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The Rt.Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, MP,
10 Downing Street,
London S.W.1

13th February 1980

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Dear Margaret.

Thank you for your letter and for taking the time and trouble to set out your views so fully.

I totally support your strategy for dealing with trade union power ; it is only the tactics which I question.

If Diplock throws doubt on the effectiveness of the present proposals for limiting picketing, then they must of course be amended accordingly. To go further and confine blacking to primary action and ban sympathy strikes altogether would, in union eyes, be seen as a fundamental threat to their movement.

In my experience, one tends to under-estimate the frictional cost of change. In this legislation I believe that the frictional cost fo change would be too high. It seems to me that to tackle the problem in two steps - supposing the second step should prove to be necessary - would be the wiser course.

As I said in my last letter, many people whom I respect share my view, and Marcus Sieff expressly told me to mention his name in this connection.

Let me conclude by saying that this must be a particularly difficult decision, and whatever your Government decides will have my total support.

Yours
Heckel

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