

PRIME MINISTER

14 November 1984

DELAY IN CROWN COURT TRIALS

Some delay in Crown Court trials are to be anticipated in the Midland & Oxford circuit and the North Eastern circuit. There is a backlog of about 500 cases. Less than 50 miners' cases have been dealt with in the Crown Court so far. The attached schedule illustrates the problem areas.

The Courts Act, 1971 provides for the Lord Chancellor to determine where any Crown Court shall sit [Section 4(6)]. It would seem appropriate for emergency extra Courts to be set up and for extra or assistant judiciary to be asked to sit.



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USE OF CROWN COURTS/NUM/NCB DISPUTE:

1. SHOWING FLOW OF CASES; AND 2. IDENTIFYING TROUBLE SPOTS

Circuit	Number Of Cases Disposed Of A = Appeal T = Trial C = Cases both A & T	Number Of Cases Still To Be Heard	Notes	Date Of Trial
Western	Nil	Nil		Lord Chancellor's Department could give no dates from any circuit for the trials but early and mid-1985 is the best estimate.
Northern (ie NW)	1T 3A	3T 8A		
South Eastern	1A	1T	Involving 5 defendants.	
Wales & Chester		2T 1A	Prosecution & defence are choosing summary trial.	
Midlands & Oxford	14C (including 6T)	22C	** 3 committals in pipeline with respectively 57, 60 & 90 defendants	
North Eastern	8C	12T 40A	* 10 committals in pipeline involving 200 defendants. ** Possible spate of appeals in January.	

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