

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH MR. WALKER

There are two subjects on the Agenda - Nottinghamshire miners and Mr Butcher's request for a meeting.

Nottinghamshire Miners

You will want to hear a report from Mr Walker on the latest position. He should, in turn, have heard from Mr MacGregor about the discussions NCB had with the Notts representatives. It is important to establish what the Notts miners are trying to achieve

- are they seeking to represent and negotiate for Notts miners alone?
- are they seeking to become a rival national union?
- are they aiming to become a hybrid representing Notts but allowing other groups of dissatisfied miners to affiliate?

You will want to know how far Notts miners have got in seceding from the NUM. Oliver's note (Flag A) points out that there are a number of legal difficulties. For example, have the Notts miners gone through all the necessary steps to secede. To whom do the assets of the old Notts area belong?

You will want to discuss the attitude of the Government and NCB. There seems to be no problem about recognising the right of the Notts Union to represent men in their area, though there may well be difficulties about recognising other groups of disaffected miners, eg. one in the north east, who represent only a minority of men in the area concerned. Oliver suggests the Government does not welcome the new union too effusively; I think the Government does have to make it clear that it supports the new union. ~~The~~ attitude to other breakaway groups is more difficult to determine at this

stage.

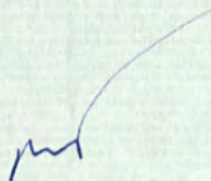
Finally you could discuss with Mr Walker how best to discomfort the opposition on this issue. Mr Kinnock is addressing the Durham Miners Gala on Saturday and at your Questions on Thursday or in a press release from Mr Walker he could be challenged to state clearly whether he supports the NUM and all it stands for, or the Notts miners and all they stand for.

Mr Butcher's Request for a meeting

Mr Walker has strong reservations about your seeing Mr Butcher. His reasons are set out at Flag B. You feel that you cannot refuse to see someone who, even though there are doubts about how much he achieved, and even about how he achieved it, was prepared to put his head above the parapet when the going was extremely tough.

I have told Mr Walker of your view. If, having heard Mr Walker's side of the case, you decide to see Mr Butcher, you should consider how this can be done to minimise any adverse repercussions.

AT



ANDREW TURNBULL

9 July 1985