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The Rt Hon Michael Alison MP
Private Secretary to
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON
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23rd May 1985

Dear Michael

As you suggested I met the delegation of 36 people including 10 working miners and members of their families last night at 6.15 pm in Committee Room 19. Sir Michael Shaw was in the chair and other colleagues present were Donald Thompson, Elizabeth Peacock, Philip Oppenheim, Gary Waller, Marcus Fox, Piers Merchant, Martin Stevens, Sir John Osborne, John Whitfield and Gerry Malone my Parliamentary Private Secretary. Woodrow Wyatt was in attendance and the delegation was led by Mr Les Firth, CTU organiser in Yorkshire.

There was some hostility at the start of the meeting about what was alleged to be Conservative Party inaction in supporting the campaign against Arthur Scargill in its early stages and in particular in 1981 when Mr Will Richards campaigned against the NUM investment in the Walworth Road HQ for the Labour Party.

The main business of the meeting was however an explanation by individuals of their own, often distressing, circumstances facing intimidation underground and at home.

It became clear however that much of the background was historic and that there was acknowledged to have been a reduction in the level of intimidation at work following the robust attitude by the management at most collieries. There were however 5 collieries in Yorkshire where the position was said to be still serious - Manvers, Wath, Kiveton Park, South Kirby and Barnburgh.

The meeting suggested that there are probably only now 20 individuals who are suffering from very serious continuing problems and almost all of those wanted the Government to pressurise the National Coal Board to have them moved to Selby.

I am now following up with Ian MacGregor the individual cases brought to my attention at the meeting. I pointed out the great admiration of the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for the courage shown by working miners and their families during the strike and their determination, with the National Coal Board, that intimidation would not be tolerated and should not succeed. I did however point out that



Ministers could not become involved in individual cases but all the points raised would be conveyed urgently to the Chairman of the National Coal Board.

I shall in fact be going underground at Selby tomorrow with Michael Eaton and will take the opportunity to raise the comments made at the meeting last night. I am also addressing the British Association of Colliery Management's annual conference in Scarborough on Friday when I shall take the opportunity of stressing the enormous responsibility owed by the industry to the working miners and the obligation of every manager to ensure that there is no continued threatening behaviour or intimidation of any kind.

Yours ever

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to be 'David Hunt', written in a stylized, cursive script.

DAVID HUNT



FILE

RANAMH

10 DOWNING STREET

23 May, 1985

From the Principal Private Secretary

To keep our records straight, I am replying to your letter of 23 May to Michael Alison, recording the conversation which Michael and I had with Gerry Malone this afternoon.

Gerry gave us a full account of your meeting with the working miners and their families, for which we were very grateful.

I gave Gerry Malone a note received by the Prime Minister with some names attached to it. I also told him in confidence who had sent it to her. He said that he would arrange for this to be checked against the list which you had already received and make sure that each case was looked into and a report obtained from the Coal Board on the merits of each one. I am sure that this is what the Prime Minister would want.

RB

David Hunt, Esq., MBE, MP
Department of Energy

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