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PRIME MINISTER

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 Content for Mr Fowler to allow
 ACAS into the Newcastle dispute?

AT

13/7

Yes not

NEWCASTLE COMPUTER CENTRE STRIKE

You will want to know of a further development in this dispute which has stopped the national insurance computers at Newcastle.

The local strikers are still taking an intransigent line although we have increased the pressure on them. Before resorting to further steps, I felt it right to make a final effort to end the dispute yesterday. There is one possibility - although not much more than that - which does not involve any real concession on our part.

In private talks with the national union leaders, officials have, with my agreement, identified a modest adjustment to the transitional arrangements. Alistair Graham and Gerry Gillman are anxious to find a way through but feel that the only way the new formula would persuade the local militants to agree was if it emerged from a process of "conciliation" involving a third party - probably ACAS.

With some reluctance I think we should pursue this approach. It would be so arranged that we and the unions were responding to an offer from ACAS to see if they could help. Our stance would be that we were taking advantage of a reasonable offer to help - with no strings - in the interest of preventing any potential threat to the uprating programme.

I think this course is the best now available for resolving the dispute in an agreed way quickly while maintaining our managerial and public stance.

CONFIDENTIAL



SECRET AND CMO

But you and colleagues will wish to be aware of how I intend to proceed.

I am copying this to Nigel Lawson and Tom King and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

13 July 1984

NF

Carputer
Strike



1 JUL 1984

COMMUNICATIONS

UNITED KINGDOM