



20

Ref. A084/2910

PRIME MINISTER

Cabinet: Industrial Affairs: Coal

You will wish to invite oral reports from:

(i) the Secretary of State for Energy on:

the number of pits and miners working;

coal movements;

outcome of, or current position in, the latest talks between the NCB and NUM at ACAS;

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(ii) the Secretary of State for Employment on:

an assessment of the role of the TUC since the NACODS settlement and prospects for effective pressure on Mr Scargill to reach a reasonable negotiated settlement;

(iii) the Home Secretary on:

picketing and intimidation;

progress in dealing with criminal cases;

(iv) the Secretary of State for Transport on:

the current state of play concerning the review of British Rail Engineering Ltd (BREL). (At the last MISC 101 Mr Ridley was invited to consult with a number of colleagues about the handling of the





forthcoming BREL review so as to ensure no opportunity would be created for the railway unions to order industrial action which would interfere with coal movement.)

2. On the assumption that the NCB/NUM talks at ACAS have broken down or show clear signs of so doing, you may wish to establish a line for Ministers to take in public statements during the next few days in order to:

clarify the confusion reported by the media about personality clashes within the NCB (with especial reference to Mr Eaton and Mr Kirk) and future options for pits in the North East (Mr Scargill's latest "hit list");

extract the maximum advantage from Mr Scargill's intransigence by comparison with NACODS reasonableness;

achieve, if possible, further exploitation of the "Libyan factor";

highlight the effect of the NUM strike on other people's jobs in the wake of the Parliamentary debate on 30 October and comments made the same day by the Chairman of the TUC.

You will also wish to seek agreement on which Minister is to speak on which subject(s).

Next Meeting

3. The next meeting of MISC 101 has been arranged for Monday 5 November at 11.00 am.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R.A.' or 'RTA', written in a stylized, cursive script.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

31 October 1984