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10 DOWNING STREET

22 December 1981

PUBLICITY STRATEGY IN THE RUN-UP TO THE MINERS' BALLOT

This is to confirm our conversation this morning, in which I told you that I had consulted the Prime Minister about the overall publicity strategy we should adopt in the period up to the miners' ballot, and that she had agreed.

I put to the Prime Minister the principles outlined in the third paragraph of my letter of 21 December to you, with some additional explanation. On the second point, the subject of Douglas Smith's letter to you of 21 December after he had seen mine, and about which we spoke, I put it to the Prime Minister that in our briefing behind the scenes we should avoid giving the impression that the Government is prepared to find more money for paying for a high settlement, without of course going so far as to indicate that at this early stage Ministers have decided what to do if the miners vote for industrial action.

The way is now clear, therefore, for us to proceed as agreed: that is, Bernard Ingham here will take steps to co-ordinate with the Directors of Information in the Departments concerned, and I understand that you will be advising your Secretary of State to minute his colleagues.

I am sending copies of this letter to the recipients of my letter of 21 December.

J. M. M. VEREKEN

I.T. Manley, Esq.,  
Department of Energy.

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