

PRIME MINISTER

THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME: THE SCOTTISH EDUCATION BILL AND A
STUDENT LOANS BILL

The Lord President's Office have warned us that the Secretary of State for Education and the Chief Secretary are likely to argue strongly at tomorrow's E(EP) meeting that the Secretary of State for Scotland's proposals for a Scottish Education Bill are so weak that that Bill does not merit a place in next session's programme. The space created from dropping the Scottish Education Bill, they will argue, should be used for a Bill on student loans (for which room is envisaged in the 1989/90 programme).

I suggest that if the Education Secretary and the Chief Secretary argue in this way, you should say:-

- 1) Their arguments are out of order for this meeting. The purpose of the discussion is to consider the policy in Mr Rifkind's proposals. If they have views on the composition of the legislative programme, this should await discussion in the appropriate committee or Cabinet;
- 2) In any event, any space in next session's programme could well be needed for a Bill on football hooliganism; and
- 3) The Scottish Education Bill could well be needed for the enactment of opting out provisions for Scotland.

N.L.W.

N.L. Wicks

6 July 1988

Solomon