



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

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David Edmonds Esq
Private Secretary to the
Secretary of State for the Environment
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1

13 June 1979

Dear David

My Minister saw Horace Cutler this morning to discuss the contingency arrangements for next week's threatened London Tube strike. The Paymaster General was also present.

One point which came up in discussion was whether Government Ministers should not attempt to share their cars during the strike. My Minister will, with CCU's backing, be advising the public, if they have to come into London by car, to give lifts whenever they can and we shall be issuing a short leaflet setting out the legal and insurance position. Against that background, it would obviously be inconsistent - and could cause adverse public and press comment - if chauffeur driven Government cars continued to arrive at Government offices with only a single occupant. Both Mr Cutler and Mr Maude emphasised the importance of getting the public on the GLC's side in this dispute, and this sort of point - though minor - could just work the other way.

Mr Fowler therefore wondered whether Mr Heseltine might consider, as the Minister responsible for the Government Car Service, whether some general advice might be issued on the use of Government cars during the strike. I understand

that there may be insurance complications, which could prevent Ministers actually offering lifts to members of the public - perhaps this could be checked. And there are security considerations too. But Mr Fowler does believe this is a sensitive point of which other Ministers ought at least to be warned and on which some action ought be possible, even if it is only in the event some restriction on the use of Government cars during the strike.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries of other members of CCU and to Sir Clive Rose.

Yours

Gene

MRS E C FLANAGAN
Private Secretary