

SECRET AND PERSONAL

Daily Coal Report - Thursday 24 January 1985

	<u>Number</u>
(i) Working normally	49
(ii) Turning some coal	25
(iii) Some men present	78
(iv) On strike/picketed out	22

W

Blaenserchen (South Wales) has moved from category (iv) to (iii). By 6.00 pm 277 new faces had reported compared to 255 last Thursday. The week's total now stands at 3,180.

Area attendances were as follows:-

			<u>Change on</u> <u>last Thursday</u>
Scotland	(24 hr attendance)	3,940	+ 563
North East	(24 hr attendance)	5,431	+ 747
Yorkshire	(24 hr attendance)	5,098	+ 949
North Derbyshire	(24 hr attendance)	6,417	+ 289
Western	(24 hr attendance)	11,630	+ 188
South Wales	(morning shift)	338	+ 78
Kent	(morning shift)	146	+ 11

Coal Movements

A good day. 183,000 tonnes were moved.

44 coal trains ran.

Law and Order

Still generally quiet.

Four striking miners were each sentenced to two years imprisonment at Stoke today for an arson attack on a coach firm last August. At fifth was sentenced to two years' youth custody.

NUM

The text of today's two statements issued by the Coal Board is attached. The requirement for a written response from the NUM has clearly thrown the National Executive into disarray. The immediate reaction from Scargill, Heathfield and other militants was predictably hostile and unconstructive.

High Court

In today's hearing of an action brought against the NUM by twenty working South Wales miners, Heathfield denied, in written evidence read to the Court, that the union had ever approved or encouraged picket line violence. The hearing continues.

BR

Department of Transport have reported that the job losses from Humberside depots, mentioned in yesterday's report, follow discussions with the rail unions which took place last November. They will be achieved through natural wastage, and appear to have been accepted by men at the depots concerned.

Line to Take

The Government wishes to see the earliest possible settlement of this senseless and tragic dispute. It therefore hopes that discussions can quickly take place between the Coal Board and the NUM which can lead to a settlement.

However there can be no point in either side entering into

SECRET AND PERSONAL

negotiations which are bound to fail. Seven rounds of negotiations have already ended this way.

The issue which has divided the parties has been Mr Scargill's insistence that every pit, no matter how uneconomic, must be kept open until exhaustion. If the NUM have genuinely changed their position on this demand and are prepared to face up to the necessity of uneconomic closures, they should have no worries about making their position clear in writing.

Britain's miners, and the country at large, are entitled to look for clarity and honesty from Mr Scargill and his colleagues. Can they deliver?

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

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

SECRET AND PERSONAL

TEXT OF NCB STATEMENT - ISSUED A.M. THURSDAY 24 JANUARY

If, following the meeting of the NUM national executive committee, the NCB receive written indication that they are prepared to help resolve the problems of dealing with uneconomic capacity, the NCB will be prepared to re-enter negotiations with a view to resolving the current dispute.

The proposals must establish that the NUM recognise that management must deal with the problem of uneconomic capacity and that the NUM will co-operate in this essential task, recognising the other commitments that the Board are prepared to make on the future of their employees and the industry.

TEXT OF NCB STATEMENT - ISSUED P.M. THURSDAY 24 JANUARY

Following today's NUM executive committee meeting the Board expect to have a written response from the NUM which would enable it to have a clearer understanding of the union's position.

This will enable the Board to consider whether or not it will then be possible to resume negotiations. The issue central to the dispute remains - whether the NUM are prepared to help resolve the problem of dealing with excess capacity in the coal industry.