



Civil Service
Prime Minister

To note - a further report on the dispute with the IPCS. Strike action on Friday now virtually certain.

[Handwritten signature]

PRIME MINISTER

My Private Secretary's letter of 15 June reported on the current dispute with the IPCS on the pay of the Professional and Technology and Science Groups. Since then there have been further negotiations on the latter which culminated in Paul Channon summoning in representatives of the IPCS last night on both disputes.

TR
276

Between
15 and
22/6

2. Having emphasised that Ministers were determined that these staff should be treated fairly and that there was no question of their being discriminated against he urged the IPCS to call off the strike planned for Friday. He pointed out that there could be no justification whatsoever for it; on Scientists the IPCS had been offered exactly what they had asked for - subject only to agreeing to conditions which would prevent repercussions or future misunderstandings. The P & T grades were included in pay research and had had an offer, substantial by any standards, calculated in exactly the same way as those which had produced settlements for other groups. If the IPCS were not able to accept the offer their proper recourse was to the independent Civil Service Arbitration Tribunal.

3. Negotiation between officials and the General Secretary of the IPCS had produced an acceptable conditions package on Scientists but Mr McCall had been unable to persuade his executive committee to accept it. Evidently he is not in control to the extent which he used to be. He emphasised the anger and resentment of his members and made it clear that there was no possibility whatsoever of calling off Friday's strike.

4. I am sure that there is no scope or justification for any further concession on either the Science or the P & T negotiations. Many civil servants are ignorant about what has already been offered and what the basis of management's case is. CSD last night released a Press Notice following Paul Channon's meeting. Officials wrote to Principal Establishment Officers in all departments last week about communicating with staff and have done so again today. Sir I Bancroft is also emphasising today to Permanent Secretaries the need for effective communication. Paul Channon will be seeking opportunities to put our case across through press, radio and TV between now and Friday. It is important that colleagues should see that their people concerned are aware of management's side of the story, the nature of the dispute and what is already on offer.

MANAGEMENT IN CONFIDENCE

5. Some of the effects of a strike were covered in my Private Secretary's letter. Inevitably, it is not easy to estimate the damage a strike will cause but it is expected that it will be possible at least to provide safety cover in the more sensitive areas such as early warning stations and the air traffic control centre at West Drayton by local agreement with union members. At the Meteorological Office the hope is that not more than 25 to 30% of staff will strike so that services can be maintained to air traffic. There is greater anxiety about the tug and jetty services provided to navy vessels by the Royal Marine Auxiliary Service and this is one area which seems likely to be affected by the further selective action threatened by the IPCS. GCHQ is expected to be hit by the strike and, contrary to earlier indications, strong support for the strike is expected at at least two British Nuclear Fuel sites, although there is no hazard to safety.

6. We are continuing to gather intelligence about the likely impact of Friday's strike and the subsequent selective action. I shall make further reports as circumstances demand. In the meantime, we have arranged for copies of a note, explaining the position, to be placed in the 'Government Whips' Offices in both Houses in order to inform Members and Peers of the present position.

7. Copies of this go to Cabinet colleagues, the Minister of Transport, the Chief Whip and Sir John Hunt.

S.

SOAMES

20 June 1979