

SECRET



cc NO 8-

PRIME MINISTER

WITHSTANDING AN OIL TANKER DRIVERS' STRIKE

I have seen Sir Robert Armstrong's minute to you of 13 October covering a report by officials on the implications of a strike by oil tanker drivers.

I agree that our objective should be to withstand a long strike. I also agree that the Civil Contingencies Unit should be authorised to explore the feasibility and desirability of using troops to maintain, say, 70% of normal road-borne oil deliveries, and any changes in current assumptions that might be appropriate. One of the issues which the Civil Contingencies Unit will need to address is the extent to which it would be right, in the circumstances envisaged, to rely on the Emergency Powers Act 1920; alternatively whether it might be right at the time to bring forward a Bill to amend that Act, on the lines we have been considering recently.

I am sending copies of this minute to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Secretaries of State for Energy, Defence, Scotland, Employment, Trade and Industry and Transport, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

L. B.

28 October 1983

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IND Pa: Industrial Action in Oil Industry

Nov 79.



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