

*Robert 1 of
in the minutes*



*of D. Pascell ①
Prime Minister 7*

*Mr Walker wants
a meeting in late Sept/*

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG early Oct. (so
01-233 3000 that he can gauge Mr MacGregor's

PRIME MINISTER

*first reactions). Mr Lawson wants a meeting
before you go abroad in September*. Do you want to
adjudicate between them?*

POWER STATION ENDURANCE IN THE MEDIUM TERM

*Or to go for "very early
autumn"?*

Sir Robert Armstrong has circulated the latest in the series of papers produced
by MISC 57. Its relevance to the discussions we will be having in September or
early October on strategy for the coal industry, is obvious: in coming to
decisions on how hard to press on pit closures, we will need an appreciation of
the level of endurance available in the event of a strike. There is also an
interaction in the other direction. In deciding what measures to take to improve
endurance, we need to know what contingencies we are preparing for. Officials
should be asked to refine the endurance options when we have decided our
strategic approach.

MLS 29/7

2. My preliminary reaction is that we should concentrate on those options like
further stockpiling of coal which provide early benefits and do not represent a
commitment of resources far into the future. But this assumes that we shall
wish to step up the rate of pit closures. And of course a number of other
decisions in the fields of public expenditure, coal prices, and the pay round, hinge
on the approach we adopt. So I hope that our meeting will be arranged for the
very early autumn.

3. I am sending copies of this minute to the Home Secretary, the Secretaries
of State for Energy, Defence, Scotland, Employment and Trade and Industry and
to Sir Robert Armstrong, for the usual limited circulation.

(N.L.)

28 July 1983

**so as to get
decisions well in
time in the expenditure
review.*