



FROM: THE RT.HON. SIR KEITH JOSEPH, Bt. MP.

KJ/SMC

Rt.Hon. Sir Geoffrey
Howe, QC, MP.

9th October 1978

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

You may remember that I got short shrift from Margaret when I suggested that we should put into the Manifesto words to warn that we would have to look at the question of Supplementary Benefit for strikers' families.

I still think that we should consider this.

I have asked Margaret whether, in the new situation, more work may be done on the question, so that it may be reconsidered. She has agreed.

I am writing, therefore, to suggest that a small group of us review the whole question. Margaret, *payment* rightly, emphasises that the pending ~~demand~~ of child benefit to the mother, regardless of whether her husband is working or on strike, changes the situation to some extent. I agree. The automatic payment of child benefit very slightly decreases the cost of going on strike but it also, very slightly, reduces the importance of Supplementary Benefit to strikers' families, though the Benefit can include payment for the wife and payment for rent and, perhaps, for other factors as well.

My own view which, of course, will not be as well-informed as Jim's, is that the union leaders desperately need to re-establish authority and that it would be tragic if the only weapon they could use was the power given by the closed shop. The restoration of the strike fund, as you yourself have suggested in the two pages you did not use of your last speech, could be an important factor.

I suggest that you and Jim and Patrick and I and, perhaps, with the help of Paul Dean and certainly of Arthur Cockfield, should go over the argument.

Cont./.....



I am sending copies of this letter to each person I have mentioned, including Margaret, and also to Angus and Chris.

I am finally sending a copy to Chris Mockler so that, if Patrick agrees to my suggestion, he will be able to arrange the meetings and look after us.

C.c. Rt.Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, MP
Rt.Hon. James Prior, MP
Rt.Hon. Patrick Jenkin MP
Angus Maude Esq. MP
Chris Patten Esq.
Christopher Mockler Esq.