



1) Mr Butler
2) Prime Minister

Lad Gowrie suggests delaying action to force the YTS issue until after the civil service unions' conferences

MINISTER OF STATE, PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

1) Mr Butler

2) PRIME MINISTER

If you agree with this advice, we must not let them defer the issue again in May. FEB 29.3.

in early May.

Yes [initials]

DMB 29/3

YOUTH TRAINING SCHEME IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

Your office asked if I would let you have an assessment of the position now reached on the proposed Cabinet Office YTS scheme from where a youngster for No 10 would be provided. As you know, the Cabinet Office branch of the Civil and Public Services Association (CPSA) held a consultative meeting with its members on 30 January on this issue, and the outcome was that the meeting decisively backed a stand against YTS. The meeting took place immediately after the GCHQ announcement and this had a major influence on the atmosphere of the meeting and therefore on the voting. Similarly, I understand that progress within the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) itself is blocked by lack of union cooperation; again, prior to the GCHQ issue, all the signs were that the unions in MSC would cooperate.

It is intolerable that the unions should seek to sabotage this valuable initiative, albeit in just one locality, from motives of revenge for their conclusive defeat on the quite separate issue of GCHQ. And I am not hopeful that their attitudes will change in the foreseeable future. So it will most likely ensue that we will have at some stage to force the issue with a direct approach to the area manpower boards.

Timing is of course crucial. Earlier this month Tom King advised me that it would be counter-productive to pressure the unions further at the moment, and that the most sensible course would be to let matters rest for a month or so before deciding on the next step. I agree with this advice. If in the immediate aftermath of GCHQ we were to act unilaterally, we would risk creating a crisis over co-operation by the trade unions generally in YTS. If we do have to act unilaterally we should do so on

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the best possible grounds. This suggests that the optimum time for action is after the Civil Service Trade Unions annual Conferences early in May. YTS will undoubtedly be on the agenda for the CPSA and Society of Civil and Public Servants (SCPS) Conferences. If our Civil Service Framework Agreement on YTS is upheld by those Conferences then we will be able to go to the next stage with a powerful case. If however - as is quite possible - those Unions denounce the Framework Agreement, then we will have an equally strong case for acting unilaterally in face of Union intransigence; and for defending our action to the public and responsible Trade Union opinion.

- .. I attach further briefing material on the background. I am copying this minute to Tom King, David Young and Sir Robert Armstrong.

By
GJ

LORD GOWRIE
29 March 1984

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

2 April 1984

YOUTH TRAINING SCHEME IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

The Prime Minister was grateful for Lord Gowrie's minute of 29 March giving his assessment of the position now reached on the proposed Cabinet Office YTS scheme.

The Prime Minister is content with the approach set out in Lord Gowrie's minute, although she hopes that action to introduce YTS into the Civil Service will not be deferred beyond May.

I am sending copies of this letter to David Normington (Department of Employment), David Young (Manpower Services Commission) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

David Barclay

Paul Cann, Esq.,
Office of the Minister of State, Privy Council Office.

LINE TO TAKE

It is essential that young people should have the opportunities for training provided by the YTS scheme. This fact was fully recognised by the Civil Service unions when they signed the national Framework Agreement. Up to 4,000 places will be available in the Civil Service and work is now in hand to give effect to the agreement which provides protections to meet points which have been worrying some of the unions. It is essential to get the arrangements right and at present the consultations envisaged under the national Framework Agreement are taking place.

BACKGROUND NOTE: YTS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

Following Ministerial agreement to YTS places being put on offer within the Civil Service, a national Framework Agreement was signed with the Council of Civil Service Unions in November 1983 after prolonged negotiations. The Civil and Public Services Association leadership signed despite the failure of their national Conference to support YTS; by doing so they exposed themselves to hostile reaction by the broad Left in the Union.

It is intended to offer up to 4,000 places in the Civil Service. These will be either in office/common service areas or in selected Departments. The training will therefore be in work experience with parallels in commerce and industry. The exact number

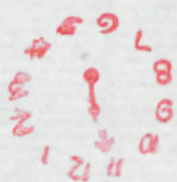
of places to be approved is a matter for local Area Manpower Boards of the MSC. Their judgements will be based on an assessment of local training needs. At present there is no call for extra places on YTS from the Civil Service, since there are a good range of opportunities available to any eligible youngster, most particularly in the kind of areas likely to be offered by us.

At present there are some 250 approved places available in the Ministry of Defence, the Property Services Agency and several research establishments. In some cases these places are offered in cooperation with outside managing agents.

There is local resistance to YTS, especially within CPSA but elsewhere as well. The CPSA opposition is in part a backlash to the Executive's action in signing an agreement. More generally, the opposition reflects problems seen in YTS as a whole. There are fears that trainees will be cheap labour; that they will substitute for full time employees; that YTS is a palliative. These fears ignore the fact that the Framework Agreement provides more than adequate protection on all these points, and they often outweigh the positive nature of YTS: the radical reform of our approach to Youth Training; the opportunity it gives to youngsters who might otherwise be labelled failures; the need to build a flexible and trained workforce for future prosperity.

At the National Whitley Council yesterday, the Civil Service Unions protested about the decisions on GCHQ and stressed the deterioration generally in relations between employers and employees

in the Civil Service. They were in no mood for present cooperation and although no reference was made to YTS it would be difficult for them at the present time to make concessions on YTS.



29 MAR 1984