

1st Pt

PRIME MINISTER

Both Mr Varley and David Basnett were interviewed on "World at One" on reactions to the working document on trade union immunities.

The main reactions to emerge were: VARLEY

- would give rise to the most contentious legal cases in the midst of disputes;
- would make industrial relations a field day for lawyers and agitators;
- it is all very complex and not the place for the law, quoting Mr Heath that industrial relations are human relations and the TUC ~~is~~ ^{is} the best kind of industrial relations ~~being~~ ^{are} self-regulation;
- what is undeniable is that whenever a Conservative Government is in power industrial relations deteriorate; when challenged on this by Robin Day he agreed that last winter was a most serious blemish on Labour's record which had, however, to be viewed as a whole, ~~from 1974~~
- it was not necessarily wrong to seek to legislate but the big question was whether it was practical;
- but surely the Government is mandated? Response: Mr Prior has got a terrific battle against Tory Party extremists but what we are now seeing by way of industrial relations legislation is a smokescreen for the collapse of the economy and mounting unemployment

BASNETT

- the action being taken by the Government is extremely dangerous; creating a climate of conflict in society.
- instead, given our very serious economic problems, we ought to be sitting down around a table to see how we can solve them - a theme repeated later in the interview;
- judges notoriously incapable of interpreting an industrial situation;
- proposals will inflame and exacerbate;
- but surely Government has a mandate? Maybe but if only people understood how complicated the issues are.... Government anti-trade union.

B. Ingham