



MO 2/2/6

LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCILCIVIL SERVICE MANPOWER REDUCTIONS:
DEPARTMENTAL TARGETS

Thank you for sending me a copy of your minute to the Prime Minister of 7th November.

2. I agree that, on balance, the time is approaching for an announcement of departmental targets. The difficulty about an announcement is that we still cannot say with any precision or conviction how the targets will be achieved, and for that reason I have, as you know, to continue to regard 200,000 as a target for which I am aiming, not an absolutely firm commitment. Much will depend on the degree of privatization it proves possible to implement by 1984.

3. My other point concerns GCHQ. The new target requires a reduction of over 1000 posts in GCHQ compared with the 1979 numbers borne on MOD. There is no way in which I can carry in my numbers any preferential treatment for them, unless my target is revised. Decisions are therefore urgently needed on their future level of activities.

4. I am sending copies of this minute to the Prime Minister, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Ministry of Defence

11th November 1980

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