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'TUC WILL DO ALL IT CAN TO END STRIKE'

THE TUC IS TO DO EVERYTHING IT CAN TO GET TALKS RE-OPENED BETWEEN THE MINERS' UNION AND THE COAL BOARD IN AN ATTEMPT TO SETTLE THE PITS STRIKE, TUC GENERAL SECRETARY NORMAN WILLIS SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING AFTER A MEETING OF THE TUC GENERAL COUNCIL, HE SAID HE DID NOT ENVISAGE AN EARLY APPROACH TO THE NCB.

'WE ARE NOT PROPOSING AT THE MOMENT TO APPROACH THE NATIONAL COAL BOARD, BUT WE ARE SOUNDING OUT IN ALL DIRECTIONS,' SAID MR WILLIS.

'IT DOES NOT LOOK FROM STATEMENTS WHICH HAVE BEEN MADE IN PUBLIC THAT THE BOARD, AT THE MOMENT, WANTS TO GO INTO NEGOTIATIONS. I FIND THAT REGRETTABLE.'

HE SAID THE NCB'S TACTIC OF PINNING HOPES FOR AN END TO THE STRIKE ON A SURGE BACK TO WORK HAD NOT SUCCEEDED. THE BOARD APPEARED STUCK ON A PARTICULAR LINE AND THE TUC WOULD BE SEEKING TO RE-OPEN NEGOTIATIONS.

MR WILLIS SAID THE TUC WOULD ALSO BE TALKING AGAIN TO NUM LEADERS.

THE TUC APPEARS TO BE WORKING AROUND THE POSSIBILITY OF NEGOTIATING A NEW PLAN FOR COAL, WITH THE AGREEMENT OF THE NUM TO TAKE A MORE FLEXIBLE LINE.

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