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Oddi wrth Ysgrifennydd Gwladol Cymru

From The Secretary of State for Wales

The Rt Hon Peter Walker MBE MP

CT/3283/88

Prime Minister
Contact for this report
to be published? (Chief Secretary - note of 26
May below - concurs). *Yes* *19* *May 1988*
PRc 6 27/5

HMI REPORT: 'ASPECTS OF EDUCATIONAL PROVISION IN WALES 1986/87'

In recent years it has been the custom to publish annual reports by the HMI in Wales about the effects on the education service of local authority expenditure policies. A corresponding series by the HMI in England has also been published.

Last year colleagues expressed some criticism of the reports and I indicated then that a review of the form and content of future reports was being carried out. At that time the 1986/87 academic year was already well advanced and I pointed out that the report for that year was already in preparation and might not fully benefit from the review.

In fact a great deal of work has been put in. The report now draws on a wider range of evidence about the way in which education is delivered than has been the case in the past. There is a clear change of direction from commentary on the effects of expenditure policies per se to commentary on the way education is actually delivered in schools and further education institutions. This is all to the good and the report is, I believe, a substantial improvement on its predecessors.

Further development will need to be considered both in the light of the changing circumstances caused by the Education Reform Bill and the development of the corresponding English document. But that is for the future. In the meantime, I hope colleagues will recognise the progress that has already been made. With their approval, I propose to publish the report and a press release as soon as possible.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, other members of the Cabinet and to Sir Robin Butler.

The Rt Hon John Wakeham MP
Lord President of the Council

4



Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

The Rt Hon Peter Walker MBE MP
Secretary of State for Wales
Welsh Office
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26th May 1988

Dear Peter,

HMI REPORT 'ASPECTS OF EDUCATIONAL PROVISION IN WALES 1986-87'

Thank you for copying to me your letter of 19th May to John Wakeham.

I agree that the 1986-87 report is a very considerable improvement on its predecessors. I welcome in particular the marked shift of emphasis, compared to earlier years' reports towards discussion of service delivery. You acknowledge that further work still needs to be done, in the light of the Education Reform Bill initiatives and the development of the English report. I hope that it can include, amongst other things, work on the relationship between levels of provision on the one hand and the results achieved on the other. But I recognise the work that has already been done and am content for the report to be published. It will however be important for officials to agree the terms of the accompanying release.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister and other members of the Cabinet, and to Sir Robin Butler.

Yours Ever,
John

JOHN MAJOR

EDUCATION Policy P118

