



Public Relations

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NO CLOSURES OUTSIDE COLLIERY REVIEW PROCEDURE

NCB's Assurance to Unions

An assurance that no pit will close without the opportunity of consideration under the Colliery Review Procedure has been given by the National Coal Board to the industry's trade unions.

The assurance was given yesterday (Tuesday) by Board Member for Personnel Mr. Merrik Spanton, to the leaders of NACODS, BACM and the NUM at their meeting of the joint sub-committee discussing modification to the Colliery Review Procedure.

The unions sought an assurance that there would be no closures outside the Review Procedure. "I made it perfectly clear that no pit would close unless it went through the Procedure" said Mr. Spanton.

That assurance applies to all coalfields and Mr. Spanton expressed surprise that NACODS Secretary Mr. Peter McNestry had questioned the Board's intentions in the North East.

The National Coal Board announced to the unions on March 27, 1985 that an urgent review was in progress to assess the condition of the seriously strike damaged collieries.



"It was clear that in a limited number of cases the damage and future prospects may prove to be so bad that the cost of re-opening will not be justified" said Mr. Spanton. "At other collieries partial re-opening or redevelopment may be the right thing to do. Where temporary or permanent job losses have occurred, redundancies are being arranged and men are leaving under the Redundancy Scheme. The number of volunteers is substantially in excess of the jobs that will be redundant".

"The National Coal Board are consulting with the unions locally as soon as any decisions are taken which involve job reductions or other action short of closure. Whenever closure is proposed, the colliery will go through the Review Procedure."

Mr. Spanton said that by the end of June 1985 all of the damage would have been assessed and the appropriate decisions taken. From that date all collieries would be operating under the normal Colliery Review Procedure.

"It must also be emphasised that the normal Colliery Review Procedure is operating now in all of the Areas which worked during the strike," Mr. Spanton continued. "There have been few problems where safety cover was provided. The most serious problems have arisen where safety cover was not provided and where the collieries could not be properly inspected."

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