

# HOW THE MINERS ON STRIKE HAVE BEEN MISLED...

## 4. ABOUT THE PLAN FOR COAL.

Miners who are on strike are angry. And it's easy to understand why.

They are angry because of what they have been told by their leaders.

But have they been told the truth?

The sad thing is that this strike is totally unnecessary.

To get them out on strike, our miners have been deliberately misled by their leaders. Causing both bitterness and hardship among miners.

If it goes on long enough, the strike threatens up to 30 good pits with permanent closure. And it could cost not only miners, but also steel workers and railwaymen jobs that should not be lost.

It will drive away future coal customers.

It will make coal more difficult to sell.

Surely, this isn't what our miners want.

That's why, day by day, the Coal Board is publishing the facts. Facts that have been buried by the emotion, and the propaganda of the strike.

**Has Plan for Coal's investment been honoured?**

Time and time again, the miners' leaders have accused the Coal Board of not honouring the Plan for Coal.

The Plan for Coal, drawn up in 1974 between the NCB, the mining unions and

the Government, hoped for £4.3 thousand million to be invested in the coal industry between 1974 and 1985.

So far, £6.5 thousand million has been invested. That's £2 billion, or 50 per cent more than envisaged. (All figures are expressed in today's money).

**Is Plan for Coal's production target being achieved?**

Because Plan for Coal did not predict the effects of the fall in energy consumption, the forecast for coal demand in 1985 was about 20 million tonnes more than we now estimate will be used. But, in percentage terms, the Plan hoped that by 1985, coal would be providing a third of the nation's energy needs. Currently, we have a slightly better share of the market than forecast.

**Is the industry being modernised – as hoped for by Plan for Coal?**

Plan for Coal looked for 42 million tonnes of new capacity by 1985. All this capacity is now completed or under construction.

Plan for Coal expected that the new low-cost capacity would replace the worst, most uneconomic capacity.

Yet the miners' leaders refuse to recognise this.

The Final Tri-partite Report on the Plan for Coal said in paragraph 27:

"inevitably some pits will have to close as their useful economic reserves of coal are depleted".

The Plan for Coal envisaged that between three and four million tonnes of capacity would be closed each year. Yet the average has been only about half that amount.

Since 1974, only 80 pits have closed. Just 12 per cent of our production is now directly costing more than £275 million a year to support. This is money that should be going into modernising our better pits – as Plan for Coal intended it would.

Britain is the only country in Western Europe that is investing so heavily in the future of coal.

The British coal industry has excellent prospects.

**This strike – not the Coal Board – could butcher the industry.**

**That's why it is so important that this strike ends soon.**

**It was called by the miners' leaders. It now needs to be called off by the miners themselves.**

**NCB**  
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**Ncb.**

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