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Mike Pattison Esq Private Secretary to the Prime Minister 10 Downing Street LONDON SW1

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT 2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SWIP 3EB

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To note. It is intolerable that

There is this risk of a leak;
but the trade union ments

7 June 1979 is suspect.

All the more reason for
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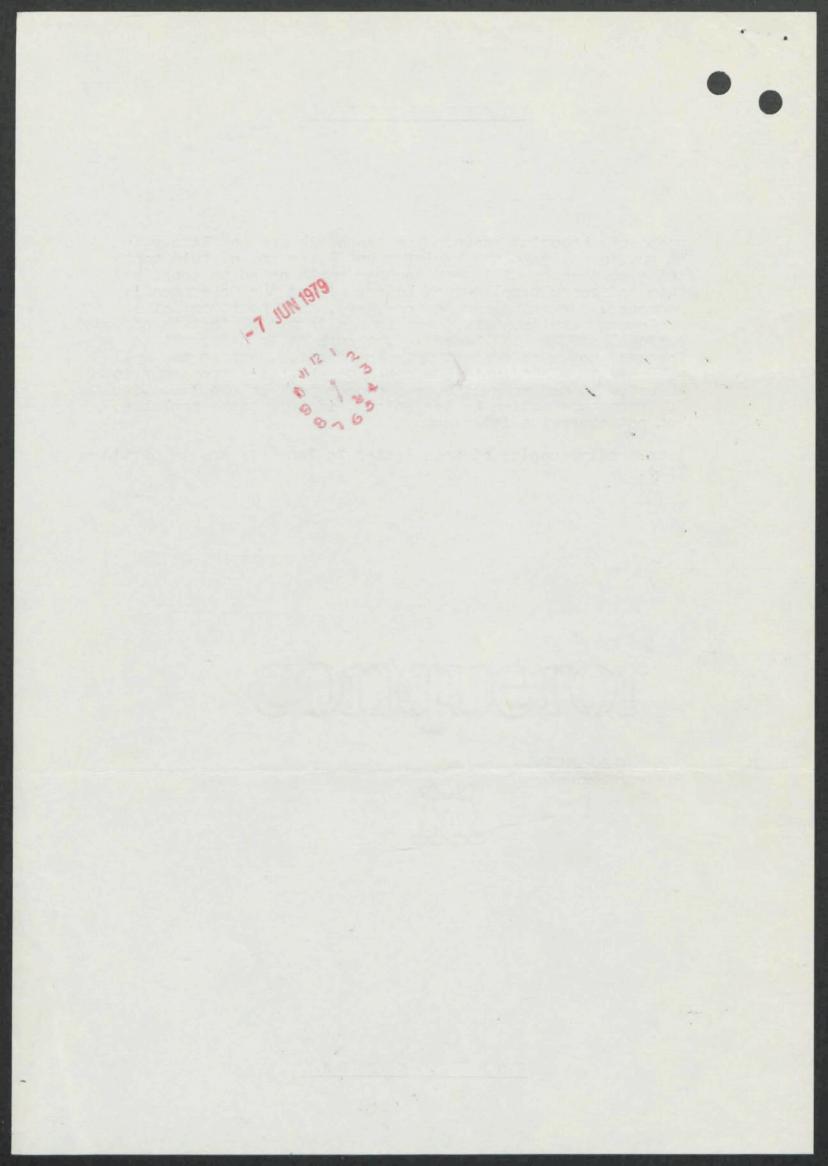
My Minister thought the Prime Minister ought to know at once that there is a risk - at the moment a very slight one - of the TGWU calling a national docks strike if the Port of London Authority's draft Corporate Plan, which revives the idea of closing the Upper Docks, leaks to the Unions.

As you know, the Port of London Authority has been in financial difficulties for some time. The previous Government agreed last year to make substantial financial support available for a massive run-down of labour, on condition that the unions co-operated in this and that the PLA drew up a full corporate plan for the future. Pending this the PLA were told not to go ahead with closure of the Royal Docks, which they had themselves regarded as necessary. The Chairman of the PLA has just told us that he has today circulated to his Board for consideration early next week the first draft of their new Corporate Plan, and that this is likely to revive the proposal to close at least one of the two Upper Docks. On past form, papers put to the Board may well leak to the unions.

When the PLA first talked of closing the Royal Docks, the TGWU threatened an official national dock strike, and indeed Moss Evans mentioned the union's strong feelings on this when he saw the Minister yesterday. The Chairman thinks that the threat could be revived as a result of the PLA's draft

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CONFIDENTIAL proposals becoming known. The proposals are not likely to be put formally to the Minister until the end of this month and even then he will need another month or so to consider them and consult colleagues before giving the Government's response. Nevertheless he considers, and Department of Employment advise, that there is a slight risk that an official national strike will be called, though it is difficult to forecast how much support this would get. Matters may well not come to a head until we react to the PLA's proposals in August. In the meanwhile he proposes that he should deprecate any premature action by the Unions, if this seems probable, but not otherwise intervene. I am sending copies of this letter to Ian Fair and to Martin Vile. Genie MRS E C FLANAGAN Private Secretary CONFIDENTIAL 2F





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT 2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

Tim Lankester Esq Private Secretary to the Prime Minister 10 Downing Street LONDON SW1

15 June 1979

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Thank you for your letter of 11 June.

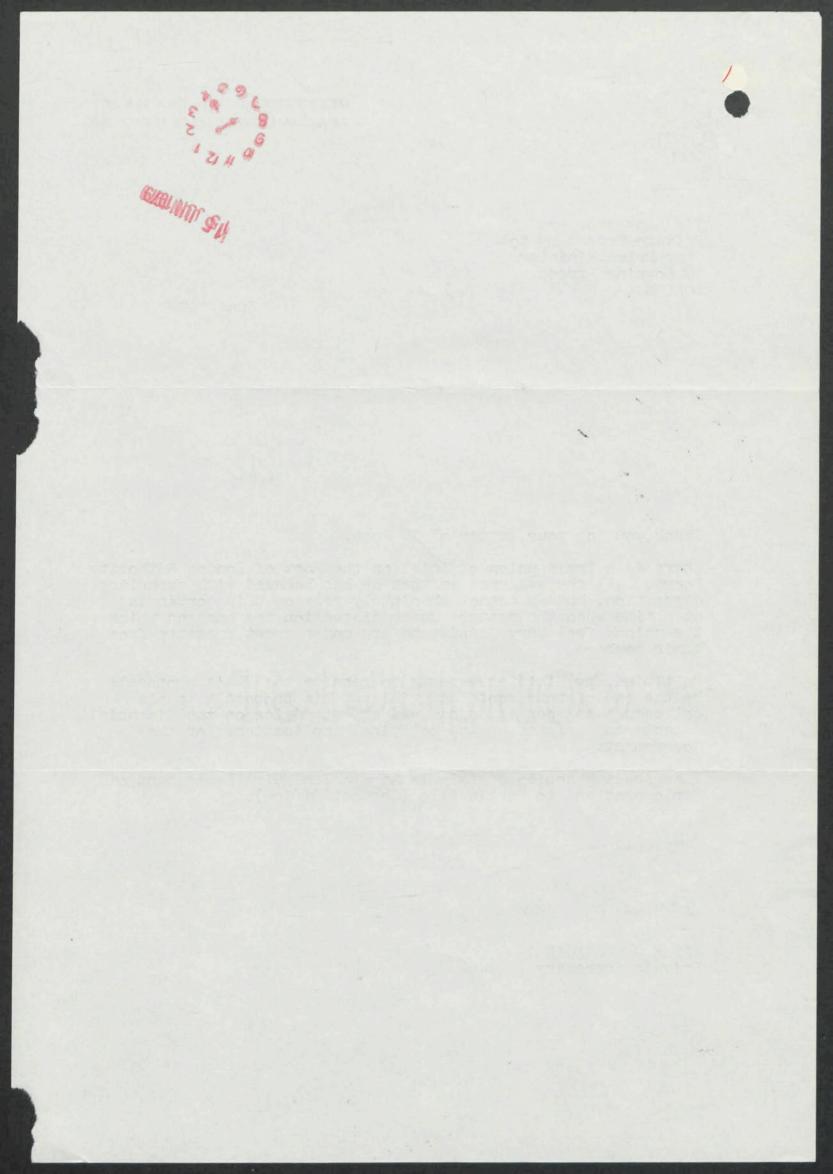
There is a trade union official on the Port of London Authority Board. All the evidence is that he has behaved with exemplary discretion, but we cannot absolutely rely on this continuing at a time when the matters under discussion are ones on which the unions feel very deeply and are under great pressure from their members.

On timing, my Minister expects to receive the PLA's proposals by the end of this month and will put his proposals to his colleagues as soon as he has had expert advice on the financial aspects and weighed up the political implications for the Government.

I am sending copies of this letter to Ian Fair (Department of Employment) and to Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

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MRS E C FLANAGAN Private Secretary



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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

CABINET OFFICE 11 June 1979 1361 11JUN 1979 FILING INSTRUCTIONS FILE No.

The Prime Minister has read your letter of 7 June about the PLA's plans for closing the Upper Docks and the risk that there could be a national dock strike if knowledge of this leaks. She is, of course, most unhappy that there is a risk that the PLA's plans will leak; this implies that the quicker the PLA Board and your Department can decide what should be done the better.

I am sending copies of this letter to Ian Fair (Department of Employment) and to Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

T. P. LANKESTER

Mrs. E. C. Flanagan, Department of the Environment.

Mr Langeton? 1. My Vile I remain worned that this correspondence has not been copied to Tsy & Trade. I still remember the ethet of the 1966 figures strike on the trade hig! & thus on £. Cd we ask No 10 to copy at least to the Chancellor?



From the Private Secretary

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