



Civil Service <sup>2</sup> WM 7/5

~~Prime Minister~~ (weekend -  
for info)

WM 8/5

PRIME MINISTER

#### CIVIL SERVICE NUMBERS

Departmental returns of staff in post at 1 April have just been received. The total of 689,600 is a reduction of 5,500 compared with January 1981. Of these reductions, 2,900 are non-industrials; 2,600 are industrials.

The main areas of reductions are Defence (3,200); Environment and Transport (1,150); DHSS (900) and the Chancellor of the Exchequer's departments (800). There is an offsetting increase of 2,000 in the Department of Employment, where it is necessary to recruit extra staff in the Unemployment Benefit Offices.

This is a good result which speaks well for the efforts made by our colleagues. But the effects of increasing unemployment have not yet worked through fully into the manpower figures. When this happens, it is bound to affect the momentum, and I still have a fear that we could see a "blip" upwards.

I will arrange for these figures to be announced to Parliament in a Written Answer.

SOAMES

8 May 1981