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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

24 August 1979

Your Secretary of State spoke on the telephone to the Prime Minister yesterday. Mr. Prior gave the Prime Minister an indication of the atmosphere of his meeting with the TUC Economic Committee. He indicated that it had been difficult and unproductive and that the consultations with the TUC seemed likely to follow these lines throughout.

He raised with the Prime Minister the preparations for legislation and said that he had it in mind to bring forward two Bills, with the first one narrowly defined to limit the scope for amendment and for obstruction at the Committee Stage. The Prime Minister said that she doubted the wisdom of this approach. Even a short Bill could easily be delayed by the tabling of numerous amendments and by other means, and it would therefore be preferable to include all measures in a single Bill. Mr. Prior said that he would want to discuss this further with the Prime Minister in due course.

The Prime Minister later mentioned this to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, during a conversation about the legislative programme. She asked Mr. St. John-Stevas to be in touch with your Secretary of State on the trade union legislation. I am therefore sending a copy of this letter to John Stevens in the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office.

M. A. PATTISON

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