



Prime Minister

TRADE UNION BILL - DISCUSSION AT E(A) ON 12 JUNE 1984

I regret that I shall be unable to attend this meeting.

On the issue of a majority requirement for strike ballots. I do not think we should lose sight of the position of GMBATU. This union holds about two-thirds of the membership of the manual workers in the Water Industry and is the largest of the three unions representing the Local Authority Manuals. It requires a 66% majority for strike action, and it is of course uncertain whether it would be encouraged to reduce this requirement to a bare majority if the issue was exposed through the introduction of the proposed amendment. But I would not wish to give the union any encouragement or excuse. The Bill cannot be expected to come into effect until October and I do not believe that the possible benefits of the introduction of the amendment outweigh the risks.

I have no comment to make on the other amendments proposed.

I am copying this to E(A) committee members and Sir Robert Armstrong.

PJ

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