These new plans (1995) are the most important set of proposals ever published for the encouragement and promotion of sport. We shall be discussing how to develop them further with those on whom we all rely to make them a reality - perhaps, above all, teachers, but also parents, volunteers, sports men and women themselves, their clubs and the governing bodies of their sports. Their advice has been hugely valuable in putting these ideas together. That process of partnership must be carried further. Together I want us to bring about a seachange in the prospects of British sport - from the very first steps in primary school right through to the breaking of the tape in an Olympic final.

People will, as ever, ask where the resources will come from. I do not believe every problem needs a financial answer. Some of the problems for sport have been created by misguided attitudes and mistaken policies over the last generation. We need to correct those. But the Government and the Sports Councils will, as the paper makes clear, commit extra resources. And there is a new factor which makes possible today a programme more far reaching and ambitious than any in our history - the National Lottery.

The existence of the National Lottery has transformed for ever the prospects of British sport. Indeed, this was one of my principal aims when I decided to create the Lottery. It was a way to provide resources for sport - and other good causes - that would be unlikely ever to come directly from the taxpayer.

The £300 million a year that the Lottery in full flood will provide for sport will revolutionise it over the years ahead. It will make possible the creation of a new British Academy of Sport for the best of our young men and women. It will help generate the resources for some of our other targets - for example, to improve facilities and support for those teachers and others who lead sport and to achieve a target I am setting today, to bring every child in every school within reach
of adequate sporting facilities by the year 2000.

Some people say that sport is a peripheral and minor concern. I profoundly disagree. It enriches the lives of the thousands of millions of people of all ages around the world who know and enjoy it. Sport is a central part of Britain's National Heritage. We invented the majority of the world's great sports. And most of those we did not invent, we codified and helped to popularise throughout the world. It could be argued that nineteenth century Britain was the cradle of a leisure revolution every bit as significant as the agricultural and industrial revolutions we launched in the century before.

Sport is a binding force between generations and across borders. But, by a miraculous paradox, it is at the same time one of the defining characteristics of nationhood and of local pride. We should cherish it for both those reasons.

In this initiative I put perhaps highest priority on plans to help all our schools improve their sport. Sport is open to all ages - but it is most open to those who learn to love it when they are young. Competitive sport teaches valuable lessons which last for life. Every game delivers both a winner and a loser. Sports men must learn to be both. Sport only thrives if both parties play by the rules, and accept the results with good grace. It is one of the best means of learning how to live alongside others and make a contribution as part of a team. It improves health and it opens the door to new friendships.

But all this is to be too dispassionate about sport. Above all, it produces pure enjoyment for those who play and those who watch. Frankly, for me, it needs no other recommendation than that.

That is why I have been concerned about the growing evidence of a decline of sport in many of our schools. The Secondary Heads Association themselves have produced alarming evidence of this. Other teacher unions have made important contributions to the debate and I want to work constructively with them to improve things.

My ambition is simply stated. It is to put sport back at the heart of weekly life in every school. To
re-establish sport as one of the great pillars of education alongside the academic, the vocational and the moral. It should never have been relegated to be just one part of one subject in the curriculum. For complete education we need all of those four pillars of school life to be strong.

Sports education is only the first step to a lifetime's enjoyment of sport. Sporting opportunities must continue after school. So we shall be looking to colleges and universities to do more to promote sport among their students. At present, too many teenagers find it difficult to transfer their sporting interests to the world outside school. So we will also aim to improve links between school and club sport. In that way we can improve access to high quality coaching and promote sensible arrangements to share facilities and equipment. There is much to gain in this, both for clubs and for schools.

Finally, I want to help our best sports men and women make the very best of their talents. I take as much pride as anyone in seeing them lead the world. I do not want to see them having to go abroad to learn how to exploit their talents. That is why our new proposals include ideas to improve talent spotting and talent support right here at home. With the help of the National Lottery we will create a new British Academy of Sport with worldclass facilities, to help sporting stars, and we will support it by a developing network of regional and sports academies to bring on the best.

John Major (Prime Minister 1995)
Editor's comments - [ Sport: Raising the game was a landmark in both British sport and wider heritage and culture. The then Conservative Prime Minister, John Major – a passionate sportsman and fan himself, drove forward plans for the establishment of the National Lottery; specialist schools (including sports colleges) and the funding of athletes in part through the lottery. Sport and the Arts (along with millennium preparations – for London at least) were centre stage. A landmark sport policy for performance, coaching and school sport: Raising the Game was to have a significant impact on sport in the United Kingdom for more than a decade. (original scan) ] {tooltip}Reference this?{end-link}Cryer, J. (2012). This page title in italics. Retrieved date, from In the text: Cryer (2012) {end-tooltip}