

PRIME MINISTER

MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DOCK STRIKE

I have discussed with Peter Gregson the question of Ministerial responsibility for the dock strike, which we discussed this morning.

Peter Gregson's advice is that MISC 101, under your Chairmanship, should continue to be the main body running the dock strike and the coal strike. It meets on Mondays and Wednesdays (and there is Cabinet on Thursdays). Peter Gregson advises - and I agree - that there would not be room for another Ministerial Group under Tom King. In writing the minutes of MISC 101, the Cabinet Office will make sure that there is no confusion as to whether Tom King or Nick Ridley should follow up decisions on MISC 101, and they will also chase progress.

This does not, however, deal with the handling of communications. Bernard has suggested that he should run a daily group to cover both the dock strike and the coal strike. It would meet at 0945 each morning - after the morning meetings held by Mr. Ridley and Mr. Walker, but before the Lobby and MISC 101 - and it would be able to put recommendations on media handling for the day to MISC 101. This seems a satisfactory arrangement.

Agree that:-

- (i) MISC 101, under your Chairmanship, should continue to be the main Ministerial Group dealing with the coal and dock strikes and no additional Group should be established?
- (ii) Bernard should hold a daily meeting of the Departments concerned to make recommendations on media handling?

16 July 1984

F.E.R.B.