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From the Private Secretary

3 March 1983

Asfordby

The Prime Minister discussed the NCB's application to mine at Asfordby with your Secretary of State and the Secretary of State for Energy this morning.

The Prime Minister said that it was fully recognised that this decision was one for your Secretary of State to make on his own, in his semi-judicial capacity. She enquired, however, about the reasons for the delay in his decision.

Your Secretary of State explained that he had just received an interim report from the working parties which had been set up following his predecessor's decision in March last year, on the disposal of spoil. The final report would not appear until later, probably in July. He had now been advised that the interim report provided a sufficient basis on which he could make his decision. He was therefore, near the point where he could reach his conclusion. The Prime Minister said that it would be important, once the decision was made, to be ready to publish it as soon as possible. She would wish to be consulted about the timing of the announcement.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Julian West (Department of Energy).

M. C. SCHOLAR

David Edmonds, Esq.,
Department of the Environment.

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