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PCS general secretary responds to Mandelson's criticism of civil servants over the Post Office scandal

Peter Mandelson made his comments during a media interview on Tuesday (9).

Peter Mandelson, Labour peer and secretary of state in the Labour government under prime minister Gordon Brown, was interviewed recently by Times Radio about the Post Office scandal. More than 700 subpostmasters were unjustly convicted of theft, false accounting and fraud in the 15 years following the introduction of the faulty Horizon software accounting system.

Asked if he felt he had been misled by the Post Office, Mandelson attempted to shift the blame by saying: "this is what you have civil servants for.....they are engaged day to day in managing the relationship between the government and the Post Office. I'm not trying to...point the finger at particular civil servants, obviously. But they should have been much more focused and cognisant of what was going on and their job is....both to protect ministers and serve the wider public interest and in this instance that failed."

In an article in [Civil Service World](#), the Liberal Democrat leader Sir Ed Davey also said that he had been misled by colleagues at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. He said "I put those concerns to officials in my department....and it's clear they all were lying to me."

PCS general secretary Mark Serwotka said: "Peter Mandelson's comments are just another cowardly example of politicians scrambling to blame others for their own mistakes.

"Politicians are quick to take credit when things go well. They should be humble and honest enough to take responsibility for their mistakes, and swiftly deliver justice for the wronged sub-postmasters and sub-mistresses."