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MISC 57(85) 11

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CABINET

OFFICIAL GROUP ON COAL

COAL SUPPLIES TO POWER STATIONS

Note by the Secretaries

1. British Rail (BR) services are currently being disrupted by unofficial industrial action, by some members of the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) protesting against BRs intention to introduce driver only trains. The NUR have arranged to ballot their guards on 29 August to seek a mandate for official industrial action as part of the same protest.
2. Although it is too early to be clear about the form and scope of any industrial action that might take place, there is a need to keep a careful watch on possible disruption to coal and other supplies for power stations that are normally carried by rail, especially in relation to achieving the required level of stocks at power stations by the end of October.
3. The Civil Contingencies Unit is arranging to monitor the likely effects of industrial action on the railways on essential supplies and services, with the exception of coal and other supplies for power stations. This latter area will be the responsibility of MISC 57.
4. There is at present no need to consider calling a meeting of the Group. It would be helpful if the Secretaries could be informed as soon as potential problems have been identified so that all members of the Group can be kept up to date and the need for any action be decided quickly.

Signed J A J BUDD
J E ROBERTS

Cabinet Office

14 August 1984