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CIVIL SERVICE DEPARTMENT

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Telephone 01 273 5400

Sir Ian Bancroft G.C.B.
Head of the Home Civil Service

Mike Pattison Esq
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

27 March 1981

Dear Mike,

INDUSTRIAL ACTION

You may like to have a further progress report on the Civil Service industrial action.

... The number on strike has increased since the last report. At the beginning of the week there were 2,000 on strike. The total today is some 2,750 - details in the attached Annex.

The unions' tactics this week have included increased efforts to prevent the banking of revenue; an all-out strike in the Scottish courts; a strike by C & E staff in East Coast ports; and an extension of the industrial action in the Ministry of Defence. Those developments apart, the mixture is much as before - selective strikes, walk-outs, protest meetings, and general non-cooperation with management.

The industrial action is in general more pronounced than a week ago. Some 14 computer installations have now been hit by strikes. Apart from the immediate effects, the recovery problems for these installations will be considerable - just as they were after the last major industrial action in 1979. Disruptive action has been threatened at a major airport this week-end; we do not have details at present.

We expect the industrial action to intensify for a short time as a result of today's TRD action in C & E and probable similar action in Inland Revenue. But we have no way of telling whether or not sympathetic action will last for more than a few days. The unions have made it clear that a good deal of industrial action can be expected next Wednesday (April 1st). We do not think that there is likely to be a one-day strike; there will almost certainly be demonstrations during the morning. An afternoon lobby of Parliament, starting at 3pm, has been planned. I will let you have further information about these demonstrations, and about the lobby, if and when it becomes available. I will also let you have further progress reports from time to time.

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I am copying this to the Private Secretaries to Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Departments and Smaller Departments.

Yours ever,

Jeremy

JEREMY COLMAN
Private Secretary

PS

There is a risk of serious delays at three terminals at Heathrow over this weekend caused by the work to rule of immigration officers.

SELECTIVE ACTION BY NON-INDUSTRIAL CIVIL SERVANTS
SUMMARY OF POSITION AT 26 MARCH 1981

Department	Number on strike	Remarks
Customs & Excise	422	250 data processing staff on strike at Southend computer; 172 customs staff at East Coast ports.
MOD	494	Strikes by computer and other staff at 4 dockyards, 4 RN stores depots, 2 RN armaments depots, Clyde Submarine Base, bill-paying (Liverpool), Mapping and Charting Establishment (Feltham), Directorate of Submarine Projects (Bath) and REME Command (Bovington).
Employment	41	Staff at Runcorn computer handling RPI statistics (plus Job Release Scheme payments and DE Group payroll both so far unaffected).
Environment	10	Driving examiners at 3 test centres.
DHSS	240	230 staff on strike at Newcastle computer recording NI contributions; 10 at North Fylde Central Accounts Office.
Inland Revenue	978	901 on strike at Cumbernauld and Shipley computers; 77 at Bush House (London) Collection Office.
PSA	10	Strike by maintenance engineers at RAF Brawdy works offices.
Trade	136	Strike by staff who handle search facilities at Companies House, London and Cardiff.

Scottish Courts Administration	380 (estimated)	Strike by staff affecting Supreme Courts (Edinburgh) and virtually closing 6 Sheriff Courts.
Paymaster General's Office	23	Strike by 10 computer staff and 13 in Finance Branch, disrupting Government banking transactions.
TOTAL	2,734 (estimated)	A net increase of about 770 since a week ago.