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FROM: P L GREGSON CB, DEPUTY SECRETARY



CABINET OFFICE

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS Telephone 01-930 8121 ext 233 8339

Mr John Graham
Private Secretary to the
Secretary of State
Scottish Office
Dover House

Our ref: P.01447

28 November 1984

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear John,

SCOTTISH TEACHERS' PAY

The Chancellor of the Exchequer and your Secretary of State had a discussion at 12.00 noon today in Conference Room A in the Cabinet Office about the draft letter to the Teachers' Side Joint Secretary of the Scottish Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff in School Education, which was attached to your Secretary of State's letter of 27 November. The Secretaries of State for Education and Science and Employment, and the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department of the Environment (Mr Waldegrave) were also present.

... I attach the revised text of the letter which was agreed at the meeting.

I am sending copies of this letter and the attachment to the Private Secretaries of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretaries of State for Education and Science, the Environment, Social Services and Employment and to Andrew Turnbull, 10 Downing Street.

Yours sincerely

Peter Gregson

P L GREGSON

CONFIDENTIAL

DRAFT OF A LETTER FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO SEND TO:

Robert Beattie Esq
Joint Secretary
Teachers' Side
Scottish Joint Negotiating Committee for
Teaching Staff in School Education
46 Moray Place
EDINBURGH EH3 6BH

TEACHERS' SALARIES

You wrote to me on 14 August on behalf of the Teachers' Panel of the Scottish Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff in School Education (SJNC(SE)) to request that I establish an independent body to review the salaries of Scottish school teachers. Your letter referred only briefly to increased workload arising from recent educational developments and to annual erosion of the relative salary position of Scottish teachers; but at my invitation representatives of the Teachers' Side of the SJNC(SE) met me on 23 October to amplify their case, and I have seen also various documents published by individual teachers' associations. I have had the opportunity too of discussion with representatives of the Management Side of the SJNC(SE), and I have very recently seen an advance copy of a report prepared by a working party of the SJNC(SE) in the matter of teachers' workload. I have received also a number of representations in the matter from other organisations and individuals.

I have taken careful note of all the points made. It appears to me that the case being advanced by the Teachers' Side depends essentially upon the claims (i) that the salaries of teachers have been eroded in recent years and (ii) that teachers have over the same period experienced considerable increases in workload. On pay, it is of course no part of the Government's policy that salary increases should be indexed either to the rate of inflation or to some measurement of pay increases in the economy generally. Such an approach would be inconsistent both with the determination of the Government to defeat inflation and with our general policy of seeking to limit local authority expenditure. However, pay awards to teachers over the last 10 years or so have in fact been very closely comparable with those made to other groups of local authority employees in Scotland.

The awards have been consistent with what has been needed to recruit and retain teachers, and with what can be afforded. These are, as you know, the yardsticks by which the Government believes pay should be determined throughout the whole economy. It has been put to me that teachers nevertheless constitute a special case, in that they have experienced substantial additions to their workload in recent years. It must, however, be borne in mind that teachers are by no means alone in having had to come to terms with new technologies and new methods of working. I recognise that new curricular developments have involved individual teachers in increased work; but I am not satisfied that the extent of this is as great as has sometimes been suggested, that it affects more than a minority of teachers at any one time, or that this is more than a temporary phenomenon. It should be remembered also that I have already made provision in rate support grant settlements for the employment of additional teachers in secondary schools and that I have agreed to a shortening of the school year in order to facilitate additional days of in-service training for teachers.

In the circumstances, therefore, I am not persuaded that I should be justified in establishing an independent review of the sort requested. However, under statute it is of course the responsibility of the SJNC(SE) to determine the salaries and conditions of service of school teachers in Scotland. I should be prepared to consider, on their merits and in the framework of the Government's existing public expenditure plans, any proposals relating to both of those matters which might result from examination undertaken in the statutory forum of the SJNC(SE).

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Management Side Joint Secretary of the SJNC(SE). I am also making it public by means of a press announcement.

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