

DAILY COAL REPORT - WEDNESDAY 2 JANUARY 1985

ATTENDANCES

321 new faces reported back on this morning's shift. No overall attendance figures will be published by the NCB this week as so many pits and individuals are on holiday. There is a public holiday in Scotland today, and those normally working at pits in the North Yorkshire, Doncaster and Barnsley areas are taking rest days. The breakdown in new faces by area is:-

North Derbyshire	137
North East	132
Western	31
South Yorkshire	8
South Wales	6
South Midlands	3
North Notts	1
South Notts	1
Coal Products	2

There were also improved attendances by members of NACODS. 32 went in for the first time at Ellington in the North East, and 30 for the first time at Shireoaks in South Yorkshire. The number of NACODs at Wearmouth in the North East, 31, was the highest yet.

COAL MOVEMENTS

Last Friday provided an added bonus. 26 coal trains moved to power stations, even though none were scheduled.

PICKETING

No incidents were reported this morning.

FOUR MORE PITS PRODUCE COAL

4 pits in the North East started producing coal for the first time since the dispute started today. By midday, coal was being brought to the surface at Whittle, Vane Tempest and Ellington collieries. At Wearmouth colliery in Sunderland, coal was produced and stored in underground bunkers.

LINE TO TAKE - MR WALKER'S NEW YEAR STATEMENT OF 29 DECEMBER

I have been informed by Sir Walter Marshall, chairman of the Central Electricity Generating Board, that there will be no power cuts during the whole of 1985 with the coal production that has now been achieved. Improved coal productions, particularly from pits which have returned to work, is sufficient for the generating board to begin reducing its oil burn and increase coal-fired power generation.

How those miners forced to strike without a ballot have been deceived. Mr Scargill told them last February that the stocks of coal at the power stations would run out by the end of April. In June he predicted power cuts in July or August. Now in the middle of winter, the whole country and every miner knows there have been no power cuts in 1984 and there will be none during 1985.

What does Mr Scargill offer the miners - another year of strikes as disastrous as 1984? Those miners, deprived by his actions of a ballot, have lost £7,000 in wages. His actions have divided the NUM, and divided mining communities. Mob picketing has resulted in thousands of arrests. Markets at home and abroad have been lost. Coal faces in good pits have been destroyed.

1984 has been the most disastrous year in the "proud history" of the miners' union.

SECRET AND PERSONAL

No wonder that 70,000 NUM members have returned to work and thousands more would already have returned had it not been for the violence and intimidation. Mr Scargill incredibly suggests that Mrs Thatcher and I should order the coal board to have further talks with him. We have witnessed the NCB having talks with Mr Scargill on seven occasions during the past nine months. We witnessed talks under the independent auspices of ACAS, which suggested a compromise proposal that the coal board and the government accepted, and Mr Scargill rejected.

On every one of the seven occasions the NCB has sought an agreement and on every occasion Mr Scargill has boasted that he has not shifted an inch from his absurd and impossible demand that every pit, no matter how uneconomic, must be kept in being until the last ton of coal is exhausted or the pit is unsafe.

Why on eighth negotiation with somebody who continues to boast of his refusal to move an inch since he organised this dispute nine months ago?

I wish 1985 to be a year of recovery for the miner, his family, his community and his industry.

A swift return to work and miners can have a year of good pay, massive capital investment programmes destroyed by the strike can be swiftly restored, and coal faces in danger can be saved.

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

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SECRET AND PERSONAL