

SECRET

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PRIME MINISTER

13 September 1984


NACODS

The latest twist in the miners' dispute is very worrying.

NACODS union men are arguing the case hard to try and deliver the two-thirds majority on the ballot for strike action. It should be very difficult for them to deliver, given that you would expect NACODS men in the working areas to be pretty heavily in favour of continuing to work, and you would expect a reasonable number in the striking areas to reaffirm their vote of the previous ballot.

However, it is vital that the NCB senior management devote time and energy to resolving the NACODS problem. They have two options. Either they can withdraw their circular and appease the NACODS union leaders by withdrawing the main cause of the flare up, or they could counter the union's argument and make sure they can deliver at least one-third of the NACODS electorate in a ballot.

If they are doing neither, we should be very worried, and it is vital that they are not totally preoccupied by the current talks with Scargill, so that their eye is taken off the ball.

  
JOHN REDWOOD

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