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# 6,000 moderates ordered to join pit strike

By Paul Routledge, Labour Editor

More than 6,000 Lancashire miners are being called out on official strike next week in support of the growing stoppage which has brought the coal industry to an 80 per cent standstill. Many more flying pickets were active in the moderate coalfields yesterday, and there were further arrests.

Men in the traditionally moderate Lancashire area of the National Union of Mineworkers have been told to strike from Monday by local union leaders "in order to maintain unity", even though they voted only a week ago by a majority of nearly two to one not to take industrial action.

Since then all but one of the coalfield's pits have been "picketed out" by miners from Yorkshire and South Wales, and an area conference of the union yesterday appealed for outside pickets to withdraw immediately. The Lancashire miners also added their voice to the growing chorus for a national ballot on strike action and the future of the industry.

The strike situation was practically unchanged last night, with 123 collieries out of 176 remaining strikebound or "picketed out" in Yorkshire, Scotland, Northumberland, Durham, South Wales, Lancashire and Kent, and only 37 working normally, chiefly in Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire and the south Midlands.

That was an improvement of three pits on the "normal work" tally. Fewer pits were described as having men at work but producing no coal.

Scotland Yard said yesterday that the estimated number of pickets throughout the country had increased to 4,600 at 43 sites, although the number of police deployed had been reduced slightly to 7,000. There have been 96 arrests since the strike began, mostly for obstruction.

Open-cast miners who are members of the Transport and

General Workers' Union decided yesterday to support the strike and will refuse to move coal from the pithead at 54 sites.

Steelworkers turned down a miners' plea to black coking coal supplies entering the British Steel plant at Port Talbot, West Glamorgan.

The National Coal Board is keeping the legal situation under daily review and may still go back to the High Court to report contempt of injunctions granted last week by Mr Justice Nolan forbidding the Yorkshire miners from organizing or encouraging secondary picketing of neighbouring moderate areas where the men have voted to work normally.

But even if the board went back to court today, under the "short notice" procedure it would be next Wednesday before allegations of contempt could be heard.

National officials of the union, including the president, Mr Arthur Scargill, and the general secretary, Mr Peter Heathfield, are due in the High Court next week to defend an entirely separate action brought by the board over the union's block on overseas investments by the mineworkers' pension fund.

This litigation may disrupt plans by moderates on the union's national executive to force an immediate session of the executive to discuss the holding of a national ballot on pay and pit closures.

● Police arrested several flying pickets from Yorkshire yesterday after they locked themselves in a car near Thoresby Colliery in north Nottinghamshire. Police officers smashed the car windscreen and arrested them for obstructing the highway.

The incident happened shortly after a visit to the coalfield by eight Labour MPs, two from Nottinghamshire and six from Yorkshire.

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