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From the Joint Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

R

Jim Buckley Esq  
Private Secretary to the  
Lord President  
Lord President's Office  
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Whitehall  
London SW1

W/R

6 February 1981

Dear Jim,

CONTINGENCY PLANNING: USE OF VOLUNTEERS

I am sorry for our delay in acting on conclusion 2(ii) of CCU(80)9th Meeting.

We have examined the scope for bringing in retired management personnel to help out in the event of industrial action disrupting social security payments. There are serious practical constraints on the use of which such retired personnel could be put. In particular:

- a. few, if any, retired managers (or, indeed, other retired staff) have the expertise to man our computer centres;
- b. some 70,000 staff are employed in local offices and there are not enough retired managerial staff to cover a strike which was so widespread that it could not be handled with our present staff;
- c. legislation and procedures change fairly frequently; except for very recently retired staff a lengthy retraining programme would be necessary, which would take time, even if trainers could be found.

I am afraid therefore that Mrs Chalker does not see scope for using retired managerial staff in the sort of industrial action we envisage might be taken in this Department, although she would not rule it out if there were some

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peculiar and, as yet, unforeseen form of action for which bringing back retired management personnel might be the answer.

Copies of this letter go to the Private Secretaries of CCU members.

*Yours ever,*

*John T. Hughes*

J T HUGHES  
Private Secretary