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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

30 May 1984

Your Secretary of State had a telephone conversation with the the Prime Minister at Chequers shortly after 9 am this morning. He reported on the arrest of Mr Scargill, and the occupation of Hobart House by Kent pickets, earlier this morning.

Your Secretary of State said that it was increasingly clear that Mr Scargill was aiming at mob rule. He would make this point in a speech at Oxford today, saying that the choice lay between mob rule on the one hand, and people taking civilised decisions themselves on the other. He would add that if the police had not acted so courageously, mob rule would have succeeded in closing not only the mines but also the power stations and the steel works. But because of the police action, mob rule had failed and law and order had been maintained.

The Prime Minister agreed that it was right to present the issues to the public in this way. She would make similar points when speaking at Banbury later in the day. It was vital that all sensible opinion should be mobilized against intimidation and violence.

Describing events at Hobart House, your Secretary of State said that about 70 Kent miners had succeeded in obtaining entry to the building and were now occupying the first floor. It seemed probable that they were going through papers. The police view was that the mere fact of entry (which had not apparently been forcible) was a civil matter. But the removal of documents would be a criminal offence, and the police were alert to this possibility. Your Secretary of State said that it seemed that Mr Scargill had invited his own arrest. The Prime Minister commented that if he had indeed committed an offence it was only right that he should now be charged. Tactics of lawlessness and intimidation could not be ignored.

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I am sending a copy of this letter to Nigel Pantling
(Home Office).

David Barclay

John Neilson, Esq.,
Department of Energy

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