

CONFIDENTIAL



Prime Minister

1

The Home Secretary wants  
5 minutes with you on  
this after MISC 7. 1

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG  
01-233 3000

Have said you will be  
prepared to listen, but no  
decisions until Lord Soames  
gets back on Monday.

PRIME MINISTER

AM

INNER LONDON MAGISTRATES' COURTS STRIKE

DL  
18/9

The Home Secretary sent me a copy of his minute to you  
of 17th September.

2. Whilst we must all be concerned about the continuing industrial action in the Inner London courts (and grateful to those who are doing their best to keep them going in very difficult circumstances), we must also recognise, however reluctantly, that nothing has occurred to change the assessment reached at your meeting on 3rd September (recorded in your Private Secretary letter of that date). Indeed the Home Secretary's minute sets out cogently the difficulties in the way of any concession. Unless we are to contemplate an about-turn (and I believe the time for this, if there ever was one, is now past), we must stand firm - particularly since we are facing even more serious industrial action by the industrial civil service on what is basically the same issue.

3. The prospect must now be of a lengthy dispute, and I am sure that our right course is to stay silent on the pay aspects. I therefore think that, if they have not already done so, the Home Secretary and the Lord Chancellor should draw up contingency plans for maintaining the basic administration of criminal justice in Inner London in the event of the strike causing magistrates' courts to grind to a halt. I am sure that if you decide to hold a meeting, these considerations should be on the agenda.

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4. I am sending copies of this minute to the Home Secretary, the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President, the Secretaries of State for Industry and for Employment, and to Sir John Hunt.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "G.H.".

(G.H.)

18 September, 1979

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