

~~Prime Minister~~ ② AT 18/10

file

44A

Daily Coal Report - Thursday 18 October 1984

	<u>Number</u>	<u>plus on holiday</u>
(i) Working normally	45	-
(ii) Turning some coal	10	-
(iii) Some men present	23	-
(iv) On strike/picketed out	96	-

Generally a quiet day. Negligible change in attendances.

Coal Movements

Another good day. 185,000 tonnes were moved.

42 coal trains ran.

Law and Order

Picketing was on a smaller scale today than of late and there were fewer reports of violence.

15 people have been fined for stealing coal from Grimethorpe pit. Their arrest on Sunday triggered the violence in which the local police station was stoned.

Industrial Relations

A relatively quiet day on this front also.

Sid Vincent, the leader of the Lancashire NUM, suggested today that there could be more talks between the Board and NUM soon. The media have picked this up but there is no clear statement to indicate the reason for his optimism.

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There are reports that two further Yorkshire miners are taking legal action against the NUM - this time for loss of earnings.

There are also reports of Staffordshire miners opting out of paying the political levy to the Labour party. 800 men at Lea Hall have already opted out and 600 at Hem Heath reportedly want to join them.

Line to Take

Stress totality of package which is on offer to the industry as a whole:-

1. A wage increase backdated until last November which is greater than that already accepted by many groups of workers, including those in the power, gas, railway and water industries.
2. An undertaking that any miner who wishes to continue working in the coal industry will be able to do so. There will be no compulsory redundancies.
3. For miners in any pit which is going to close, an opportunity to go for voluntary early retirement on terms more generous than in any coal industry in the world, and any other industry in this country.
4. A continuation of a capital investment programme in new machinery, new collieries and new coal faces, which will enable the industry to produce cheap coal and therefore to expand its markets. A sharp contrast to socialist France where the mining industry is to be cut by half.
5. The creation of a new enterprise company which will provide finance, advice and accommodation for new businesses and new enterprises in any mining community adversely affected by closures. During the eleven year period in which Labour

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governments closed 330 pits (many more pits than exist at present) there was no such generous programme for the communities, and there were no such provisions for early retirement.

6. An offer to amend the colliery review procedure previously agreed between the National Coal Board and the mining unions so that an independent review body can, if asked to do so, give its views on a closure. This would be coupled with an undertaking that full weight will be given by the NCB to any advice received from the independent review body.

NACODS members in particular should recognise that since their recent ballot all their main objectives have been achieved. There can be no justification for a strike now.

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