

Return to Teesside Folder

PRIME MINISTER

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TEESSIDE VISIT

Your visit concentrates on Middlesbrough on the south side of the River Tees but also takes you north of the river to Stockton. You will see something of the scale of industrial dereliction faced by the area; meet members of the Urban Development Corporation newly charged with tackling its problems; see some of the progress so far within the Enterprise Zone; tour a new private housing scheme; meet youngsters training to start up their own businesses; and visit an old-established engineering firm which has modernised to maintain its market lead.

Media anticipation of your inner city visits has been building up and, Glasgow notwithstanding, this will be seen as the first of them, attracting considerable national as well as local interest. At outside venues photographers will be contained by barriers and inside their numbers will be restricted on a pool basis. You will have two opportunities to talk to the media - before lunch about half-way through the programme and in the afternoon at the very end. Again, cameramen and reporters will be behind a barrier so that you can determine how much you want to give them.

The programme runs as follows:

At Teesside Airport you will be joined by Mr. Ridley. You will also meet Mr. Richard Bell, DOE's Regional Controller for urban and economic policy in the North East, who for the past two years has led the inter-departmental Cleveland Coordinating Team which operates as a countywide CAT. He will be at hand throughout the day.

Head Wrighton Teesdale Site

This is a 35-acre derelict site, formerly Head Wrighton's engineering works, at the "Stockton Loop" on the Middlesbrough side of the River Tees. It falls within the newly-created

Urban Development Corporation's boundaries and will cost up to £6 million to prepare for redevelopment.

You will be met at the site by the Chairman of Teesside Development Corporation, Mr. Ron Norman (a recent profile of whom by The Times is attached). He will explain plans for clearing the site and improving access, by means either of a new bridge over the Tees or a new slip road from the A66 trunk road, with a view to attracting mainly housing developers. The site is currently owned by the Davy Corporation, which supports the City Technology College concept and a CTC is a further possibility. Photographers will be present.

Britannia Steelworks Site

The second derelict site you will see was formerly a BSC steel-making plant. It extends to 70 acres, now within Middlesbrough's Enterprise Zone, and is largely owned by Cameron Hall Developments which built the Gateshead Metrocentre on Tyneside. However, Mr. John Hall is understood to have decided against a similar venture for this site.

You will be met at the site by Teesside Development Corporation's newly-appointed Chief Executive, Mr. Duncan Hall (no relation) who will outline plans for spending about £3 million to prepare for industrial and retail redevelopment. Photographers will be present.

Teesside Development Corporation

Messrs Norman and Hall will lead you on the very short walk to the UDC's offices - in fact, within the Cadcam complex which you are to visit next. Upstairs, in the board room, you will be introduced to the UDC's Deputy Chairman, Lord Dormand, and nine board members. Over coffee, Mr. Norman will spend 10 minutes outlining the UDC's objectives and a further 20 minutes has been allowed for discussion.

Mr. Norman will then bring in the signatories to a new £10 million agreement for the redevelopment of nearby Smith's Dock which closed last year with the loss of over 1,000 jobs.

Mr. John Hackney and Mr. Charles Wellington, respectively Chief Executive and Company Secretary of the Tees and Hartlepool Port Authority, will sign the agreement with Messrs Norman and Hall. At least 1,000 new jobs are expected to be created, mainly in high-tech offshore work; and it is hoped to announce the first investment in the scheme - a joint venture by British Telecom and Uglund, of Norway, to establish a base for a sophisticated new North Sea communications system. A limited media pool will be brought in to cover the story.

Cadcam Centre

A short walk will take you next to the Cadcam Centre where you will be met by Executive Chairman, Mr. Alan Coultas and Director, Mr. Arthur Llewellyn. They will take you immediately on a tour of the Centre which provides a focus for Cadcam training, consultancy and R&D. In its two years of existence, 17 high tech firms employing about 200 people have been attracted to units built by English Estates on an adjacent complex.

Upstairs in the Centre you will see computer graphics design software in action and meet trainees from local companies. You will also be shown computer design work on an engineering component and then go downstairs to see a wax model of the component being machined according to the computer programme. A small number of photographers will accompany you.

In the main entrance you will be invited to make a short speech and unveil a plaque to open the Phase 2 extension of the Cadcam complex and launch Northern Systems, which will act as the commercial arm of the Cadcam Centre. About 30-40 guests will be present and there will be a small dais and microphone for you. Space for the media is limited and most cameramen and reporters will be gathered outside where you may wish to talk to them as you leave.

Systems Control

You then walk across to this small company which has flourished in Phase 1 of the Cadcam complex, making miniature

robots for educational and laboratory use. Founder and Managing Director, Mr. George Carter, a former BSC employee, will show you around and demonstrate the "Labman" and "Smart Arms" robots in action. Two of the firm's 9 employees are YTS trainees - secretary Helen Darlington and machinist Steve Elliott. There will be limited photographic coverage.

You then walk across to one of the unoccupied units in Phase 2 where a buffet lunch will be provided by English Estates.

The guest list is at "I" in your main brief.

St. Hilda's, Middlesbrough

Considerable environmental improvement, much backed by Urban Programme funding, has taken place in Middlesbrough over recent years. This UDG-assisted private housing scheme by local builders Cecil M. Yuill at Tower Green in the heart of the town is a good example, providing about 120 homes at average prices below £20,000.

You will be met by Chairman, Mr. Peter Yuill, Construction Director Mr. Phillip Yuill, and Chief Executive, Mr. Dennis Grieveson. In a show house they will conduct you around a typical 3-bedroom starter home and tell you about the development.

You then go across the road to No. 31, home of Mr. Simon Gates and his common-law wife Maria Evans. He is a lorry driver at BSC Redcar but spent 9 years in the Royal Corps of Transport, serving in Northern Ireland. She is officer-in-charge at an old people's home. They have a four year old daughter, Alexis; and will be delighted to show you their home. Photographers will be outside.

Cleveland Youth Business Centre

Around the corner is this centre which provides information, training and help to local youngsters wanting to become self-employed. Much of its original capital finance was from central and local government, but most revenue funding now

comes from private industry. Its counselling staff are MSC-backed under the Community Programme.

The manager, Mr. Mike Reaney, who is on a two-year secondment from ICI, will greet you and show you around. He will introduce the centre's Chairman, Mr. Tom Young and Deputy Chairman, Rev. Bill Wright. On the ground floor you will meet two of the counsellors, Harinder Uppal and Tom Wardle, and their clients. A small number of photographers will be present. Upstairs there will be a training course in progress, run by senior tutor Tom Body-Smith, and you will be able to discuss with four or five youngsters their ideas for setting up in business. In an adjacent room you will be shown office computer training.

Harkers Engineering

Your last official engagement is at this old-established family business which employs about 150 in the precision machining of large components for a wide range of industries. It has invested about £10 million over the last 10 years, with grants from DTI, building up a sophisticated computer-controlled machine shop. The workforce has increased by about 50 in the past 4 years and the firm takes on its own apprentices in order to overcome local skill shortages.

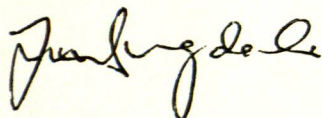
You will be met at the entrance to the new machine shop by Managing Director, Mr. Malcolm Harker and Chairman, Mr. Fred Harker, his father who is 75 but still goes to the works every day. In the course of a U-shaped tour of the shopfloor you will see typical examples of the company's work - on components for the oil, | coal, | railway, | nuclear, | defence / and aerospace industries. // Two jobs of particular interest, where photographers will be present are:

- a £1 million contract from Dowty Rotol to cast and machine the main structure of the landing gear for BA 146 aircraft;
- a £1/4 million initial contract from General Electric of

the US for machining large power station components.

Before you leave, you will be asked to sign the firm's visitors book. Press, radio and television will be gathered outside and this will be the last opportunity to comment on your visit.

Finally, you have a one-hour meeting with Party workers at the St. George's Hotel, Teesside Airport.



SIMON DUGDALE

Press Office

14 September 1987

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