



Press & Public Relations
Department.

Phone: 01-222 0151/8
01-222 9000

Conservative Central
Office.
32 Smith Square,
London SW1P 3HH

RT. HON. PETER WALKER, M.B.E., M.P.

Release Time: 13.00 Hours/WEDNESDAY 408/84
30th May, 1984

Extract from a speech by the Rt. Hon. Peter WALKER, M.B.E., M.P., (Worcester),
Secretary of State for Energy, at Oxford University on Wednesday, 30th May, 1984.

The battle we are witnessing is not a battle to improve miners' pay and conditions but a battle enthusiastically supported by Marxists to see whether or not the mob, using mob violence, can rule.

Only the courageous and tenacious action of the police has stood between these rights and freedom, and the triumph of violent mob rule. As a result this country has been saved from chaos. If the police had not done their duty then by now violent mobs would have closed every power station in the country, even though the power workers want to work. The mob would have closed every steel works in the country, even though the steel workers desperately want to work. The mob would have closed every coal mine in the country, even though virtually all those mining areas ^{that} have had a chance to vote have voted to work, not strike.

But the rule of law has been maintained and the mob has failed everywhere. From Ravenscraig to Orgreave, from Nottinghamshire to Lancashire, the mob, often violent, has tried and failed because the police have protected ordinary workers from mob intimidation.

The Government is determined to continue to uphold the right to work and freedom under the law.

It is quite clear that this mob violence is not in the interests of miners. For what have the miners on offer? A pay deal better than that already accepted by steel workers, railway men, power workers or gas workers; a capital investment programme which is in the very first rank among capital investment programmes for the industries of this country; and a guarantee that where totally uneconomic

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pits now need to be closed, every miner working in them will be able to continue to work in the industry if he wishes to do so. None of these are reasons for a day's strike let alone for mob violence around the country.

Mob violence will achieve nothing. Organising violence or posturing on picket lines will lead nowhere. I believe that the majority of workers in the coal industry realise the futility of these tactics and how many people they alienate; they understand what is now needed is to get back to a joint effort to take advantage of a great opportunity and make this industry an industry that brings prosperity and success to the miners and their families.

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No-one who has witnessed the continuing violence and mass picketing on TV night after night can do anything but condemn it. Of course, miners - like any other trade unionists - have a right to picket PEACEFULLY. Equally, those who want to work have a right to go PEACEFULLY about their business.

What we have seen recently is an affront to a civilised society. There can be no justification for the Bully Boy tactics and brute force coercion. What is happening at Orgreave and elsewhere is the unacceptable face of trade unionism.

All those who believe in law and order - and they are the overwhelming majority - must make it clear that there is no place for mob rule in this country.