

PRIME MINISTER

7 December 1984

NCB/NUM DISPUTE - THE LATEST REPORT ON CRIME

Both the police and the Home Office confirm a slowing down in the spate of crimes related to this dispute. The decline is due to the fact that miners' pickets are not congregating in such large numbers. Intimidation, however, is rife, and the commission of serious offences is increasing.

Up until 4 December, 8,688 arrests had been made during the present dispute; out of this number, 7,249 persons were charged.

51% of these cases have been disposed of in Crown Court or Magistrates' Court; 11% were found not guilty. Nearly all the cases have been dealt with in the Magistrates' Courts. Additional stipendiary magistrates were appointed for eight towns; they continue to sit in four - Chesterfield, Pontefract, Rotherham and St Helen's.

The Lord Chancellor's Department is currently planning the appointment of more stipendiary magistrates in two new places, and is responding to requests for help. It does not consider it necessary to appoint any additional Assistant Recorders.

Conclusion

- Although the overall crime figures may be levelling off, there is still cause for much anxiety over the

trend towards the deliberate use of violence and intimidation as a tactic in the dispute.

- There is considerable evidence that local constabularies are getting to grips with the problem and have welcomed new proposals for the use of computer technology. One is already in use.
  
- There is progress towards the apprehension of conspirators behind some of the intimidation.
  
- 49% of the cases charged have still not been disposed of. We recommend that the Lord Chancellor's Department do something more positive than to "respond to requests for help".

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