

Daily Coal Report - Wednesday 7 November 1984

30

	<u>Number</u>	<u>plus on holiday</u>
(i) Working normally	45	-
(ii) Turning some coal	10	-
(iii) Some men present	33	-
(iv) On strike/picketed out	86	-

Vane Tempest and Whittle (North East) and Emley Moor (Yorkshire) have moved from category (iv) to category (iii).

For the third consecutive day there has been a marked increase in attendances in all areas. By lunchtime a further 387 striking miners had reported back to work, bringing the total for the three days to nearly 1700.

Once again the most significant increase was in North Derbyshire. A further 86 men reported at Shirebrook, bringing the total to 581 (up 300 since Friday). There were record attendances at all other North Derbyshire pits.

A Board spokesman predicted that coal production could soon restart in Yorkshire, where a total of 221 miners have now gone back to work - 51 more than yesterday.

In a number of areas there are now pits with perhaps just one or two men in - hopefully paving the way for the return to work to spread (although it would be foolish to predict that the surge back over the last few days will necessarily continue at the same rate).

However there have been further signs today that the return to work is putting Scargill under pressure. For the second day running he has claimed that the Board had deliberately

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over-estimated attendances. Today he claimed that only 53,000 were at work in the industry. In fact the number is 72,500.

Coal Movements

Another good day. 189,000 tonnes were moved yesterday.

40 coal trains ran.

Law and Order

Picketing was heavier than yesterday. There was trouble in the North East, though attempts by pickets to build barricades and to stone buses failed to prevent 27 men from reporting to Whittle pit - the first significant break in the strike in the Northumberland.

There were 19 arrests in North Derbyshire - 16 of them for public order offences at Markham pit - where 119 men reported for work today (up 95 since Friday).

The road convoy from Port Talbot to Llanwern steelworks was stoned at various points by pickets on motorway bridges.

The first of the striking miners' rallies took place in Edinburgh. Only 2400 attended. There were no serious disturbances.

NUM/TUC Meeting

Scargill, McGahey and the NUM General Secretary Heathfield met the TUC's Finance and General Purposes Committee today. Before the meeting, Scargill said he hoped the TUC would deliver the support promised by Congress in September. Afterwards he claimed the talks had been "fruitful".

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High Court

The two Yorkshire miners whose contempt action led to the seizure of the NUM's assets have begun a fresh action seeking the appointment of a receiver and manager to take control of the Yorkshire area NUM's funds. The case is expected to be heard on Monday.

There are press reports that the £5 million, said to have been removed from the NUM's Irish bank account just before the account was frozen, has been placed in the US.

Line to Take

Today's encouraging figures show that miners are voting with their feet. Nearly 73,000 were at work in the industry today - 20,000 more than Mr Scargill was prepared to admit.

It is time that Mr Scargill and his militant friends faced reality and admitted honestly that what is on offer to the miners is the best deal since nationalisation.

Distribution: Members of MISC 101, Paymaster General,
Sir Robert Armstrong, Mr Gregson (Cabinet Office)

Enquiries: Michael Reidy, PS/SOS for Energy, Tel: 211 6070