



CIVIL SERVICE DEPARTMENT  
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2AZ  
Telephone 01 273 5400

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

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON SW1

Dear Prime Minister,

DINNER FOR PERMANENT SECRETARIES

On behalf of my colleagues, I would like to thank you for the splendid dinner you gave us at No 10 on Tuesday night. I hope that you found it useful to meet Permanent Secretary Heads of Departments collectively and have a frank exchange of views with us. We for our part found much to reflect on.

I know from comments made to me already that there are one or two important points which many of my colleagues want me to put to you as a postscript to our exchanges on Tuesday night: I would want to anyway.

First, as senior civil service managers we are fully committed to the policy of this Administration, as the elected Government of the day, for a smaller and more efficient civil service giving value for money and effective service to the public. I hope it goes without saying that with departmental Ministers we will continue to work away at the best means of achieving this, with advice from Derek Rayner as appropriate. Ministers can then decide on the priorities for further action. It won't be easy for Ministers or for us. As you acknowledged, there will be hard political and managerial decisions to be faced on the way, as well as pressures arising from the state of the economy. But we are all determined to make the very best fist of it we can.

Second, amongst our responsibilities as managers we have to motivate the staff to give of their best. We won't be able to do this if they feel that they are being constantly got at and that none (or few) of us appreciate the good work they carry out. Irrespective of what the unions may do, we can't afford to let the bulk of staff think we don't care very much about their achievements or about whether they are treated fairly - no more and no less - over such matters as their pay, their working environment and defending them from unfair criticism. We will need Ministers' help in this.

Prime Minister.

An attempt to return lost ground, but I believe and hope genuinely meant.

I also enclose in the attached folder the thank-you letter I mentioned earlier today. Some of these, eg. met from Pat Nason, are encouraging and show that what you said at dinner has not been lost 8 May 1980 or at least some PSES.

Yours  
Sv.

MS

I would like to end as I ended on Tuesday night: you and we are not on separate networks, and we for our part want to work in close cooperation with you and your colleagues on the basis of mutual trust.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Bancroft

IAN BANCROFT



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 01-218 2119 (Direct Dialling)

01-218 9000 (Switchboard)

PERMANENT UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE

SIR FRANK COOPER GCB CMG

PUS/80/441

58/15/4

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON SW1

8 May 1980

*Dear Prime Minister.*

Thank you for inviting me to dinner on Tuesday night and for your kind hospitality.

On Civil Service numbers, as you know I am firmly of the opinion that we can make further reductions here in Defence. It is encouraging that other Departments are being requested to contribute and that pressure is being brought to bear elsewhere in the public sector.

On efficiency, I have much sympathy for many of the ideas which have been put forward by Derek Rayner. We are most anxious to get ahead in this area here and it is a big job. We shall only succeed if we engage the enthusiasm and interest of the staff themselves and give them more responsibility and freedom to manage with less central controls. It is here that the heart of the matter lies.

*Your sincerely*  
*Frank Cooper*

FRANK COOPER