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*cc/BG*



SCOTTISH OFFICE  
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AU

N L Wicks Esq CBE  
Principal Private Secretary  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON  
SW1A 2AA

*ABJ*      *Terse in writing*  
*Have we something in*  
*the diary?*      *?*  
*N.*

25 March 1988

*Dear Nigel,*

**OPTING OUT IN SCOTLAND**

Thank you for your letter of 21 March about opting out in Scotland. This reply is simply to confirm that my Secretary of State will be happy to discuss the relevant issues with the Prime Minister after Easter and agrees that it might well be helpful to have a discussion in E(EP) after he has been able to talk with the Catholic Hierarchy. We have had some difficulty in arranging the meeting with the two Scottish Catholic Archbishops who are the key figures in the Hierarchy (the Easter period appears to be a very busy time for Archbishops) and it will now take place on 6 May. Meanwhile my Secretary of State will be happy to consider what might be involved in terms of legislation.

*at 11.00*

I am copying this to Tom Jeffrey (DES) and to Sir Robin Butler.

*You sincerely,*  
*David Crawley*

**DAVID CRAWLEY**  
Private Secretary

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EDUCATION: pding pt 17



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cc Mr. Poles



SCOTTISH OFFICE  
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AU

P A Bearpark Esq  
Private Secretary  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON  
SW1A 2AA

29 March 1988

Dear Andy, <sup>MS 3073</sup>

**OPTING OUT IN SCOTLAND**

I have told Nigel Wicks that the Glasgow Herald have alerted us to the fact that they have certain correspondence between Nigel and myself on the subject of opting out in Scotland. Our expectation is that they will publish what they have tomorrow and we cannot be certain precisely which letters are involved until then. He asked me to get in touch with you urgently in the morning to tell you precisely what is in the Herald; and to give you a line to take for the Prime Minister to use tomorrow.

I would hope to catch you tomorrow morning at No 10 before you leave or, failing that, in the car on your way to Northolt. Meanwhile, I attach a line to take.

I am copying this to Nigel Wicks.

Yours sincerely,

David

**DAVID CRAWLEY**  
Private Secretary

Enc

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HMP08936

E.R.

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**OPTING OUT IN SCOTTISH SCHOOLS: BRIEFING FOR PRIME MINISTER**


Background

Our Press Office has been told by the Glasgow Herald that they have copies of correspondence between the Prime Minister's Principal Private Secretary and the Secretary of State for Scotland's Private Secretary on the subject of opting out in Scotland. This makes it clear that the Government are seriously considering introducing opting out provisions for Scotland, at some stage, and also indicates the steps that will be taken to consider policy. The correspondence refers specifically to the expectation that the Government's position will be made clear in response to an amendment to the School Boards (Scotland) Bill which is expected to be put down by Mr Allan Stewart MP; and it also indicates that collective consideration of the policy issues will follow private discussions which the Secretary of State intends to have with the two Roman Catholic Archbishops in Scotland.

We do not know precisely which correspondence the Glasgow Herald have but we shall take steps to ensure that the Prime Minister is aware as early as possible tomorrow morning of what the Glasgow Herald actually prints, assuming that they do so.

Line to take

We do not comment on private correspondence. As far as Government policy on opting out in Scotland is concerned, no decisions have been reached. The Government's present policy on the involvement of parents in the management of schools has been clearly spelt out and the Government do not propose to include opting out provisions in the present School Boards (Scotland) Bill. The Government will take into account the views of parents and others in determining future policy on this issue.



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PM  
file ccBU

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

21 March 1988

*Dear David,*

OPTING-OUT IN SCOTLAND

I reported to the Prime Minister my talk with your Secretary of State about my letter of 14 March to you concerning opting-out in Scotland.

The Prime Minister would like to talk to your Secretary of State about all this after Easter. She thinks that there will need to be a discussion in E(EP) before too long (probably after your Secretary of State's talk with the Catholic hierarchy) if only to settle the Government's line on Allan Stewart's amendment. Meanwhile, she would like your Secretary of State to consider what would be involved in terms of legislation for introducing opting-out in Scotland, including the use of an order-making power which would bring the legislation into effect sometime after it had reached the Statute Book.

The Office here will be in touch with you about a meeting after Easter.

I am copying this letter to Tom Jeffery (Department of Education and Science) and to Sir Robin Butler.

*Yours sincerely,  
Nigel Wicks*

N. L. WICKS

David Crawley, Esq.,  
Scottish Office.

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