

For Addison

File

You should see this

J 24/7

MS

PRIME MINISTER

FOOTBALL FINANCES

As you know, I was the source of the weekend newspaper stories which warned the FA/FL from pleading poverty when they come to see you next week after the contract Sunderland have given to Lawrie McMenemy, ex-Southampton manager. He is reputed to be getting £150,000 a year - or £3000 a week as newspapers put it.

I am told by friends in the North East that, having given him this contract Sunderland, in one of the highest unemployment areas of the country, have raised season ticket prices by up to 20%. The dearest seat on the ground now costs £120. The supporters' club is up in arms complaining that fans are being asked to pay first division prices for second division football. (Sunderland were relegated last season.)

Sunderland AFC's action shows, however, that clubs have no compunction about raising money when they have to. But they don't raise it to spend on fans.

BERNARD INGHAM

23 July 1985