

**CONFIDENTIAL**

*Gov Machinery*



*Clive Hill 26/9*

HOME OFFICE  
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

21 September 1979

*PM has seen a copy  
of this, but I thought  
you should see too.*

*(Coal stocks at power stations  
are at a low level compared with  
previous years).*

*Dear Tim,*

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES

*R 26/9*

Thank you for your letter of 12th September in which you asked for a note outlining the contingency plans presently on the stocks, and their state of readiness, against the possibility of industrial disruption this coming winter.

As you will be aware, the Civil Contingencies Unit (C.C.U.) is concerned only with the consequences of industrial disputes, and then only where they threaten supplies and services essential to the life of the community. It is not concerned with handling such disputes in any other sense, nor of course with settling them. It is a co-ordinating body which oversees contingency planning and ensures that it is kept up to date: and which in an actual situation ensures that agreed options are presented to ministers. It does not itself have executive powers; executive responsibility rests with the Departments concerned in every case. Even in its own limited area of essential supplies and services, its scope is necessarily limited by practical constraints. As the Home Secretary said in E Committee on 19th July, its plans cannot be comprehensive; cannot guarantee an effective or durable means of withstanding industrial disruption; and cannot at best do more than buy time.

I attach a schedule prepared by the secretariat of the C.C.U. which lists in the left hand column the 15 industries and services where it is thought that industrial action could most seriously affect supplies and services essential to the life of the community. Alongside each are described the contingency arrangements which currently exist as a means of reducing vulnerability, under four headings -

- b. Military Plans
- c. Emergency Powers, which may be made by an Order in Council under the Emergency Powers Act 1920 or Energy Act 1976, e.g, to waive statutory obligations or control the supply and consumption of materials.
- d. Alternative Resources, when regular workers are on strike, e.g, volunteer labour or standby generators.
- e. Stockpiling arrangements.

Finally, a remarks column indicates points specific to a particular industry or service. As a footnote to schedule item 1b. (military plans for civil service contingencies) I should add that the C.C.U.

/is not .....

Tim Lankester, Esq.

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is not responsible for the M.O.D's "in-house" plans for using Service personnel in certain circumstances to replace civilians affected by industrial action; these are referred to under item 1d.

This schedule represents the current form. The C.C.U. is at present co-ordinating a review of contingency plans, which should be ready for consideration by Ministers in mid-October. This goes beyond the usual annual up-date; it is a new review, for new Ministers, who face a new situation. The Home Secretary would not wish to preempt its recommendations at this stage but has given instructions for it to be completed with the maximum speed consistent with necessary thoroughness.

Y  
Lans etc,  
JAC

J.A. CHILCOT

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a. Industry and Services in which industrial action can most seriously affect the life of the Nation	CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS				REMARKS f.
	b. Military Plan	c. Emergency Powers	d. Alternative Resources	e. Stockpiling	
1. CIVIL SERVICE	None, but ad hoc always possible, eg fuel to air traffic computer generators	N/A	Yes - eg contract printing; servicemen at defence establishments	Yes - forms and paperf	Little public sympathy
2. COAL MINERS	Yes - for distribution only. Practicability under review.	Yes	Impracticable	Yes, at power stations See attached	Strong support from Unions (eg NUR) not in dispute
3. ELECTRICITY WORKERS	None	Yes	Standby generators at hospitals, private generation	N/A	Some support from some other Unions
4. FIRE SERVICE	Yes	Yes - eg if requisitioning required	Very limited through industrial/military fire brigades	Yes - reserve appliances	Unlikely to attract public sympathy again so soon after 1977
5. GAS WORKERS	Yes - for safety only	Yes	Impracticable	N/A	Natural gas very non-labour intensive
6. NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE	Yes - ambulances and hospital chores	Possible but unlikely	Yes - volunteers; contractors	Yes - food; disposable linen	Strong support from Local Authority employees
7. BROADCASTING SERVICES	None	N/A	Yes - wartime broadcasting service	N/A	
8. LOCAL AUTHORITY WORKERS	Yes - sewage pumps	Yes	Yes eg Sewage into rivers; contractors; volunteers.	Yes - plastic bags	Support from NHS workers
9. OIL WORKERS	Yes - for distribution	Yes	Impracticable	Yes - but very little at petrol stations	See attached for stock levels
10. PORTS	Yes - unloading	Yes	Limited airlift	Yes	
11. POSTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS	Yes - but very minor	N/A	Yes - private enterprise	N/A	
12. RAILWAYS	Yes - vehicle parks only	Yes	Yes - road transport.	N/A	Much inter-rail union rivalry
13. ROAD HAULAGE	Yes - oil tankers only	Yes	Yes - rail	N/A	Many private, non-union operators
14. SEAMEN	None	N/A	Limited airlift	N/A	
15. WATER INDUSTRY	Yes	Yes	Stand pipes in the streets	Problem is distribution, not supply	

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Govt. Machinery

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

12 September 1979

6/F-25-9.79

The Prime Minister would be grateful for a note from the Civil Contingencies Unit outlining the contingency plans which we have on the stocks, and their state of readiness, against the possibility of industrial disruption this coming winter. It would be helpful if we could have this by 25 September.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

I. P. LANKESTER

John Chilcot, Esq.,  
Home Office.

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5 B

Good Machinery

PRIME MINISTER

The Home Secretary might raise this with you over lunch today.

out.

DUTY CLERK

22 September 1979

Tim

Now. Good station d-  
power station are  
still very good  
mt.

**CONFIDENTIAL**HOME OFFICE  
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1A 9AT

21 September 1979

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e. Stockpiling arrangements.

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*Y  
Lous cov,  
Pm*

J.A. CHILCOT

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4 September 1979

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Thames House South  
Millbank SW1P 4QJ

Tel: 01-211-0925

ENERGY STATISTICS - WEEKLY STATEMENT <sup>(1)</sup>

			Week ending				
			26.8.78	4.8.79	11.8.79	18.8.79	25.8.79
<b>COAL</b>							
Production <sup>(2)</sup>	(m tonnes)		2.30	1.19	1.74	2.05	2.19
Undistributed stocks	"		10.97	11.61	11.35	11.19	11.02
Voluntary absence <sup>(3)</sup>	(%)		4.4	2.3	4.2	3.9	4.2
Involuntary absence <sup>(3)</sup>	"		12.7	9.6	9.4	9.6	10.0
Output per manshift overall <sup>(3)</sup>	(tonnes)		2.17	1.78	2.02	2.15	2.18
<b>POWER STATIONS</b>							
Coal: Stocks	(m tonnes)		20.01	14.11	14.24	14.31	14.50
Consumption	"		1.28	1.23	1.34	1.45	1.45
Receipts	"		1.50	1.19	1.47	1.52	1.63
Oil <sup>(4)</sup> Stocks	"		1.04	0.87	1.00	1.10	1.17
Consumption	"		0.13	0.08	0.09	0.09	0.10
Receipts	"		0.15	0.12	0.21	0.19	0.17
Electricity supplied <sup>(5)</sup>	(GWh)		3,769	3,350	3,593	3,796	3,916
Temperature corrected	"		(3,791)	(3,350)	(3,598)	(3,796)	(3,793)
<b>GAS INDUSTRY</b>							
Oil: Stocks	(m tonnes)		0.25	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.12
Gas: Sent out <sup>(6)</sup>	(m therms)		178	158	174	190	208
			Month ending				
			31.8.78	31.5.79	30.6.79	31.7.79	31.8.79
<b>OIL COMPANIES' STOCKS - UK <sup>(7)</sup></b>							
Stock level	(m tonnes)		19.6	17.3	18.4	18.4	19.3
Estimated endurance:	(days supply)						
Motor spirit			56	61	62	64	67
Kerosene			84	71	74	74	74
Gas/Diesel			96	102	108	97	90
Fuel oil			87	112	112	101	91
Naphtha			68	71	73	63	68
All finished products <sup>(8)</sup>			82	86	90	85	82

(1) Great Britain unless otherwise stated. All latest figures subject to revision.

(2) Including opencast

(3) MCB mines only

(4) On field, before export

(5) Steam stations including nuclear

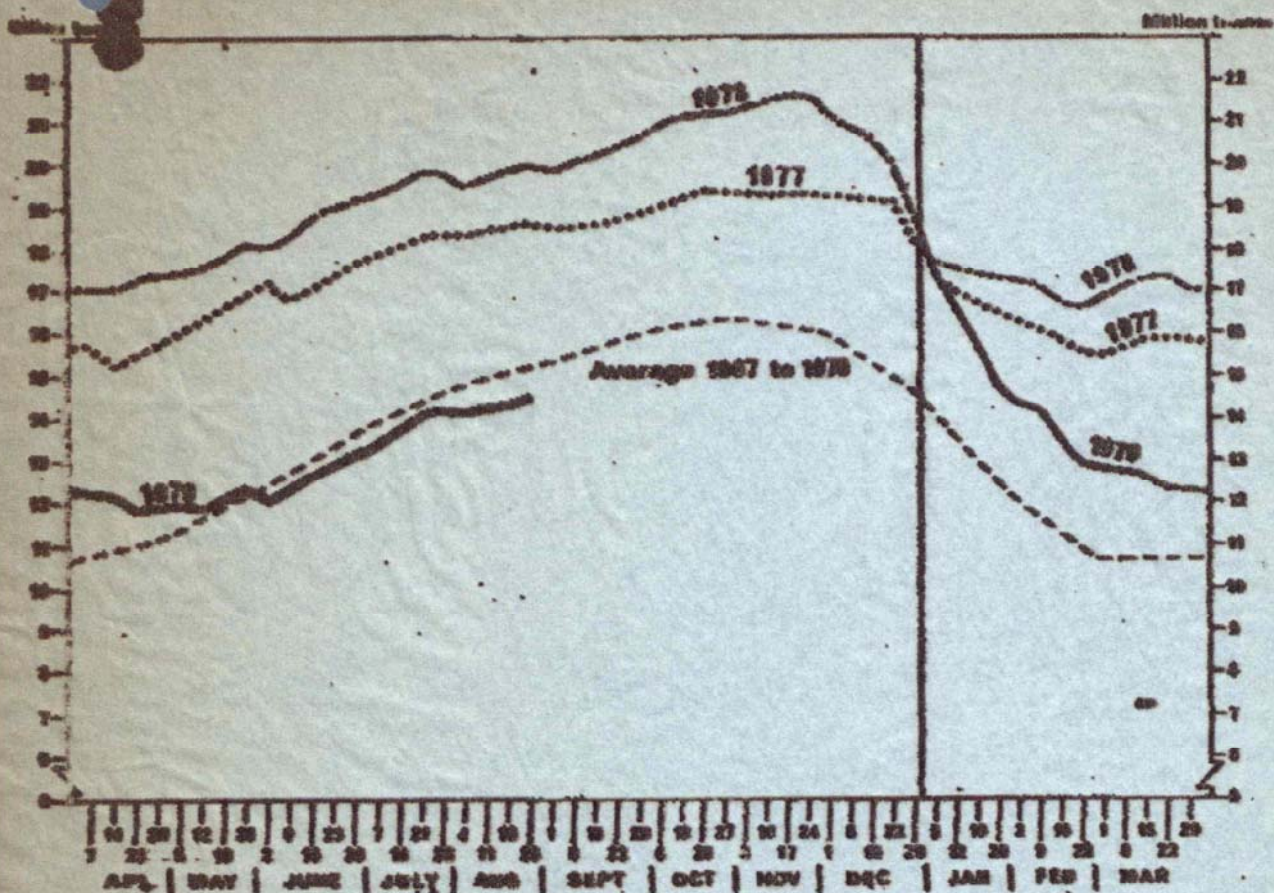
(6) Natural and town gas

(7) Including the product equivalent of crude and process oils

(8)

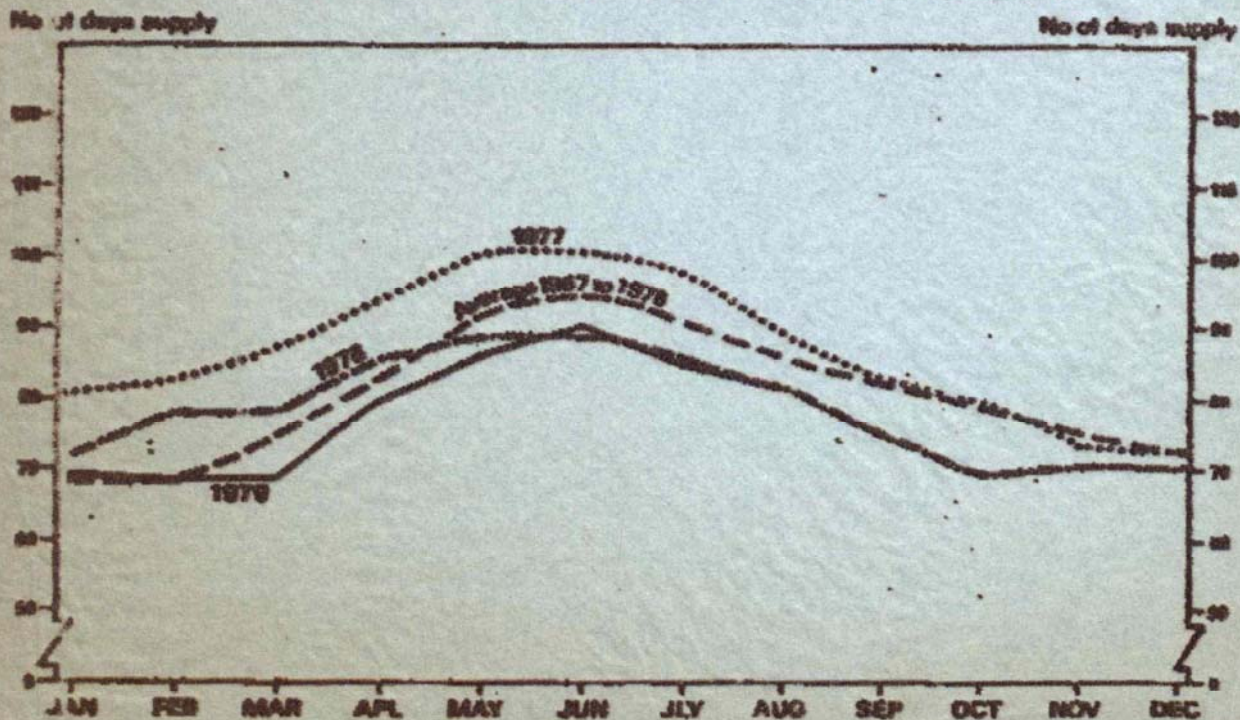


## COAL STOCKS AT PUBLIC SUPPLY POWER STATIONS IN GREAT BRITAIN



## OIL COMPANIES STOCKS - UK

ESTIMATED ENDURANCE: ALL FINISHED PRODUCTS (see Table, Note 7)



9 October 1979

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

ENERGY STATISTICS — WEEKLY STATEMENT<sup>(1)</sup>

			Week ending				
			30.9.78	8.9.79	15.9.79	22.9.79	29.9.79
<b>COAL</b>							
Production <sup>(2)</sup>	(m tonnes)		2.40	2.53	2.30	2.58	2.57
Undistributed stocks	"		11.26	11.10	11.00	10.89	10.77
Voluntary absence <sup>(3)</sup>	(%)		4.4	4.7	4.1	4.8	4.8
Involuntary absence <sup>(3)</sup>	"		13.1	10.7	10.3	10.6	10.6
Output per manshift overall <sup>(3)</sup>	(tonnes)		2.21	2.28	2.24	2.33	2.33
<b>POWER STATIONS</b>							
Coal: Stocks	(m tonnes)		20.61	14.77	15.00	15.34	15.73
Consumption	"		1.41	1.43	1.48	1.50	1.55
Receipts	"		1.60	1.78	1.72	1.84	1.93
Oil: <sup>(4)</sup> Stocks	"		1.04	1.34	1.36	1.52	1.55
Consumption	"		0.16	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.12
Receipts	"		0.13	0.18	0.14	0.28	0.15
Electricity supplied <sup>(5)</sup>	(GWh)		4,110	3,927	4,025	4,126	4,218
Temperature corrected	"		(4,172)	(3,986)	(3,958)	(4,064)	(4,161)
<b>GAS INDUSTRY</b>							
Oil: Stocks	(m tonnes)		0.22	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12
Gas: Sent out <sup>(6)</sup>	(m therms)		232	194	211	228	252

<sup>(1)</sup> Great Britain unless otherwise stated. All latest figures subject to revision<sup>(2)</sup> Including opencast<sup>(3)</sup> NCB mines only<sup>(4)</sup> Oil fired boilers only<sup>(5)</sup> Steam stations including nuclear<sup>(6)</sup> Natural and town gas

