

## Rampage as rebel enters pit

Striking miners "ran riot" at Easington colliery, co. Durham, it was claimed yesterday, as the North-east suffered its worst outbreak of violence in the 24-week pits dispute.

The trouble broke out after a mass picket heard that a rebel miner, Mr Paul Wilkinson, had succeeded in getting to work. Hundreds of miners went to Easington from other pits after hearing the news, and "disgraceful" scenes resulted, a National Coal Board official said.

Office staff were forced to shelter in corridors as bricks smashed windows, sending glass flying, and the 500-strong picket rampaged through the colliery car park.

"They damaged six cars, including the one belonging to the colliery manager, and a brand new Audi was overturned and is now a write-off", the official said.

As the men went on the rampage, he announced: "We have a riot situation". Later he said: "This was a deplorable, disgraceful scene - the worst outbreak of violence in the North-east so far".

A local National Union of Mineworkers official said that the coal board had broken a promise not to "sneak" Mr Wilkinson into the pit by the back door.

The MP for Easington and Parliamentary Labour Party chairman, Mr Jack Dormand, said that he would be sending the "strongest possible protest" to Mr Leon Brittan, the Home Secretary.

"For the violence today I blame the Government absolutely and the Home Secretary in particular", he said.

Repeating that an agreement was broken, Mr Dormand alleged: "The responsibility for the escalation today lies fairly and squarely on the Home Secretary, who has given instructions to the police that whatever happens, no matter how many police it takes, that man must get into the colliery."

"Today's situation was completely unnecessary. An agreement was broken just for the sake of one man coming into work and that is little short of a scandal", Mr Dormand said.

But Supt Keith Tweddle said: "It was just hooliganism and vandalism. Those who went on to NCB property seemed to completely lose their heads."

The police escorted Mr Wilkinson, aged 28, a power loader, into the pit at 8am, when only 250 pickets were on duty.

Roads leading into Easington were closed to traffic as

hundreds of police were drafted in. Some wore riot shields and helmets with protective visors - the first seen in co Durham during the strike.

Five police officers and several pickets were injured, and there were four arrests.

One picket, Mr David Gillan, aged 22, returned to the pit after hospital treatment to display his injuries. They were caused, he alleged, when possibly as many as 15 police officers attacked him, some with truncheons, while he was sitting on a wall.

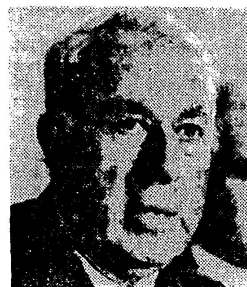
Mr Gillan, whose right arm was in a sling and who had a scalp wound, bruises and scratch marks, said that he was charged with a breach of the peace offence.

The Easington miners' secretary, Mr Alan Cummings, said that the village would take a long time to forget what happened. "Several lads saw one of our men being hit by truncheons while being arrested. Industrial relations here are finished."

The pickets wanted to defuse the situation by asking that Mr Wilkinson be removed from the pit. Mr Cummings said, but that was refused because "it seems he is being used for political purposes".

## Britain can be 'king of coal', MacGregor says

Britain has the opportunity to become "king of the coal industries of Western Europe," working in the interests of both the taxpayers and the mine-workers, Mr Ian MacGregor, chairman of the NCB (right), said yesterday.



Speaking at the Harrogate Convention of the Institution of Mining, Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Mr MacGregor said: "As a nationalized industry, our shareholders are the taxpayers who have been extremely generous in recent years and, it has to be said, for little return.

"They deserve better. They deserve a vigorous, dynamic, modern coal industry which will be a regular, reliable supplier of low-cost energy to the country. The mine-workers deserve exactly the same and the NCB's plans will direct their skills and talents to safe, low-cost highly efficient pits where they can mine coal which will find a ready market.

"They deserve high financial reward for their effort and productivity, to fulfil their ambitions for themselves and their families. But this will only be possible if we get the cost of

our coal down so that it is an attractive product."

Mr MacGregor pointed out that the coal industry would succeed by carrying on the process, started 10 years ago with the Plan for Coal, jointly agreed by the Government, the NCB and the mining unions, with the aim to build a new coal industry from the old.

Reviewing the situation since 1974 he said that investment in new mining capacity and other major projects up to 1985 was envisaged to be about £4,400m. To the end of March, 1984, £6,500m had been invested - so taxpayers had fulfilled their part of the bargain.

## Rioting miners hold up dying man's ambulance

A widow wept yesterday as she told how her husband died as she sat with him in an ambulance after being delayed by rioting miners.

Mr Christopher Jackson, aged 56, a farmworker, had suffered a severe heart attack and was being taken to Doncaster Royal Infirmary when the ambulance was stopped by roadblocks near Markham Main colliery at Armthorpe.

The vehicle was delayed for about five minutes as 1,000 pickets and police clashed in the streets of the mining village and

stones fell around the ambulance.

Mr John Mills, senior administrator at the hospital, said: "It took about four minutes for the police to force a way through. That might not sound long but in severe coronary cases like this every second counts."

Mrs Mary Jackson, aged 52, of Graiselound near Haxey, said: "I'm not saying that my husband would have lived without this delay - but the pickets did not give him that chance".

## Face worker crushed to death

An investigation was under way yesterday after a miner was killed in an accident 2,000ft underground.

Mr John Wildman, aged 36, a face worker, was carrying out roof repairs at Cotgrave colliery, near Nottingham, on Thursday when he was crushed by a hydraulic support he was using to lower a roof beam. His workmates tried to save him and gave first aid.

A National Coal Board doctor gave mouth-to-mouth resuscitation but the miner was dead before he was brought to the surface.

Mr Wildman, of Cartbridge, Cotgrave, had worked through

the miners' strike. He was divorced, with two daughters.

In Yorkshire 19 miners went in to work at various pits, an increase of one over Thursday's figure. Three men were arrested outside the Silverwood colliery as two miners crossed the picket lines to go to work. Previously only one miner, Mr Jim Massey, an underground electrician, had been going to work at the pit. Three miners went into work at Allerton Bywater, where only a small number of men were picketing.

In Lancashire five men were helping police in connexion with attacks on the homes of two working miners in the

village of Golbourne. Windows were smashed in the houses.

About 40 per cent of the workforce at Golborne, one of a three-pit complex, at Leigh, in Greater Manchester, are reporting for work.

In Staffordshire police received a petition with 191 signatures from working miners in Stoke on Trent thanking them for their support during the pit strike. Chief Inspector Peter Johnson said: "All the miners who signed gave their lamp numbers and they thanked the police for their support which has enabled them to go to work with the minimum of effort."

**The miners' strike.**

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