



NATIONAL COAL BOARD
HOBART HOUSE
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LONDON SW1X 7AE

01-235 2020

Prime Minister ②

A robust letter

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15/11

CHAIRMAN

Ian MacGregor

16 November 1984

Rt Hon Stanley Orme MP
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

MT

Dear Mr. Orme,

You asked me to consider the paper which you left with me when you were here on Tuesday, 13 November.

This paper contains suggestions which are, in essence, aimed at changing the wording of some of the proposals that were placed in front of the NUM by ourselves or by ACAS (in the one paper they produced which they regarded as an even-handed paper on the closure issue).

In a way, your paper is a negotiation and, at the present moment, my view is that it would be inappropriate for me to negotiate with you on this matter.

As I explained to you, during the long and numerous sessions we have had with the NUM, I found it disappointing that there seemed to be no effort to reach common ground on the part of those on the other side of the table, despite efforts by the Coal Board to modify language in an attempt to reach acceptable versions of the principles which we discussed and which would have to be established in our future relationships.

As I told you when you were here, in the discussion with NACODS we found that there was a desire to reach a settlement and therefore we did our best to produce an accommodation on most of the items which are still subject to dispute in our discussions with the NUM. The NACODS proposal is still available to others.

Unless there is a tangible indication from the NUM that they are intent on reaching a settlement in accordance with the NACODS agreement and the ACAS compromise proposal, and they advance some indication of that in writing, I do not see that it will be worthwhile for further discussions to take place.

Sincerely

Ian MacGregor.