

Gadaffi 'had £20m ready to boost pit strike fund'

- Colonel Gadaffi of Libya is believed to have been ready to give the miners more than £20 million towards their strike fund
- The Archbishop of York says a new initiative is needed if the pits dispute is to be resolved
- Union leaders who have given the

- mineworkers cash support fear they may face contempt proceedings unless they declare the details to sequestrators and the official receivers
- The coal board is planning a new back-to-work campaign, emphasizing the high level of coal stocks

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By Julian Haviland, Political Editor

Colonel Gadaffi of Libya is believed to have been willing to offer more than £20 million to the National Union of Mineworkers, when he received a representative of the union in Tripoli two months ago.

The sum is several hundred times greater than was envisaged by members of the union's executive as a possible contribution and 10 times as much as Libya paid to the IRA over several years in the early seventies.

The NUM said yesterday that no money was offered by Colonel Gadaffi to Mr Roger Windsor, the union's chief executive, when they met in October, and no cash help had been sought from the Libyan Government or offered by it.

The brief and formal meeting between the two men came after Mr Windsor held two days of talks with Libyan trade union representatives.

The information that more than £20 million would have been available, had the union been willing and able to receive it, was given to *The Times* by a well-placed source in the Yorkshire coalfields.

The source is sympathetic to the miners, but disturbed at the discovery that the Libyan Government is prepared to intervene in other countries' affairs and to spend money on

such a scale with the primary purpose of embarrassing a foreign government to which it is hostile.

Colonel Gadaffi has given many indications of his antipathy to the British Government, both as a central member of the Atlantic Alliance and because of resentment at Britain's breaking off of diplomatic relations after shots fired from the Libyan People's Bureau in London killed WPC Yvonne Fletcher last April.

In recent weeks the Libyans have talked of resuming their payments to the IRA. Those are believed to have ceased several years ago, but IRA leaders have maintained good personal relations with members of the Libyan Government.

Colonel Gadaffi has shown his willingness to spend money to promote revolutions and to destabilize governments all over the world, from Central America to the Philippines. With oil revenues of 10 billion dollars, and a population of only about 3,500,000, he is not short of funds and has absolute control of them.

The position of the NUM, as defined by its president, Mr Arthur Scargill, and repeated yesterday, is that it will not take money from the Government of Libya, but it would take money

from trade unionists anywhere.

Mr Scargill said last night: "No moneys have been received from any government. The only state interference we know of is that of the Thatcher Government."

When Mr Windsor's visit to Tripoli became known, senior members of the Labour Party and the trade union movement were outraged. Mr Neil Kinnock said that any offers from the "vile" Libyan regime to the miners would be "an insult to everything the British labour movement stands for."

Professor Paul Wilkinson, Professor of International Relations at the University of Aberdeen, who has made a special study of Libya and of international terrorism, said yesterday that it was unlikely that Colonel Gadaffi's agents would find difficulty in conveying large sums from Libya to contacts in Britain or elsewhere.

There was evidence that the Libyan regime had used so-called students or businessmen, sometimes travelling on the passports of other countries, as couriers.

Labour leaders believe that, if the NUM were to receive an offer of funding from Libyan trade unions, opinion in the party would make it impossible for it to be taken up.

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