

Our Ref: 10606c

Mr R Dykes  
Managing Director  
Royal Mail  
143 Old Street  
London EC1V 9HQ

5 August 1996

Your letter dated 2nd August asked the Union to call off the industrial action planned for tomorrow (August 6th) and to place the proposed settlement brokered by ACAS to a ballot of our members.

As you know full well that settlement was only available on the basis that (to quote the accompanying letter from Royal Mail) "once endorsed by your Executive (It) will result in the immediate ending of any further industrial action, together with a recommendation for acceptance of the agreement to your membership".

It was Royal Mail's stipulation that the agreement had to carry the recommendation of the Executive. As two parts of the eight part agreement were unacceptable to the Executive in their present form they could not give that endorsement.

The Union is, as you know, keen to re-open negotiations either directly with Royal Mail or through the services of ACAS. Indeed, having already cancelled 84 hours of the 108 hours announced up to last week, we offered to suspend tomorrow's action if there was any prospect of meaningful negotiations.

Royal Mail's response gives us no alternative but to go ahead as already notified to you and to set out a further programme of discontinuous action over the coming month which we will be notifying you of separately today.

Rather than feign ignorance of our constitutional procedures and make disparaging comments about the Postal Executive (who were recently elected by Individual ballot of all our Royal Mail members), the business should return to the negotiating table so that we can finish the job we started at ACAS on 26th July.

Only by resolving this dispute and beginning to break down the barriers of distrust that exist between Royal Mail and its workforce can we protect the business from the consequences you mention. That will require us to have an agreement that my Executive can recommend to the members who voted so overwhelmingly to give us authority to take industrial action earlier in the year.

Yours sincerely

ALAN JOHNSON  
Joint General Secretary