

Coal filecc: Press
JKDaily Coal Report - Wednesday 5 September 1984Pit categories

	<u>Number</u>	<u>plus on holiday</u>
(i) Working normally	42	3
(ii) Turning some coal	7	2
(iii) Some men present	15	-
(iv) On strike/picketed out	104	1

The Tilmanstone pit in Kent, where a small number of men have now reported for three days running, has been moved from category (iv) to (iii).

Despite the uncertainty about talks, the drift back to work by striking miners has continued.

In Scotland, 221 men reported for work, 12 up on yesterday. Bilston Glen reached a new record attendance of 153 (up 7 on yesterday, and by more than 100 on the position a month ago).

Attendances at the Western area pits of Lancashire, Staffordshire and North Wales rose by 70 to 4750.

In North Derbyshire there were post-holiday record attendances at Bolsover (235, up 20 on yesterday), Shirebrook (158, as yesterday) and Warsop (158, up 4).

Numbers in Yorkshire were down by 2 to 31. The single man working at Thorne pit was seen by the NUM last night and reportedly will not work again. At Brodsworth pit the single man there failed to report for duty.

In Kent, in the face of angry picketing (see below) 23 men reported at Tilmanstone and 4 at Betteshanger (as yesterday).

One continuing uncertainty is the attitude of the pit deputies union (NACODS) in the striking areas. One factor is their reaction to the TUC motion, and whether their members will continue to cross NUM picket lines; another factor is their reported desire that their members should be able to go to work "with dignity". NACODS members this morning refused to cross picket lines at Castlehill in Scotland, where a pit emergency has again been declared because of the risk of flooding, and in Kent.

Coal Movements

Yesterday was a good day. 141,000 tonnes were moved (compared with 98,000 tonnes, and 122,000 tonnes on the previous two Tuesdays).

39 coal trains ran, giving British Rail their best day since July.

800 tonnes of coal went by road to BSC Scunthorpe.

Movements of coke into Scunthorpe from BSCs coking plant at Orgreave are resuming today, probably for a four day period until stocks are again exhausted.

Law and Order

There were 300 pickets (including Mrs Scargill) at Kiveton Park pit in South Yorkshire, with some skirmishing reported; 500 pickets at Hawthorne (North East), with no men working; 400

pickets at Kellingley (North Yorkshire) where 2 men are working; 500 at Markham (North Yorkshire) where 3 men are in.

There was trouble at Tilmanstone, with 300 pickets burning straw etc. An NCB engineer was seriously assaulted by pickets who set upon him in an office, and the policeman who went to his aid was also assaulted. Both were taken to hospital.

Talks Between the NCB and NUM

The Board has formally confirmed its renewed offer to meet the NUM. A copy of the Board's letter is attached. (Text not yet released to press though they are clearly aware of its basic message). At the time of writing the NUM has still to respond, though Scargill told the press earlier this morning that the Board had only to notify the union if it wished to resume talks.

Mr MacGregor has again dismissed as "absolute nonsense" Scargill's claim that the Board cancelled the talks due to have taken place tomorrow or Friday.

Industrial Relations

The Easington pit miner, Paul Wilkinson, who was awarded the injunction against the NUM earlier this week, has been called before his local NUM lodge committee to explain why he is crossing picket lines. He is contacting his solicitor.

Docks Dispute

Transport union officials are meeting today to consider ways of escalating the dispute. Meanwhile dockers at Fleetwood voted this afternoon to rejoin the dispute, thus overturning a decision taken two days ago.

D/Transport reported that the Port of London Authority hope to get the first returns from their ballot tomorrow.

Line to Take

The Coal Board have re-confirmed their desire to meet the NUM for further talks to resolve this dispute. It is now up to the NUM to demonstrate to their members and the country at large that they are willing to negotiate sensibly and constructively.

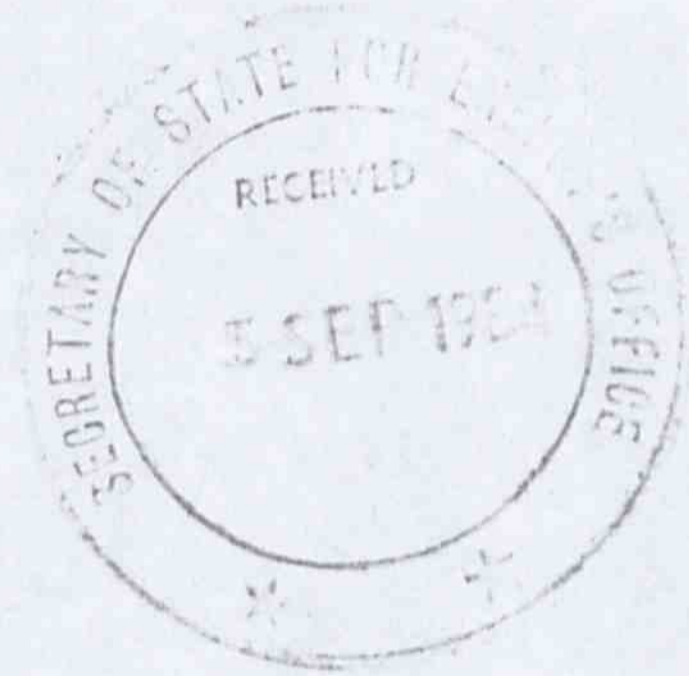
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5 September 1984

P E Heathfield Esq
Secretary
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SHEFFIELD
S1 2EX

Dear Mr Heathfield

Following the Chairman's most recent offer, I confirm that we will be at a mutually agreed location at 7.00 p.m. on Sunday 9 September. If the time or date are inconvenient to the NUM, we will agree with you a mutually convenient arrangement.

I hope that you will attend so that the problem upon which our talks broke down in July can be solved, and that the closure of uneconomic pits can be dealt with in accordance with the principles of the various Reports on the Plan for Coal. I hope also that you will constructively discuss the manner in which the huge investment that we are willing to make in the industry can be applied and operated so as to create a successful, solvent and prosperous industry to the benefit of the miners, their families and the nation. I expect to see you on Sunday or at as early a date thereafter as is mutually convenient.

In the absence of Mr Smith, I hope you will be in touch with me as soon as possible to make appropriate arrangements.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'K Hunt', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

K Hunt
for Ned Smith