

Prime Minister
 The recommendations
 are in para. 6. .
 Are you content with them?

Ref. A084/2148

PRIME MINISTER

Organisation to cover the Coal Strike in August

FERB

26.7.

The Lord President will be in this country, mostly in Cumbria, throughout August.

2. The Home Secretary will be in this country, mostly in the north, throughout August.

3. The Secretary of State for Energy plans to be at home in Worcestershire from 4 to 14 August and then in Greece until 1 September. Mr Buchanan-Smith is at home in Midlothian throughout August (except for a visit to Norway from 20 to 22 August). Mr Giles Shaw will be abroad from 3 to 18 August; and thereafter in this country.

4. The Secretary of State for Employment will be in this country, mostly at home in Wiltshire, throughout August.

5. The present arrangements are:

- (1) The Secretary of State for Energy has a daily meeting with senior officials from his Department, from the other Departments primarily concerned, and often from the NCB and the CEBG. This meeting is to pool information and consider tactics, rather than policy.
- (2) You chair meetings of MISC 101 once (or more recently twice) a week, to receive information, review policy and agree or confirm the line to take with the media.
- (3) There is a similar discussion in Cabinet under Industrial Affairs.
- (4) The Secretary of State for Employment holds a meeting about once a week or as necessary to co-ordinate publicity.
- (5) Mr Ingham co-ordinates the line for the media with the Chief Information Officers of the Departments principally concerned, calling meetings as necessary.

6. I recommend:

(1) There should continue to be regular and frequent meetings at the Department of Energy under the chairmanship of an Energy Minister to exchange information and consider tactics. This meeting should be held as often as necessary, but it may not need to meet daily in August: twice a week (Tuesdays and Fridays) might be sufficient, if supplemented with close telephonic contact in between times. The Secretary of State for Energy should either take these meetings himself (until he goes to Greece) or depute Mr Buchanan-Smith or Mr Shaw to do so in his absence.

Mr. Walker envisages that there will be a daily meeting, under a Minister or, if on one or two

(2) You may like to have one meeting of MISC 101 shortly before you depart for your holiday. Thereafter, until the end of August, MISC 101 should meet only if and when there is some policy issue requiring consideration and not just for exchanging information and stocktaking. The Lord President should take the chair; if for any reason he cannot do so, the Home Secretary should do so.

(3) At the end of each of the Department of Energy meetings referred to at (1), a situation report should be prepared and circulated to members of MISC 101 (this would be a substitute for the Secretary of State for Energy's oral briefings). The format and circulation of this situation report should be agreed between the Cabinet Office and the Department of Energy. The Minister in charge of the Department of Energy should be responsible for deciding whether a significant change in the situation calls for an interim report between meetings.

This will include a daily report to you.

(4) Miss Christopherson should be responsible for co-ordinating the Government information/PR response, subject to any Ministerial meetings on the issue, holding meetings of Heads of Information/Chief Press Officers regularly, and making recommendations for action to Ministers and, as necessary, to you (this is agreed with Mr Ingham).

Agree?

days, no Energy Minister is available, Sir K. Gouzenr.



- (5) Day-to-day responsibility for Ministerial supervision of the media arrangements should be for the Secretary of State for Energy (or the Energy Minister in charge in his absence), who should maintain frequent and regular contact with and consult as necessary the Lord President and the Secretary of State for Employment on these matters.
- (6) The Secretaries of State for the Home Department, Trade and Industry, Employment and Transport should ensure that a Minister from each Department is available in this country at all times throughout August to receive reports and take part in whatever discussions (by telephone or at meetings) are required.
7. The Cabinet Office will be able to service any meetings that are required in August. At least one member and for much of the time two members of the MISC 101 Secretariat will be in the office. Mr Gregson will be in the country throughout August, always contactable by telephone, and never more than 150 miles from London.
8. If you are content with these proposals, I will prepare a draft of a minute for you to send, giving instructions accordingly.

R
Approved by
ROBERT ARMSTRONG
and signed in his absence.

26 July 1984