

CONFIDENTIAL

Unit Series



BAZ/14/3A
N.B.U

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

29 October 1979

Dear Tim

The Prime Minister has now had an opportunity to give further thought to the dispersal proposals for the Health and Safety Executive. She has taken account of minutes of 15 and 25 October by the Secretary of State for Employment, 23 October by the Secretary of State for Energy, the Minister of Agriculture's letter to her of 24 October and the Lord President's minute of 19 October.

The Prime Minister does not wish to re-open the Cabinet decision that the dispersal package for Bootle should be made up by posts from PSA, the Home Office and HSE. She does not consider that decisions relating to any other Department would prove to be easier than the issues surrounding HSE. She has therefore concluded that a dispersal package for Bootle should be announced, comprising elements from the three offices. The announcement should not, however, set a firm figure on the HSE element, but should make it clear that the number of policy-level HSE posts to be dispersed is being urgently considered. The Prime Minister would like the Secretary of State for Employment to invite the HSC, CBI and TUC to undertake the joint examination they have offered, in as short a timescale as possible. This review should consider not only the optimum number of posts to remain as a headquarters base in London, but should also examine whether options for a smaller number of London-based posts are viable, given the factors which have led the Government to implement a dispersal programme.

As soon as the results of this further study are available, the Prime Minister will wish the Lord President and the Secretary of State for Employment to consider urgently whether the results offer a worth-while alternative package which can be implemented with the acquiescence, if not the full support, of the CBI and TUC. At this stage, the Prime Minister will also want to reach a final view on whether the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate should be included in the HSE dispersal package. The Prime Minister recognises that there is a strong case for leaving NII out of the dispersal package, but would not want to reach a decision on this until the results of the new study on HSE are available.

/I am sending

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Members of Cabinet, including the Minister of Transport, and to Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely

Mike Patterson

Jim Buckley, Esq.,
Lord President's Office.