

PRIME MINISTER

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MCS

Wrong Figures from the DoE

Tom King's office humbly apologise for giving us wrong figures on the numbers of workers in the water industry. The figures they gave us today - an England, Wales and Northern Ireland total of 75,507 in March, 1979, 74,309 in March, 1981 and 70,485 in December, 1982 - are the right figures. The figures on their factsheet, which they produced early on in the dispute and repeated (of 61,634 in 1975, 66,482 in May, 1979 and 61,863 in December, 1982) are incorrect. They exclude the employees of the private sector water industry. This was a sheer mistake in the DoE's Water Division, and I have said that it was unforgivable in a factsheet which was produced at leisure.

On Tom King's 2%, Mr. King says that there has been a misunderstanding and he apologises if he has misled you. He was not entirely sure about the 2% figure at Cabinet this morning and his confirmation was intended to be of the 9% figure *for last year's settlement.* I have told ^{his office} him that he gave us the 2% figure, several times. I think, at earlier meetings. But he does not recall this, and his briefs from the Department nowhere contain the 2% figure.

MCS

24 February, 1983