

E. R.

(2)

PRIME MINISTER

COAL DISPUTE: INTIMIDATION

At Cabinet yesterday, the Home Secretary reported that, while some success was being had in containing intimidation in Nottinghamshire, the situation in Derbyshire was still unsatisfactory. In part, this might be because Derbyshire is more deeply divided and because it is closer to the Yorkshire coalfields. It was also suggested that failure to tackle the problem might reflect the fact that the Derbyshire Police are now commanded by the Assistance Chief Constable, the Chief Constable having been suspended by his police authority.

There have been a number of nasty incidents today, the worst being an attack on the house of an NUM official who supports the return to work. Serious damage was done to the property which, I am told, included the tearing out of a bay window.

Mr. MacGregor has been in contact with both No. 10 and the Home Office, with David Young acting as intermediary, to plead for great efforts to stop intimidation and to protect working miners. He fears that not only could such intimidation slow the return to work, it could frighten miners currently working into staying away.

The Home Secretary is sending one of the Inspectors of Constabulary to Derbyshire on Monday. The officer concerned has recently completed a study of anti-intimidation methods in Nottinghamshire and should, therefore, be well placed to advise on how to tackle the problem. At the same time he can no doubt do a bit of stiffening of backs.

3 August 1984

JKRADZ