

Thatcher

14th February, 1979.

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

You may remember the report of the Carrington Committee, of which I was a member, which was most unfortunately leaked to the press last year.

The events of the past month make me think that we ought to be looking once more at its recommendations, and I wonder whether you would consider it appropriate that we should try to do this before we take over government.

In my view, recent events make it even clearer that we urgently need a positive government strategy to look ahead to possible industrial action in essential services. The present Government has muddled through, and one can just imagine the frequent meeting of the Cabinet's Emergency Committee and the rather helpless way in which they struggle with events beyond their control.

I feel very strongly that we ought, without any publicity, to devise a permanent strategy for planning ahead, with the aim of being ready to meet industrial action with effective counter measures. As the Carrington Report suggested, there is a lot that can be done in preparing and designing government undertakings so that they have alternative methods of supply etc., adequate stocks to withstand siege, and some basic preparation for the use of volunteers where appropriate.

I realise that we all have much on our minds at the present time, but we shall have even more when we get into government, and now is the time to think ahead about the sort of changes which might be necessary.

I would be most interested to know your reaction to this suggestion.

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.