

MR VEREKER


cc Mr Mount
Mr Scholar

MINERS' BALLOT

I am afraid none of the events so far have demonstrated that the miners are not irresistible . All they have proved is that they are not prepared to be led by the nose. Events have not however challenged the post-war impression of their invincibility for we have yet to beat a national stoppage.

I would be much happier if your draft reactions dropped the last sentence and inserted in the previous sentence "or clapped out" between "uneconomic" and "pits".

In my view the last thing we should do today is to lend credibility to Scargill. The point is made without the emotive sentence, "The way is now clear for the coal industry to put its house in order." Scargill will tell the miners in response to that, "Exactly - what did I tell you?"



B. INGHAM

10 March 1983



10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

COAL BALLOT

My contact in the NCB who is usually very reliable is forecasting a 2-1 majority against a strike.

Returns from Yorkshire show that they are likely to split 50-50 compared with 56-44 last time. North Derbyshire, the barometer area, could return 62-64% against and Lancashire 60% against a strike.

These forecasts are based on reports from individual collieries.

My contact tells me that they are being confirmed by journalists who have their own good contacts in the coalfields.

B Ingham
8.3.83

Next End