

Pym says Thatcher made strike worse

By Richard Evans, Lobby Reporter

Mr Francis Pym yesterday blamed the Prime Minister for making the coal strike harder to resolve than it need be.

On the day when unemployment figures showed another dramatic increase, the former Foreign Secretary linked his criticism to what he said was the Government's failure to work out a proper strategy for unemployment.

Mr Pym, sacked from the Cabinet after the last election, said he had repeatedly argued the need for the Government to

show more imagination over unemployment and to construct a strategy which would enable the country to come to terms with the situation which had developed.

"Failure to see the need for such a strategy, let alone construct one, has made this strike more difficult to resolve than it could have been."

In a speech at Cambridge which will delight the "wets" in his party, he said the Conservative Party had always been at its best when it was broad in its

view, national in its interest, tolerant in its outlook, constructive in its debate and unifying in its aim.

In a veiled attack on Thatcherism he said: "That philosophy is always applicable, no more so than in the biggest problem facing the Government today - the miners' strike."

Mr Pym added: "We ought to hear more of the human side of this strike and how the country can best mitigate the

worst effects of continuing high unemployment.

"We should take a fresh look at the coal industry and how it is organized. We should see if in the longer term we can transfer some of it into the ownership of miners themselves. We ought to know more about what the miners themselves want.

"And we ought to hear much more about new job opportunities in the areas where the pits have to close.

Pym says Thatcher made strike worse.

By Richard Evans, Lobby Reporter.

The Times (London, England), Friday, Oct 05, 1984; pg. 1; Issue 61954. (310 words)

Category: News

© Times Newspapers Limited

Gale Document Number:CS17403717