

BLACK FLAG

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STOP THE CITY



News is coming in all the time, but here is a brief resume of information received so far. . . Around 1500 took part, there were less cops around at the beginning (busy day — miners pickets and GLC protest even the Cruise Missile road trip at Greenham). Things started to happen from around 9 onwards. From the beginning, the police moved in with snatch squads picking individuals at random. There were some attempts to defend comrades but there was many instances of protesters standing by allowing the cops to do what they want. Around 11.30 about 500 stormed up a street smashing bank windows. Altogether about 40 plate glass windows were broken (estimated damage £10,000). Lots of waste-bins and skips set on fire, tyres slashed, graffiti in chalk/pen/paint, locks glued etc.

There were many reports of people being followed by plainclothes cops. We heard of one undercover cop who was following a group around for several hours — he had also been seen the previous day, in the end the cop was chased into a wine bar and punched in the face. He won't be seen again.

We heard reports of some cars being overturned. One Rolls-Royce had its windscreen kicked in while the owner inside panicked!

Altogether the number of arrests were high — around 450 (this includes people who were arrested in the early evening protesting at the Cruise Missile manoeuvres in Trafalgar Square near Paul Raymond's Theatre of War.) We later heard that the police were thinking of charging some of those arrested under the firearms Act for throw-

ing smoke canisters. One protester was arrested and threatened with conspiracy to riot. At the police station he was accused of organising the STC protest, merely because at the time of his arrest he was carrying a CB and, possibly, because police infiltrators remember him from a planning meeting. He had several injuries: 3 cops got him in a strangle hold and carried him to the police van by his throat. In the police van they got hold of his breathing device (he's an asthmatic) and dangled it in front of his face, which was by now turning blue. At the police station he collapsed, in the cell, and had to be seen by a doctor. Fellow prisoners demanded he be let go. The cops thought he was dying, so they let him out without charging him, and told him 'to die 40 yards away, not here'.

Finally we hear that one group of squatters was visited by plain clothes cops the day before STC. They were refused entry and later that evening they were visited by a young man looking for somewhere to stay for the night. He didn't explain clearly how he knew about the house, he also came out with some bullshit about how he had some gelignite and how he had been in the Swedish Army (he was too young). Later he was confronted and ordered at knifepoint to remain in the house overnight and to get out of the area in the morning. This agent—provocateur clearly hadn't done his homework.

More overall coverage of STC will follow in the next News Bulletin, please be prompt with news and photos if you wish to contribute.

MINERS

BALLOT?

The liberal call for a national ballot on whether or not to strike against pit closures, can only be treated with derision and contempt. If a pit closes, a whole community dies. You only have to look at what were pit villages in the north-east and South Wales to witness the utter devastation and dereliction that are the result of pit closures. So the call for a ballot of people, some of whom do not even live in mining communities (particularly white collar staff) to decide on the life or death of that community is an anathema. Such decisions should lie with every man, woman and child in that community and the people in the pit villages are well aware of this, and in the past few weeks have been working shoulder to shoulder with the miners to defend themselves against the attacks made upon them.

Their actions are mainly ignored by the media who are only interested in those opposed to the strike, e.g. some Nottinghamshire women. Little has been said about the Yorkshire women standing with the men on the picket line; making collections of food and money to help each other out as there has been no social security payments as yet; setting up kitchens; taking food to pickets; producing news bulletins. Nor about the school children who have demonstrated in solidarity with the miners in Edlington and Mexborough schools near Doncaster. Nor about the Barnsley nurses who have voted to have a rota of women to stand with the miners on the picket lines. Nor about the local trades people who are selling fish and chips cheaper or giving food to the women's action groups.

The fight against pit closures is a fight that concerns all the people who live in the mining areas.

POLICE STATE

The police operations during this strike have struck alarm into the hearts and minds of the liberal establishment. The co-ordination on a national rather than regional level has been seen as the embryo of a national police force. The speedy mobilization as a threat to 'democracy'. Their tactics an affront to freedom of movement. Perhaps these are all true, but as anarchists they are what we expect.

What has happened has helped to open the eyes of many to the repressive nature of the state. For the first time many people are finding themselves in direct confrontation with the police merely by travelling, picketing and even in one case having a drink in a local pub. In reality the police actions are just the tactics they have used on some demonstrations on a much larger scale, and a watered down version of what they do every day in the north of Ireland.

So, what have they been doing? The stopping and turning back of pickets is common place, many are given a warning the first time and arrested the second. This is done on a thorough basis, with police road blocks, and when pickets have tried to walk to pits still working, lines of policemen standing across the road. A good example of the thoroughness and effectiveness of the police operation can be seen in the following example. A miner from South Yorkshire, contacted his brother who runs a pub in Nottinghamshire saying he was coming over to stop the night so he could go picketing in the morning, and so if the police contacted him to confirm it. The miner and a friend then dressed themselves up as if they were going for

DIVISIONS OF LABOUR

The Coal House in Doncaster has become a battle ground in the miner's strike, not only because it is still working but because it is where the wages for the Nottingham scabs are made up.

The Coal House is the main administrative centre in the region and employs some 1,800 workers, who are divided into 3 unions BACM (British Association of Colliery Management), APEX (Association of Professional Executives and Computer Staff) and COSA/NUM (Colliery Officers Staff Association).

There is traditionally a resentment of the office staff by the miners, and since the introduction of the bonus system this has greatly increased. The bonus system works on an area, pit and face structure, face workers are paid the bonus on the production from their face, other pit workers get paid on the production from their pit and office workers are paid a bonus on the overall production of the area. What this means is that office staff are paid a bonus which is higher and more constant than the other workers. If a face stops production for reasons which are no fault of the face worker such as mechanical or geological, the face workers lose most of their bonus, whilst still working a full shift in situations that are just as hard and dangerous.

So the bonus system means that office staff earn their bonus not on their own work but from the toil, blood and sweat of the pit workers which makes the resentment more intense. The National Coal Board Policy is to employ



VISIT SCENIC YORKSHIRE *Photo: M.*

Odd items were thrown and a window broken; at one point, when the police allowed a car to drive into the mass of pickets it was attacked and rocked and the woman inside thumped, but she was not a scab, she was a magistrate going to the court. But it was a woman who was

Yorkshire, contacted his brother who runs a pub in Nottinghamshire saying he was coming over to stop the night so he could go picketing in the morning, and so if the police contacted him to confirm it. The miner and a friend then dressed themselves up as if they were going for a drink. After entering Nottinghamshire they were stopped by the police, the story was given and checked up on, but they were still turned back on the threat of arrest.

The police have smashed windscreens, held miners on minor driving offences, arrested many and beaten some up; just to stop them reaching the still working pits. Four miners from Bently pit, north of Doncaster, were arrested while having a drink and a game of darts in a village pub.



*"March while its still legal." Photo: M.
"My friend wanted to come but he lives in Kent." GLC Demo March 29th London.*

The police have mounted roadblocks and convoys of vans constantly cruising up and down motorways in order to stop the recent tactics of causing congestion of main roadways.

The police have also been questioning arrested pickets on their political views, but again this is nothing new. Finding out what people think, who they vote for and what they think is the major function of the special branch and MI5, whose job it is to keep an eye on. It is clear that the police have mounted an efficient means of control, but it is only a fraction of what they could do and their tactics and repression have only been a part of the methods they could use.

bonus not on their own work but from the toil, blood and sweat of the pit workers which makes the resentment more intense. The National Coal Board Policy is to employ people who are relatives of people already employed by them, which means you have men on picket lines while wives working in the office are crossing the picket lines. You even have the case of picketing men driving their scabbing wives to work.

THE THIRD WEEK OF THE STRIKE

On the Monday at the start of the third week of the strike the Coal House became a target for pickets from the Doncaster area; up to this time the only pickets had been a handful from the Coal House and their effect was minimal. There were around 200 pickets, mainly miners who had been turned back from the Nottingham border, but they were supported by members of the Hatfield Women's Support Group and a handful of unemployed workers. On arrival at the Coal House there were only 20 policemen but these were soon reinforced by others from the police station next door, bringing their numbers up to about 100,

There was then pushing and shoving to occupy the entrance to the building, and although the pickets could not hold it all the time, the police couldn't ensure the 'safety' of the scabs, the majority of which were being held at the police station. After a couple of hours when only a smaller number of workers had braved the pickets the management agreed to close the place down for the day.

Although the press has attempted to highlight any 'violence' of strikers towards scabs, this encounter showed there is little violence directed at the scabs; this is obvious when all the pickets and scabs are face to face. When a non-striker stops to talk and argue their case, even if they are surrounded by pickets there is quiet to allow them to talk. When the police lines are outflanked, a group of 50 pickets ran towards the workers being held at the police station; even though there was only a couple of police there, the pickets stopped short of the scabs and shouted pleas for solidarity. It is only when the pickets are held back or pushed around by the police that abuse and aggression is directed at the scabs.

The next day the police were better prepared and when the pickets arrived at the Coal House there were already 200 officers around the entrance, but as more and more pickets arrived they were re-inforced by bus loads of police from the barracks in Nottingham. There were about 500 pickets facing 500 police many of whom came from outside South Yorkshire.

The scabs were again held at the police station while the police and pickets fought for control of the entrance to the building, but the police managed to form a cordon. One of the weaknesses of the pickets was the reluctance to risk arrest. At one point when a surge was taking place further down the line, it was only the action of the women who held their ground while the men fell back, which gave the more militant pickets time to run over to out-manoeuvre the police.

point when the police allowed a car to drive into the mass of pickets it was attacked and rocked and the woman inside thumped, but she was not a scab, she was a magistrate going to the court. But it was not these events that the press focused on, but the passing out of a policeman. During a lull in the pushing and shoving a policeman was 'overcome by the occasion', nothing was thrown and he was not pushed, an ambulance arrived which had a blue light smashed and the policeman was taken to hospital. This event gave the press their headlines and front page photographs.

After the closure on the Monday and the near run thing on the Tuesday, by the Wednesday the police were making no mistakes. The police started by occupying all the ground as they out-numbered the pickets by around 600 to 400 the result was a police training exercise.

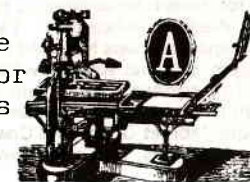
The pickets attempted to block a main road that runs next to the Coal House, but were soon dispersed. As it came nearer to the time for the scabs to be escorted in, the number of pickets fell further as miners left. A small group, consisting mainly of the women of the support groups, attempted to stop the scabs reaching the police station, but they were also pushed back by the police. The police managed to keep the pickets at least 40 feet from the entrance and the scabs were escorted in with ease. It was after the scabs had been taken in and the miners were about to disperse, as they had done the previous day that the police line opened up and a snatch squad burst out to make a few indiscriminate arrests.

The next day the bulk of the pickets changed to picket the power stations which is just as well, because there was a bigger police presence than the day before and were in a position to squash any attempt to disrupt the scabs going to work in Coal House. The ability of the police to build up their forces and to preposition them (learning from the previous days events) makes it extremely difficult for pickets to permanently close a place of work, which is one of the reasons why the miners are being forced to move from place to place in an attempt to catch the police unaware. The days of the early seventies and the mass pickets that closed the Saltby coke works are over as the police are now better trained and more willing to take on large groups of pickets.

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Doncaster @narchists have been printing leaflets for free for Hatfield Women's Support Group and need help, donations etc to:

DAG c/o John Creaghe Society
PO Box 217 Sheffield S1-1FD



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MINERS

LA-BORE HYPOCRITES

The Labour Party is giving its full support to the miners in their fight against pit closures, but as with all things their words in opposition and their actions in power are two different things.

The present run down of the industry is very similar to the run down that occurred between 1964 and 1970 under the Labour government, where in South Wales alone 50 pits were closed, one every 7 weeks, and 34,000 jobs destroyed. In the 60's oil was very cheap and power stations were changed from coal to oil. This is similar to today where nuclear power is seen by many as a cheaper form of power, mainly because it employs less workers, which makes it less vulnerable to industrial action as most of the workers are specialist technicians and management.

After the oil producing countries pushed up their prices and the oil crisis led to the 3 day week, coal was back in favour, power stations were switched back to coal and the new Labour government of 1974 launched 'The Plan for Coal'. But even now the coal industry was being run down as nuclear power is to be the power of the future. In South Wales alone between 1974 and 1979 4,000 miners jobs were destroyed.

Tonny 'Lefty' Benn, the Energy Secretary between 1975 and 1979, not only supervised the 'Plan for Coal', in order to offset the pressure from the oil countries, he also lunched a plan for nuclear power, giving the go ahead for many more nuclear power stations, which then as now was seen as the alternative to coal. Tony Benn also proved that the nuclear power stations are easier to control when he broke a strike at one plant by threatening to send the troops in.

Thatcher may have a hatred of the miners and the power they are within the working class and a love for cuts and monetarist purity which the Labour Party is dead against but for whatever reason they act, over the last decade both labour and tory government have meant one thing and one thing only for the mining industry, CLOSURES.

The miners are split in the fight against pit closures, a split that will probably be the death of the strike and the death of many pits. Because of the massive stock piles, especially in the power stations, the miners cannot win without the support of other workers, and they cannot win without the support of each other. The divisions within the miners union cannot be healed by ballots or by executive officers mending their differences, they can only be healed by destroying all the things that divide miners



"Thats what you get for not paying Rent!"

93 Effra Parade, Brixton 4.30am Landlord Time.

EFFRA PARADE BATTLE

Monday 25 March 4.30am

Brixton. After a 'tip-off', 100 squatters wait in Effra Parade for the arrival of the bailiffs and removal vans. Two removal vans are chased off — the cops turn up. An empty house bursts into flames as a car is put on its side, and corrugated iron is torn down for barricades each end of the street.

More cops, this time in vans — people go into the houses to fortify the doors and go up on the roofs. The heavy mob — 200 riot police, arrive with shields, helmets, truncheons, searchlights, night vision scope cameras (straight from Northern Ireland) and sledgehammers to smash the doors.

Bricks fly — the cops go for the crowd in the street and people split up. People on the roofs sit waiting for the doors to break down — the sickening thudding goes on. It takes them some 10-15 minutes to get through, as the 'accros' and scaffolding holds well.

Finally they do, and to everybody's surprise, restrain themselves from giving people inside the door treatment, and tell them to get out, or else!

Skirmishes around side streets — bricks at 'community' cops. One hit on the head, one arrest and three more as others try to prevent the seizure.

Fire engines put out the fire — cops 'secure' the area like a curfew. You cannot leave your house/flat, or go in or out of the street.

Scabs move in — wreck the roofs and set fire to our old doors and furniture. The gas and electric vans come and turn off all the sources, but water spurts out unchecked from broken pipes.

Monday 6pm Kennington Police Station. One squatter is still being held. Our fog horn hooters blast away as we yell out — he heard us inside — and we get support from people on the nearby housing estate, who had just heard about it on the TV news. We leave, and six cops even follow us on to the bus to make sure we pay our fares!

People go to the Lambeth Council Planning Meeting on the same night (!) but they don't discuss the demolition or what will happen to the site. We stare at them all, and suddenly a stink arises. They open their windows — if they put up with each other such a stink is nothing really. The NALGO union heavy gets abuse. This council shits on the residential workers, and the residents too . . . he should be ashamed, but he just shuffles his papers. The glorious 'Red' Leader Ted Knight leaves glaring at us.

Elsewhere in Brixton, a councillor gets a stink bomb through their door, and in the next few days the scabs have problems with punctured tyres. . . Two of the houses are fired.

Next night there are less cops about so the corrugated iron fence comes down on one side, and graffiti reminds the scabs that booby traps and bricks await them. 'Just doing my job — signed A. Nazi'.

Effra Parade lies in ruins but the people who lived there still resist on other fronts, and squatting will continue to be a thorn in the side of power-mad bureaucrats, 'left' and 'right'.

**Note: While no watercannons were present there were armed policemen to accompany every police group that went into the houses.*

the miners union cannot be healed by ballot or by executive officers mending their differences, they can only be healed by destroying all the things that divide miners against miner. The first target must be the bonus system, which must be eradicated, but it is not only the divisions that are imposed on the miners by the NCB that must go, but the divisions that the miners force on themselves.

Only by creating a free union, free from full time officials, bureaucrats and other trappings of inequality. Only when every organiser is a worker, and whether national president or pit secretary is unpaid and does union work in their spare time, will the miners be free from their own bureaucrats. Keeping the officers in the pit not only means that the miners replace them when dissatisfied, it means that the militants are left where they can educate all miners of the need to fight and work together.

But it is not only the burden of full time—paid officials that miners must free themselves from, it is from any entanglement with the NCB. All agreements allowing people time off to do union work must be scrapped; liasing with the NCB over the pensions and the running of the Miners Welfare Clubs must be destroyed in order to free the miners from the tentacles of the NCB. All pensions, clubs, union offices etc must be run and owned by the miners without the NCB.

Thirdly the miners must free themselves from the restrictions and divisions that the law puts on them. All laws such as the one restricting the transfer of cash into the strike fund from other sections and the divisions of pickets into official and unofficial must be ignored.

When the organisation of the union is free from all hierarchical and bureaucratic structures and the union is made totally independent of state and company can the solidarity evolve that is required to destroy the power of the state.

J.M.

HYPOCRISY OF THE POLICE

Speaking on the miners' pickets to a seminar on police discipline, and predictably praising the operation as a 'victory for traditional policing methods', Eldon Griffiths MP (adviser to the Police Federation) said they had prevented 'violent men' from intimidating those who wished to work. He contrasted it with the teargas of the American police, the lathi charges of the Indian police, of the water cannon used by the Germans and Japanese. (No mention was made of Iron Curtain countries for fear the comparison would be too direct; he contrasted the bad against the worse in terms of the 'Western' police only). Taking the same facts and terms of reference, perhaps he could have praised the restraint of the miners. But that was not what he paid for.

In a curious aside he said 'any attempt to obstruct those who wish to go to work is a breach of criminal law'. Are arrests pending in the Cabinet Office and Coal Board? The strike was over the closure of pits, thus preventing those wishing to go to work from doing so.

STOP THE CITY GLASGOW 22nd MARCH

Thursday 22 March, forty people participated in the first anti-war protest of its kind in Glasgow, drawing attention to the links between Big Business, Arms Trade and Third World poverty.

Protestors assembled at the Bank of England office, at about 8.30, then moved on to the Stock Exchange, closely followed by two Special Branch officers. Fifteen people entered the building, whilst others remained outside, to leaflet, and talk to employees and passers-by. Police arrived quickly in three vans, three cars and two motorbikes. Inside, the protestors were given a hostile reception by the shocked staff. Physical violence was directed against two protestors and a freelance journalist present.

Moving on from the Stock Exchange protestors split into smaller groups in order to leaflet and occupy nearby banks, with special attention given to Barclay's Bank and South African Airways.

After a meeting at the Art School, protestors slow marched down Souchiehall St and Buchanan St, carrying banners, chanting, playing instruments and leafletting, culminating in a die-in in George Square which generated strong interest. Various groups then moved off, one to the Canadian Embassy to protest this year's seal-cull, while another group entered the nearby Army Recruiting Office where we were prevented from speaking to prospective recruits. Moved on again by police and an abusive Army Sergeant. The next action was at the Navy office in West Nile St, where we were again joined by our friends from Special Branch who were given particular attention by a group of protestors.

The day was closed by an occupation of the foyer of the City Council Chambers in George Sq., where a group of twenty-nine protestors formed a circle, chanting. Three Labour Councillors expressed sympathy with the demonstrators. Although police closed the entrances, other protestors joined in the chant from outside thereby drawing attention to the action.



Sarah Tisdall Card: South Atlantic Souveneirs

Note: While no water cannons were present there were armed policemen to accompany every police group that went into the houses.

Leaving the chambers, protestors formed a human chain between the chambers and the cenotaph, two mounted policemen then spurred their horses into the chain in an attempt to clear the road, protestors sat down; one lane of the road was forcibly cleared, with two demonstrators being struck by horses hooves. This action progressed to a sing-in in the middle of George Sq.

However, this festival atmosphere was soured when two men were arrested after erecting a large banner on the cenotaph, which bore the legend, '1984 BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU.' After a long day without arrests and the expenditure of much effort, police tempers were obviously frayed, and a woman protesting the brutality of the arresting officers was herself bundled into the van, and later charged with obstruction.

Throughout the day, the peace bus co-ordinating the action was followed by a succession of police officers in un-marked cars, and was held over by traffic police threatening to impound it, initially on charges of obstructing the city centres. However, this charge was dropped when the driver pointed out that he had been parked for the previous ninety minutes, and cited as witnesses the police 'tail'. A further charge of un-road-worthiness was also later dropped.

Glasgow police attempted to follow the example of their Edinburgh colleagues, in confiscating leaflets, using the threat of forgery charges, as some leaflets bore a photocopied £1 note on one side.

At the end of the day, energy was high, the feeling being that the actions were successful, if only as a prelude to things to come. With approaching ten thousand leaflets distributed, we can properly claim to have made a real impact on Glasgow's 'City'.

The Impressionists 1984

FOOTNOTES:

Many Bank and cash card machines were superglued. In all, nine people were arrested. Two of these are being held on remand for breach of the peace and obstruction for 10 days and 2 weeks.

SARAH TISDALL AND THE GOVERNMENT

Sarah Tisdall was a Foreign Office Clerk who noted an outrageous document on Sir Geoffrey Howe's papers. It gave details of the arrival of cruise missiles in England, which was being kept secret from the public.

Miss Tisdall leaked it to the *Guardian*, who published it: the Government demanded to know where they got their information, and the editor weakly handed over the document received.

The Government wanted to show that nobody should dare do such a thing again, and Miss Tisdall, identified as passing the document, was made the burnt sacrifice: she gets six months imprisonment (in criminal conditions: 'we do not have political offenders in England' is the parrot cry). 'You enabled people fanatically opposed to the introduction of cruise missiles to obstruct them', the judge told her. Not the potential State enemy be it noted. The *real* enemy: the People.

FOOTNOTE: An indignant piece of graffiti opposite Farringdon Station (the nearest tube to the *Guardian*) asks 'Guardian workers — have you no conscience?' This, for all its good intentions, seems muddled. Press workers, like any other workers, are never consulted. This is a case reflecting on professional middle class ethics. The editor lacked the guts to tear up the document, after using it, and tell the police, 'Sorry, it's been lost in the filing'.