



Ministers at 10 Downing Street yesterday for a meeting of the MISC 101 committee. Left to right: Mr Leon Brittan, Home Secretary, Mr Norman Tebbit, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Mr Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for Transport, Mr Peter Walker, Secretary of State for Energy and Lord Whitelaw, Mrs Thatcher's deputy. (Photograph John Voos).

## Crisis talks bring in 14 ministers

By Peter Hennessy

Fourteen ministers joined Mrs Thatcher in Downing Street yesterday morning for a meeting of the Cabinet's busiest ad hoc committee, known as MISC 101, from its secret Cabinet Office classification, which determines the Government's response to developments in the coal and dock strikes.

The core membership of MISC 101, which convenes regularly on Mondays and Wednesdays (reporting to the full Cabinet on Thursdays) and meets more often when required, is the Prime Minister, her deputy, Lord Whitelaw, Mr Nigel Lawson, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Leon Brittan, Home Secretary, Mr Tebbit, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Mr Peter Walker, Secretary of State for Energy, Mr Tom King, Secretary of State for Employment, Mr Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for Transport and Sir Michael Havers, Attorney General.

Other ministers attend when needed. For example, the possibility of deploying troops in the docks required the presence yesterday of Mr John Stanley, Minister for the Armed Forces, Mrs Peggy Fenner, Minister of State at the Ministry of Agriculture, was there to report on foodstocks.

Mr John Gummer was present, so Downing Street claimed, in his capacity as Minister of State at the Department of Employment, where he has responsibility for industrial relation in the ports, rather than as chairman of the Conservative Party.

## Call for calm at Port Talbot

From Tim Jones, Cardiff

As violence broke out again outside the Port Talbot steelworks, Mr Viv Brooke, assistant chief constable of South Wales, appealed to miners and drivers to cool down before someone is crushed by a lorry.

Two policemen and a miner were taken to hospital yesterday following ugly disturbances outside the entrance to the works as miners tried to prevent convoys of lorries taking supplies to Llanwern.

More than 400 pickets clashed with 200 policemen as the lorries sped by, with their loads of coal and iron ore and 42 miners were arrested.

Bottles and stones were thrown at the lorries, and 40 windscreens, estimated at £6,000, were smashed. Some drivers wore safety helmets and visors to protect themselves from missiles and flying glass.

Although there are sizable stocks of coal and iron ore at

Port Talbot, no more is coming in because of a decision by tugmen to join the transport workers' strike. Without them the ore carriers cannot enter harbour.

Nearly 5,000 people have been charged with offences relating to the miners' strike between March 14 and July 10. Mr Douglas Hurd, Minister of State for the Home Office, told Mr Anthony Marlow, Conservative MP for Northampton North, in a written answer yesterday that 4,727 people have been charged. Most were arrested for obstruction or breach of the peace. But 84 people have been charged with the serious offence of riot.

In the same period 656 people were dealt with in court and 60 defendants were acquitted.

The following table of offences was supplied:

Offence	Number of charges
Conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace	1,893
Obstruction of a police officer	1,027
Obstruction of the highway	511
Criminal damage	257
Arson	1
Assault on a police officer	256
Assault occasioning actual bodily harm	221
Causing grievous bodily harm	12
Theft	67
Assault with intent to resist arrest	9
Offensive weapon	12
Section 7 of the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act 1875 (Intimidation)	76
Burglary	1
Handling stolen property	1
Drug offence	1
Attempting various offences	9
Drunkness	57
Unlawful assembly	135
Affray	12
Riot	84
Others	85
	<b>4,727</b>

## Owen backs Thatcher over miners

By Philip Webster  
Political Reporter

Dr David Owen, leader of the Social Democratic Party, said yesterday that Mr Arthur Scargill, the miners' president, must not succeed in winning what had always been for him a political strike and that the Government deserved support in standing firm against a sell-out.

In a radio interview Dr Owen launched a savage personal attack on Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, for being "led by the nose" by Mr Scargill and said that if the miners' leader won it would have a devastating effect on the cause of moderation and realism in British trade unionism.

Dr Owen said that when Mr Scargill spoke on Saturday of the political overtones and influences in the strike, and of effectively bringing down the Government, Mr Kinnock should have disowned Mr Scargill's views.

The fact that he did not and that he was prepared to line the Labour Party up increasingly with the miners' strike "reeks of opportunism", Dr Owen said. I appeared that Mr Kinnock thought the miners would win and that the Labour Party should stand alongside them, whereas hitherto he had sat on the fence.

Mr Kinnock's failure to disown Mr Scargill was very dangerous and would come back on him. It would mean there were practically no moderates left in the Labour movement.

## Europe air charters beat dock strike

By John Lawless

The scramble by British importers and exporters to beat the docks strike has even seen light aircraft being chartered to fly goods to and from Europe, with charters on heavier planes being snapped up.

Mr Christopher Foyle, grandson of the founder of Foyle's bookshop, who owns an aviation company based at Luton airport, said yesterday: "We have our own Aztecs, Navaho and Chieftains capable of carrying between half and one tonne, and we have been asked to do everything from importing car parts to exporting live bait."

Air Foyle's customers are

being quoted between £5,000 for a seven-tonne load from Dusseldorf to Southend on a Viscount, to £15,000 to take 40 tonnes on a Boeing 707 from the Midlands to Brussels, much above sea-freight rates.

Most of the inquiries related to places in near-northern Europe, with shippers trying to get goods that are trapped in ports across the Channel or North Sea.

National newspapers could face a shortage of newsprint next week if the dock strike continues, and in common with other papers *The Times* will be reducing the number of pages it

carries later this week. The closure of Dover to freight cargoes yesterday blocked the last main avenue for the import of newsprint (a Staff Reporter writes).

The Army's Royal Corps of Transport would be at the centre of attempts to keep the ports running if the Government brought in the troops because of the dock strike (the Press Association reports). The corps practices constantly at a military port at Marchwood, near Southampton. Run by 350 men of the 17th Royal Port Regiment, it is Britain's only military port.

**Crisis talks bring in 14 ministers.**

By Peter Hennessy.

*The Times* (London, England), Tuesday, Jul 17, 1984; pg. 2; Issue 61885. (1066 words)

**Category:** News

© Times Newspapers Limited

**Gale Document Number:**CS34311921