

Daily Coal Report - Thursday 23 August 1984*gc press*Pit categories

	<u>Number</u>	<u>plus on holiday</u>
Working normally	41	4
Turning some coal	8	1
Some men present	8	-
On strike/picketed out	98	14

These totals are the same as yesterday.

117 men worked at Bilston Glen in Scotland today, equalling yesterday's record. Men are now working at 9 of the 11 Scottish pits, in total 154 appeared today (up 2). Six men turned up at Polkemmet where the continuing lack of safety cover has led the Board to announce that the mine is under "critical" threat from rising water and gas. Polkemmet colliery produces a particular quality of coal required at Ravenscraig.

Sixteen went into Wearmouth colliery in the North East again this morning. Power has been switched off underground at Easington colliery and in parts of Wearmouth colliery following the withdrawal of safety cover. Blackhall colliery is also in danger of serious flooding following introduction by the NUM of five day a week safety cover instead of continuous cover.

Picketing in Yorkshire was generally quieter than yesterday, when there was considerable looting and damage to property. A total of 18 miners turned up for work in Yorkshire today, 4 more than yesterday and one more than the previous record set on Tuesday. The breakdown between areas is as follows: North Yorkshire - Gascoigne Wood 2, elsewhere in Selby 5, and Allerton Bywater 3; Doncaster - Markham 1; South Yorkshire - Kiverton Park 6 (up 3), Silverwood one. Kiverton Park is thought to offer the best prospect of a more substantial return to work in Yorkshire in the

near future.

In North Derbyshire the attendance at Shirebrook was 141, 8 more than yesterday and one below Tuesday's record (225 pickets). The attendance at Warsop - 128 and up 4 - did set a new record.

#### Coal Movements

Movements on Wednesday were encouraging. 127,000 tonnes were despatched and 35 coal trains ran. This was the highest figure on a Wednesday for 6 weeks. Four trains ran from Westhouses again yesterday. However, pressure from staff there for a secret ballot about a return to normal working of coal trains seems to have disappeared.

The NCB is managing to supply 75% of the normal demand from its industrial customers at this time of year. There are no reports of immediate difficulties from industry, but concerns for the future remain, particularly in the foundry industry. There are some signs that more drivers in the Midlands may be prepared to run coal trains; however a similar improvement in the attitude of guards and signalmen will be required to increase the level of movements.

#### Law and Order

The organised violence in Yorkshire yesterday was particularly serious. Police discovered maps and other documents which indicated targets for picketing in Yorkshire when they searched a car outside a Yorkshire colliery. There has been relatively little trouble today, and the miners who wished to work in Yorkshire all got in without much difficulty. However, 3 petrol bombs were found by police in the village of Armthorpe, near Markham Main colliery, where some of the worst scenes occurred yesterday. 2,000 pickets gathered there before dispersing when being confronted by police. 2,000 pickets returned to Gascoigne Wood again this morning; Allerton Bywater was only lightly picketed.

Pickets at Wearmouth colliery in the North East arrived after 16

men had gone in there; later in the morning they left the pit entrance and ran amuck in the town centre some distance away.

#### Hunterston and the Threatened Dock Strike

TGWU tugboat men and registered dockers at Hunterston walked out when ISTC employees of British Steel started unloading the Ostia this morning. Mr Jimmy Gilligan, Scottish Docks Secretary of the TGWU, said the walk out by his Hunterston members was "the start of a Scottish regional docks strike." He said later that 7 Scottish ports had held meetings and decided to strike, and that decisions on the strike call from the other ports could be expected either later tonight or tomorrow.

A docks delegate conference of all UK ports is being arranged in London tomorrow morning. Mr Clive Lewis, the ISTC's Scottish Organiser, is reported to have rejected a plea from Mr Scargill that all trade union members should refuse to handle the coal from the Ostia. Both BSC and the ISTC pointed out that their crane operators were doing no more than their normal job. Unloading of the Ostia is expected to take about 4 days. The Ostia's cargo will be blended with other types of coal before being shipped to Ravenscraig in lorries next week. Mr John Cullen, Assistant TGWU Convenor at Felixstowe, said today: "There is likely to be some reluctance in this port to a strike call."

#### Channel 4 Debate - Mr Orme's "Peace Proposal"

The NCB issued a statement today about the Orme peace formula, which Mr Scargill claimed in last night's debate had been ignored by the Board. The statement made it clear that Mr Orme had been told that his formula of 2 August did not provide a basis for progress, because it failed to face up to the problems of defining uneconomic capacity. This proposal from Mr Orme had been prepared after 35 hours of formal negotiations which ended when the NUM rejected the NCB's requirement that a colliery shall be deemed exhausted if it has no further reserves which can be "beneficially" developed.

Statement by CBI President

Sir James Cleminson said today that trade unionists whose jobs would be put at risk by a docks strike should pressurise their leaders not to embark on "another damaging and unjustified stoppage." He added: "there is one basic lesson that some trade unions have yet to learn - strikes do not preserve jobs, they destroy them."

Line to Take

A statement issued by the Secretary of State for Employment today said: "If there is a national docks strike it will imperil the jobs of hundreds of thousands of trade unionists up and down the country." He questioned whether a strike call would be heeded by all dockers and added: "no one is threatening dockers' jobs. The only threat to dockers' jobs at Hunterston would be if Ravenscraig closed, because that is the only work they do there. I think dockers are likely to ask 'Just what are we being asked to go on national strike about?' BSC's decision will be understood by the overwhelming majority of people."

A statement issued by the Rt Hon Douglas Hurd MP, Minister of State, Home Office, said: "Violence is increasing in the miners' dispute because the strike is beginning to crumble." He added that he had complete confidence that the police would cope with the new "destructive tactics being used to intimidate working miners."

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