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PRIME MINISTER

MISC 101(84)39th Meeting

You will wish to deal first with coal and then with docks.

Coal

2. On coal, after the usual reports, you will wish to focus the discussion on:

- the latest position in the NCB/NUM talks;
- assuming the talks have broken down by the time of the meeting, how the NCB can best win the public argument, and how Ministers can best reinforce the NCB's efforts;
- in particular, whether (as was provisionally agreed at Monday's meeting) the best line of attack is to step up pressure for a national ballot by the NUM, and how to mobilise support for this line from the widest possible sector of opinion.

Docks

3. On docks, after the usual reports on the number of ports and dockers working, you will wish to focus discussion on:

- the efforts of the employers, particularly at Tilbury and Bristol, to encourage a return to work;
- the efforts of the TGWU (particularly at Grimsby and Immingham) to widen the dispute;
- any further developments on civil action in the courts;
- whether (particularly if the NCB/NUM talks have broken down) Ministers should resume a higher profile in the media on the docks dispute and what the line to take should be.





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Flag A - 4. On civil action, I understand that the Solicitor General, whose staff have been in touch with the Department of Employment's lawyers, will be ready to clarify the relevance of the new employment legislation, due to take effect on 24 September, to the coal and docks disputes.

Next meeting

5. There will be an opportunity for a further discussion under the Industrial Affairs item at Cabinet on Thursday 13 September.

P L GREGSON

11 September 1984

Operant.