



SA

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

26 March, 1984

London Transport Strike

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 23 March. She has noted and endorsed his proposed response to the London Transport strike. She has also noted the way in which British Rail is handling its pay negotiations. This is consistent with the line which Ministers had earlier agreed should be followed.

I am copying this to the Private Secretaries to the other members of Cabinet and to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

ANDREW TURNBULL

Miss D. A. Nichols,  
Department of Transport

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VK

560  
CC NO

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Prime Minister ②

PRIME MINISTER

*Amend not*

- (i) To note and endorse Mr Ridley's proposed response to LT strike
- (ii) To note position on BR pay negotiations.

LONDON TRANSPORT STRIKE

AT 23/3  
*mt*

It now seems very likely that the unions will succeed in stopping all services on the London Underground, and almost all services on London Transport buses, on Wednesday 28 March, as part of the campaign of protest against our plans to abolish the GLC.

My Department is in close touch with the Metropolitan Police about appropriate arrangements to keep traffic moving, particularly in the late afternoon when people start coming into town for the evening at the same time as others start their journey home. There is bound to be a good deal of congestion on the day.

I do not see any need for a Parliamentary statement on this matter, but on the day I shall be ready to comment that the GLC-financed lobby for their own preservation has now induced the unions to inflict great inconvenience on millions of Londoners. Apart from such a comment on the day, I believe that a generally cool response from us will leave the public to draw the lesson for themselves.

I have reviewed whether this action on London Transport is likely to coalesce with other disputes or form part of a wider build-up. I doubt whether there are serious dangers. Neither I nor the Railways Board

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expect that there will be any disruption of the BR commuter services on the day. Bob Reid has formulated his pay offer and tactics in a way to put pressure on the NUR leadership, and divide them from ASLEF and TSSA, and is playing the hand long. He is doing his utmost to avoid disruption of the railway while the miners' dispute continues, and on local incidents he has instructed his managers to maintain proper discipline without provoking needless trouble.

There is also a pay dispute at the National Bus Company, where the TGWU have demanded a further negotiating meeting on Monday 26 March and called a delegate conference on Wednesday 28 March. Lord Shepherd will refuse to increase his existing offer of 4.5% (plus some small offer of increased leave entitlement). He has warned me that the delegate conference may then reject it, leading to some form of industrial action. However, a very similar offer by the municipal undertakings has already been accepted, and it may well be that the union in fact expect the delegates to accept the NBC offer. The offer is on the high side already and I will certainly not press Lord Shepherd to improve his offer.

I am copying this to the other members of the Cabinet and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Dr.*  
*Private Secretary*

pp NICHOLAS RIDLEY  
23 March 1984

*(approved by the Secretary of State & signed*

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*in his absence).*