

SECRET

I suppose we should be
60,000 and hope
no one asks questions.

1 TF
2 CF

29

AT

X is a complete
contradiction as
the NCB line when
says to have a
order of 1-2000

MR TURNBULL

4 July 1984

COAL

Men at work

The position is confused, and it is extremely difficult to produce reliable figures. The information provided by the Department of Energy simply reflects the actual number of people working on Wednesday, 27 June - ie 57,000 working in the coal fields, or 63,000 if regional HQs, research centres and Hobart House are included. (Incidentally, Hobart House employs 700 people).

The table cannot be used to estimate the number of men on strike. This is because:

- Seven working pits were on holiday.
- The numbers of mineworkers (NUM) and officials (NACODS) do not include working men who are absent for legitimate reasons, ie rest days, including shift rest days, holiday, sickness etc. NACODS are not formally on strike, but some men are not turning up to work because of heavy picketing. The number of working members of NACODS is likely to rise as the number of working NUM members increases.
- The full complement of management (BACM) is shown as working, ie the number on holiday or ill is included, because the NCB are able clearly to identify these people as not on strike in contrast to the above categories.

Consequently, the quoted numbers of men at work underestimate the underlying position, although it does not appear possible to quantify this. We find this hard to believe, because the NCB must have some clear idea of who is on strike in order to decide who should be paid.

It is also difficult to obtain precise information on the trend of men returning to work. Allowing for holidays and other legitimate reasons, our best information is that during the last 2 weeks perhaps 170 strikers have returned to work, principally in North Derbyshire and Scotland. This trend can still only be described, therefore, as a trickle.

DLP.

DAVID PASCALL

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