



Copy to Mr. Syman

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26/6

HOME OFFICE  
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

26 June 1981

Dear Clive,

The Home Secretary has asked me to report to you on the outcome of this morning's meeting of the Civil Contingencies Unit (CCU).

NALGO have called a strike of all local government employees in Lothian and Borders on Tuesday in protest against the steps that the Government has taken to reduce local authority spending. The local Fire Brigades' Union (FBU) Brigade Committee had agreed that their members should support this action while continuing to provide fire cover. But their recommendation had a mixed reception in Lothian and it was not known at the time of the CCU meeting whether firemen there would refuse to answer emergency calls. Scottish Office Ministers have been in touch with the Scottish Secretary of the FBU to emphasise the serious implications of such a decision. Meanwhile, contingency arrangements have been made for servicemen with Green Goddesses to be deployed if necessary. But I have just learned that the Lothian Fire Brigade has decided to maintain emergency cover on Tuesday and that military assistance will not therefore be required.

The ambulancemen have called a further national 24 hour strike today. London ambulancemen are taking part. It appeared this morning that the response was patchy. It may be that military assistance will be required in London and in Mid-Glamorgan. Gwent and South Glamorgan should be able to manage. Servicemen's notice will be increased to 48 hours over the weekend. Decisions on notice next week will be taken by Health Ministers in the light of local circumstances.

The Unit will keep under review the risk of industrial action on the railways and the London Underground late in July. Much will depend on the decision of the Railway Staffs' National Tribunal (RSNT) which is now expected on or about 10 July.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Secretaries of State for Employment, Defence, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Social Services and Transport, the Financial Secretary, Treasury, and Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours ever,

J. F. HALLIDAY

Clive Whitmore, Esq.

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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

29 June 1981

Dear John

I have shown the Prime Minister your letter of 26 June about the outcome of the meeting of the Civil Contingencies Unit held that day.

The Prime Minister was grateful for the Home Secretary's report.

I am sending a copy of this letter to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely,

John Halliday

John Halliday Esq.,  
Home Office.

AH