
Downsizing deals - Ms Baird to fight closure of Corus TCP

Monday, 05 Oct, 2009

It is reported that an MP has pledged to fight to the bitter end to save a threatened steel plant as workers took their campaign to keep it open to the Labour Party conference.

Ms Vera Baird said that she would let Teesside Cast Products close over her dead body. About a dozen Redcar steel workers, wearing 'Save Our Steel' T shirts, attended the conference in Brighton, ahead of a fringe meeting in the evening to discuss the situation.

Expected to be present were Mr Nick Brown minister for the North East and Business Minister Mr Pat McFadden, as well as Ms Baird. The campaign to keep the plant open has already won support from the TUC and Middlesbrough Football Club chairman Steve Gibson.

Speaking before the fringe meeting, Ms Baird said that "Priority number one was for a commercial solution to Corus' difficulties, whether that be for someone to buy the plant or agree a new contract over a number of years to take its steel."

She said the rising price of steel had made the plant more competitive and there was renewed optimism about its future. However, Ms Baird said that should a commercial solution not be possible, she was happy to back calls for support to be made available by government, although she did not say what this could be specifically.

She said that "The lads have come down here and I support them and I am standing by ready to help if there is a need for more help from the government. We cannot let this plant close and it will close over my dead body."

It may be noted that the TCP plant faces closure after an international consortium pulled out halfway through a 10 year agreement to take more than three quarters of its steel. Up to 3,000 people, including those directly employed by the plant and its contractors, could lose their jobs.

Mr Michael Leahy Community Union general secretary said that "Everyone in Teesside has heard of, and supports the campaign to save steelmaking on Teesside. Community Union is backing the Save Our Steel campaign and is calling upon the Government to leave no stone unturned as it searches for ways to support our members and the UK steel industry."

(Sourced from www.thenorthernecho.co.uk)

For more news visit at www.steelguru.com