



B/F with Treasury 1 pu, OFS
response AT 22/11
cys

SCOTTISH OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AU

CONFIDENTIAL

The Rt Hon Nigel Lawson MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
Treasury Chambers
Parliament Street
LONDON
SW1P 3AG

21 November 1984

Dear Nigel,

SCOTTISH TEACHERS' PAY

When I wrote to you on 16 August I had just received from the Teachers' Side of the Scottish Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff in School Education (SJNC(SE)) a formal request that I should "establish an independent body to review the salaries of Scottish teachers". I said that, when I had been able to consider this request in detail, I would write to you again.

The request has been supported by a campaign of disruption in schools, mainly organised by the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS). It has mostly taken the form of a policy of non-co-operation with new curriculum developments, which has already done considerable damage to our proposals for the introduction of the new Standard grade of the Scottish Certificate of Education. The original expectation was that the disruptive action would apply only to new developments; but it has been directed also at developments which are already far advanced, where pupils are already taking the necessary classes with a view to sitting the new examinations in 1986. There is a real danger that in the very near future many schools will run out of teaching materials and that no new materials will be prepared. I consider that it is already too late to revert to the previous methods of teaching - and it would involve a serious breach of faith with the pupils - but clearly there are great difficulties ahead. The education authorities have given me an assurance that they will support me in trying to maintain the progress already made, but they are not prepared to give me unqualified guarantees that they will be able to deliver. In addition, the teachers - and this involves other teachers' unions than the EIS - are now embarking on disruptive action of a "work to contract" nature which is likely to affect particularly the grey areas such as lunchtime and playground supervision, parents' meetings and so on. Finally, the EIS are currently making plans for selective strike action at a later date and have made a specific threat to disrupt examinations in 1985.

Against this background, I have now met representatives of both the teachers and of Management to discuss the situation. The teachers claim to have lost patience with a process of salary negotiations in which the value of their earnings, compared with the cost of living, is eroded year by year and in which they see themselves as constantly losing ground compared with other groups of

earners. They regard the Houghton review of 1974 and the Clegg review of 1980 as having, in their day, dealt with accumulating injustices and they say the time has come for another such review and for establishing a method of calculating their salaries which will avoid for the future the evils of which they complain. The other main plank of their argument is that curricular and other developments in Scotland have enormously increased the workload of teachers and added to its complexity, to an extent which justifies additional remuneration. In short, their case is that, while they have been taking on additional work, their remuneration has been progressively reduced in real terms and by comparison with other groups.

The Management Side of the SJNC(SE) are broadly in sympathy with the teachers on the matter of erosion of salaries through inflation, though they have admitted to me that the teachers have received very much the same salary increases as other groups of local authority employees and they could not assure me that granting the request by teachers for an independent pay review would not open the door to similar requests by others. They also take the view that recent curricular developments, particularly in the secondary school, have added considerably to the workload of the teachers. They support the claim for an independent review, but argue that any review should take account also of teachers' conditions of service, management of schools and staffing levels. They are particularly concerned about conditions of service, where they say that the teachers are over-generously treated and that the conditions impede effective management of the education service.

In the light of Government policy on pay, and of my own measures to curb local authority expenditure in Scotland, I am quite clear that there can be no question of my acceding to the teachers' request for an independent review extending only to salaries. Such a review would have to be justified on the grounds that the teachers were a special case, who could be clearly distinguished from any other group, but I do not think that this is so. I recognise that new curricular developments have involved many teachers in increased work, but I am not satisfied that the volume is such as they claim, that it affects more than a minority of teachers at one time, or that its effects will be permanent.

However, I still have to face the prospect of very serious disruption of the educational system in Scotland. Already considerable damage has been done to new curricular developments, particularly Standard grade, to which the Government is committed and in which we have invested a good deal of political capital. I am also receiving a considerable volume of representations from parents who are deeply concerned about the education of their children and it is important that my decision should be capable of being presented, if at all possible, in such a way as to get parents and the public on to our side. I am conscious also of the argument put to me by Management Side of the SJNC(SE), that there is a case for taking advantage of this approach by the teachers to commission a wide-ranging inquiry into teachers' pay and conditions of service etc; there is no doubt that existing conditions of service do stand in the way of progress and, like Keith Joseph, I would very much like to move towards strengthening the hand of management in this area.

I therefore propose that, in replying to the teachers, I should

- (i) reject the request for any sort of independent review but
- (ii) indicate that, subject to certain conditions, I would be prepared to invite the SJNC(SE) itself to undertake a wider review embracing pay and conditions of service. (The SJNC(SE), unlike Burnham, has of course a statutory responsibility covering both areas.)

In doing so, I would make it clear that such a review must deal specifically with a range of matters which have been giving concern to Management -including the definition and prescription of teachers' responsibilities in relation to preparatory work for teaching duties, playground and lunchtime supervision and periodical attendance at meetings with parents, and the vexed question of control by employers of that part of a teacher's conditioned hours which is not spent in class contact. I would indicate also that I would expect all disruptive action by teachers in schools to cease forthwith. On finance, I would go no further than saying that, if - and only if - a package which I considered acceptable were to emerge from a review of this kind by the SJNC(SE), I would be prepared to consider with my Ministerial colleagues the case for any additional provision that might be necessary to implement it. I would of course give no advance guarantee of any sort that extra funds would be forthcoming.

In my judgement a response of this kind, while in no way conceding the teachers' request for an independent review, would represent a positive answer on my part, affording a reasonable change of wrong-footing the teachers and winning public opinion to our side. Moreover, a review within the SJNC(SE) of the sort which I envisage would provide the opportunity for some real productivity gains on the part of management. As I have indicated above, I would be under absolutely no obligation to fund any package with financial consequences which we regarded as unacceptable. Nor would the local authorities themselves, given the constraints which I have imposed on their spending, be in a position to reach any settlement involving substantial additional costs unless I was prepared to make additional financial provision available to them.

As I have said, the difficulties in the schools are now becoming acute and the EIS have just announced an escalation of action if I have not responded to the teachers' request this week. While I see no necessity to do that, I would like to announce a decision by the middle of next week - in advance of a meeting of the SJNC(SE) on 29 November and in good time before 5 December when I am top of the list for oral questions and am sure to be pressed hard in the matter. This being so, I should be glad to know as soon as possible and in any event by midday on 26 November that you are content with the line which I propose to take.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, Members of E(PSP), the Secretaries of State for Wales and Northern Ireland and Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours ver,

George.

Teacher Pay Pt. 3

22 NOV 1968

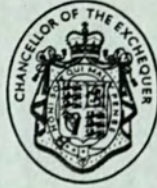
11 12 1 2 3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10

The following information is being provided to you for your information. It is requested that you review this information and advise the undersigned if you have any questions or comments. This information is being provided to you for your information and is not intended to be used as a basis for any action.

The following information is being provided to you for your information. It is requested that you review this information and advise the undersigned if you have any questions or comments. This information is being provided to you for your information and is not intended to be used as a basis for any action.

The following information is being provided to you for your information. It is requested that you review this information and advise the undersigned if you have any questions or comments. This information is being provided to you for your information and is not intended to be used as a basis for any action.

Handwritten signature or initials



AKO

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG
01-233 3000

23 August 1984

J S Graham Esq
Private Secretary to the Secretary of State
for Scotland
Scottish Office
Whitehall
LONDON SW1

*N
23/8*

Dear John,

TEACHERS' PAY

20/7

The Chancellor was grateful for the letter of 16 August from your Secretary of State reporting the latest developments in the Scottish Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff in School Education. We note that your Secretary of State will be writing again when he has had an opportunity to consider the detailed items of the letter he has received from Scottish teachers, asking him to establish an independent body to review their salaries.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Prime Minister, to the other members of E(PSP), to the Secretaries of State for Education and Science, Wales and Northern Ireland, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret O'Mara

Miss M O'Mara
Private Secretary

EDUCATION Teacher's Key

11 12 1
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

23 AUG 1984