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PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH WORKING MINERS

Chris Butcher, alias Silver Birch, rang No. 10 today. He and Mr. Trevor Morris from Staffordshire addressed the Conservative Backbench Committee on employment chaired by Ralph Howell and received a sympathetic hearing. By contrast they had received no response to their approach to Mr. Kinnock.

Mr. Butcher now wishes to bring a group of working miners to see you. I have consulted Mr. Walker about this and he avises strongly against. To see Mr. Butcher is likely to increase the tensions which exist between the Silver Birch Group and the Working Miners Committee. In my conversation with Mr. Butcher I detected a great deal of jealousy between the two. Mr. Walker regards the latter as more formidable - in his view the Silver Birch Group is something of a publicity exercise financed by the Daily Mail.

Agree I speak to Mr. Butcher and explain that you have not felt it right to meet any of the working miners groups personally, while assuring him of your full support?

for *sc*  
Andrew Turnbull  
29 october 1984

*It will be difficult to refuse. Could I not see representatives of both? - Separately not*