

PRIME MINISTER

HUNTERSTON / RAVENSCRAIG

THE MAIN DEVELOPMENT TODAY IS THAT LOCAL DOCKERS AT HUNTERSTON HAVE BEEN TO RAVENSCRAIG TO REVIEW THE PLANT'S SUPPLY POSITION AND HAVE COME AWAY IMPRESSED WITH ITS' SERIOUSNESS. THEY ARE SAYING OPENLY THAT, IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE FUTURE OF RAVENSCRAIG, THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO UNLOAD THE '9'5 'OSTIA' THEY ARE. HAVE ADSKED FOR A MEETING WITH THEIR LOCAL UNION REPRESENTATIVE WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE LATER TONIGHT (THURSDAY). TOMORROW MORNING, THEY WILL REPORT THE OUTCOME TO THE LOCAL MANAGEMENT. MEANWHILE IT LOOKS AS IF THE DOCK LABOUR BOARD GAVE THEIR WAY THERE MAY BY THEN BE NO DISPUTE TO DECIDE.

MR WALKER, MR KING, AND MR TEBBIT ARE ALL BEING KEPT IN TOUCH. THEY AGREE THAT A GRASS ROOTS MOVE TO UNLOAD THE OSTIA WOULD BE BE THE BEST POSSIBLE OUTCOME AND BRITISH STEEL IS THEREFORE BEING ENCOURAGED TO KEEP ITSS' HEAD DOWN. BUT IF THE LOCAL DOCKERS FAIL, AND THE NDLB DECISION IS UNFAVOURABLE, THERE MAY NEED TO BE A MEETING OF MINISTERS UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF LORD WHITELOW ON MONDAY.

DAVID ID BARCLAY

16 AUGUST 1984