



Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

29 November 1979

The Rt Hon The Lord Soames GCMG GCVO CBE
 Lord President of the Council
 Civil Service Department
 Whitehall
 LONDON
 SW1

John Clarke, 29/11/79

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NATIONAL SAVINGS BANK GLASGOW

In my letter of 16 November I described the situation which had resulted at the National Savings Bank at Glasgow from the blacking by some staff of work done by branches working overtime or where substitution was in operation.

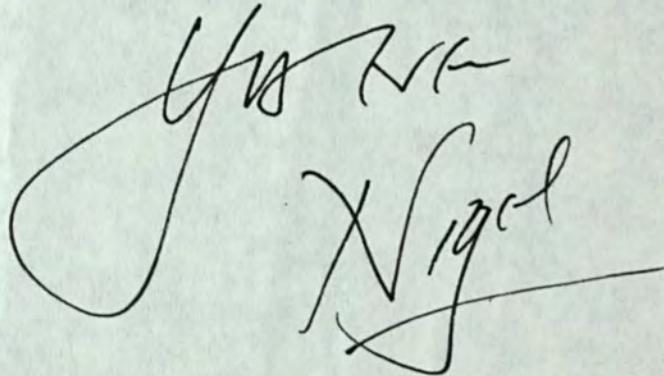
The extent of the action taken by the management in suspending staff (after due warning) for blacking was evidently becoming a serious embarrassment to the Civil and Public Services Association (CPSA) whose strike fund was already depleted by earlier general Civil Service and Post Office industrial action. On 20 November (when total suspension had reached 418) 2 CPSA HQ representatives approached DNS HQ management to discuss the possibility of a formula for a return to normal working being put before a meeting of the CPSA National Executive later that day.

A broad formula emerged, which was approved by the National Executive, and a subsequent joint management/CPSA statement provided the basis for a local mass CPSA meeting on 22 November to vote in favour of a return to normal working. The joint statement provided for a return to normal working on 26 November, to be followed by local joint discussions about the extent of overtime during which, for a few days, overtime working would be suspended, but with management's right to resume it thereafter recognised.

The issue of suspension notices continued until 22 November, when the total reached 524. The local impression is that many who courted suspension did so because of the prospect of a holiday at union expense.

Yesterday the return to normal working took place as envisaged, and there have been no reports of any subsequent incidents.

It would be unwise to predict what effect, if any, these events might have in dampening or restraining local militancy, given that the forthcoming announcement about reductions in the Civil Service may provide militants, or unions acting officially, with further pretexts for disruption in various places in the Service. However, the resolute counter measures taken by the Glasgow management (which comprised not only mass suspensions but also the collection and moving of mail by hired van and volunteer senior staff through picket lines) can hardly have failed to leave some impression. As I said in my earlier letter, the risk that the situation would escalate to the point of virtually halting Bank operations had to be faced, and taken.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Lawson'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'N' and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

NIGEL LAWSON

29 NOV 1979

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