

SECRET AND PERSONAL

24

Prime Minister⁽²⁾

not

Daily Coal Report - Friday 2 November 1984

	<u>Number</u>	<u>plus on holiday</u>
(i) Working normally	45	-
(ii) Turning some coal	10	-
(iii) Some men present	26	-
(iv) On strike/picketed out	93	-

Encouragingly, the tailing off of attendances which normally takes place on a Friday did not happen today. In the key area of North Derbyshire attendances in fact rose: at Shirebrook colliery, scene of some of the most bitter picketing during the strike, 41 new faces reported on the morning shift bringing the total to a new record 286. In the Coal Board's Western Area there was the best ever morning shift attendance of 63% overall.

Coal Movements

180,000 tonnes were moved yesterday, bringing the prospect that movements for the week might once again exceed 900,000 tonnes.

39 coal trains ran.

Law and Order

There was the usual skirmishing in Yorkshire but elsewhere it was relatively quiet.

Coal Board Initiatives

The Board announced two important developments today.

Its new job creation subsidiary, NCB (Enterprise) Ltd announced its first loan to a former miner. This is the first tangible demonstration of the Board's

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Efforts to generate alternative job opportunities in the mining areas. A copy of the Board's press announcement giving details is attached.

The Board also announced that miners who returned to work could qualify for a Christmas bonus. For example, men on power loading rates who were present on Monday 19 November and who kept up the necessary attendance qualifications could receive a gross wage of £658 on Friday 21 December, including a £70 service bonus. Men on underground rates could receive £544 gross. This offer was later attacked by Scargill, which suggests that it might prove effective.

Correspondence with the Opposition

In an exchange of correspondence with Mr Orme, the Secretary of State for Energy has challenged the Labour Party to provide public answers to a number of key questions. Correspondence attached.

Line to Take

Please refer to speaking note circulated yesterday. Also, emphasise questions in Secretary of State's letter to Mr Orme

Distribution: Members of MISC 101, Paymaster General, Sir Robert Armstrong, Mr Gregson, Cabinet Office

Enquiries: Michael Reidy, PS/SOS for Energy, Tel 211 7214

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NCB

Public Relations

RB FINAL CLEARANCE AWAITED

National Coal Board
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NCB (ENTERPRISE) COMPANY IN BUSINESS

First Loan Made to Ex-Mineworker

The NCB's new job-creation subsidiary, NCB (Enterprise) Ltd. held its first meeting on Tuesday (October 30) and its Chairman, Mr Merrik Spanton, National Coal Board member for Personnel, has announced its first loan, to a former employee.

The loan is to Mr Michael Ralton, 34, a mechanical engineer who now runs a transport business in Fife.

Mr Ralton took voluntary redundancy in May 1984 from Solgirth Mine in Fife. By combining his redundancy pay and other savings he bought two commercial vehicles and now operates a parcels delivery service.

In September the Scottish Development Agency offered him a lease on factory space in Cowdenbeath which will enable him to expand his business and store parcels for delivery by arrangement with a national distributor. The proposed development could lead to the creation of four jobs in the first year with a probability of a further three in the second.

Mr Merrik Spanton said today: "I am pleased, but by no means surprised, that our first payment has gone to a former employee. My years in the industry have convinced me that there is a great deal of commercial flair evident among our workforce at all levels - many people who have left the industry have gone on to form successful businesses."

(more)

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Mr Spanton emphasised that lending would not be limited to ex-Board employees. "We will be pleased to hear from new businesses or existing firms wishing to relocate and we will assist with the provision of premises or support through equity or loan capital financing. Provided a company or individual entrepreneur will provide a significant proportion of jobs for ex-NCB workers, we are prepared to consider their proposition," he said.

The enterprise company is one aspect of the National Coal Board's initiative and this direct effort will be complemented by retraining for miners seeking work outside the coal industry and by increased support of established enterprise agencies. These agencies have had considerable success in encouraging new businesses in their localities and Mr Merrick Spanton announced that the NCB would be seconding Tony Fox, a 56 year old financial accountant to the newly formed Agency at Blaenau Gwent (Ebbw Vale).

Applicants for support under NCB (Enterprise) Ltd should write to Martyn Sloman at Hobart House.

Note to Editors: Further details and a picture of Mr Ralton are available from NCB Public Relations Dept., Scottish Area, Green Park, Greenend, Edinburgh, EH17 7PZ. 031 664 1461

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Press Office (1925)

2 November 1984

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NCB (ENTERPRISE) LTD. ESTABLISHED

"We are aiming to help small businesses in particular," says Chairman

The National Coal Board's new job creation subsidiary, NCB (Enterprise) Ltd. came into being on 8th October, 1984. The Company has a basic share capital of £1 million, and is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the National Coal Board. It will initially have available £5 million to help create new businesses and job opportunities to alleviate unemployment in mining areas. It is intended that all such businesses should employ a significant number of ex-miners and other former employees of the Board.

The Board of Directors of NCB (Enterprise) Ltd held their first meeting on 30th October. The Directors are:

- Mr Merrik Spanton - Chairman (NCB Board Member for Personnel)
- Mr Tommy Macpherson - (a part-time Member of the National Coal Board and former Chairman of Mallinson-Denny)
- Sir Melvyn Rosser - (a part-time Member of the National Coal Board, partner in Deloitte, Haskins and Sells, and Member of the MSC)
- Mr David Brandrick - (Secretary to the National Coal Board)
- Mr John Northard - (Director, NCB Western Area)
- Mr Philip Weekes - (Director, NCB South Wales Area)

Secretary to the Company is Mr Geoffrey Matthews. An executive director, to carry out the day-to-day running of the Company, has yet to be appointed.

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An early decision of the Company has been for it to concentrate initial efforts on helping smaller enterprises by means of advances or other assistance. Company Chairman, Merrick Spanton, said today:

"It is clear from our early investigations that there is an important gap to be filled in helping small-scale businesses - particularly in the service sector. Through the £5 million provided by the National Coal Board, we are aiming to meet this need. So, as well as hearing from companies, we hope to get approaches from enterprising individuals. We can promise them a sympathetic hearing - and an early response to any applications they make."

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