

CONFIDENTIAL

*David Levine*

PRIME MINISTER

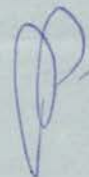
DISPERSAL

I have seen the minute of 24 October from the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food, and I fully share his view that what is important is to ensure that the decision taken will do the least long term damage.

I, too, am not convinced that there are no other blocks of work in London that are better candidates than those closely concerned with policy and with EEC matters, as is the administrative core of the Health and Safety Executive.

Of course, although the Lord President spoke in his minute of 19 October of the need to find 600 posts for dispersal if my proposal about the HSE were accepted, the fact is that the sort of review jointly proposed by the CBI and TUC would be likely to recommend the retention in London of only about 400 posts (ie only 300-350 more than was considered by Cabinet). If that number of posts cannot be found from elsewhere, we ought perhaps also to consider whether that much smaller a dispersal is really unacceptable.

I am copying this to members of Cabinet, Norman Fowler, Paul Channon and Sir John Hunt.



J P

25 October 1979