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From the Secretary of State for Social Services

The Rt Hon The Lord Soames GCMG GCVO CBE
The Lord President of the Council
Civil Service Department
Whitehall
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30 October 1979

E(CS) MINISTERIAL SUB-COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ON CIVIL SERVICE:
INDUSTRIAL ACTION AT THE LIVERPOOL (BRECKFIELD) LOCAL OFFICE

At our meeting on 3 October, the Committee agreed with my proposal that the next step I should take at the Breckfield office would be to require Clerical Officers there to undertake the work which should be done by the seven Clerical Assistants who had been relieved from duty. Two of the CAs had been back at work for some days, but I thought you would wish to know that the remaining five returned to duty on Tuesday 16 October, having indicated their willingness to carry out their normal duties in accordance with management instructions. Of course one can never be sure that there will not be further untoward developments, but as it happened the need did not arise to take the step envisaged by the Committee of getting the Clerical Officers to do the work, and it rather looks as though we have got the CPSA at all levels to accept the principle of management's responsibility for setting work priorities, in this instance at any rate.

I should add that following the meeting of E(CS) consultations between officers of the Law Officers' Department and my staff led to some doubts being cast over the ability to require Clerical Officers to undertake the work of a lower grade, and I have asked my officials to pursue this urgently.

I am copying this to other members of the sub-Committee and to the Prime Minister.

Yours
R. Bates

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