

Ref. A084/3262

PRIME MINISTER

Cabinet: Industrial Affairs: Coal

You will wish to invite oral reports from:

i. The Secretary of State for Energy on:

the number of pits and miners working;

the pay negotiations now in progress with NACODS.

ii. The Home Secretary on law and order.

iii. The Secretary of State for Employment on the NUM's contacts with the TUC, and the current attitude to the dispute of other trade unions. (It should be borne in mind that the TGWU is now in conflict with the courts over the recent Austin Rover strike, and that there must be a risk that the dock strike at Southampton could be exploited.)

iv. The Solicitor General on the legal actions relating to the NUM's funds, (and in particular his minute to you of 3 December about the indemnity of the sequestrators).

FLAG A.

Indemnity of the Sequestrators

2. Unless the sequestrators are able to lay their hands on sufficient funds within the next day or two there would appear to be no alternative to reporting to Parliament about the indemnity

on the lines envisaged by the Solicitor General. If that is agreed, it would be desirable for the Cabinet to settle the line to take when the matter becomes public on Monday or Tuesday of next week. This will presumably be that the indemnity is a natural and unavoidable step to ensure that the courts are in a position to make their authority effective. It can also be pointed out that, as and when the NUM's funds become available to the sequestrators, the need for the indemnity will be extinguished. It would be essential to rebut any suggestion that the Government has interfered with the judicial process.

Next Meeting

3. The next meeting of MISC 101 has been arranged for Monday 10 December at 5.30 pm.

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Approved by
ROBERT ARMSTRONG
and signed in his absence.

5 December 1984