

PRIME MINISTER

MINERS' WIVES BACK TO WORK CAMPAIGN

BACKGROUND

Mrs Fjaelberg, Mrs McGibbon and Mrs Linton wrote to you to seek a meeting to discuss the coal dispute. We delayed such a meeting until the last phase of negotiations was completed but it has now been fixed for 1515 tomorrow.

Mrs Fjaelberg's group is part of nationwide network of similar groups. Hers was founded about 2 months ago with a view to encouraging the men to go back to work inspite of the intimidation and violence likely to be faced by wives and families. They intend to act as a mutual support group of wives, giving help to those who are suffering under the strain and exchanging practical ideas on how to face shared problems.

We have spoken to Mrs Fjaelberg and agreed that they will arrive without saying anything to the press. After the discussion, you will want to agree with them whether they wish the meeting to remain private or whether they wish to give publicity to it. If the latter you should warn them that they must expect some media attention. We can arrange it that they are on their way home before anything is made public. I think the decision must be left to them.

I attach a short note to be issued to the press which you could discuss with them. Bernard will be available to advise them.

Objectives

To hear at first hand the situation for miners and their families in the coal fields, to express support for

Local bus stores -

not going to bus number

Taxis — 5 by number
not to bus stops
 —

Number - we have our rights.

Pickups — outside home

Woburn - Wentworth - Swick

↓.

130.

-30

— || Cur. Getting — || Middlemen

Local Management.

those who are courageously trying to secure a return to work, and to establish what contribution Government can make.

Points to Raise

- (i) What is the nature of the Miners' Wives Back to Work Campaign? Is it a network of local groups? Does it have a national organisation? How does it finance itself?
- (ii) How do the wives assess the mood of the men in South Wales and nationally? How strong is support for the strike and how likely is a significant return to work?
- (iii) What is life like for miners and their families? How extensive is violence and intimidation in South Wales? (As the strike has so far been total it is likely that Wales has been spared the worst of the intimidation but this can be expected to occur if a drift back to work is started.) How are families managing with their household bills?
- (iv) Have the group made contact with local NCB management to seek advice on the prospects for a return to work? Or with the Welsh Office?

Points they will raise

- (i) What advice can the Prime Minister give? In the first instance, you should advise them and their husbands to make contact with the local colliery management who can assess the chances of bringing men into work in some numbers and who can make arrangements for men wishing to go to work to be protected.

News Inspectorate

30% - fear
Threat

Hand Areas. - notes

National Register

- J.V. South -

Totally discredited

N.U.M. - Students do pay parents -
do not make value

Plan

- (ii) What safeguards are there for men coming into work? It is the duty of the police which they will undoubtedly carry out to ensure that those wishing to go to their place of work will be able to do so. As can be seen from other parts of the country the police are prepared to deploy substantial resources to bring this about. In other areas where there has been intimidation special measures have been taken by the police. Additional foot patrols by uniformed officers have been established and plain clothes detectives have investigated allegations of intimidation. It is essential that families be prepared to report incidents to the police and provide them with the evidence to mount prosecutions.
- (iii) Is the NCB willing to offer transfers to other areas to miners who go back to work and whose lives after the strike become intolerable? The Board has given an assurance that any miner who loses his union card will not lose his job. It has not taken a policy decision on whether to give a guarantee of transfer to beleaguered families - it would be reluctant to create a situation in which the militants can demand the expulsion of moderate miners.

Mr. Walker suggests that you say you are sure the Board will be careful to look after those who have been loyal to it and that you will bring this question of transfers to the Board's attention.

Duty Clerk.

PP. ANDREW TURNBULL

17 September 1984

VSCAAG

N. U. M. - "stake bed"

Danger to life

Admission - stake beds
Good pencils. God

Kent - Concerning God { Pen.
Ruler.
Instruct }

Coal merchants - Admittants getting coal
"The Cowley Shore"

39 men parked - still
on NCB property.

Chambers - ^{money to} minutes ~~pay~~ ~~money~~

Hoare 999 Ted Xch

Kent 100 2600

19 → 16

DRAFT STATEMENT

In response to a request from the Miners' Wives Back to Work Campaign, the Prime Minister today met Mrs Fjaelberg, Mrs McGibbon and Mrs Linton who had asked to see her. They told the Prime Minister the difficulties being faced by miners and their families and gave her a report of the efforts they and their husbands were making to bring the dispute to an end. The Prime Minister expressed her understanding of the problems faced by their families and gave her full support to their efforts to secure a return to work.

Local Management here
compared to men
from working.

The Island - went to most homes
to dissuade them.

"Have ropes cut" - no surface work

Travel to other pits

Have C. B. redobs.

Food parcels - nutrients

Thrive - Gas - Working on fields

Not joy to work in industry

Paul⁵¹ - came into home in March

DRAFT STATEMENT

In response to a request from the Miners' Wives Back to Work Campaign, the Prime Minister today met Mrs Fjaelberg, Mrs McGibbon and Mrs Linton who had asked to see her [to discuss the coal dispute]. They ^{told} ~~discussed with~~ the Prime Minister the difficulties being faced by miners and their families and gave her a report of the efforts they and their husbands were making to bring the dispute to an end. The Prime Minister expressed her ^{understanding of the problems faced by the} ~~sympathy for~~ their families and gave her full support to their efforts to secure a return to work.