

Ref. A085/417

PRIME MINISTER

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Cabinet: Industrial Affairs: Coal

You will wish to invite reports from:

(i) The Secretary of State for Energy on

the number of pits and miners working;

coal movements;

likely future developments in view of the South Wales NUM's statement that they are considering ordering a return to work in their area without a settlement, and reports that other areas may also take this course;

the current position of NACODS (the press have reported the NACODS vote for acceptance of the NCB's 5.2 per cent pay offer and that Mr McNestry is still talking about the possibility of a strike ballot being called if the NCB (and by implication the Government) insist on a written commitment from the NUM about the closure of uneconomic pits);

the handling of public relations to ensure the NUM are not given an opportunity to exploit reported differences between the NCB and Government Ministers on the written commitment;

the latest position at the Frances and Seafield  
collieries in Fife (and the line on possible  
redundancies);

the NCB's thinking on the new independent advisory  
body.

(The urgent need for a report originally requested  
 by the Cabinet (CC(85) 3rd Conclusions, Minute 4)  
 was reiterated at MISC 101 on 4 February  
 (MISC 101(85) 5th Meeting, Conclusion 2.)

FLAG A —

FLAG B —

(ii) The Secretary of State for Employment on

current TUC attitudes;

whether ACAS have any further role to play;

(iii) The Secretary of State for Transport on any likely  
 developments between BR and the rail unions, following  
 the failure of attempts to reopen NUM/NCB strike  
 settlement negotiations.

(iv) The Home Secretary on law and order, if there have been  
 any significant developments.

(v) The Attorney General on developments in civil actions -  
 if any of significance have occurred.

2. The next meeting of MISC 101 is at 5.00 pm on Monday  
 11 February.

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

6 February 1985