

Civil Service



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PRIME MINISTER

CIVIL SERVICE STRIKE

I am increasingly concerned that we are not managing the strike effectively. The situation is developing all the time and it is only the CSD, at the moment, which has an overall view. I am bound to say that I do not feel that that Department is taking enough of a grip of the situation and there is some ambiguity about its objectives.

I am afraid the situation may deteriorate rapidly. We need to keep in very close touch and make sure that what is done in various Departments conforms to a coherent strategy. I wonder whether the time has not come to establish a small group of Ministers to assume operational control, meeting daily and reporting to you very frequently?

Prime Minister.

I suspect that this reflects the Chancellor's concern about the particular (G.H.) problem of the Inland Revenue where 6 April 1981 industrial action is escalating more rapidly than elsewhere. I do not have the impression that matters are so serious in other departments that a daily meeting of Ministers is necessary yet. Of course if such a group were set up and its existence became known, the unions would interpret it as a sign that Ministers were getting really worried. Would you like to discuss with the Chancellor and the home President? John Gw

Yes
no