



FILE  
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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

8 February 1984

*Dear David,*

I enclose a record of the meeting between the Prime Minister and Mr. Robert Kilroy-Silk MP which took place yesterday. The Prime Minister would be grateful if Mr. Butcher could set in hand the further enquiries of BICC to which she agreed.

In the course of the meeting, the Prime Minister enquired about the position of community programme schemes in Knowsley. I am therefore sending a copy of this letter and the enclosure to Mark Howdle in Peter Morrison's office, (Department of Employment) with a request that he provide advice on this.

*Yours ever,*

*David*

(David Barclay)

Dr. David Saunders,  
Department of Trade and Industry

*da*

SUBJECT:  
cc Master



314  
CMA

BT

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

8 February 1984

Dear David

The Prime Minister met Robert Kilroy-Silk MP at the House of Commons yesterday to discuss redundancies at BICC, Prescott. Your Minister and Michael Alison MP, the Prime Minister's PPS, were also present.

Mr. Kilroy-Silk said that although 350 redundancies may not seem a large number, coming on top of previous major closures and job losses they were a serious matter for his constituents. The 1981 census had recorded a male unemployment rate of 32%, and there had been 8,000 redundancies in Kirkby alone since the Conservative Government took office. At BICC the workforce had already been reduced from 8,000 to under 3,000 without trouble. But the latest redundancies, involving closure of the central servicing unit, would be a bitter blow to morale.

Mr. Kilroy-Silk said that notwithstanding his disagreement with the Prime Minister's economic policy, he had not come to ask her to change it. He hoped the Government would be prepared to use its influence in two specific ways: first, by pressing BICC to absorb the job losses elsewhere in the organisation; and secondly, by asking them to direct their proposed new investment to Merseyside.

The Prime Minister said that the Government could not direct companies to choose specific locations, nor could it ask them to employ a larger workforce than they judged to be economic. Your Minister drew attention to the scale of existing Government assistance both to the area, which had SDA status, and to BICC.

In more general discussion of the problem of Knowsley, Mr. Kilroy-Silk stressed the degree of deprivation which had shown up on almost every indicator in the 1981 census. His was virtually a one class constituency. In contrast to the West Midlands, there was no pool of skilled labour. Prolonged unemployment sapped the will to work, to the point where people could no longer be bothered to apply for jobs, and lost any sense of self-discipline. Sixty percent of the local population now depended on State benefits. His own view was that the only solution to problems of this magnitude lay in public planning.

/ The Prime Minister

da

The Prime Minister commented that public planning had not served the country well in the past. The economy could only sustain a very limited number of "artificial" growth points, and to plan a bigger future for an area than it could naturally expect was to do a disservice to the people who lived there. This did not mean that she did not understand the degree of demoralisation. She did. Yet despite the large sums being spent by the Government to help Merseyside, and other developments such as the Freeport, the difficulty remained that there was a shortage of "self-starters" - people with the independence and initiative to help themselves. It seemed, too, that Liverpool's excellent higher educational facilities were not the attraction for industry which other areas less well endowed often supposed. It was ironic that there was a national shortage of certain skills, eg in the building trade.

The Prime Minister said that she attached particular importance to the improvement of the physical environment. Even in times and in areas of high unemployment, there was much that could be done to improve people's surroundings. She welcomed the work being done by the Development Corporation and through the Community Programme to this end.

In response to a suggestion from Mr. Kilroy-Silk, the Prime Minister said that she would be willing to meet a group of young people from Merseyside and to talk with them. She had done so before, but experience had shown her that such meetings were often disrupted by the extreme left-wing in Liverpool. She therefore suggested that Mr. Kilroy-Silk might discuss with Mr. Alison the possibility of bringing a group of young people to London for a discussion with her.

Summing up the Prime Minister asked your Minister to enquire further into BICC's thinking on the two specific points raised by Mr. Kilroy-Silk (the location of job losses, and the prospects for new investment at Prescot). She made clear that no Government pressure could be brought to bear; and that no guarantee could be given as to the outcome of the further contacts which were envisaged.

*Yours ever,  
David*

(David Barclay)

Dr. David Saunders,  
Department of Trade and Industry



TF to see

CND  
2

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY  
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PS/  
Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

29 November 1984

Andrew Turnbull Esq  
Private Secretary to the  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

MB

Prime Minister  
To note  
JR

29m

Dear Andrew,

BICC

The Prime Minister and Mr Butcher met Mr Kilroy-Silk on 7 February to discuss redundancies which had been announced at BICC Prescott. The Prime Minister's subsequent letter to Mr Kilroy-Silk is attached, together with a copy of a background note prepared by the Department.

2 The background note makes it clear that further difficult decisions remained to be taken by BICC during the course of the year. We now expect the company to make an announcement on 30 November about a further restructuring of their business in the North-West, which inevitably involves further redundancies. The company expects to announce the following decisions:

- a) they intend to single-site their metallic telecommunication cable operations at Blackley, Manchester during the spring of 1985. Demand no longer warrants two parallel operations at Blackley and Prescott, and the Prescott activity will therefore be closed. About 450 jobs will be lost;
- b) optical fibre cable operations will be concentrated in the Prescott area, and this will involve the transfer of up to 70 jobs from Blackley to Prescott. This relocation is planned to take place during 1986, and will be to a new purpose built plant; though this decision has been taken in principle, the precise siting of the plant has not yet been decided - and this latter point is likely to be a matter of negotiation, involving the Merseyside Task Force;
- c) the company is considering a complex series of moves to concentrate their components business at Prescott. But a decision along these lines would be conditional on the workforce accepting both the overall package and single union

JH5ALF



status for the new activities at Prescott. It could also depend on Government assistance - see below.

3 The company expects the announcement to be controversial. It will take the line that it must improve its competitiveness in order to survive, that it is making substantial capital investment and that it is creating a smaller number of better quality jobs.

4 Negotiations are taking place with the company about a limited amount of regional selective assistance, and it may be that some Government assistance is required. The Department of the Environment and the local authority are in discussion about the future use of a part of the prescot site which will eventually not be needed by the company.

5 I am sending a copy of this letter to Alan Davis in Mr Jenkin's office.

*Yours ever,*  
*Arthur Lanley*

pp RUTH THOMPSON  
Private Secretary



10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

*Mr Hooper*  
I have spoken to Mr Keates  
at BICC about this, in the  
absence of Mr De Velle. No further  
action at present.

1 MAR 1984

1 March, 1984

2/3/84

*Dear Mr. Kilroy-Silk,*

At our meeting on 7 February to discuss the redundancies at BICC Prescott, you raised two specific points concerning the location of these job losses and the prospects of new investment on Merseyside. I made it clear that the Government could not direct companies to act against their own commercial judgement, but I asked John Butcher to enquire further into BICC's thinking on these two points.

BICC has advised that there is no practical possibility of making these job reductions elsewhere. The businesses which have run into difficulty are based at Prescott, and BICC does not make comparable products at its other sites. However, the company is seeking to ensure that, as far as possible, those made redundant at Prescott are considered for vacancies elsewhere in the Group, and I understand that special arrangements have been introduced to this effect.

You asked about the prospect of new investment on Merseyside. The company emphasised that it has invested - and is investing - in its Merseyside plants; at Huyton Quarry and Melling as well as at Prescott. The company's future can only be assured if it can compete in an increasingly competitive market. In considering further investment to meet this aim, the company has said that it will continue to take account of its responsibility to the workforce on Merseyside. I am afraid that I cannot press them further than this.

/I also

I also promised to find out more about the Community Programme in Knowsley. I understand that at the end of January 870 of the 1036 places allocated to Knowsley Metropolitan Borough had been filled, that there should be no difficulty in reaching the target, and that it should be maintained in 1984/85. Several projects are directed specifically at improving the physical environment, which as you will know from our talk is something that I believe can help a great deal.

When we met you left me in no doubt of your concern for your constituents. Equally, I hope I left you in no doubt that I do understand the seriousness of the problems facing Merseyside. Insofar as it lies within the power of Government to tackle them, we shall continue to do so.

Yours sincerely  
Margaret Thatcher

Robert Kilroy-Silk, Esq., M.P.



## BICC PRESCOT

## BACKGROUND NOTE

Following the Prime Minister's meeting with Mr Kilroy Silk on 7 February, Department of Trade and Industry Officials visited BICC Prescott on 20 February both to discuss the specific issues raised by Mr Kilroy Silk and to discuss the general situation in more detail. Officials subsequently spoke with the Deputy Executive Chairman of the BICC Group about the situation.

The Location of job losses

2 Mr Kilroy Silk asked if the Government would use its influence to press BICC to absorb these job losses elsewhere in the organisation. As far as direct redundancies are concerned, this is not an option. The businesses that have run into serious difficulty are at Prescott, and they are not duplicated elsewhere. But the Company is seeking to ensure that those made redundant at Prescott are considered for any vacancies elsewhere in the Group, and special arrangements have been introduced to this effect.

New investment on Merseyside

3 Mr Kilroy Silk asked the Government to press BICC to direct proposed new investment to Merseyside. The Company is already investing heavily in its Merseyside plants. A £6 million investment is in hand at its enamel wiring plant at Huyton Quarry, for which DTI assistance is being provided. A further investment of about £6 million is in progress in the flexible wiring plant at Melling. Both will lead to a measure of redundancy. BICC expect to invest about £20 million a year for the next five years in their cable business in the North West, with a steady reduction in the number of jobs. They are also investing in their metals and minerals activities both at Prescott and elsewhere. As far as future investment is concerned, the Company is likely to be taking two related decisions on the location of major investments during the course of this year, and this raises serious difficulties - see below (Paragraph 5b).

General matters : future decisions

4 BICC appears well aware both of its obligations to the future of its business and of its responsibility to the Company's employees. They are investing heavily in new technology and seeking to bring their efficiency, costs and manning levels into line with the international competition. Their manning levels are still too high in some plants, and investment in new technology tends to mean reduced employment. As far as costs are concerned, the Company is severely critical of the level of Local Authority rates and of energy prices. The Government's policy on energy prices came in for serious criticism.





5 For the immediate future, there are two outstanding issues of major importance for the Company:

a) The Prescott site is very large and overheads correspondingly high. These overheads would be reduced if the Company could satisfactorily dispose of a 23 acre section of the site. The Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Environment will discuss with BICC and the local authority what alternative use could be made of this land, and whether it would be appropriate for government financial assistance to be offered.

b) There are two important and related decisions which must be taken during the course of this year. BICC currently operates two traditional telecommunications cable (ie twisted copper cable) plants, one at Prescott and the other at Blackley, Manchester. There is over-capacity in this sector both nationally and within BICC. One plant will be sufficient to meet BICC's production demands; inescapably either Prescott or Blackley must close with further job losses of about 450 in either case. BICC also has to decide where to invest in a substantial new optical fibre cable plant. This could be at Blackley (where there is a small facility at present), at Prescott, or on a completely new site. This second decision will probably be taken in the middle of the year, and BICC Management is weighing up the advantages and disadvantages of each option. Though the two decisions are in principle independent, there are links both in terms of the Company's overall strategy and in terms of industrial relations. Whatever course is taken, further redundancies are almost inevitable, with consequent industrial relations problems very likely.

6 The Company is seeking to improve productivity and efficiency at all its plants and, as part of this programme, two further sets of redundancies are likely to be announced shortly at other BICC plants in the North-West. About 130 jobs are expected to be lost at Leigh, and a similar number at Helsby; announcements are expected in respect of both plants in March or April. The Company believes that voluntary redundancies will be sufficient at Leigh, but they expect more difficulty at Helsby.

7 BICC Management has not wished to take Mr Kilroy Silk into their confidence on these latter issues, and they cannot therefore be conveyed to him.

8 It is clear that the Department will need to maintain close contact with the Company over the months ahead. To the extent necessary, the Department will involve DOE through the Merseyside Task Force.

15

PM: KILROY - SILK: JAN 84



FILE - CF

207

10 DOWNING STREET

JOE  
cc: J. Emp  
DJ

THE PRIME MINISTER

1 March, 1984

Dear Mr. Kilroy-Silk,

At our meeting on 7 February to discuss the redundancies at BICC Prescott, you raised two specific points concerning the location of these job losses and the prospects of new investment on Merseyside. I made it clear that the Government could not direct companies to act against their own commercial judgement, but I asked John Butcher to enquire further into BICC's thinking on these two points.

BICC has advised that there is no practical possibility of making these job reductions elsewhere. The businesses which have run into difficulty are based at Prescott, and BICC does not make comparable products at its other sites. However, the company is seeking to ensure that, as far as possible, those made redundant at Prescott are considered for vacancies elsewhere in the Group, and I understand that special arrangements have been introduced to this effect.

You asked about the prospect of new investment on Merseyside. The company emphasised that it has invested - and is investing - in its Merseyside plants; at Huyton Quarry and Melling as well as at Prescott. The company's future can only be assured if it can compete in an increasingly competitive market. In considering further investment to meet this aim, the company has said that it will continue to take account of its responsibility to the workforce on Merseyside. I am afraid that I cannot press them further than this.

/I also

207

I also promised to find out more about the Community Programme in Knowsley. I understand that at the end of January 870 of the 1036 places allocated to Knowsley Metropolitan Borough had been filled, that there should be no difficulty in reaching the target, and that it should be maintained in 1984/85. Several projects are directed specifically at improving the physical environment, which as you will know from our talk is something that I believe can help a great deal.

When we met you left me in no doubt of your concern for your constituents. Equally, I hope I left you in no doubt that I do understand the seriousness of the problems facing Merseyside. Insofar as it lies within the power of Government to tackle them, we shall continue to do so.

Yours sincerely  
Raymond Dalrymple

Robert Kilroy-Silk, Esq., M.P.



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From the Parliamentary Under Secretary  
of State for Industry

JOHN BUTCHER MP

David Barclay Esq  
Private Secretary to the  
Prime Minister  
No. 10 Downing Street  
LONDON SW1

GR  
For PM's big pce.

29 February 1984

29/2

Dear David

The Prime Minister and Mr Butcher met Robert Kilroy-Silk on 7 February to discuss the recently announced redundancies at BICC Prescott. During the meeting she asked Mr Butcher to enquire further into BICC's thinking on two specific points. These enquiries have now been made, and the results are set out in the attached background note.

It is clear that the BICC Cables Division is facing a difficult time. Although there is no doubt about viability, the company must improve its productivity and efficiency to compete successfully in an increasingly competitive international market. As the background note makes clear, the company is investing in the North West; but further job losses are inevitable. The Department will maintain its close contact with the company over the months ahead.

BICC has not wished to take Mr Kilroy-Silk fully into its confidence, and this limits what we can say to him. BICC were particularly anxious that the information in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the background note was kept confidential. However, I attach a draft letter for the Prime Minister's signature which responds to the two specific points he raised.

I am sending a copy of this letter and its attachments to Alan Davis in Patrick Jenkin's office and to Mark Howdle in Peter Morrison's office.

Yours sincerely  
David

DAVID SAUNDERS  
Private Secretary

J12AEJ



DRAFT LETTER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO ROBERT KILROY-SILK MP

At our meeting on 7 February to discuss the redundancies at BICC Prescott, you raised two specific points concerning the location of these job losses and the prospects of new investment on Merseyside. I made it clear that the Government could not direct companies to act against their own commercial judgement, but I asked John Butcher to enquire further into BICC's thinking on these two points.

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PTD

that when ~~we~~ ~~met~~  
I hope I left you in no doubt ~~when we spoke~~  
about the depth of my concern for the people  
of Merseyside. I remain willing to meet a group

people from the area here  
of ~~your~~ young ~~constituents~~ in London, ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> if  
you would like to take this <sup>idea</sup> further perhaps  
you could have a word with Michael  
Alison.

When we met you left me in no doubt of  
your concern for your constituents. Equally,  
I hope I left you in no doubt that I do  
understand the seriousness of the problems  
facing Merseyside, ~~and that~~ ~~the Government will~~ ~~we shall~~  
~~continue to make strenuous efforts to~~ <sup>within the</sup>  
~~tackle them,~~ insofar as it lies ~~in~~ ~~our~~ power  
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BICC PRESCOT

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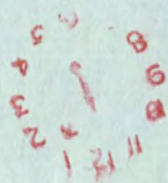
b) There are two important and related decisions which must be taken during the course of this year. BICC currently operates two traditional telecommunications cable (ie twisted copper cable) plants, one at Prescott and the other at Blackley, Manchester. There is over-capacity in this sector both nationally and within BICC. One plant will be sufficient to meet BICC's production demands; inescapably either Prescott or Blackley must close with further job losses of about 450 in either case. BICC also has to decide where to invest in a substantial new optical fibre cable plant. This could be at Blackley (where there is a small facility at present), at Prescott, or on a completely new site. This second decision will probably be taken in the middle of the year, and BICC Management is weighing up the advantages and disadvantages of each option. Though the two decisions are in principle independent, there are links both in terms of the Company's overall strategy and in terms of industrial relations. Whatever course is taken, further redundancies are almost inevitable, with consequent industrial relations problems very likely.

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PM Jan 24 Kirroy-Silk Mtg



29 FEB 1984



Department of Employment  
Caxton House Tothill Street London SW1H 9NF  
Telephone Direct Line 01-213.....5949.....  
Switchboard 01-213 3000

Minister of State

David Barclay Esq  
Private Secretary  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON SW1

CR  
May I see my note  
of the meeting p. 17  
20/2

February 1984

Dear David

Thank you for copying to me your letter of 8 February to  
Dr David Saunders at the Department of Trade and Industry.

As requested I enclose a short note about the position of  
Community Programme Schemes in Knowsley. I hope this is  
helpful, and please let me know if you need further  
information.

Yours sincerely

CR  
Await letter  
from John Bulcher's  
office

Mark Howdle

MARK HOWDLE  
Private Secretary

D  
21/2

COMMUNITY PROGRAMME AND KNOWSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH

1 The Community Programme provides temporary jobs for long-term unemployed adults (18+) on projects of benefit to the community. An additional £25m will be made available in 1983/84 (bringing total funding to £403m) to allow it to reach the target of 130,000 filled places by Spring 1984. It was announced on 16 November 1983 that the Programme will continue to October 1986 on the basis of 130,000 filled places.

2 Places are allocated to regions and areas broadly in line with the distribution of the long-term unemployed. At 31 January 1984 Knowsley MB had 1036 places allocated, 870 of which were filled. There should be no difficulty in building up to the target of 1036 filled places, or in maintaining it in 1984/85.

3 The Borough Council decided early on to support the Programme, and become a managing agent running a variety of projects. It has had some difficulty in getting trade union agreement (mainly from NALGO) to its projects because:

- a) it cannot top up wages beyond the £60 a week average (the maximum that can be reimbursed from Community Programme funds) and
- b) NALGO want the ratio of full to part-time workers on projects to match that found in normal local authority employment. The Council cannot meet this condition and remain within the £60 average wage.

Nevertheless the Council has provided several hundred places and intends to continue as an agent in 1984/85.

4 Several projects (some run by the Council, some by other sponsors) provide work to improve the physical environment. They include projects to clean up derelict sites and create nature reserves or recreation areas, and projects to tidy up the gardens of elderly and handicapped people.

PM: mty. with Kilsay-Silk MP  
Jan 84



JF5561

PS/Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

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3 February 1984

David Barclay Esq  
Private Secretary to the  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON  
SW1

Prime Minister

DMS  
3/2

Dear David,

I attach a brief for the Prime Minister's meeting with Mr Robert Kilroy-Silk on Tuesday, 7 February concerning the recently announced redundancies at BICC Prescott.

2 Mr Butcher will be attending the meeting as this Department's representative.

Yours ever,  
Ruth

RUTH THOMPSON  
Private Secretary



PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH ROBERT KILROY-SILK MP

Redundancies at BICC Prescott

I was naturally very concerned to hear of these redundancies; unemployment on Merseyside is a matter of great concern to the Government. But it would be wrong for the Government to seek to intervene in decisions which are properly a matter for the commercial judgement of the Company. The Government is, however, responding vigorously to the problem of unemployment both through its general economic management and more directly with planned expenditure of almost £2 billion in 1983/84 on employment and training schemes. Furthermore, the DTI is providing financial support for certain innovative developments within BICC. DTI officials are in contact with the Company about its operations at Prescott. Meanwhile all the services of the Manpower Services Commission will be made available to those whose redundancies have become unavoidable.





## BICC PRESCOT

### Background Note

#### a) The redundancies

BICC currently employs about 3,250 people at Prescott on a site of about 160 acres, employment having more than halved since 1974. The Company has a number of operations on the site in several manufacturing units, including cable making, electrical wire drawing, copper rod production and copper refining. There is also a central servicing unit, Prescott Industries. A total of 350 redundancies have now been declared. The majority of these result from the closure of the independent central servicing unit; the Company's view is that this is no longer appropriate and that it imposed too heavy a burden on the manufacturing units. Up to 250 of the 770 jobs here are to be lost. The remaining redundancies come from one of the manufacturing units, Reliance Cords and Cables, which is involved in the production of moulded plugs etc. for BICC's general cables activity. This particular operation has been under severe trading pressure for some time, and up to 100 of the 180 jobs are to be lost.

(Confidential. Other units on the Prescott site are also in difficulty. While it is hoped that the remaining jobs on the site will be safe-guarded in the short term, further rationalisation may become inevitable. In particular BICC currently operates two telecommunications cable plants, one at Prescott and the other nearby at Blackley; and it is likely that a decision will be taken at the end of the year to rationalise on just one of these sites. Trade and Industry officials are in contact with the Company about their activities. Further redundancies cannot be ruled out.)

#### b) Mr Kilroy-Silk

Mr Kilroy-Silk, M.P. for Knowsley North, applied unsuccessfully on 23 January for an emergency debate on the redundancies at Prescott. An early day motion was tabled on 2 February by Mr Kilroy-Silk and 93 other M.P.s as follows:

"That this House, recognising the already unacceptably high level of unemployment on Merseyside and in the Borough of Knowsley, deplores the closure of BICC Prescott Industries Ltd and the loss of a total of some 350 jobs at that factory and at Reliance Cords and Cables Ltd; calls upon BICC to take all possible steps to provide alternative employment to those made redundant; and calls upon BICC to ensure that any new investment by the group is directed to the Prescott site."

We understand that Mr Kilroy-Silk visited the Prescott site on 27 January to discuss the situation with both management and unions. The impression gained was that he was not unduly critical of either side, and that he fully recognised - and was saddened by - the seriousness of the position.

PM Jan. 84

Kulroy - sulk.

23 FEB 1984



NOTE FOR FILE

1. Request briefing from DTI.
2. Ask Minister to be present.

*ER*

27 January, 1984



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

27 January, 1984

Could you kindly let me know on Monday whether Mr. Kilroy-Silk is coming to see the Prime Minister on Tuesday, 7 February at 1600 or on Thursday, 9 February at 1545. I am sorry to pester you about this but I would be grateful for confirmation as soon as possible.

MRS. CAROLINE RYDER

Mrs. S. Lawrence,  
Personal Secretary to Mr. Robert Kilroy-Silk, MP



10 DOWNING STREET

~~D.S.~~

CR

No progress on  
this today.

I have offered DMS  
25/1

Robert K-S 7/2 at

1600 or 9/2 at

15.45. He is in

Committee on both

p/n's. But will

take one or the

other.

Have not told

D.T. or asked

for Minute.

CR.



10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

Attached is a piece of Questions briefing which you did not see today. Robert Kilroy-Sil has asked for a meeting about the BICC announcement of 350 redundancies. Do you wish to agree?

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mrs M. H.' with a large flourish at the end.

24 January 1984

## BICC PRESCOT

### LINE TO TAKE

I was naturally concerned to hear of these redundancies at Prescott. However it would be wrong for the Government to intervene in decisions which are properly a matter for the commercial judgement of the Company.

### BACKGROUND NOTE

BICC currently employs about 3,250 people at Prescott on a site of about 160 acres, employment having halved since 1974. The Company has a number of operations on the site in several manufacturing units, including cable making, electrical wire drawing, copper rod production and copper refining. There is also a central servicing unit. A total of 350 redundancies have now been declared. The majority of these result from the closure of the central servicing unit; the Company's view is that this is no longer appropriate and that it imposed too heavy a burden on the manufacturing units. The remaining redundancies come from one of the manufacturing units, involved in the production of moulded plugs etc for BICC's General Cables activity. This particular operation has been under severe trading pressure for some time.

Mr Kilroy Silk applied unsuccessfully on 23 January for an emergency debate on the subject of redundancies at Prescott.

(Confidential). Other units on the site are also in difficulty. The Regional Office of the Department of Trade and Industry is considering an approach from BICC for assistance with large-scale investment at the site).