



PLS 8A

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

6 December, 1984

Coal Dispute: Prosecutions and Trials

The Prime Minister has seen and noted the Solicitor General's minute of 30 November.

I am copying this letter to Richard Stoate (Lord Chancellor's Office), and Hugh Taylor (Home Office).

ANDREW TURNBULL

Henry Steel, Esq., C.M.G., O.B.E.

✓

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ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE
LONDON, WC2A 2LL

Prime Minister ①

Agree S/G's proposals represent an adequate response?

PRIME MINISTER

AT
30/11
Yes
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1. I have reviewed the policy by which the Director of Public Prosecutions -
 - (i) requests Chief Constables to inform him of certain categories of cases arising in the miners' dispute in which Chief Constables propose prosecution, and
 - (ii) takes over the most serious or notorious cases himself, including all cases of intimidation arising elsewhere than at the "picket line".
2. In every such case committed to the Crown Court in which the Director of Public Prosecutions himself prosecutes it will henceforth be his policy to apply to the Court, as soon as practicable after committal, for a date for the trial to be fixed, and also, in the case of intimidation offences, to invite the Court to provide by this means for an expedited trial. (These comprise the great majority of the cases which the Director reserves for prosecution by himself.)
3. Whether a Court agrees to fix any date in these circumstances will lie wholly within its own judicial discretion. It will equally be for the Court's judicial discretion to decide whether any such date should be fixed earlier than the sequence of committals to that Court would normally suggest.
4. While I am entirely satisfied that the public interest warrants this policy I do not think it would be fitting for Ministers to refer

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to it publicly, although the Law Officers or the Director himself may properly do so.

5. I understand that the Home Office, who together with the Lord Chancellor's Department were present at my meeting with the Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions, intend to take the DPP's policy into account when offering any advice to Chief Constables as to the handling of such cases arising from this dispute as are left to them to prosecute.

6. I am sending a copy of this minute to the Lord Chancellor and to the Home Secretary.

CONFIDENTIAL AM

LAW OFFICERS' DEPARTMENT

30 November 1984