

Cabinet

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Ministerial Sub-Committee on Industrial  
Relations in the Civil Service

The Prime Minister has seen your minute  
AO5942 of 12 November 1981 and agrees that  
E(CS) and OCS should be wound up.

| E. A. WHITMORE

13 November 1981

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1.

Min. Minister.

Agree with E(CS) and OCS

should be wound up?

Ref. A05942

PRIME MINISTER

Yes mt

RM  
12/11The Ministerial Sub-Committee on Industrial Relations in the Civil Service

The Ministerial Sub-Committee on Industrial Relations in the Civil Service (E(CS)) was established in September 1979 with the terms of reference "to consider industrial relations questions in the Civil Service". There is a corresponding Official Committee (OCS). The intention was that E(CS) should fulfil two functions. First, to provide a forum in which Ministers could consider broad questions concerning potential industrial disputes in the Civil Service and management's best response to them; and second, to enable Ministers collectively to consider the tactical handling of disputes in the Civil Service.

2. Much of the former work has now been completed; the Sub-Committee has not met since November 1980. As for overseeing the tactical handling of industrial disputes in the Civil Service, E(CS) was not involved at all during the strike earlier this year. The main strategic decisions were taken by Cabinet or E Committee; and day-to-day decisions were taken by the Interdepartmental Group on Industrial Action, under the chairmanship of the Minister of State, Civil Service Department. In the event of a similar dispute in the future, careful consideration would have to be given to the best form of co-ordination machinery, but I imagine that arrangements similar to those which were devised this year might once again be employed.

3. It therefore seems that E(CS) and OCS have outlived their usefulness, and I therefore recommend that they should be wound up. Were matters to arise in the future requiring discussion at either Official or Ministerial level within the framework of the Cabinet Committee system, the terms of reference of the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Public Service Pay (E(PSP)) and of its official counterpart (PSP(O)), are sufficiently flexible to accommodate the sort of issues that are likely to arise.

4. I have consulted the Departments concerned, at official level; they all agree.

5. If you agree, we will make the necessary arrangements.



ROBERT ARMSTRONG

12 November 1981