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the department for Enterprise

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CONFIDENTIAL

The Rt. Hon. Kenneth Clarke QC MP
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and
Minister of Trade and Industry

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Our ref

Your ref

Date

1 June 1988

Dear Secretary of State,

will request if reqd

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of 13 May to John Wakeham asking for preliminary views on the merits of a national lottery. The National Health Trust scheme which provoked considerable unfavourable comment appeared throughout to be an unwise and ill-judged attempt to evade the present law and appears now to have collapsed. I would be very reluctant to leap into any announcement linked to that failed scheme as it would be yet another way of lending force to the argument that the NHS is desperately short of money. That is the argument of all our critics and the Government should not indirectly reinforce it.

However I think it is arguable that the current law on lotteries may be more detailed and restrictive than strictly necessary. Any revision of the law should obviously take would-be participants interests fully into consideration. There is an obvious need for consumer protection, but also a wider interest in providing additional choice for those who want to gamble. I tend to favour the second option you identify, of amending the law to provide for the proper regulation of large lotteries. I would hope that this would also provide an opportunity to simplify and streamline the law. I do not favour a state run lottery.

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I certainly agree that this is an issue which will cause controversy and I would be happy for you to proceed by reviewing the policy.

I am sending a copy of this letter to other members of H Committee, the Chief Whips in both Houses and to Sir Robin Butler.

Yours sincerely,



PP KENNETH CLARKE

(Approved by the Chancellor of the Duchy
and signed in his absence)

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