



Public Relations

National Coal Board
Hobart House, Grosvenor Place
London SW1X 7AE
Telephone: 01-235 2020

"THINK AGAIN" CALL TO MINERS LEADERS

"Accept the realities of reaching a sensible settlement"

National Coal Board spokesman Mr. Michael Eaton today (Tuesday) called on miners' leaders to "think again" and accept the realities of reaching a sensible settlement, Mr. Eaton said:

"It is unreasonable for them to suggest that the Coal Board have been unwilling to negotiate a settlement of this damaging and unnecessary dispute. It is also untrue that there has been any pressure from the Government to stop negotiations taking place.

"The Coal Board have always sought a settlement which would give miners and the coal industry a sound future. We also want to ensure that any miner or mining community affected by the closure of an uneconomic pit would have better facilities, better conditions and better opportunities than has ever been offered when uneconomic pits have closed in the past.

"In seven rounds of negotiations lasting 175 hours the NUM have refused to move from their demand that every uneconomic pit should be kept going until the last tonne of coal is exhausted. The Coal Board cannot meet this impossible demand that would undermine the coal industry's future and provide no security for miners or for the children of miners in the years to come.

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"Our offer of no compulsory redundancies, guaranteed jobs, continuing major investment in the future of the industry, and pay increases really is the best deal for miners than anything that has been available since nationalisation.

"The Board want to achieve a settlement of this dispute, but we do not want another round of talks in which the NUM yet again persist with their one impossible demand leading yet again to failure.

"We hope, in the interest of miners, their families, their communities and the industry that they will think again and speedily come to a sensible settlement".

Press Office (1993)

January 22, 1985.