

Prime Minister!

Content with the proposed low key approach to officials in other Departments as in paragraph 4 below.

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P 03360

From: R T J Wilson
7 February 1989

MR GRAY

REC 6 7/2

DOCK LABOUR SCHEME

1. As agreed at the Prime Minister's meeting on 19 January we are carrying out an exercise on the Dock Labour Scheme.
2. Knowledge of the exercise is being confined to an extremely small circle of officials comprising only one official each from the Department of Employment, the Department of Transport and the Treasury plus a small Cabinet Office secretariat. We aim to submit a paper to the Prime Minister and other Ministers concerned by the end of next week.
3. It has however become clear that there are some matters about which we do not have enough knowledge within our group. These include in particular factual information about current food stocks and animal feedstuffs; certain key industrial information, for instance about how many weeks' stocks of raw materials are held by British Steel; and some details about oil supplies.
4. We need to cover these points. I propose therefore that Brigadier Budd should make a low-key approach to one or two people in the Ministry of Agriculture, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Energy, to find out what we need to know. Without referring to the Dock Labour Scheme, he would simply say that there has been some concern about recent threatened dock strikes and that he has been asked to provide an up-to-date assessment of how prepared we are to withstand industrial action in this field. He would stress that he was asking for the information on a strictly confidential basis. The individuals concerned would merely be asked to supply the information, and would not be told about, or invited to attend, the Cabinet Office Group.
5. I would be grateful if you could confirm that there is no objection to our proceeding in this way.

Has there? }
Do on this map here?

R.T.W.

R T J WILSON