

NOVEMBER 2, 1984

Speaking in London today, Mr Peter Walker, Secretary of State for Energy said:

"During the week, as miners recognised the nature of Mr Scargill's approaches to Libya and his refusal to negotiate for a settlement, there has been every indication of the ordinary miner wishing to get back to work.

"In Scotland at Bilston Glen, where a month or two ago there was but a handful of people courageous enough to work, attendance figures went through the 200 barrier.

"In Yorkshire, at every pit where there were men at work in spite of massive and violent picketing, there were no declines in attendance, but a whole range of increases.

"But in North Derbyshire, a centre of violent picketing, the region between the militancy of Yorkshire and the working activity of Nottinghamshire, dramatic changes have taken place. Last Friday 184 miners went to work at Shirebrook; this Friday there were 286. At Warsop - a record attendance. At Whitwell, where but a few weeks ago the first man had the courage to attend, 29 people went in today. And even at Arkwright, where this morning 1,000 pickets tried to stop anybody going into work and were addressed by Militant Tendency hero Tony Benn, three times as many men went in this week as last Friday.

"The Western Area has had record attendances since the dispute started.



"The reality is that the miners today, as with the National Executive of the NUM yesterday, increasingly realise this is a senseless dispute which is only damaging the coal industry, the miner, the miner's family, and the mining communities."