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C.P. (45) 119.

16th August, 1945.



**CABINET.**

**RAISING OF THE SCHOOL LEAVING AGE.**

**MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND.**

WITH reference to the Memorandum\* which the Minister of Education is circulating on the raising of the school leaving age, I propose, if my colleagues agree, that in Scotland the age should be raised to 15 on the 1st April, 1947.

2. Under Section 23 of the Education (Scotland) Act, 1945, the school leaving age is to be raised to 15 on the 1st April, 1946, "or such subsequent day within one year thereafter as the Secretary of State, having regard to the time required for enabling adequate provision to be made for a supply of teachers or of school accommodation to meet the needs of children between the ages of 14 and 15 years, may by order appoint." It will therefore be necessary for me to make an Order appointing the 1st April, 1947, as the day for raising the leaving age to 15.

3. If the age is raised to 15 on the 1st April, 1947, it is estimated that some 1,800 additional teachers will be required on the assumption that 2,500 married women and teachers who have reached retiring age will remain in service. As Scottish schools have suffered less from bombing than schools in England, we shall probably have correspondingly less difficulty in providing the additional accommodation that will be required. In some areas, however, there will be an inevitable increase in the number of oversize classes, and in others an increase in the average size of classes.

4. If this proposal is agreed to, the Government's decision should be announced simultaneously for England and for Scotland.

5. I must emphasise, however, that if it is agreed that the leaving age shall be raised to 15 on the date I propose, there will be a general expectation on the part of Education Authorities that the Government will assist their preparations for the reform by generous treatment in the allocation of labour and materials for school building, and in the release of teachers from the Services.

J. W.

*Scottish Office, S.W. 1,  
16th August, 1945.*

\* C.P. (45) 117.

