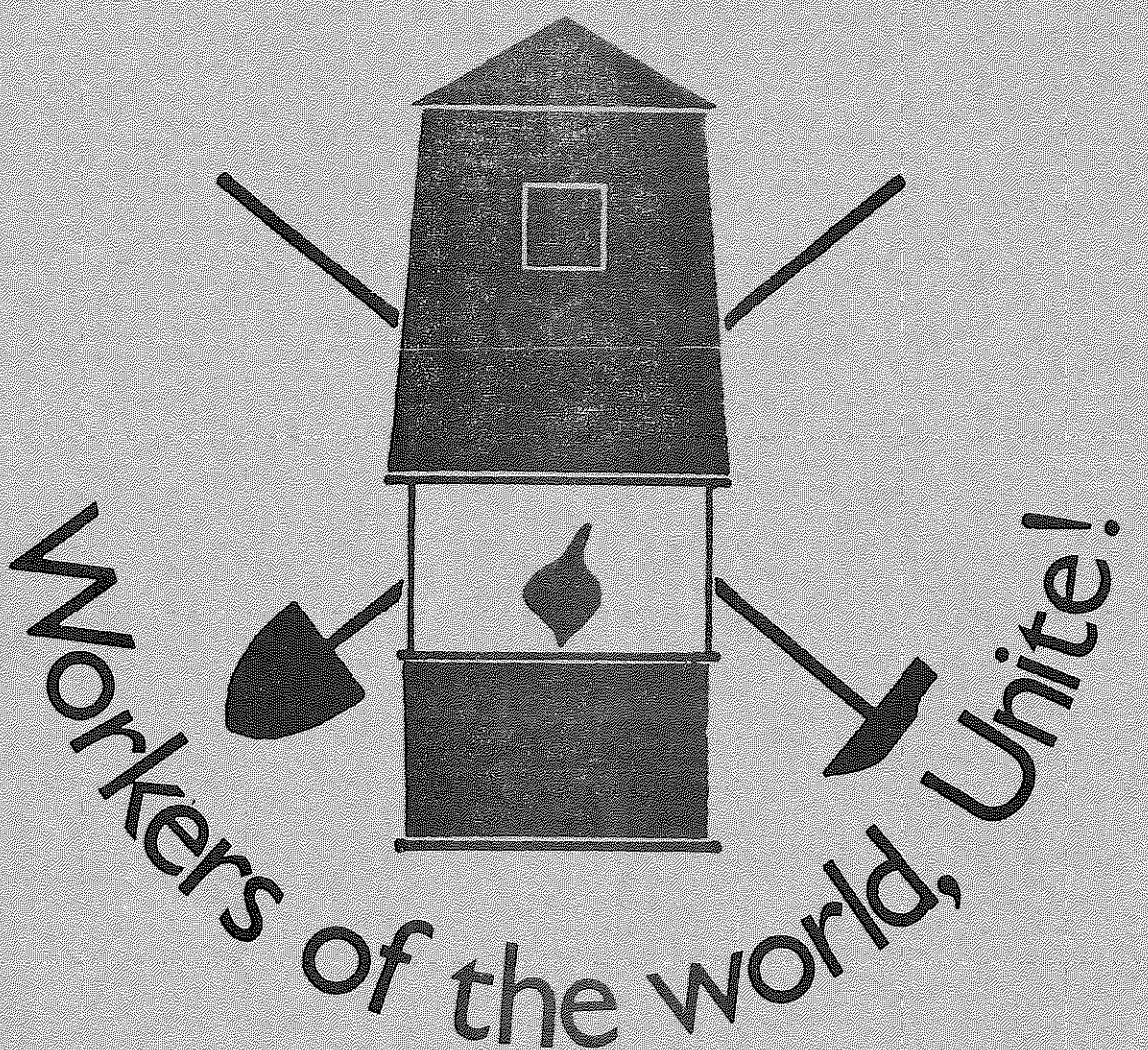


# THE RED MINER

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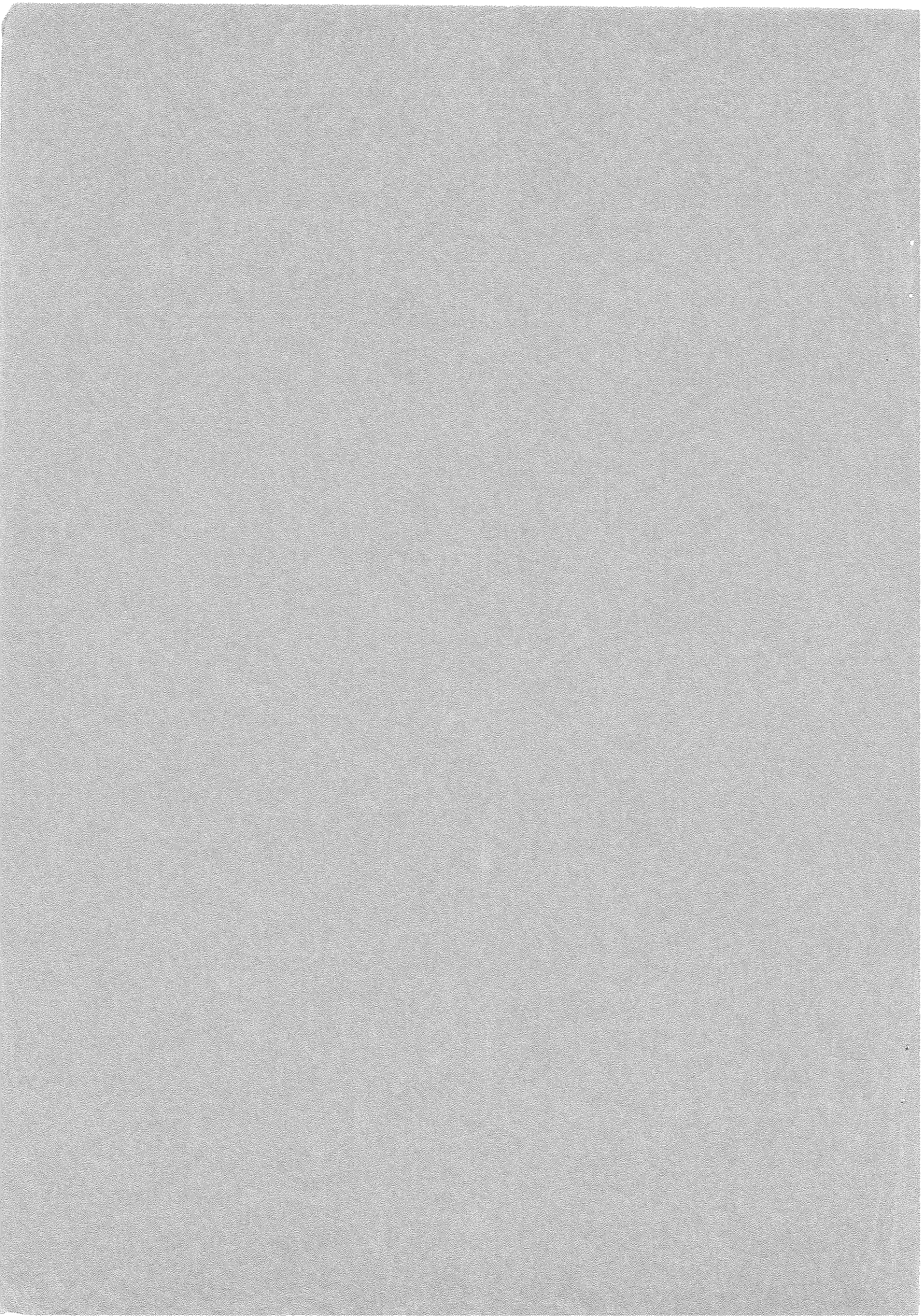
NO.8 MARCH 86



**workers  
power**

Bulletin for miners and their families 10p







Last month RED MINER argued for a campaign to stop the retreat in the NUM. We said this should culminate in a national "stop the retreat" conference which all rank and file organisations and papers should sponsor. This month we repeat the call for such a campaign. The NCB offensive continues unchecked. Since our last issue, the NCB have ignored the independent review procedure and gone ahead with the full closure of Bates colliery in Durham.

This has exposed the lie that closures can be stopped through building broad campaigns to influence "public opinion". In the coming weeks all over the country, there will be meetings, rallies, and conferences all commemorating the Great Strike.

If these events are to be of any use they must turn their attention to discuss how to rally and mobilise the rank and file to stop the retreat in our union. Part of RED MINER's contribution to this task will be the holding of an open forum in Sheffield on March 15th to which we invite militants in the NUM and the womens organisations who want to stop pit closures, smash the UDM, and build a truly national union committed to class struggle policies.

At the same time RED MINER supporters will continue to argue within the National Rank and File Movement for a change of direction in line with the policies outlined in the last issue of RED MINER.

To this end RED MINER supporters have sent a letter to the editor of Rank and File Miner spelling out our views on the direction of that paper and the need to return to building a serious rank and file movement.

We reprint that letter below.

**\* RED MINER \***  
**NATIONAL MEETING**  
**MARCH 15th**  
**SHEFFIELD**  
for details ring (0742) 666208

## TO 'Rank and File Miner'

Dear Comrades

Last autumn a meeting of the National Rank and File Miners Movement discussed how to build the Rank and File Movement in the areas, through using a series of meetings and by producing a smaller more regular paper.

We were therefore disappointed to find the latest issue was no more than a glossier version of "The Miner" with nothing much from the areas and no feel of being a militant, anti-bureaucratic paper with a base in the coalfields

While we accept that the editor could not possibly do all the work on the paper, more co-ordination with Rank and File Movement members could have produced more articles on the NUM. As it is the paper does not reflect what is going on in the union and it does not explain to militants what needs to be done. It is more like an information sheet on general topics for interested observers of our union. There is nothing in it about the numerous disputes and strikes that have taken place, (at Silverwood for example, and around the campaign to keep Darfield Main open). Nor is there anything about the issues in the union like the election of Des Dutfield in South Wales and it's significance in the NUM, about what the Notts lads are doing on the ground to fight the scabs, significantly none of the letters in the letters pages seem to be from miners.

We think a new direction is needed if the militants within the NRFMM and the paper are not to become fed up and drop out of activity. We propose a recall meeting of the NRFMM committee, but a meeting open to all members of the NRFMM who should be circulated in advance. At the meeting we should discuss:

1/ The drift to the right in the leadership of the NUM and what rank and file militants need to do about it.

2/ How to produce a paper/bulletin that reflects the struggles of rank and file miners and guides their activities politically.

Will the secretary of the committee act on this proposal. We hope so.



# REGIONAL ROUND-UP



## NORTH DERBYSHIRE

Coal News (the NCB paper) propaganda keeps dropping through the letter boxes of our members, the latest edition attacks the National Executive Committee decision that pension rights should not be tampered with. Misleading statements have been made by the National Union of Mineworkers, claims Coal News. Misleading statements eh! - the board should know, they've got it off to a fine art. What was it they said before the strike - they wanted 4.7 million tonnes taken out of capacity : we would call that a misleading understatement.

Whitwell Colliery seems to have got a stay of execution : FOR NOW.

Warsop Colliery has been chosen in the boards campaign to raise standards and efficiency (that word again). 15 selected collieries in England, Scotland and Wales are being put to the test to increase and sustain productivity to at least an average of five tonnes a manshift. These will set a standard - if these cannot be maintained at your pit get ready for them putting the lid on it.

### BRAINWASHING!

An article in the Guardian (Feb 14th) started by saying 'Six hundred feet down a North Derbyshire pit (Highmoor) a group of miners were discussing the most dangerous offence to threaten any pit..' Contraband was the offence it went on to say, but a more dangerous situation confronts the miners today : Team Briefings. Already 800 people have been trained on 43 courses to put the boards propaganda to the miners face to face. These briefings are to be extended through review meetings where representatives of the miners teams meet management for two hours to discuss issues in more detail.

The brainwashing gathers momentum.

Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Staffordshire and North Wales are the next places where the team briefings will try to undermine the role of the union, this is expected in Spring. **YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.**

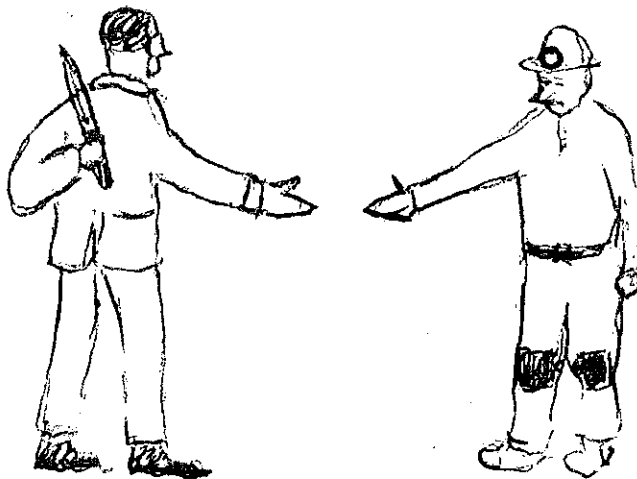
### BONUS SCHEMES

The area bonus scheme in North Derbyshire is to be scrapped, in its place will be an individual pit bonus, setting pit against pit, face team against face team, and men against men. It's the same old story - **DIVIDE AND RULE.**

## SULKING SCABS

Neil Greatorex one of the leaders of the UDM has got his handkerchief out complaining men in Derbyshire won't join the UDM because of a campaign of terror. Does he really believe we are going to swallow this crap, is this what happened in the Leicestershire vote Neil, or should we say Kneel

## NORTH DERBYSHIRE TEAM BRIEFINGS



One Highmoor miner says, "It shows the coal board extending the hand of friendship." Guardian Feb 14th

CARTOONS BY GWL

## SOUTH WALES

As was feared in the last issue of RED MINER, South Wales has lost another pit with the closure of the Coedely end of the Cwm-Coedely complex in Mid-Glamorgan. 200 out of the 300 workforce at Coedely will transfer to the Cwm shaft, with 100 taking redundancy. The lodge voted to accept closure after advice from Peter Heathfield that they could not put forward Coedely alone to the review, Cwm would also have to go for review. Because of the £12 million loss of the complex this year it was feared that all 1300 jobs would be at risk, so therefore there was no "alternative" but accept, closure. With "leadership" like this is it any wonder that the NCB continue to run riot in South Wales

Likewise Nantgarw is definitely up against it now. The pit is on course to lose £4.5 million this year and has only one face left open, though two more are expected to open in April and August. A recent fire at Merthyr Vale has now put the pit's relatively healthy future in some

# REGIONAL ROUND-UP

doubt in putting out the fire the NCB (by accident???) have flooded several potential new faces below

## GOOD RIDDANCE!

Emlyn Williams officially retired from the presidency last month. Most miners around the country will not be sorry to see the back of him, particularly after such parting shots as, "I firmly believe that the final outcome of us all marching back together did nothing less than save the union. I'm proud of that". South Wales miners aren't fooled by such rubbish and refused to vote for Williams' stooge Terry Thomas as new area president, choosing instead Des Duffield.

However Duffield himself now appears to have jettisoned his militant background and seems to pin all his hopes on saving pits with the new review procedure: "We now have a new 9 month review procedure which if it's treated with sincerity by the NCB, gives us time to argue the justice of our case, which is all we ever wanted" Miners at the former St. Johns and Bedwas pits found out how sincere the NCB were when they began ripping out machinery before the review had even started.

## SCABS BEATEN

On the scab union front, 3 lorry drivers at an NUM lodge at Ammanford who recently left the NUM for the scab UDM, have now rejoined. The NUM now claims full loyalty of the coalfield's 13,600 miners, despite continued UDM claims that it has recruited in the area.

This success against the UDM mirrors events at point of Ayr colliery in North Wales, where after a vote last year to join the UDM, only a handful of scab union members now remain.

## WARWICKSHIRE

Good news for the NUM from Warwickshire where men are leaving the UDM to rejoin the NUM. At Keresley, UDM membership has gone down from a claimed 200+ to less than 100. And at Daw Mill the NCBs "great scab hope" NUM membership has increased to 300 and is rising.

One of the main reasons for the men rejoining was that they felt conned over the wage deal, and were not told that Lynk and Co had agreed to link it to the pensions scheme. Many miners only found out about this when they read it in COAL NEWS, democracy in action Roy Lynk style. But also a good example of the need for more propaganda from the num both locally and nationally to win miners back and smash the scab union.

On an even more positive note, after a short stoppage at Daw Mill at the beginning of February, with both NUM and

UDM members coming out, some UDMers rejoined the NUM because they felt the UDM was basically useless.

However the National Union are not filling militants with confidence. The NUM executive has agreed that Warwickshire can be a new area of the national union. If this means more rank and file control all

well and good, but if it means more independence for the area leadership from the national union we must fight it.

So far the rules are going to be revised so it will need a 55% majority for strike action, as opposed to the national 50%.

This can only be a setback for the fight for a truly national union.

## YORKSHIRE

### BRODSWORTH

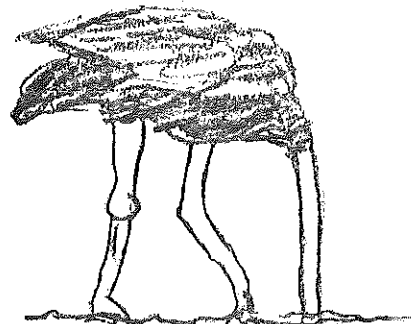
At Brodsworth last Thursday (20th February) at the end of the shift men were stuck in the lift shaft for 1hr 10 mins. They had no idea of what was going on and obviously were suffering from shock when they eventually arrived at the surface.

Were the management ready to compensate them for this trauma - of course not - they were told in no uncertain terms that they would not even be paid for that 1hr 10 mins. After all, management have no control over electrical faults!

LOOK!

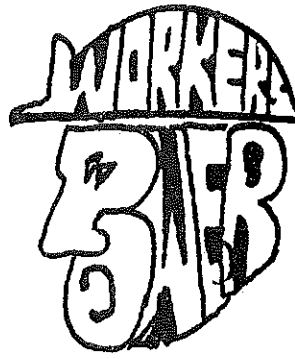
RED MINER COMPETITION

GUESS THIS YORKSHIRE OFFICIAL



The winner will receive a cardboard cutout of Niel Kinnock to put on their next picket line. (more use than the real thing)

MORE REGIONAL REPORTS OVER THE PAGE →



# REGIONAL ROUND-UP

## FLYING PICKETS

Miners from all over Yorkshire have been down to the Wapping picket at the request of rank and file printers, in recognition of the enormous support received during the strike. Many miners who were at the Kinsley Drift rally a few weeks back remember hearing Peter Heathfield call on NUM members to picket Wapping. Since then the area officials have been putting a dampner on it, telling members that they will not be covered by the union if they are arrested. Taylor has even said that the union has not been asked for support, and we would not be welcome.

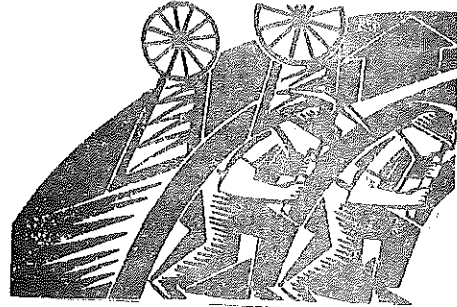
Sounds like he has been talking to Dean and Dubbins and not the rank and file printworkers who have written to every branch asking for support - financial and physical. With or without Taylor's blessing Yorkshire miners will continue to go and support our comrades on the line at Wapping.

## BATES CLOSURE

An article in the Feb. edition of the Miner headlined "First Victory Under New Procedure began" "The future of the Northumberland Bates colliery looked promising as the Miner went to press.... For the first time the Independent Review Body.... has ruled in favour of prolonging the life of a pit which the Coal Board wants to shut...." Well so much for the Independent Review Body the NCB ignored it and planned to close Bates last week. McGregor said on Wed (Feb 26th) "we would still make the final judgement on whether that pit had a future or not".

As we always said placing hopes in the review body to save pits is a waste of time. Mr Norman Willis is reported to be angry - pity he didn't get angry during the strike, it would have been more use then.

The latest plan is to try and save the closure through the courts, with the same judges who jailed our pickets and stole our funds. The NCB feels so confident about the views of the judges that it has already ceased production, and is preparing salvage work despite being ordered to postpone the closure until his lordship decides.



## NOTTINGHAM

As RED MINER went to press miners at Bevercotes colliery in Nottingham NUM and UDM members are on strike over the sacking of the branch secretary Paul Whetton for putting up a union notice in the canteen.

Another union official has been warned not to be seen in the middle of a group of people in the canteen as this could be construed as a meeting!

With the spread of the UDM halted management are clearly worried that their union is going to be threatened in the Notts heartland and are out to make life as difficult as possible for those fighting to build the NUM.

However such an arrogant approach can be turned to our advantage, and the fact that some UDM members have struck for Paul's reinstatement shows that not only can Paul's job be won back but that the UDM can be smashed in Notts as well

## SCAB RETIRES

Well well! Ken Toon UDM president of South Derbyshire is to retire soon. UDM members anxious to know when the election of a new president is going to be will be more than a little disappointed. Having taken a tip from the NCB on how to fill leading positions Toon's successor is to be appointed.

Did I hear anyone say they wanted a baaaaa'llot

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RED MINER 138 Crookesmoore Road  
Sheffield S6 3FS

# - INTERNATIONAL -

## FRENCH MINERS

### IT'S THE SAME THE WORLD OVER

If you think the situation in the British pits is bad, take a look at France. Without a major struggle, the French bosses ("Charbonnage de France") are succeeding in their plan to cut production from 18m. tonnes per year to 10m tonnes per year by the end of the 1980's. And as British miners know only too well, a drop in production means job losses - getting on for 50% of French miners are to be threatened.

Worst affected are the Pas-de-Calais and Nord regions, around Calais, Boulogne, and Lille. Virtually all the pits have now been closed in this region. Lens, once the coal capital of the north, saw face 4/19 closed on the 1st of February this year - the last active face in the town. For the workers, this means early retirement (many miners are already close to the retirement age of 50), or, for the 40% of face workers who are from North Africa, financial "aid" to go "home". And the reason for all these closures, all this unemployment? You'll have heard something similar before: "We need to prune away the unprofitable pits" said the bosses.

Coal production in the North of France has been in decline for the last 30 years due to the bosses' criteria of "profitability". In 1960 the region produced 27m tonnes of coal. In 1984, 3m tonnes. And all this with a "socialist" government with, until mid-1984, "communist" party ministers! What happened?



### "SOCIALIST" CUTS

In 1981, Mitterand was elected President. A massive Socialist Party Communist Party majority in parliament followed a week later. Workers throughout the country were optimistic. Mitterand and his allies launched a massive programme of expansion of coal production. 10,000 miners were hired, wages increased, the working week shortened, and output was planned to increase by 33% over the decade.



The rank and file grouping 79-84 hold their banner

There was only one major problem. The coal industry - all of French industry - remained part of a capitalist system, dedicated to profit, not need. So when the crisis began to bite, it was the working class, not the capitalists, who had to pay. In 1982 Mitterand, with the backing of the CP, slashed public spending, and let unemployment rip - all for the good of "the nation". All state aid to the Charbonnages de France was frozen - hence the vicious austerity drive, thanks to the dreams of the Socialists and the Communists who thought they could reform capitalism out of existence. Let that be a warning to any British miners who put their hopes in a labour government.

Unfortunately, management have been able to get away with their attacks largely unhindered. A 24 hour strike in March 1984 led to a march in Paris. Pits in Ladrecht and Saint Quentin have been occupied in an attempt to stop closures. But there has been no sustained national action capable of beating the bosses' offensive. There are two reasons for this.

continued over....



## French Miners..

### FOUR DIFFERENT UNIONS!

Firstly, the pits in Lorraine, in the East, are not immediately threatened, solidarity action from these miners has been difficult to organise. Secondly, although french miners are well organised, there is no closed shop. Only 40% of miners are unionised, with four different unions - each with different political affiliations - competing for members. And given that the strongest union - the CGT - is affiliated to the Communist Party, which was part of the government which began the attacks, you can see why the union bureaucrats might not be too keen on launching an all out response. The structural weakness caused by the split union system, together with the cowardice of the union leaders have helped to limit any nationwide fightback.

And the answer? French miners need both an organisation - a cross union rank and file movement, based in the pits, capable of mobilising unionised and non-unionised miners, and a programme - a national, all out response to the bosses attacks, no matter what government introduces them. The prospect of a right-wing victory in the parliamentary elections in March makes these tasks all the more urgent.

# SOUTH AFRICA

## FREE NELSON MANDELA



As RED MINER goes to print, Nelson Mandela is still in jail, now in his 24th year of imprisonment. The Apartheid regime jailed him for his part in organising the freedom fighters Umkhonto We Sizwe, the armed wing of the African National Congress. The real reason for his long incarceration is that he is seen by both white minority rulers, and the black majority, as the major leader of opposition to Apartheid.

Pressure for Mandela's release is now so great that president P.W.Botha has to appear keen. That became clear when he made his bizarre "offer" that Mandela would be released when three other prisoners - including Russian dissident Anatoly Scharansky - were freed. Botha had been given advance information of the Scharansky deal. The prospect of Mandela's release undoubtedly helped South Africa negotiate new financial help from big western banks. But Botha is still not making a real offer of freedom. He wants to send Mandela into exile where he would have less influence.

The western governments would like to see Mandela free because they realise that the black working class, especially the youth, will not give up their struggle. They realise that only Mandela has the authority to negotiate.

Why does Mandela command this huge support? And what would he negotiate if freed?

### MANDELA : AN INSPIRATION

Mandela's courage has inspired all those fighting for freedom. Like all active opponents of apartheid in South Africa, he faced death and long imprisonment. In his trial in 1964 he explained his preparedness to die for his ideals. Several times now he has refused the regimes fake offers of release despite the fact that he is now ageing and has been seriously ill, refusing to accept any conditions which would betray his cause or gag him.



ANC leaders Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela.



## ..SOUTH AFRICA

There are other ways in which Mandela represents the long struggle against apartheid. As a leader of the major black opposition, the ANC he was influential in it's stages of development since the second world war. Along with other young activists he turned the ANC into a mass campaigning organisation in the 1950's, and when non-violent methods failed, argued for taking up the armed struggle in the form of sabotage.

Mandela is primarily a nationalist rather than a communist. On many occasions he has said that he believes in the Western type of parliamentary democracy. Like the other leaders of the ANC, he believes that the immediate goal is getting rid of apartheid, and that all classes can unite to do this. It is these ideas that pose a great danger for the black working class in South Africa. Even if there were big changes in the law, and black majority rule, - such as Zimbabwe - there would still be fundamental equalities in society, in

who owned and controlled the wealth. The black working class in South Africa has the power and the ability, if armed with the programme of revolutionary marxism, not only to remove apartheid, but to destroy capitalism in South Africa as well.

### FOR A WORKERS BOYCOTT

So although black trade unionists join with other forces in demanding the release of Mandela, they shouldn't hand over the leadership of the struggle to him and the other ANC leaders. The working class must ensure the struggle goes on for real workers democracy and socialism. It needs it's own party to do that.

Our duty here is to help our fellow trade unionists in South Africa through supporting the new federation COSATU, arguing for a workers boycott of South African goods, and joining their campaign for the release of all the courageous fighters languishing in South Africa's jails.

FREE NELSON MANDELA  
FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS

During the first three weeks of March some representatives of MAWU, (Metal and Allied Workers Union) one of South Africa's largest unions will be doing a speaking tour of Britain. They want to speak to as many trade unionists as possible on their fight against the apartheid regime. If you can arrange a meeting or want to find out if there are any meetings in your area then ring:

Julian Bild;Camden Nalgo 01-278-4444 ext.2281 or Mike Murphy 0203 78877

## ..... MINER'S INTERNATIONAL

Plans of the coal bosses to coordinate their actions internationally show how vital it is that miners are organised as an international force. The scab coal from Poland and South Africa that broke the strike and the international solidarity that helped to sustain the strike show just how vital internationalism is. We need an INTERNATIONAL MINERS UNION that is organised for struggle and democratically controlled by rank and file miners themselves.

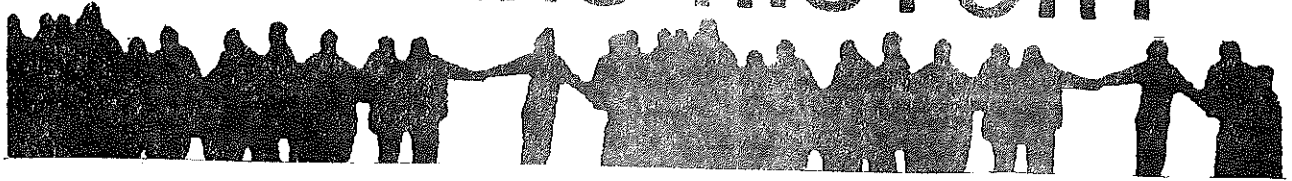
At present there are two rival miners internationals. The smaller is the Miners International Federation (MIF). It is based on the German and other social democratic unions. It is pro-western and anti-communist. The NUM has recently left it to join the IMO which is a larger international based primarily on the state run unions in the Soviet bloc and Communist Party led unions outside that bloc.

NUM members cannot put their trust in either international. The MIF is committed to working within the capitalist system. The IMO contains unions run by appointed officials of states like Poland which scabbed on the Great Strike. Both outfits are run as coalitions of the top officials of the national unions.

NUM members should not oppose affiliation to the IMO. The MIF is in no way a better fighter for miners interests. But we should demand that the NUM uses its affiliation to fight for the interests of all miners. That means that it must fight to create one international union. In walking out of the MIF the NUM leaders may have left a federation which contains key militant miners unions in South Africa and Bolivia. Many miners unions belong to neither international. The NUM must spearhead a fight for international fighting unity of all miners.

The NUM must lead the fight for class struggle unionism and rank and file democracy. This means fighting the class collaborations of the MIF and fighting all such tendencies in the IMO too. Crucially it means using IMO affiliation to take the fight into the state run East bloc unions against the scab role of their patron bureaucracies; against every injustice or repression against workers and for full backing to independent struggles of workers against the privileges of the oppressive rule of the state bureaucracies. The NUM must never again be allowed to be used against independent workers struggles as the speeches of its leaders were against Solidarnosc.

# WORKERS HISTORY



## CLASS STRUGGLE IN MINNEAPOLIS

If Britain in 1986 was a tough place for class fighters - with anti-union laws, picket busting police, witchhunts against militants, and the ever present threat of the dole - then the lessons of the Minneapolis strikers are invaluable. Because, without a doubt, Minneapolis in 1934 was tough place for class fighters.

That year unemployment in America was 25%. The bosses had viciously put down resistance from workers to the effects of the slump using armed police and the National Guard. The Roosevelt government had introduced industrial laws to defuse strikes, enforce ballots and stitch up settlements.

The union leaders response had been to witchhunt the militants! These leaders - whose pro-business outlook is a model for Hammond today - had presided over a decline in union membership from 4 million in 1920 to about 2 million by the early 30's. Besides which, the unions were organised along narrow craft lines and excluded the masses of unskilled or semi-skilled workers.

In Minneapolis, a city where the transport industry was central to the economy, the drivers union was typical. International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 574 "organised" 70 or so members. The local executive was the mouthpiece of the scabby national leader Daniel Tobin. It had no plans to recruit the thousands of unorganised transport workers and even less idea of fighting for their interests.

This suited the Citizens Alliance, a federation of bosses dominated by big capital, which had crushed every strike attempt in Minneapolis for 20 years.

The American Trotskyists, the Communist League of America (CLA) had other plans. The Minneapolis branch set out to organise the transport industry in one industrial union using local 574's charter. They had to fight even to get admitted to the union at all against Tobin's local stooges. But having got in, they launched a recruitment drive around the needs of the truckers.

## RANK AND FILE CONTROL

The truckers demanded union recognition, job protection, increased wages, and shorter shifts. The trotskyists stressed that only class struggle could win any of these and to organise struggle the rank and file would need to control their own union.

The organising drive started in the coal industry where the local CLA leaders worked. In February 1934 a mass meeting elected a strike committee to negotiate and give the employers 48 hours to settle. The Citizens Alliance backed the employers urging them to stay firm. But when the union struck nothing moved. 600 pickets, some of them in cruising squads, (today's flying pickets) stopped the coal in sub-zero temperatures. The employers quickly buckled. The union was recognised. Wages were improved.

The organising committee now became an official body by rank and file consent. A recruitment drive on industrial rather than craft lines was launched. By April over 3,000 had been recruited.

## **DRIVERS, ORGANIZE!**

Because of the depression, wages of all workers have been reduced, and this has resulted in the general lowering of the standard of living.

The increase in the cost of living has resulted in further wage cuts.

### **WHAT MUST WE DO?**

The Only Answer Is ORGANIZATION!

### **DO YOU KNOW?**

That under Section 7-A of the N.L.R.A. workers are not only granted the right to organize, but are guaranteed the right to exercise this privilege without discrimination!

### **DO YOU KNOW?**

That the coal drivers of Minneapolis took advantage of this privilege to organize and through our organization gained a 25% wage increase!

## **Monster Mass Meeting**

**Shubert Theatre, Sunday, April 15**  
at 2 P.M.

will open the big campaign to organize

**ALL Minneapolis Drivers, Helpers, Filling Station Attendants and Platform Men**

### **Governor Floyd B. Olson**

Will Speak on "The Right to Organize"

Speakers from your union will outline a definite program of organization for your approval.

Auspices of Minneapolis General Drivers and Helpers Local Union No. 574

A mass meeting then elected a broader strike committee to fight for the union's demands in the rest of the haulage industry. Meticulous planning was done in advance by the Trotskyist leaders.

## STRIKERS STOP CITY

Alliances were built with the unemployed, to get their support and with the poor farmers whose livelihoods would be disrupted by the strike. A womans auxiliary was set up to support and spread the action. And the union's office became HQ. of a force which operated like an army, but an army under rank and file control.



# Class war in Minneapolis

On May 15<sup>th</sup> this army went into action. Nothing moved in Minneapolis. The angry bosses sprang a trap on one team of pickets, 5 of them women. Who were brutally beaten. From then on the strikers organised their own defence, pickets armed with clubs.

The struggle heated up. In one battle after 30 cops had been hospitalised, the cops drew their guns only to be thwarted by Bob Bell. "...a huge man and utterly fearless. He was told to rush to the market ignoring all traffic rules, and to drive straight into the midst of the cops. Bob did just that. The pickets jumped out of the truck onto the cops who, being unable to shoot without hitting one another, had to continue fighting with clubs. After that, police chief Johannes decided to call it a day" (Farrell Dobbs: Teamster Rebellion)

The pickets couldn't be intimidated and the Trotskyists were busy spreading the action to other unions. The alliance conceded improved pay and conditions and union recognition. Membership soared to over 7,000

The Trotskyists knew the alliance was only buying time. So they prepared for a showdown. Leading national members of the CLA were sent to Minneapolis to give the benefit of their experience. Together with local 574 they launched a union paper - the Weekly Organiser. In the final strike the paper became a daily and was a powerful weapon to counter the bosses attacks and lies For example the day after "Bloody Friday" when 2 strikers were shot dead by the police the Organiser countered "You thought you would shoot Local 574 into oblivion. But you only succeeded in making 574 a battlecry on the lips of every self-respecting working man and working woman in Minneapolis. You thought you would separate the rank and file from their leaders. You only succeeded in cementing the bond that holds them together in an efficient fighting army. You thought you would alienate the labour movement from 574. You only succeeded in rallying every section of the labour movement to our cause" After reading the Organiser construction workers armed with iron bars helped to clear the hated cops out of the district

### STRIKERS KILLED

The third strike was the longest and most brutal. The national guard and the police were mobilised. Two strikers were shot dead and many were wounded. The

strikers were red-baited by Tobin and the press, then imprisoned.

But local 574's strength ran deep into the rank and file. Regular mass meetings, a strike committee of 100, a daily paper gave direction to the determined strikers. Militant defence of their picket lines, and succesful arguments with other workers for solidarity action won the day.

In the end president Roosevelt himself stepped into the fray fearful of it's powerful example. Too late. Local 574's victory was watched carefully by workers throughout America. If the truckers could win against the forces of the Citizens Alliance and the state, then other workers could defeat their bosses.

Following Minneapolis the American working class made a "giant step for labour". A wave of mass strikes in 1935 and 1936 gave rise to the industrial unions grouped in the CIO.

In the battles of 1934 the small forces of Trotskyism, often derided for their bookishness, exposed the lie, so often levelled at the Trotskyists by the Communist and Labour parties, that they are incapable of winning mass support and leading workers to victory.

In the battles to come we firmly believe that the power of the working class united with the programme of Trotskyism will bring lasting victory. Against the Communist party who preach that class struggle is dead, and the Kinnockites who ask us not to struggle but to wait for a labour government, we put the task of organising class struggle first.

**"Don't Fail Me Now Boys!" - Last Words of Henry H. Ness, Shot in the Back in Cold Blood by Order of Michael Johannes the Murderer. Died July 23rd, 1934**

## DAILY STRIKE BULLETIN

UNITED LABOR ACTION THE ORGANIZER SWANEY THE CITIZENS ALLIANCE

# The Fight Has Just Begun

Laundry Men to Strike Tuesday, Solid with 574  
The First Martyr of 574  
Bosses' Threats Fall to Worry 574's Picketers

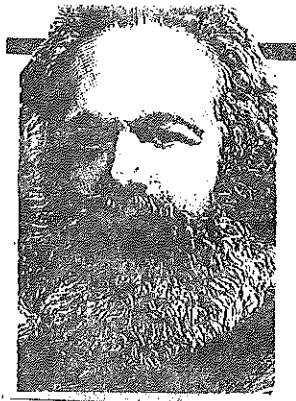


Henry Ness, 34, was shot in the back by a police officer on July 23rd, 1934, while on picket duty for Local 574. He was a member of the union and was known for his leadership and courage. The article details the circumstances of his death and the impact it had on the strike and the labor movement. It also mentions the 'Citizens Alliance' and the 'Kinnockites' mentioned in the main text.

Front page of the July 23 Organizer following the death of union member Henry Ness.



# WHAT IS



# MARXISM ?

This month we start a series of articles that try to answer the question "What is capitalism?" We don't do this out of idle curiosity. As Marx would say: "Many philosophers have interpreted the world, the point is however to CHANGE it".

We invite miners and their families to participate. Any explanations you don't understand, any questions you want to ask - write to us. Above all join us - not just in understanding capitalism, but in putting an end to it!

## WHERE DO PROFITS COME FROM ?

Question - Where do profits come from ?

Answer - Yes, you've chosen a good place to start from. Making a profit is the only reason for production under capitalism. Capitalists make a profit by selling a commodity for more than it took to produce it. Marx showed how they did this in his 'Labour Theory of Value'...

Question - Hold on; Before we get onto 'theories of value', what exactly is a commodity ?

Answer - A commodity is anything - from a nail to a Rolls Royce - that is made, or produced, for exchange.

Years ago these commodities were exchanged for other commodities. Nowadays, under capitalism, they are produced for sale.

Question - And who decides their price ?

Answer - Well, the bosses like to tell us that prices are magically set in the imaginary place called an 'open market'. Or they're the result of supply and demand. They like to tell us that high prices are a direct result of high wages.

Question - Don't tell me - now you're going to say that this is a pack of lies ?

Answer - Well they certainly have their reasons for telling us this. It's why they tell us we can't have any wage increase this year. But you're right this isn't true. To a certain extent prices do vary according to supply and demand, but they fluctuate around an average price and this average price of a commodity is determined by its VALUE

Question - I wondered when you were going to get back to the 'Labour theory of value'. O.K. What is value ?

Answer - Every commodity needs a certain amount of labour to produce it. The more



labour that is needed to produce a commodity, the greater is its value. Gold has a high value because it needs a lot of labour to find, mine and refine it. Pound for pound (in weight), coal has a lower value because it takes far less labour to produce it.

Question - So the value of a commodity varies according to the labour entailed in producing it ?

Answer - Yes.

Question - That's all very well, but it still doesn't answer my original question - Where do profits come from ?

Answer - Ah! Now we have come to the central point of the whole argument. When capitalists sell commodities at their value, they get paid for all the labour contained in these same commodities....

## MARXISM ...

Question - Yes but don't capitalists have to pay the workers wages ?

Answer - Yes that's true. But not because they particularly want to. They have to pay us enough to be able to eat, be clothed, housed, bring up our children etc., in short, our wages are necessary to be able to buy commodities that we need in order to be able to live and continue to be of use to the capitalist.

These commodities also have a combined value - a value equal to our wages.

Question - And is there a difference between the value of our wages and the value of the commodities we produce ?

Answer - Yes, and this is the crux of the matter. It only takes a part of the working week to produce the value of our wages - or what Marx called our labour-power. The rest of the week is worked FREE for the bosses - it's unpaid labour! They own the factories, the raw materials and the products of our labour, hence they also own the products of our unpaid labour.

Question - So in actual fact there is no such thing as "A fair days work for a fair day's pay". Unless we get paid the total value of everything we produce.

Answer - Yes, but the capitalists could never allow this as it would mean they would make no profits at all! There is no such thing as fair wages or fair profits. The source of all profits is this unpaid labour. Exploitation is not unfair wages but the wages system itself. That's why we have nothing in common with the capitalists. The only way we can end 'unfair' wages, or exploitation, is by ending the capitalist system itself.

Question - Well I agree with that, but before I ask how we can do that, perhaps you can explain why it is that capitalism sometimes can't make a profit - where do all these recessions we hear about come from ?

Answer - I'm afraid you'll have to wait till next month for the answer to these questions.



## « INTERVIEWS »

RED MINER interviewed Gethin Jones a 24 year old miner from Taff Merthyr colliery. He was victimised for his active role in the strike and sacked. He was reinstated 5 months later but with loss of service.

Q. Do you get the impression that South Wales miners feel isolated at the moment, particularly militants?

A. Each pit is isolated. This isn't the fault of management it's the fault of the union. There's a need for greater information and participation after the strike. But we've had very little backing off the NUM, if any. Miners are afraid because up front they haven't got the support, haven't got the backing.

Q. Is that the problem, lack of confidence in the leadership ?

A. Yes the confidence in the leadership has gone, both in South Wales and nationally.

Q. Why are miners criticising Scargill ?

A. They're blaming him for the defeat, but they don't realise that we didn't fight because Scargill was there, we fought to save our jobs. To blame Scargill for the defeat and strike was ridiculous, it was forced on us.

Q. Do you feel that the leadership in South Wales take their membership for granted, not just during the strike, but since by saying "our lads will never join the UDM"?

A. Yes that's a fact. We're still taken for granted by Ponty-pridd, they know we were solid during the strike. But there is going to be a change.

Q. The election of Des Dutfield as President was a surprise to many outside (and inside ) the coalfield, Terry Thomas was seen as the favourite. How did Dutfield come to be elected, what kind of campaign did he run ?

A. He didn't run any campaign at all, that's the reason he became elected. Terry Thomas's head had to fall for being seen as leading (Area vice President ) a lost strike. Des spent his time during the strike in Oxford and wasn't seen much in South Wales. He wasn't seen as a militant who might bring us out on strike again.

Q. What would you like to see Des Dutfield doing for the South Wales miners ?

A. As far as the rank and file are concerned, get us involved now, not when it's too late. Let everyone know what's

(continued.....)

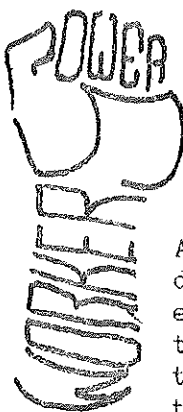
happening and let us be part of it. If we lose the battle again then fair enough, but let us be part of it, let everyone know step by step what he is doing and not try and spring a strike on us again.

Q. Workers Power feel that the NUM should be rebuilt. There is a need to organise now to defend NUM rights and gains, a need for elected representatives on every shift, every face, who need to meet regularly, more mass meetings, a regular pit bulletin - these would actually involve the membership. What are your views?

A. We already have NACODS, BACM and the NUM putting their bits in the Taff Merthyr bulletin. As for more reps. in the pit, yes, we need greater representation between them and the rank and file. Lodge committee members are not prepared to tell you what's going on, they hold meetings like Freemasons.

Q. These representatives must be made accountable through mass meetings.

A. Yes, What's happening at Taff Merthyr, the lodge itself make the policy decisions for us. They don't ask anymore.

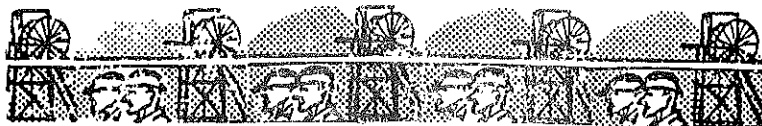


Q. Red Miner recognises the need for building a rank and file movement in the union, rather than relying on the leadership all the time. During the strike a lot of the more successful actions were organised by ordinary miners.

A. Yes, they're treating us like donkeys. They're not prepared to educate people. They're prepared to tell you what to do, but not prepared to tell you why. They tell you to do these things in case you get your own

thoughts and think why should I do it their way, why not another way They don't want that. Bureaucracy is the name of the game as far as the NUM in South Wales is concerned and you can underline that!

The interview with Gethin covered several other areas such as the sacked and jailed miners, Wales Congress, role of the support groups scab unionism and the election of a Labour government. Limitation of space has prevented them being printed. Red Miner would like to urge miners to send in their views on the state of the union since the strike and what they are doing in the different areas. We will be happy to print any information and letters we receive



Red Miner also interviewed Anthony Williams, a sacked miner from Markham Colliery, South Wales. Anthony was cleared in court of any part in the death of scab taxi driver David Wilkie, but was immediately sacked by his pit manager for "gross industrial misconduct"

Q. What treatment did you get at the tribunal hearings?

A. It wasn't worth going through them. It was us against them.

Q. Could you comment about the part played by the NUM in your case?

A. They could have done a lot more. They seem to have sat back and kept their faces out of it. They could have come up front much more.

Q. Do you feel the union has now abandoned you?

A. It's beginning to look that way. They haven't come to the house, they haven't sent a letter, they haven't said anything. I thought someone would have come, if just to say how are you feeling.

Q. Have you been in contact with any of the other sacked miners in the coalfield?

No. I haven't talked to any of them. But I think the Wales Support Group are going to organise a meeting to find out who is sacked and what's happening. They've said that they will find out what we can do together. We've got a chance then.

Q. Hopefully it would be possible to link up sacked miners from all over the British coalfield.

A. The ones that were sacked are the strikers not those on strike. There's a difference. For the union to abandon them now is wrong. If it wasn't for a lot of the people who've been sacked the strike wouldn't have lasted 2 weeks. There's a lot been found guilty and not sacked. Their names have been brought up in Crown court, the NCB are trying to say they don't know who they are. They look at and pick on certain people and say let's get rid of them.

Q. How do you think you can get your job back?

A. Not with this government. The union has no power to ask for jobs back. What can I do?



## REPORT FROM LEICESTERSHIRE

The UDM recieved a major setback in February when Leicestershire miners voted 885 to 490 to stick with the NUM.

Leicestershire - where only 30 miners came out in 1984-85 was the next big target for Lynk and his scabby crew. It's a small and declining coalfield, but the Vale of Belvoir superpit has been sunk in the area.

Having failed to win Leicester the UDM's strategy is in disarray. How will they pay for all their new union houses and cars?

But this "victory" for the NUM was won at a terrible cost.

### FLOWERS FOR A SCAB

The NUM leadership relied totally on Jack Jones, the scab president of Leics NUM to deliver the goods. They stayed from the area during the campaign and allowed him to write rubbish on the front page of THE MINER. Terry Thomas of South Wales even sent him a bunch of flowers! In the end what have we won?

1500 scabs remain in the NUM. None have lost a days pay. None have been disciplined or expelled. Meanwhile the "Dirty 30" Leics. striking miners have been swept under the carpet. These men and their families stuck out the strike till the very end. They have had to stick up for themselves every day down the pit since last March. They even had to get a court order to get into their own union meetings.

As for Jones he's forgotten nothing. His whole campaign was based on the slogan "Keep Leics. Local". He told his men that Leics' independence would be guaranteed in the NUM, but that they'd be swallowed up by Notts. if they joined the UDM. So far not one member of the executive has contradicted him.

But what did Leics' "independence" mean in 1984? It meant the whole area stayed at work because they'd had a local ballot against the strike.

Jones won by telling the local miners that Scargillism has been beaten, that the NEC's ruled by moderates, and that they won't be called on to strike again. So the leics. vote was not a vote against scab unionism. It was a vote for scab unionism with an NUM badge instead of a UDM one. This is the reality in Leics. today

### "DIRTY 30" VOTE

135 men voted for a "Dirty 30" member as Vice President. These militants trust Jones as far as they can throw him. He is already talking about an eventual merger with the UDM.

Instead of putting him on the front of THE MINER, and sending him flowers, the Executive should be helping get rid of Jones. If he's so loyal to the NUM he should accept it's discipline which can only mean removal from office, expulsion, and confiscation of his house and car.

There is an alternative to letting scabs and their friends run the NUM. A campaign which said:- "If you vote yes to the NUM you're voting for a real trade union, this will mean coming out on strike when asked by the National Union".- may not have won so many votes. It may have led to a split with a minority staying in the NUM as in Notts.

But this would have been far better than leaving Jones at the helm in Leics. He is worse than useless, he is a dangerous agent of scab unionism in our ranks.

Rank and file miners in militant areas should have this message for their Exec. representatives: Stop campaigning with Jones.....Discipline all Leics. officials who scabbed....Expel Jones now.

## JOBS NOT JAIL

Last month RED MINER argued that branches should not affiliate to the Justice for Miners Campaign as we believed that their policy was a selective one defending only those who "acted in good faith" rather than all those victimised and imprisoned during the course of the strike.

However we have since received information showing we had a wrong impression of the campaign which is fighting for all imprisoned and sacked miners. The misunderstanding arose because of the wording in the "Justice for Mineworkers Bill" which refers to those "who acted in good faith". We therefore maintain this criticism of this selective approach in the Bill, while urging branches to affiliate to the Campaign, which, although backing the Bill, is committed to campaigning for all miners. We must never abandon men like the Rymney 2 serving long sentences for their part in the strike.



SOGAT

# PRINT STRIKE



Militant miners and women from support groups have demonstrated their solidarity with printers sacked by multi-millionaire press owner Rupert Murdoch by joining the Wapping picket. They have wanted to repay the enormous (£m) financial support for the miners strike and haven't forgotten when the presses stopped to prevent vicious slurs on Scargill being printed.

Many militants are at Wapping because they recognise that, like in our fight, this attack is part of the bosses plans to destroy union power and they understand that all workers must be won to support the printers.

of "the public", to try and get people not to buy Murdoch papers. Meanwhile Fleet Street works on and any effective action is prevented.

Apart from going down to Wapping and arguing for effective picketing what can miners do?

We know the terrible effect of letting the cancer of scab unionism in Notts. fester and grow within the NUM, when it could have been cut out at the beginning. The same is true of the EETPU. We must pass resolutions to go to national NUM and the TUC demanding that they are expelled immediately.



A defeat at Wapping will mean faster and more confident attacks by all the other bosses, it will strengthen any moves to build a scab union federation of scab miners, electricians and railwayworkers, and it will see more and more union leaders backing away from a fight.

We can set up local support groups and get printers invited to as many local unions and shop stewards committees as we can.

And finally we can hammer home at every meeting and in every discussion the crippling effect of the anti-union laws. They have outlawed effective trade unionism anyone taking solidarity action will be breaking these laws.

As well as doing as much as possible ourselves to support the printworkers we

## 6,000 SACKED

### NEWS INTERNATIONAL DISPUTE

For the printworkers it would be a disaster. Trade unionism in the media would be struck a deadly blow and these "new" papers built on smashing unions will bring renewed anti-union fervour to their headlines. Already Maxwell has sacked 400 workers at Glasgow and the Express Telegraph and Mail all want up to 50% redundancies

Miners and Wives who have picketed at Wapping have been surprised and disappointed by the print unions' response to this threat. The mass pickets have been positively discouraged by Dean and Dubbins and are not planned to have an effect. They are part of a strategy to win the support

must also fight to stop the TUC sitting on the fence. What have the TUC done so far? Absolutely nothing! We must be clear, the printworkers cannot win alone against Murdoch and the Tory laws. The only way to get rid of the laws is for the whole trade union movement to respond with a general strike. It was mass strike action which got rid of Heath's laws, thats what we need to get rid of Thatcher's



# WHY WE WENT TO WAPPING!

RED MINER spoke to miners wives from Askern, Armthorpe, Kirk Sandall, Bentley and Brodsworth ( Doncaster Area ) who joined the 3,000 strong march of women printworkers and supporters to the Wapping picket. ( 8.2.86. )

*R.M. Why did you decide to go to Wapping ?*

Bobbie Because Fleet Street supported us fully in our dispute so I thought it was only right we support them. Not just money - we should go and be solid that way.

*R.M. How did you get organised ?*

Bobbie Well I rang Ollie (SOGAT) and asked if any pickets were going on. When he said yes I went to Doncaster Women Against Pit Closures and asked if we should put a minibus on. They said yes - so we went.

*R.M. Can you describe the march ?*

Bobbie Well, we all met near Tower Bridge and went up to Wapping where the printworks are. There were thousands of men and women on the march, but mainly women.



*R.M. Was it a militant picket ?*

Bobbie. Well, no not really. When we got there as we were walking down all the blokes were clapping us. We were shouting, come on, get in the road with us - they just ummm'd and arrr'd.

(The road was one of the main entrances to the printworks and could have been blocked)

*R.M. How many were there on the pavement then ?*

Bobbie. Thousands I would have said. If we'd all got together, if we'd got down in the road we could have done something to stop the lorries and buses. We could have sat down. They should have had more guts about them

*R.M. Bobbie and Brenda earlier have both suggested sitting down in the road. Wouldn't that just make us unable to defend ourselves from attacks from the cops.*

Aggie. Well, I would have done it if they had but there would have been a lot of people hurt as it does take longer to get up - people would be trampled on. But just standing there like the SOGAT pickets - it was pathetic.

*R.M. So you didn't think much to the printworkers tactics !*

Aggie. Pathetic.,

Bobbie. Well I thought it were slack, very slack. There were lots of streets uncovered, lots of ways in and the pickets were like sheep all flocking in one place.

Aggie. Well, they hadn't got any tactics, have they really - they just stand and shout scab. They should put up more of a fight, they aren't even trying to stop lorries. I was down the week after and at 9 O'clock the cops started charging us with horses - and that picket wasn't as big as the previous week's so I was surprised we hadn't done anything then.

*R.M. So the police have learn't their lessons from the miners strike better than the printers ?*

Aggie. Yes I think so.

*R.M. You went back on the picket at 5am*

Bobbie Yes, two women got out of a cab - the men just let them walk in ! We started shouting scab at them and the pickets asked us to stop and not cause any trouble - but that's only the natural thing to do, if you're scabbing you are a scab - they didn't even try to stop buses or talk to anyone.

Brenda. I didn't think it was a strong picket at all. I think the women were stronger than the men when we were there, they wouldn't even come off the pavement to block the road. We saw lots of backways in that had no pickets on.

*R.M. What should the printers do now ?*

Bobbie. Stick it out and get harder, and get more support down there. And I think it should be everybody, not the Mirror going to work and all the others, get them out, get them all out of Fleet street. That's the only way. If we'd got Notts out we could have won. If they want to win now - all out !

*R.M. What should we be doing now ?*

Bobbie. We should twin with the printers and build support for them. We should send money so they can stay out and win.

*R.M. Finally what do you think should be done about the electricians ?*

Aggie. Well, they should be kicked out - they are in with the scabs in the UDM. And now the management at International Harvesters in Doncaster are after the same sort of scab agreement, arn't they. If they are let off they will not keep TUC policy and we'll get them (scab agreements) everywhere never mind London !

Bobbie. Yes they should be kicked out, that's my opinion. I'm sick of everything they have done.



# WHERE WE STAND

## RED MINER

The Red Miner is produced by members and supporters of Workers Power. Workers Power is a revolutionary organisation fighting to build a new revolutionary party to overthrow capitalism - at home and abroad.

## WORKERS' STRUGGLES

We support all workers' struggles against the bosses. We fight to turn all struggles into conscious anti-capitalist struggles.

## REFORMISM

The trade union and Labour leaders believe capitalism can be reformed, made better, but they do not aim to overthrow capitalism. They act as go-betweens for the bosses with the workers. Even militant leaders limit their struggles to the fight for gains within capitalism. For this reason we are for building rank and file movements politically independent of the bureaucracy and committed to transforming the unions into democratic, class struggle unions.

## REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

A revolutionary party will be a workers' party, a party that, built in struggle, can learn and pass on the lessons of the 1984-85 strike and other struggles. We stand for miners taking their place in the front ranks of building such a party as they did in the 1920s. Only by building a new revolutionary party can we create the class army that can fight and destroy the stinking capitalist system that threatens us with always having to fight to protect our jobs, conditions and organisations.

## INTERNATIONALISM

We are committed to fighting capitalism internationally. We strive to build an international organisation of revolutionary parties. (Workers Power works with Irish, German, French and Chilean revolutionaries in the Movement for a Revolutionary International). In particular we fight nationalist solutions to the crisis put forward by reformists like calls for import controls. Such demands merely divide the working class.

## DIVISIONS

We fight all divisions in the working class. Divisions are fostered by the bosses to weaken us. We are implacably opposed to racism immigration

controls, fascism, discrimination against and oppression of women, gays or black people.

## THE OPPRESSED

We support all struggles by people oppressed by the bosses of Britain, America, France, Italy and the other capitalist (imperialist) countries. Immediately in Britain this means we support the right of the Irish people as a whole (not just those in the north) to determine the fate of their country. We unconditionally support the republicans and socialists in Ireland fighting for this right and demand the immediate withdrawal of all British troops from Ireland.

## WORKERS' STATES

The USSR, Eastern Europe, etc are workers' states. Capitalism has been abolished. However, in each of these states a bureaucracy, based on the Stalinist Communist Parties, holds political power. This situation arose out of the international isolation of the Russian Revolution in the 1920s. The revolution degenerated at the hands of the bureaucracy headed by Stalin. The other workers' states were degenerate from birth in that they were created in the bureaucratic image of the USSR.

Therefore we call for a political revolution in all of these states to overthrow the bureaucracy and realise the full potential of these non-capitalist economies through democratic planning. At the same time, in order to preserve the gain for the working class represented by these economies, we defend the USSR and degenerate workers' states unconditionally against imperialism which, through war, will seek to re-introduce capitalism in these countries.

## OVERTHROW CAPITALISM

The revolutionary party we seek to build will have as its strategic goal the overthrow of capitalism by workers organised into workers' councils and armed so as to defeat the police and army that the bosses have used, and will use again, against us. We are for a socialist society in which all property is in the hands of the workers' state and all production is directed towards meeting human need - not satisfying the profit greed of the capitalists. We stand on the old slogan of Karl Marx:

**WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE,  
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT YOUR CHAINS,  
AND A WORLD TO WIN.**