

Prime MinisterMR SCHOLAR

Nov 13 / 11

cc:- Mr Hoskyns
Mr InghamOil Tanker Drivers

MS.

The CCU met at official level this morning, to consider the now very confused picture over the threatened oil tanker drivers strike.

As it is understood by the Department of Energy, the position is that Esso have rejected the latest offer by a majority of about 2 - 1, but will not take industrial action until they see what picture emerges from other ballots next week. BP are voting today, for the second time of course, and early indications are that they may again reject the call for industrial action (in Northern Ireland, for instance, they voted 48 - 5 against). Esso and Texaco vote next week - Wednesday/Thursday - and it is widely expected that there will be a period of further negotiations between the tanker drivers and the employers at the end of next week, when all the results are known.

The CCU concluded that it is most unlikely that industrial action will take place on any significant scale before Monday, 23 November. The dispositions of service instructors and service drivers are being made accordingly.

I see no reason to change my earlier judgement that an all-out strike will not in the event take place.

13 November, 1981