



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

4 November 1985

LEGAL AID IN SCOTLAND

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 24 October, which she has noted without comment.

I am copying this letter to Joan MacNaughton (Lord President's Office), Richard Stoate (Lord Chancellor's Office), Rachel Lomax (H.M. Treasury) and Michael Stark (Cabinet Office).

Mark Addison

John Graham, Esq.,  
Scottish Office.

DSG



10 DOWNING STREET

*not seen*

~~MKA~~

minute from 55/Scotland  
at Pap.

RTA has no comments

JB

1/11



SCOTTISH OFFICE  
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AU

Ry MS gCNO

PRIME MINISTER

RTA office subsequently  
referred me they did have  
comments to offer, but they  
are pursuing these on the  
official set. MEA 4/11

ce RTA

24 October 1985

Prime Minister (2)  
For information.  
MEA 1/11

LEGAL AID IN SCOTLAND

I reported to you in my minute of 27 February my proposals for changing the legal aid arrangements in Scotland and, in particular, for establishing a Non-Departmental Public Body responsible for their administration. Your Private Secretary's letter of 5 March indicated that you were content that H Committee should be consulted on the lines I suggested subject to greater emphasis being placed on the potential for improving control over legal aid expenditure and on the scope for limiting abuses of the system.

H Committee subsequently approved my proposals on 13 March and agreed that I might issue a consultation paper on possible changes in the legal aid arrangements. In the light of this consultation I have worked out my proposals in greater detail and have obtained the approval of H Committee to the inclusion of these in the legislation which will be announced in The Queen's Speech.

I am satisfied that the transfer of responsibility for most aspects of the administration of legal aid in Scotland to a Non-Departmental Public Body will result in greater control, increased consistency and improved efficiency and meet most of the criticisms of the present Scottish arrangements. My officials are in touch with MPO and Treasury about the details of setting up the new Body. I have agreed with the Lord Chancellor that I shall, as far as possible, present changes in a way which emphasises the differences in the Scottish system in order to reduce the risk of awkward comparisons with the position in England and Wales.

E. R.

I am sending copies of this minute to the Lord President, the Lord Chancellor and the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

C.Y.

HOME AFFAIRS : CIVIL LEGAL AID DEC 1982

F. R. E.

