



SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR
NORTHERN IRELAND

The Rt Hon Sir Keith Joseph Bt MP
Secretary of State for Education
and Science
Department of Education and
Science
Elizabeth House
York Road
LONDON
SE1 7PH

NAIN AT 27/6
ccol
NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
WHITEHALL
LONDON SW1A 2AZ

27th June 1985

Dear Secretary of State,

NORTHERN IRELAND TEACHERS PAY

At a meeting on 24 June 1985 on the Northern Ireland Teachers' Salaries Negotiating Committee, the employers' representatives proposed to the Northern Ireland Teachers' Unions that Northern Ireland teachers be paid a 5% increase on salaries and allowances with effect from 1 April 1985 on condition that teachers' organisations in the Province withdraw and desist from any form of industrial action of their 1985 pay claim. The employers pointed out that since Northern Ireland has a policy of Burnham equivalence on Teachers Pay such an offer would be ~~with~~ ^{with} prejudice to the adoption by Northern Ireland of any subsequent agreement at Burnham.

My representatives intervened to point out that such an offer required Ministerial approval. The meeting was adjourned to allow my views to be sought.

Of the four unions represented on the Negotiating Committee the two Northern Ireland based unions (the Ulster Teachers' Union and the Irish National Teachers' Organisation) recognised both a tactical advantage to them and difficulties for them inside the Trades Union movement if they accepted. The NAS/UWT representative was embarrassed and the AMMA representative not unsympathetic to the idea.

The offer having been made, I think the balance of advantage lies in my endorsing it. It would place the unions on the spot in response to a joint management/Government approach. If accepted it would mean

/an end

an end to the campaign of disruption in Northern Ireland schools which has been less severe than in Great Britain but which could escalate next term and has already dislocated important curriculum initiatives. On the wider front it would signal a break in the stalemate and the first significant weakening in the teachers campaign, which I hope we could exploit.

Northern Ireland teachers would be accepting 5% and whilst wishing to continue negotiations, as is their right, would be foregoing the use or threat of industrial action in pressing their case. The fact that Northern Ireland has a clear policy of equivalence with Burnham and Northern Ireland teachers have a right to expect whatever is agreed at Burnham reduces the second half of the offer to a mere statement of established fact and does not per se create or endorse any expectation that Government will concede more than 5% at Burnham.

Unless you or any colleagues register an objection before close of business on 28 June I propose to allow the management offer to go forward.

Copies go to the Prime Minister, Nigel Lawson, Tom King, Patrick Jenkin, George Younger, Nicholas Edwards and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours Sincerely
N Edwards
Private Secretary
for Secretary of State.



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FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Jim Daniell Esq
Private Secretary
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
Northern Ireland Office
Whitehall
SW1

1 July 1985

Dear Jim,

NORTHERN IRELAND TEACHERS' PAY

My Secretary of State has asked me to respond to your Secretary of State's letter of 27 June in his absence from the office this afternoon.

Sir Keith can see the attraction of concurring in the Northern Ireland employers' proposal and perceives no Burnham disadvantages of any consequence. Accordingly, he would not wish to argue against your proposal. However, since Burnham has not yet addressed the detailed composition of any 1985 settlement, your concurrence should be in terms which would allow the 5% figure to be overtaken by the eventual Burnham settlement, even if that involves less than 5% from 1 April. (Privately, we regard this as highly unlikely, but it is theoretically possible, if Burnham moves to a staged settlement.)

Copies of this letter go to private secretaries to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretaries of State for Employment, the Environment, Scotland and Wales, and to Richard Hatfield.

Yours,
Elizabeth

MISS C E HODKINSON
Private Secretary

educ: Teachers Pay : Pt 4