



## CIVIL SERVICE DEPARTMENT

WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2AZ

Telephone 01 273 5400

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

Mike Pattison Esq  
Private Secretary  
Office of the Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON SW1

16 April 1981

*Dear Mike,*

## INDUSTRIAL ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

Details of the number of non-industrial civil servants on strike yesterday are given in the attached Annex. They do not differ greatly from those for Friday 10 April (3,722 on strike then; 3,543 yesterday).

The use by MOD of naval personnel to help in re-equipping Resolution on Monday night led to a call by the Council of Civil Service Unions for their members to walk out during 14 April. It will be some time before final returns are available, but preliminary indications are that about 45% of non-industrials were absent for part of the day (mostly during the afternoon). Support varied from Department to Department and from region to region; I will let you have a fuller report in due course. The total absenteeism was less than on 9 March (the one-day strike which had been planned for some time) but considerably more than on 1 April which, like Tuesday's action, was called at short notice.

Although the work of all Departments is continuing - in some cases despite considerable difficulties - a number of recovery problems, similar to those in 1979 are building up:

## (i) Inland Revenue

It would now take the Accounts Offices at Cumbernauld and Shipley 12 weeks to return to normal. If the strike were to end this month, it would take the PAYE system 6 months to recover; if it goes on beyond 19 May, when

*Civil Service  
Pay & Pension  
T. V. ...  
2/1/4*

*1. CLIVE  
2. MIKE  
To see.  
MJS  
16/4*

*Civil Service*



the first payments of PAYE and National Insurance relating to the new fiscal year are due to be received, recovery would take 18 months. The introduction of Schedule D collection arrangements might have to be deferred for a year.

(ii) Customs & Excise

Resumption of normal working would depend on the co-operation of staff and their willingness to work overtime. It would take the computer at Southend 7 months to catch up on VAT and 12 months on the Trade figures - these periods would extend to 11 and 18 months respectively if the strike continues beyond the end of the month.

(iii) DHSS

The backlog of benefit enquiries could be cleared in a few weeks; most supplementary benefit contributions are received in May/June and there would be serious difficulties if the strike extends beyond the end of April.

(iv) MOD

Repair work and participation in trials had been lost; the computers processing industrials' pay and supplies would take some months to recover.

(v) Trade and Industry

The Companies House Library would need 1 week for each week of the strike to return to normal. In addition, a backlog of enquiries would have to be cleared.

(vi) Scottish Office

Three times the duration of the strike at the Scottish Office Computer Centre would be required for recovery.

(vii) Paymaster General's Office

It would take about 1 week to recover for every day of industrial action.

*Yours ever,  
Jeremy*

J G COLMAN  
Private Secretary



SELECTIVE ACTION BY NON-INDUSTRIAL CIVIL SERVANTS

SUMMARY OF POSITION - 15 APRIL 1981

Department	Number on strike	Remarks
Customs & Excise	750	277 data processing staff on strike at Southend computer; 243 customs staff at West coast ports; 185 staff on the NI Boundary 7 HQ staff; 38 Manchester Betting Duty Office.
MOD	572	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 & Taunton) Directorate of Submarine Projects (Bath) and 5 Oil Fuel Depots.
Employment		Staff at Runcorn computer centre are now working normally.
Environment	13	Driving examiners at test centres.
DHSS	252	230 staff on strike at Newcastle computer recording NI contributions; 10 at North Fylde Central Accounts Office; 12 at Merseyside and Manchester Local Offices.
Inland Revenue	1479	901 on strike at Cumbernauld, Shipley and Worthing computer centres; remainder at various Collection Offices.
Lord Chancellor's Department		
PSA	13	Strike by maintenance engineers at RAF Brawdy works offices. 3 Engineers at Aberporth.
Depts of Trade & Industry	140	Strike by staff who handle search facilities at Companies House, London and Cardiff; telephonists at Cardiff.



Scottish Office	25	Staff at the Scottish Computer Centre.
Scottish Courts Administration	235	Strike by <u>staff</u> at Edinburgh and Glasgow Sheriff Courts.
Registers of Scotland	11	Strike by Administrative staff.
Paymaster General's Office	28	Strike by 10 computer staff; 13 in Finance Branch, disrupting Government banking transactions; telephonists.
FCO	25	Passport Examiners at the Glasgow Passport Office.
GCHQ		
TOTAL	3543	A reduction of about 138 from last week, mainly because of the return to work at ALAC's.