

MEETING BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND GEORGE HUNTER

The Prime Minister met and spoke to Mr. George Hunter, vice President of the Union of Democratic Mineworkers, during the course of the Party reception at Ingliston, near Edinburgh, on Wednesday 3 September.

Mr. Hunter expressed his grave disquiet at the prospects for the branches of the UDM in coalfields - his own in Durham was an example - where UDM membership was in a minority, vis-a-vis the NUM. He feared that if the NUM took industrial action in these areas in respect of their own pay claims it would be easy, indeed inescapable for them to claim to be acting for the minority, UDM as well, where the latter had not yet had their national wage agreement with the NCB implemented. Mr. Hunter believed that UDM minority branches would wither away under these circumstances. He believed that the remedy was for the NCB to implement their wage agreements with the UDM in every coalfield and area, whether or not the union branch there was the majority membership union. He urged the Prime Minister to press this course on the new NCB Chairman.

Mr. Hunter also expressed misgivings about a report alleging that the new Chairman was about to reach a wage settlement with the NUM on very favourable terms, considerably backdated. This again would undermine the growth and strength of the UDM.

The Prime Minister listened carefully to Mr. Hunter's complaint: she expressed her concern, and undertook to follow them up.

Mr. Hunter's address is:

45 Tracy Avenue,
West Boldon,
Tyne & Wear

MICHAEL ALISON

4 September 1986

*Mr Nurgrove,
Pl have an urgent word
about this.*

*N. C.W.
5.9*

SUBJECT
cc master

file

JDB AAE

cc BG



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

9 September, 1986.

UDM

I have been told that the Prime Minister met Mr. George Hunter, Vice President of the Union of Democratic Mineworkers, during a Conservative Party reception at Ingliston, near Edinburgh, on Wednesday, 3 September.

Mr. Hunter expressed his grave disquiet at the prospects for the branches of the UDM in coalfields - his own in Durham was an example - where UDM membership was in a minority, vis-a-vis the NUM. He feared that if the NUM took industrial action in these areas in respect of their own pay claims it would be easy, indeed inescapable for them to claim to be acting for the minority UDM as well, where the latter had not yet had their national wage agreement with the NCB implemented. Mr. Hunter believed that UDM minority branches would wither away under these circumstances. He believed that the remedy was for the NCB to implement their wage agreements with the UDM in every coalfield and area, whether or not the union branch there was the majority membership union. He urged the Prime Minister to press this course on the new NCB Chairman.

Mr. Hunter also expressed misgivings about a report alleging that the new Chairman was about to reach a wage settlement with the NUM on very favourable terms, considerably backdated. This again would undermine the growth and strength of the UDM.

BF // The Prime Minister undertook to follow up Mr. Hunter's concerns. The point about a wage settlement with the NUM is now largely overtaken. But I should be grateful for a draft reply which Michael Alison, the Prime Minister's Parliamentary Private Secretary, might send to Mr. Hunter about areas where the UDM is in a minority, together with any comments you think it might be helpful to offer on the announcements made by Sir Robert Haslam yesterday.

David Norgrove

Geoff Dart, Esq.,
Department of Energy.

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