

cc Mr Flesher

PRIME MINISTER

THE TRADE UNION CENTENARY

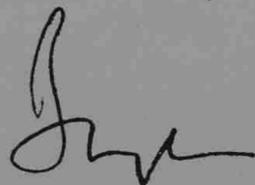
I had a call from Tommy Thompson, the opinion researcher, today in the light of your remarks about the miners' strike in Malaysia.

He claims that his latest survey suggests that you are not getting the credit for standing firm against the miners - ie that we downplayed the victory at the time and that you were right, subject to the reservation of making the point abroad, to emphasise that the Government had "seen off" the strike.

I told him that I was profoundly unconvinced that it would have been wise at the time to rub the NUM's nose in it, but that we ought progressively to get over the fact that the NUM lost - as indeed will other strikers in the future lose. I also take the view that the Labour Party/TUC performance during the NUM strike will be a serious liability at the next election, provided the point of their performance is steadily and regularly registered with the public.

Thus tomorrow at Questions is an opportunity to build on the platform provided by the Opposition over Easter.

Tommy Thompson says his research shows that the public strongly approves of what the Government is trying to do in closing uneconomic pits and very strongly blame the strike on the miners' leadership.



BERNARD INGHAM
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