

BLACK FLAG

ANARCHIST FORTNIGHTLY

11.2.85

Vol. VII NO. 126

30p

SUPPORT THE MINERS!

From the very beginning the government has dictated the parameters of the present miners strike: nothing short of class war, the objectives of which are the defeat of the National Union of Mineworkers and the crushing of militant trade unionism and syndicalist direct action.

The government's final strategy is one of desperation: to restrict and contain the resistance within the mining communities and to prevent any wider resistance or uprising from materialising and detracting from the process of Coal Board intimidation that goes under the name of "talks".

But away from the glare of the NCB "call my bluff" game, the mood at pit level is one of anger, and the demand is for retribution and for the strike to move into a new phase, onto the offensive, in order that a speedy but victorious conclusion be imposed.

To date, measures have been defensive, given that many mining villages have virtually been under police occupation and that government and NCB propaganda in

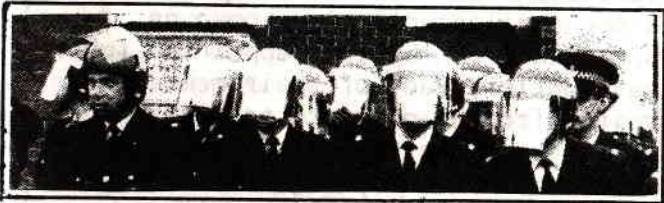


given that many mining villages have virtually been under police occupation and that government and NCB propaganda in inducing scabbing has been unprecedented.

Now, in this, the possible final stage of the dispute, there are many who are insisting that the strike returns to the offensive and that such offensive measures be deployed outside and beyond the mining communities and be taken to the heartlands of the ruling class.

If any such offensive were to take place, it would presumably include a stepping up of the campaign to encourage secondary industrial action, backed up by massive sabotage aimed at weakening the power, fuel and communication lines. March 9th, the anniversary of the strike, could also function as the culmination point for any coordinated action: if the strike was still going by that date, it would not be at all unfeasible for miners and support groups to organise, say, a mass picket aimed at besieging parliament itself.

The potential for escalation is there. The folly of a militant government, resolutely seeking total surrender, may be all that is necessary to light the fuse.



Stop Business as Usual

"On 30th April we should all hit back at this evil rotting system whose reality is measured by the fact that it is willing to annihilate all in order to "defend" itself "....At 12 noon on that day - fight back against multi-national companies all over the world.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Strikers at a doll factory in Perpignan, southern France, have sent dolls to the children of striking miners in Britain, in an excellent example of working class solidarity.

The strikers (mainly women) have been strike since September last year. It's their second strike in three years. In June '82 the 1000 workers struck against the closure of the factory, resulting in a new ownership, but with the loss of 685 jobs.

Five months ago the boss announced the closure of the factory - the only doll factory in France. In response the workers occupied the factory and continue to do so. There have been demonstrations in support of the strikers, which have been attacked by riot police.

One point the strikers are stressing is that the French ('Socialist') Government gave the new owner Fr11m (about £1m) in 1982 and nobody seems to know what happened to it. The Government doesn't seem at all concerned about this state of affairs.

Messages of solidarity would be very welcome at the following address: Berchet Industrie SA, 193 Avenue Languedoc, 6600 Perpignan, France.

SOURCE: Groupe Puig Antich (Perpignan anarcho-syndicalists, members of the Federation Anarchiste).

Cambridge Anarchists and DAM (Direct Action Movement) have helped to arrange a visit to France by striking miners from Shirebrook Colliery in Derbyshire. The invitation came from some Parisian anarcho-syndicalists (members of the Federation Anarchiste), who are arranging factory visits and a large public meeting in Paris, and another meeting in Lyon.

FRANCE

Radio Libertaire, the radio station of the Federation Anarchiste, intends to devote a complete day to the miners strike and it is hoped that the Miners Videos will be shown in places the visiting strikers will not be going to. The strikers will be accompanied on their visit by a comrade from Doncaster DAM.

AUSTRALIA

Over 6000 Australian miners, dockers and seamen have been laid off because they have refused to cooperate in the movement of coal to Britain.

MINERS UPDATE

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Police Thugs

Police officers were alleged to have hurled bricks and concrete from a bridge at a car being chased along the M57 motorway recently. Two Liverpool men were finally stopped after a two hour high speed chase through Cheshire and Merseyside during which time at least nine police cars were damaged.

The two men were then placed in a police dog's cage in a police van and savaged by the dog, according to their defence solicitor. Both men have been charged with stealing the car and making off without paying for petrol worth £23.75. One wonders how the media would have reacted if these men had been killed!

Snowman

Pickets near Rotherham angered local police by building a snowman and decorating it with a toy policeman's helmet. One Superintendent was particularly angry and ordered the removal of the helmet. When the miners refused his request he jumped into his police land-rover and demolished the snowman. He also demolished his landrover (and was badly shaken) as the snowman had been built around a concrete post!

Brother Scab

A Notts miner's daughter was threatened with suspension from her school for wearing anti-scab and pro-strikers badges, for writing on her satchel 'my bother's a scab' and for trying to organise debate in the school on the strike. But she refused to accept any punishment and accused her teachers of being hypocritical - after all they



Wages Sabotaged

The NCB's central wages office at Fryston Colliery was broken into and smashed up. The raid took place on New Years Eve when security was lax. Nine offices were ransacked and records destroyed. The offices stored wage records for the whole of the North Yorkshire area, thus payment details for scabs in that area were sabotaged. A Board spokesman said that it would take months to sort out the mess.

Hatfield Arrests

News on the four pickets arrested outside Hatfield Main Colliery (see last issue). They were all charged with various public order offences, and were held for 24 hours.

Mass Pickets

With the failure of the NCB-NUM talks - no doubt encouraged by the government in the first instance in order to build up false hopes and so lead to demoralisation - miners at pit level have turned to action to demonstrate how they feel the direction of the strike ought to be heading. In South Yorkshire mass picketing has resumed and the indications are that it is here to stay.

Kiveton Park and Hatfield led the way, followed by Cortonwood, where more than 3000 gathered to prevent scabbing, but also to drive it home to the NUM leadership that there's to be no sell-out. At Cortonwood they came from all over Yorkshire - and Nottinghamshire too - and the police were clearly unprepared for the mass turn-out. Riot cops were seconded, as an emergency measure, from other areas. Some fighting broke out, but arrests were few.

But it was at Houghton Main where picket line anger at the games the NCB are playing was so impressively shown. Again the police were unprepared as over 2000 pickets converged. When police reinforcements arrived, the usual riot gear was quickly got out, which in turn led to a justifiable response from the picket line as stones, concrete posts and other missiles were hurled at the cops. Nine cops were reportedly injured and later the police cut off the village in a mop-up operation.

The question is will the mass picketing remain a defensive measure, ensuring that the police retain their siege conditions in the pit villages, or will pickets decide to adopt offensive

organise debate in the school on the strike. But she refused to accept any punishment and accused her teachers of being hypocritical - after all they wear their CND and NUT badges. She told them that if they can be political, then she couldn't see any reason why she should have to stop supporting striking trade unionists.

Her father told Hatfield miners that if she can stand firm against a whole school of scab's children and teachers and refuse to give in, then the rest of the striking miners movement can follow her example.

Arsonists Jailed

Four miners were each sentenced to two years for an arson attack - causing £75,000 worth of damage - on a scab coach firm, Thomson Tours of Trentham. A fifth miner was sentenced to two years Youth Custody. The five all come from the Potteries. In the same case, another miner had charges dismissed and a second got acquitted.

Scab Spotting

On the M25 from the Dartford tunnel to the M1 - many scab coal deliveries are being undertaken by Three Rivers Haulage, in navy blue artic tippers, mainly Dodge units.



MacGregor's office? Sure, it's just down the corridor and follow the trail of stabbed backs.

News on the four pickets arrested outside Hatfield Main Colliery (see last issue). They were all charged with various public order offences, and were held for 24 hours. Dave Douglass, NUM organiser for Hatfield Main, was beaten by the police, getting a gash from his hip to his knee, and bruising to the liver and legs. He has been charged on four counts. A woman had her coat and shoes taken away, and was kept in a freezing cell. One man, who had been involved in a car crash a few days earlier, was released with internal bleeding.

MacGregor's Heavies

Wackenhut, the US security firm employed by NCB Chief Ian MacGregor (then head of AMAX) to intimidate striking miners, have now opened up an office in Britain: Unit 3, Britannia Estate, Luton (tel - 0582 30556).

Neasden Pickets

Brent Miners Support Group is picketing every Monday from 6.30am. On Wednesday there are pickets by Richmond and Twickenham Miners Support Group. There is a need for other support groups to fill in other mornings, to build up support and as a lead-up to the mass pickets of February 11 and 13. Neasden Power Station is in north-west London and is on the Jubilee Line.

Collections

Money is being collected for single striking miners who are living over a wide area of South Yorkshire. Single workers on strike do not get any Social Security payments at all. Donations can be sent to Dave Douglass, PO Box 96, Doncaster, S Yorkshire.

The question is will the mass picketing remain a defensive measure, ensuring that the police retain their siege conditions in the pit villages, or will pickets decide to adopt offensive measures and go for the power stations, the fuel depots, the centres of government, etc?

Back Miners Defence

A Miners Defence Committee congress is due to take place in Sheffield on February 9, with delegates from trade union organisations and speakers from the NUM. The MDC bulletin is Black Dragon, edited by GLC Labour leader Ken Livingstone. On the whole it contains useful information as to picketing arrangements, etc. According to the paper (sub details on application from 31 Cranwich Rd, London N16), NUM delegates have now taken a central role in organising the MDC.

Europe Supports

It is highly encouraging that so much interest is being taken on the Continent in the miners' strike, which is recognised as a key issue in resistance to the encroaching totalitarian State. The Direct Action Movement has received sums of money, from European comrades to pass on to miners support groups, and other sums have been sent direct.

From comrades of the CNT in Spain has come several thousands of pounds for the miners families; this is especially heartening bearing in mind that the traffic isn't one way - not only have thousands of pounds been collected for Spanish prisoners and veterans, not least by the Anarchist Black Cross, but with the rebuilding of the Spanish movement anarcho-syndicalists here sent offset lithos, duplicating, photocopying and other machines, as well as training people to use them; and we organised a regular shuttle during the period when, in the last days of Franco, large numbers of young women were discovering a freer life but were unable to obtain contraceptives and had to seek abortions, or contraceptive devices, outside Spain. It is nice to know that from the people we helped is coming the impetus to help miners in their hour of need. That's what solidarity is all about: mutual aid!