

## The miners' strike

# Welsh pickets defy court order

From Tim Jones, Cardiff

The High Court injunction limiting to six the number of pickets at five named South Wales pits was largely ignored yesterday as 93 strikers turned out to hurl abuse at working miners.

The injunction, granted on Monday, by Mr Justice Scott, restraining the South Wales National Union of Mineworkers from "organizing pickets to congregate or assemble at or near colliery entrances", had little effect on persuading men to abandon the strike.

According to the National Coal Board, 401 miners were back at work in the coalfield yesterday, 16 more than on Monday.

A similar injunction outlawing mass picketing in Yorkshire was granted in the High Court yesterday to 19 working Yorkshire miners.

As the Welsh miners reported to work yesterday there were 36 pickets at Cynheidre, 25 at Cwm, 19 at Abertillery, 10 at Merthyr Vale and three at Abernant.

Mr Ieuan Thomas, one of the Cynheidre working miners who sought the injunction, said: "There were about 40 pickets outside the pit this morning, six standing across the road and the others standing a short distance away.

"I believe they were in contempt of the injunction because the verbal abuse was as terrible as always. Away from

the pit, miners waiting in the village to go to work were prevented from going into bus shelters to gain protection from the bitter cold."

The South Wales miners' union executive met yesterday to prepare an agenda for today's area delegate meeting which will consider ways of seeking a settlement "with honour".

But the idea of officials leading a mass return to work without an agreement has been rejected. Mr Emlyn Williams, the South Wales president, has made it clear that the area will go back only when a national agreement is reached.

## Fife pitmen unbowed

The miners' strike at the Seafield colliery in Fife is one year old today. The 2,300 men walked out over the downgrading of an engineer but that local dispute was overtaken two weeks later by a national strike.

There was nothing to celebrate at the strike centre in Dysart yesterday, save that its leaders in Fife remain determined and claim overwhelming support. The board says 167 miners are working.

"Bruised, bloodied and damn near bankrupt," was how one miner described their attitude. But nothing, he said, would persuade him to return without an honourable, negotiated settlement and a union instruction to resume work.

## Delay on NUM cash

Judgement was reserved last night in an action in the High Court, Dublin, to decide who owns more than £2.7 million deposited in a Dublin bank by the National Union of Mineworkers.

The NUM transferred the cash to a branch of the Bank of Ireland Finance Limited last year, in an attempt to avoid sequestration of its assets which had been ordered by the High Court in London after its failure to pay a contempt of court fine.

The Irish High Court heard complex legal argument over

the enforceability in Ireland of the power of officials appointed by a British court. The judge, Mr Donal Barrington, gave no date for delivering his judgement.

● Mr David Hunt, Under Secretary of State at the Department of Energy, yesterday attacked the damage caused to the coal industry by the strike, but also urged industrialists to convert to coal. He was speaking at a breakfast meeting with more than 400 businessmen in Bournemouth.

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