



From the Secretary of State

MANAGEMENT IN CONFIDENCE

Mike Pattison Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
London, SW1

14 November 1980

Dear Mike

CIVIL SERVICE MANPOWER REDUCTIONS

My Secretary of State has been considering the proposal for an announcement on departmental targets, latterly in the light of your letter of 13 November.

You will be aware that the major element of the manpower reductions of this Department involves our making changes to the Insolvency Service to remove from its ambit personal bankruptcy. As a prelude to the necessary legislation, we issued in July this year a Green Paper setting out our proposals. This has met with universal opposition, and there is already considerable Parliamentary feeling against the changes. We can therefore anticipate considerable difficulty when we bring forward a Bill, which we are planning for the 1981/82 Parliamentary Session. A retreat on the proposals will in any case be damaging to the Government, but my Secretary of State feels that it will be made worse if the departmental target for manpower is obviously under threat as well.

Despite these anticipated difficulties Mr Nott is pressing ahead with an examination of the options for overcoming or meeting the objections voiced. He can, however, see no way of achieving departmental reductions on the scale required without this change in the Insolvency Service.

My Secretary of State has therefore asked me to say that he views with some reservation greater publicity for a departmental target which in our case is presently looking precarious.

I am sending a copy of this letter to David Wright (Cabinet Office) and Jim Buckley (Lord President's Office).

*Yours sincerely,
S HAMPSON*

S HAMPSON
Private Secretary

MANAGEMENT IN CONFIDENCE