

PRIME MINISTER

COAL

Andrew Turnbull rang to say:

- (a) There are 44 pits working today, compared to 11 on Friday.
- (b) In the areas which voted for a return to work, only about 4 pits have not started work today.
- (c) In North Derby, where the vote was 50-50, the Executive have called for a strike.
- (d) Ministers met this morning. We are still maintaining a low Government profile. The Attorney General has said everything necessary on picketing. We are presenting it as a police, not a Government matter.
- (e) The Coal Board has applied for an adjournment (not a withdrawal) of its legal action - apparently in the hope that the picketing situation will improve.
- (f) The expectation is that the NUM Executive will call for a ballot. They may make the call this week with the ballot taking place next week. So it could be two weeks before the matter is resolved.
- (g) Meanwhile no decisions have been taken on oil burn.

A.J.C.

19 March, 1984