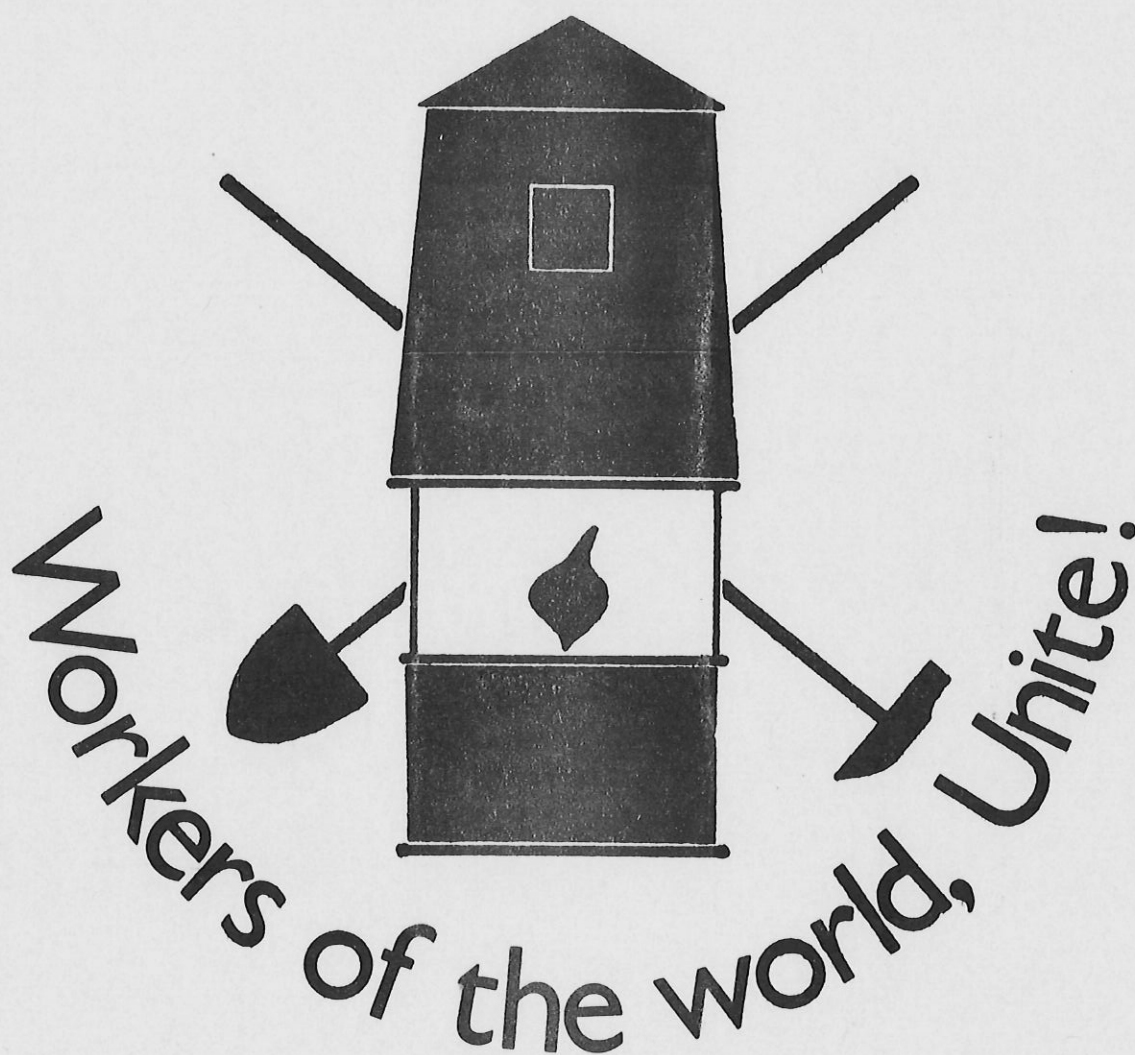


THE RED MINER

NO.6. DEC/JAN '86

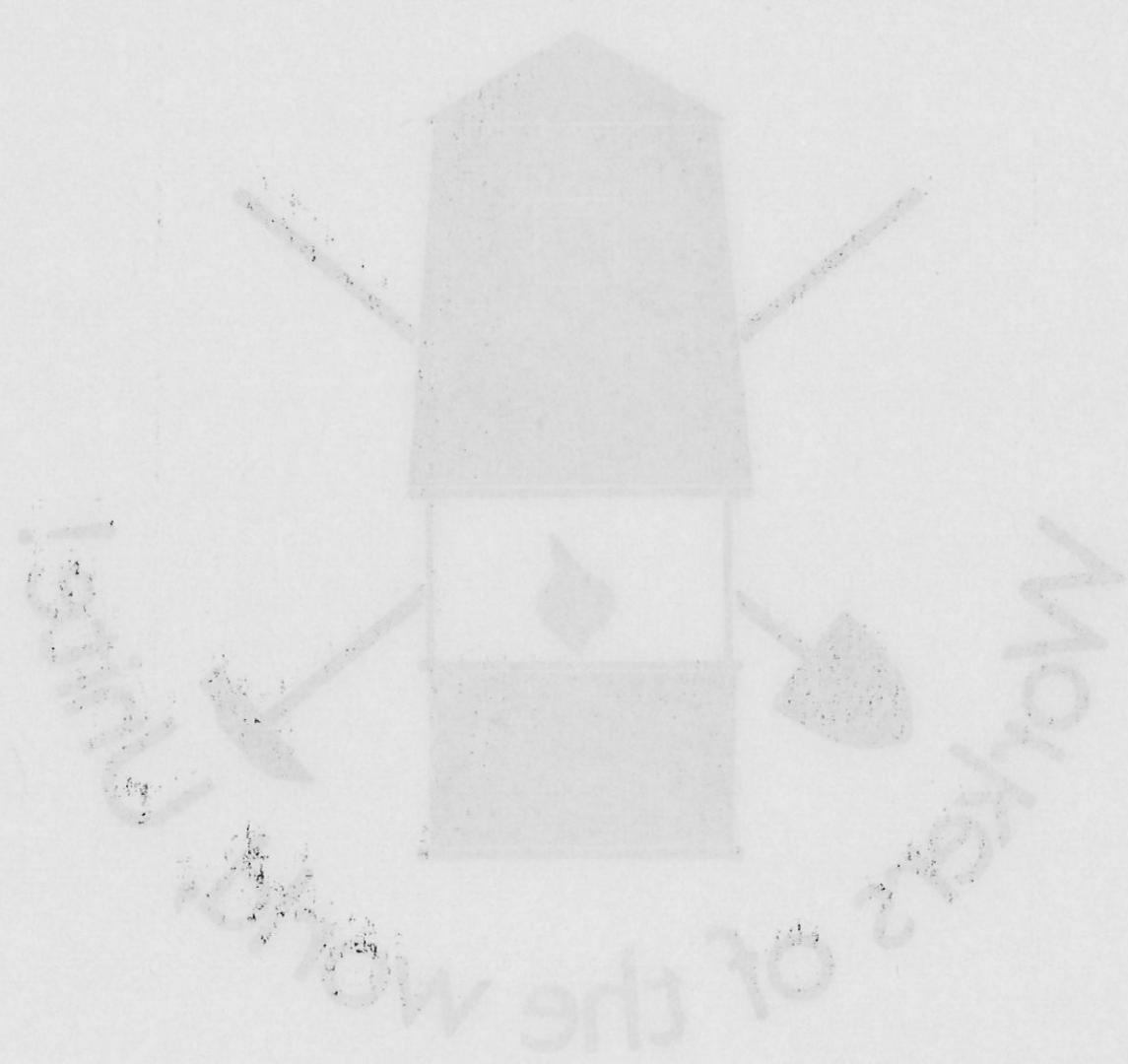


**workers
power**

Bulletin for miners and their families 10p

THE RED MINER

NO. 8. DECEMBER 1933





THE NCB'S ATTEMPT to rub the NUM's nose in the dirt is continuing apace. In order to avoid expanding production, the NCB has deliberately turned down the opportunity of selling coal to Denmark. Opening up this new market (the Danish government is looking for an alternative to South African coal) might mean keeping pits open and MacGregor wants none of that!

With 17,000 miners having taken redundancy since the end of the strike, the NCB is hoping to reach its target of 70,000 before too long. Nobody should believe that the reprieve given to Darfield Main indicates a U-turn on the part of the Board. Its plan - part of an EEC plan to halve coal production in member countries - is being carried through relentlessly. Darfield Main may be open, but Bold, St Johns and a host of others face the chop.

The main line of attack on the NUM, however, is now centred on the pay front. In a bid to maintain the flagging momentum of the scab UDM, the NCB is withholding a pay offer from the NUM. It has said that it is not prepared to give the NUM the £5.50 plus 50p a shift that it has already awarded the UDM until the NUM gives a written undertaking to abide by certain conditions. Even then it is refusing to make an offer increasing national grade rates. In line with the CBI's 'Nowt for nowt' slogan it is making all increases conditional on increased productivity.

The aim of the board is transparent. By giving the scabs a backdated boost to their wage packets it hopes to encourage loyalists to leave the NUM. This bribery of the members is of a piece with the board's offers of cars and pensions to the scab leaders, like Jack Jones, who have opted to stay in the NUM. It shows that smashing the NUM was and is a central part of the NCB's strategy.

The NUM's leadership's response to this onslaught has been appalling. The Yorkshire area under Jack Taylor led the way. His area was the first to argue for sending the NCB a written undertaking to abide by its conditions.

A letter was circulated recommending that branches support Taylor's line. Confusion, demoralisation and desperation to get some money led many branches to accept Taylor's line. Even in the militant Doncaster area only 4 branches voted against Taylor.

At first Taylor was unable to get his way on the National Executive A 10-9 vote in late November went against giving the NCB a surrender note.



However, instead of building on this and launching a campaign in the coalfields to rally morale, offer a way forward and prepare for action, Scargill and his supporters opted for a legalistic fight. They chose to prove that the board is in breach of the 1946 National Conciliation Scheme by taking individual cases to an industrial tribunal to demand pay parity.

While legalistic methods like this cannot be ruled out they are no substitute for organising the mass of the rank and file to fight. For a start the 'impartial' people (like lawyers!) who staff the tribunals are only ever likely to rule in favour of the NUM if they feel and fear mass pressure. The increasing reliance on tribunals and the courts to fight the scabs and the NCB is a dead end. It will not rebuild the fighting strength of the union.

Eloquent proof of this came at the very next Executive meeting. The 10-9 vote was overthrown by a 12-6 vote in favour of giving the NCB written undertakings. The executive has accepted that pay will be tied to incentives. The Area Incentive Scheme will be supplemented by attendance bonuses. Divisions between pits and areas will be supplemented by divisions within pits and areas.

The NCB stands a better chance now than ever before of doing to the NUM what BSC did to the steelworkers. And the executive's decision on the pay offer, a decision in total breach of the policy on incentives agreed at the last delegate conference, will help the board in this project.

A fightback must be mounted. Voting against the offer were the peripheral coalfields, Durham, Kent, Scotland, etc, who will gain least by incentive payments. In some of those areas Euro-Communist elements, like Bolton and McGahey in Scotland, predominate. Their position on pay does not reflect their willingness to fight. It does reflect the fact that they could not sell such a deal to their members. These members must begin to organise quickly to stop the retreat. They must link up with each other and with the militants in the Yorkshire and Midland's coalfields.

A national fight on pay and closures is unlikely. But there is still much that can be done. In every pit rank & file newsletters, like *The Armthorpe Tannoy*, must be launched to supplement the *Rank and File Miner*. Every closure must be met by action that is spread within and across areas. In particular Kent, as a militant area, could begin building a fighting alliance of

the areas around resistance to closure of Betteshanger. The recent election in South Wales of Des Dutfield, a Scargill supporter, by a sizeable majority over the Kinnockite (and Euro supported) Terry Thomas, should be used as an opportunity to rekindle militancy in South Wales and link up this area with others prepared to fight.

By building on strikes and disputes that do take place militants will be able to renew a feeling of confidence amongst their mates. Recently *Socialist Worker Review* pointed out that they had recorded 20 local strikes since the end of the Great Strike. This is by no means a complete record, but it shows that a willingness to fight does still exist. To really be able to build on it the manoeuvres and retreats of the leaders must be countered by the determined actions and campaigns of a locally rooted but nationally organised rank and file.

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REGIONAL ROUND - UP

YORKSHIRE

Nothing the Coal Board does surprises us any longer. The degree to which they will lie, cheat, misrepresent, break agreements and promises, spoken or written must break all time records for any management. So it comes as no surprise whatsoever that although production has reached record levels at Rossington the board has not moved one inch in 9 months to reinstate any of the 27 miners sacked at this pit. Not even one.

It is no surprise either that all the noise and media coverage of the UDM making inroads into Bentley are as hollow as Roy Lynk's promises. So much for the two or three hundred possible recruits, in fact you can count them on one hand, and they are just the worthless out and out scabs that are still crawling wherever they go (usually to management).

But what is a surprise is the stand the Yorkshire Area Executive took over the issue of the latest coal board offer. After the first national executive vote against the offer, a mandate was sought from the membership. On asking what the recommendation was from the area executive it was that we accept the offer. An offer that we don't even know the full details of because the board won't deign to give them. Surely the boards arrogant attitude and bullyboy tactics deserve a tougher response from our area leaders than this. Are they to throw the towel in before they have even left the corner.

At least the Area Council have made their intentions clear. At their meeting on the 18th of November it passed the Thurncroft branch resolution which noted concern at the loss of Yorkshire Main Cortonwood and Brookhouse Collieries, and states:

"We recognise the great difficulties facing the union since the return to work. However we feel that urgent steps need to be taken to try to ensure that the agreed policy on fighting pit closures is carried out.

"To this end we call on council to:

- "a) actively encourage all branches to resist closure and make full use of the Colliery Review Procedure;
- "b) do everything possible to maintain the morale of the men while a pit is under the Review Procedure, including the setting up of pit-community based campaigns

"c) take up the necessary steps to ensure that, once a pit comes under the Review Procedure, it can be withdrawn only by the mutual agreement of the branch concerned and the National Executive."

The problem with this is that it ties any fight against closure to the Colliery Review Procedure. Firstly, the board can ignore it's findings, and secondly it should not be the Colliery Review Board which decides whether a pit should close or remain open, but the pit workers themselves. All closures even through the Colliery Review Procedure should be resisted.

Campaigns have got to involve the whole area; national officials should be invited to meetings and links made with workers in other industries for support and sympathy action. In this way a new national campaign of action can be built to prepare for the next big fight.



DARFIELD MAIN TO STAY OPEN

A demonstration and rally at Darfield celebrating the victory was held the day after the decision to keep the pit open was taken. The mood which came from the platform which included Scargill, as well as the mood of the marchers themselves was somewhat restrained.

Congratulations on the fight by the NUM, the community action group and other sections of the community are in order. But the terms of the reprieve, which were not given at the rally are hard. At least 100 of Darfields 500 workforce will go, and production will have to be maintained at a higher level, by a smaller workforce. This type of deal which secures the life of the pit but at a high cost has left people wondering what type of victory has been achieved.

It is understandable then that the mood of the rally was not of outright victory. With pits in Yorkshire having closed since the end of the strike, and with Kinsley Drift and Fryston now threatened the fight is far from over.

WARWICKSHIRE

Contrary to media reports Warwickshire, has not become a scab stronghold. Daw Mill's vote to join the UDM came as no surprise, but the result at nearby Anstey Workshops did. Despite only having a handful of men still out at the end of the strike, attempts to get them to join forces with Daw Mill failed, by a majority of 16 they voted to stay in the NUM.

Also, at Daw Mill a loyal NUM branch has been formed, with approximately 150 members, and mostly led by those who stayed out on strike till the end. Apparently Sammy Glass has offered his assistance to the NUM branch, he claims to remain loyal to the NUM. How has he shown this loyalty in the past? By leading men through the picket lines during the strike. With friends like these, who needs enemies.

At present no other pit shows signs of joining the UDM, though individuals have throughout the coalfield. However the 11 men remain sacked. Attempts to build on the one day strike action at Keresley for their reinstatement have failed. The NCB remain on the offensive.



Paranoia...

Frank Clark right wing delegate from South Kirby slated not only the miners rank and file movement, not only the South Yorkshire Defence Campaign, but even the day release course at Sheffield University as a "breeding ground for communists", at a recent N.E.C. meeting. As communists the RED MINER would like to inform comrade Frank that the best breeding ground for communists is in struggle both with the Tories and right wing idiots like himself- something we look forward to. Does he?

North Derbyshire

Latest management tactics in North Derbyshire are; videos at work a monthly newsletter, printing among other things weekly production figures, and coal news sent through the post. What's needed is propaganda in reply by the union, regular bulletins -like the Armthorpe Tannoy- which can put paid to managements attempts to brainwash us.

LOOK WHAT'S NEW!

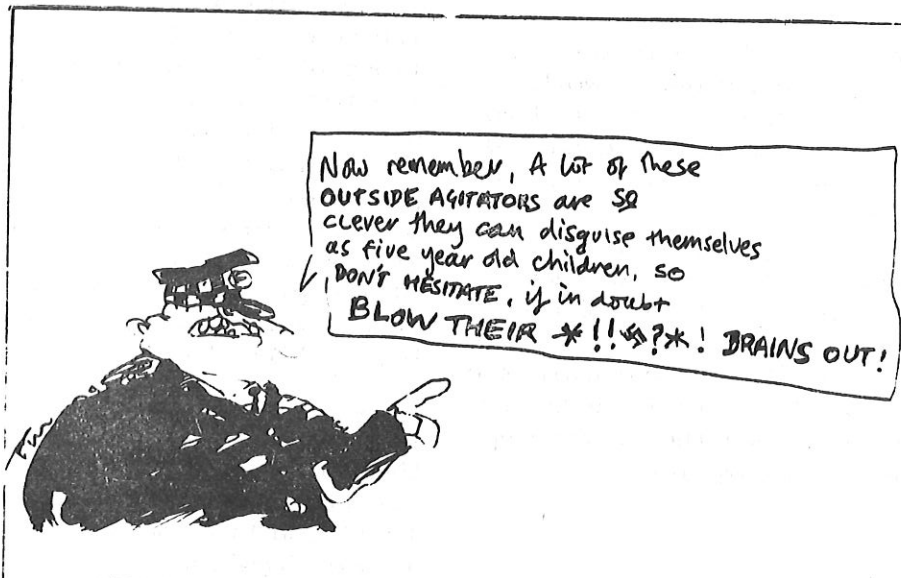
Welcome to this, the First Edition of Renishaw Park Colliery's own monthly Newspaper, full of interesting and relevant information about you and your colliery

Our future editions will include:-

- Safety & Training News.
- Production Results.
- Competitions. (with prizes)
- Reports on Mechanical & Electrical Depts
- Items of local interest
- Poems and Cartoons etc
- Profiles of Colliery Staff

In addition to this we will be having a "Right to Reply" column which will give everyone an opportunity to give their opinion on articles in the paper

management propaganda



SOUTH WALES SINCE THE STRIKE

In the 8 months since the end of the great strike, the NCB has succeeded in closing, or merging 11 of the original 28 pits in South Wales. To date 8 pits have shut:- Bedwas, Treforgan, Markham, Abertillery, Aberpergwm, Celyren South, Penrhiwceiber, and St John's. In addition Celyren North, Blaenjerchon, and Mardy are all to link up with nearby pits. out of a workforce of 18,500 in march, around 3-4,000 jobs have been lost.

The declared aim of area director Cliff Davies is to make the South Wales coalfield break even by next spring using further pit closures. The pits most likely to be threatened in the near future are Tower, Garw, Nantgarw, and Six Bells, of these Garw appears to be in most danger having been given impossible new production targets by the NCB. The men at the pit have voted to fight closure, but will not be encouraged by the fact that miners at the nearby St John's colliery voted to end their 7 month campaign against closure. As well as Garw, Mardy miners are continuing to resist coal board attempts to close their pit. Indeed production levels are so good at Mardy that the proposed link with Tower has been delayed until early next year. However, boosting production is no way to save pits. There is a need to build, from the militancy at Mardy, and Garw a united, fighting campaign, against the further round of closures the Coal Board is planning for the area.

Many of the miners sacked during the strike in South Wales (around 30) have been reinstated. However 5 men sacked for occupying pit shafts in the Midlands lost their industrial tribunal and remain sacked. Also 5 lads sacked from the Phurnacite plant, on the word of superscab Paul Watson have accepted ex-gratia NCB payments and left the industry. Anthony Williams, cleared of any part in the death of the scab taxi driver remains sacked, together with another half dozen South Wales miners.

The cases of the 2 Rhymney miners Dean Hancock, and Russel Shankland have attracted a lot of attention. There was general relief in mining communities when their sentences were reduced, though the manslaughter conviction maybe overthrown by the House of Lords. (Who elected them).

Scab Unionism doesn't appear to be a serious threat yet, though Lynk claims to have received requests for membership from individual South Wales miners. Although many scabs have left the area, and some "scabby pits" during the strike have shut, the UDM won't just go away as the leadership hope. The officials seem to be taking a complacent attitude and taking their members for granted, as they did during the strike. It's unlikely that the election of the new Area President to replace Emlyn Williams will result in active campaigns against pit closures and scab unionism. The winner Des Dutfield, who defeated Terry Thomas with 60% of the vote in a 75% turnout, came to national prominence in 1983 after leading a stay down strike at the Tymawr/Lewis Merthyr pit. In a low key campaign he stood largely on this and his 30 years experience as a miner.

While rejecting the "Scargillite" label, he does have respect for Scargill together with a healthy distrust of Kinnock, although preferable to the stalinist Thomas as president he has still got to declare how he intends to rebuild confidence among South Wales miners.

Since the end of the strike the NUM leadership have made it clear that they will do nothing to halt the NCB butchery of the coalfield. Together with the Wales Congress, in which they have significant influence, these stalinist misleaders are committed to winning over public opinion for the "case for coal" and ensuring that "Kneel" Kinnock is fully supported.

Indeed Williams even stated recently that "Neil Kinnock has always been a friend of the South Wales miners". Their strategy of waiting for the next Labour government to come to the rescue of South Wales miners must be exposed to the membership as the sickening sellout that it really is. Their surrender to the coal board since the end of the strike must be fought, and organised against by militants, before it is too late.

Postscript: After this article was typed miners at Garw pit voted on Dec. 8th to accept closure.

Emlyn Williams



BLACK PEOPLE UNDER ATTACK

Two militants from the Broadwater Farm estate in Tottenham spoke to NUM members at the Markham Main branch (Doncaster) last month about police harassment and the "riots". Branch members told Red Miner that the contact with Tottenham had been made during the strike when money was being raised for miners.

The meeting opened a lot of peoples eyes about how long harassment has been going on, and the police tactics were found to compare closely to the time "our village was invaded". No doubt readers can remember T.V. coverage of cops in riot gear knocking down doors and chasing pickets through homes and gardens in Armthorpe.

THE REAL PROBLEMS

True to form the press and T.V, chose to ignore the real problems causing the "riots" and gave coverage to the calculated hysteria of the Tories, calling them "criminal outbursts" and Kinnocks comments about riots being senseless and indefensible.

A brief look at the reality of the inner city areas experienced daily by unemployed black youth will help us understand why "riots" happen. In Brixton since 1979 unemployment has risen by 249%, in Handsworth only 99 of the 1,434 school leavers got a job last year and only 8 of these were Afro-Caribbean. In the borough of Lambeth (contains Brixton) more than 15,000 houses are officially unfit for human habitation. Recent reports show that black people get poorer quality housing and suffer a greater burden of unemployment than the white community.

RACISM FUELS RIOTS

On it's own this does not explain why the bricks fly, and the buildings burn in Brixton and not in Sunderland. Working class youth in Newcastle, Glasgow etc. face high levels of unemployment yet so far have remained passive. The answer to this is police racism. The Economist (the magazine that advises the bosses) reporting the riots had this to say:

"In the side streets there, police in riot gear were banging their shields and shouting racial abuse." Police were quoted as saying "There's nothing

like a bit of coon bashing." Attitudes like this run through the police from top to bottom.

The riots in each city were a spontaneous response by mainly black youth to flagrant state racism. Police brutality, harassment and deportations are the methods that the British state has chosen to keep the lid on the inner cities. The arrest of a parking offender in Birmingham, the shooting of a mother of six in Brixton, the sudden death of a Tottenham woman, and the trial of 4 blacks in Liverpool triggered things off in these areas.



FASCIST ACTIVITY

A racist police force tolerates racism amongst whites and in recent months there has been a rapid and vicious escalation of racist violence -- particularly in East London with arson attacks becoming commonplace. The most horrifying when Shamira Kassam and her 3 children were burnt alive in an attack the police refused to treat as racist. Black people turning to the police for protection soon find themselves the subject of lengthy questioning and often arrest, with little or nothing done about the attacks. The black community is obviously becoming more and more resentful. Meanwhile the small fascist organisations like the National Front, who had the wind taken out of their sails by the Tories racist policies in 1979, have been quickly regrouping a hard core of thugs prepared to terrify the black community and white anti racists.

WORKERS MUST ORGANISE

It is the organised working class that can effectively challenge racism at work and in the community. Interestingly the main

point of discussion at the Markham Main meeting was not against young blacks defending themselves, but towards how that fight could be made more successful. The miners experience of the cops on the picket line and in the village left them in no doubt about whose side they were on, and how they were being used to defeat the strike. The attacks made on inner city youth were seen in exactly the same light.

Militants who have seen clearly the way the class enemy works, how racism can be used to divide the working class, and how state racism provides cover for the growth of fascist organisations, must, as done in the Armthorpe Tannoy pit bulletin, produce information and arguments to counter racism and build support for black defence in the labour movement as a matter of urgency.

BLACK WORKERS FIGHT BACK

When the South African Minister of Law and Order, Mr Louis le Grange, tried to gag the foreign press and T.V. by stopping them entering the black townships, he justified it by arguing that the T.V. cameras inflamed the situation. But a month into the ban it's clear that the real purpose was to hide a police onslaught on the black townships. During November, police actions,

ship demonstration. The police murder of 13 of the demonstrators so incensed local feeling that a massive funeral took place (which did reach our T.V. screens). Flags of the banned liberation organisation the African National Congress, were openly displayed.



The newly-elected President of COSATU, Elijah Barayi, being carried by workers in Durban last Sunday

resulted in over 25 deaths throughout the country. The racist regime thought it could crush the revolt in the townships in this way, but it has demonstrably failed.

In Mamelodi, a campaign by the youth had drawn in their parents in a protest against rent increases and the police presence, and local workers struck in support of a town-

NEW UNION FEDERATION FORMED
 The racist regime has its back to the wall. It has suffered another setback in the courts dismissal of treason charges against leaders of the alliance against the apartheid laws, the United Democratic Front. But the potentially most significant threat comes from the step forward taken by a

STEEL STRIKE - FORGE THE LINKS

This week British Steel recorded a half year pre tax profit of £21 million. Also this week workers at Sheffield Forgemasters finished their 9th week of striking. Forgemasters is half owned by British Steel, (the other half is the private firm Johnson and Firth Brown), and their actions over the past 3 months are a graphic example of how British Steel has managed to boost it's profits.

MANAGEMENT ATTACKS

The plants which form Forgemasters have lost in the past 5 years over 5,000 jobs, there are now less than 1,000 working there, but the workers who are left have had enough. Shop steward Arthur Millward told Red Miner, "We're like any workers in the country, if they're pushed to the limit then they'll come back fighting".

Workers at forgemasters certainly have been "pushed to the limit". Management provoked the strike by: withdrawing the measly £4 a week pay offer, scrapping existing work practices, -such as pay guarantees when on short time working, the ending of plant level bargaining in the hope of setting one section against another, and withdrawing recognition from the convenor and the senior negotiating team. As a final act of arrogance management announced 520 redundancies, including the convenor. Faced with such an attack the workforce had only one response, -all out strike.

SELLOUT RESISTED

Since the strike began it has been 100% solid despite the threat of the sack, and attempts by the leaders of the two main unions the ISTC and the AUEW to engineer a sellout. ISTC officials did in fact tell them at a mass meeting to go back to work, the mass meeting told the officials to get stuffed. However in order to keep going Forgemasters strikers need your support.



SUPPORT NEEDED

During the miners strike trade unionists at Forgemasters raised over £23,000 for the miners through their JSSC, they continued to raise money even after the strike was over in order to help the NUM and the sacked lads. The favour now needs to be returned. Many NUM branches have given support, money food, coal, etc. but this needs to be increased by taking it to the rank and file. At Renishaw Park for instance bucket collections are preceded by a leaflet to all miners at the pit explaining the case for support. Other support from miners has included a pledge of £250 a month from Silverwood pit, and a social at Goldthorpe with all proceeds going to the strikers.

Finally miners probably know more about striking than any other section of the British working class, we need to take the lessons of our strike to other workers in struggle. The most important lesson of the miners strike was, that it's always harder to win on your own. If Forgemasters are going to win, the best form of solidarity is strike action in other parts of the industry, hitting the bosses where it hurts most, in their pockets.

Messages of support, money etc. to;
Forgemaster Atlas Strike Cttee.
c/o AUEW House
Arundel Gate
Sheffield S1 tel 79042

substantial section of the non-racial trade unions in South Africa through the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions- C.O.S.A.T.U. This federation gathers in 1/2 million mostly black workers.

C.O.S.A.T.U. has declared that it will not only fight on immediate economic issues like wages and conditions, but also take up the fight against the apartheid pass laws. These laws mean that black Africans have to carry special documents showing whether they have a right to be in a white area. Otherwise they may find themselves detained and sent back to the so-called homelands (only 13% of the country) where the majority of black Africans are forced to be officially resident. The trade unions have found that they have to take up these political issues, otherwise they simply can't organise effectively. And there is daily a groundswell of action to get rid of apartheid once and for all.

GENERAL STRIKE

But massive determination and commitment isn't enough to guarantee success. If the working class is organising to take on these political questions, then President Botha must sleep uneasily in his bed- but he has massive armed power on his side. His class, like Thatchers, runs the apartheid state, the businesses, factories, and mines. To overthrow the apartheid state, the black working class needs the correct strategy and massive working class solidarity action.

C.O.S.A.T.U. has given the regime six months to scrap the pass laws. This may be too long to wait. The regime, forewarned, could strike first when it chooses. It is not clear yet what action C.O.S.A.T.U. proposes. Red Miner argues - learning the bitter lessons of our own struggle - that if the regime is to be paralysed then there has to be a general strike. And as this means a head on confrontation with the state, then there will have to be defence squads, links between the trade unionists and the youth in the townships, control of distribution, and elected workers committees to run the strike, and if possible, prepare for the overthrow of the regime and the seizure of the factories.

There will be a danger that unless the working class itself takes a lead, then middle class leaders will negotiate the future in its own interests. There were warning signs of this when the A.N.C. had "friendly talks" with white businessmen.

SUPPORT NEEDED FROM BRITISH WORKERS

Our major task remains to fight for solidarity action. Those of us who are not in the front line for taking action to stop goods moving can still make an important contribution. If we are going to see more action like that of the Southampton and Stranrear dockers, or the Glasgow passport office (who are refusing to process passports of those going to South Africa), If we are to see shop and distribution workers following the example of Dunnes in Dublin, then the rest of us must be committed to supporting these workers. They will be breaking the Tories trade union laws.



TWINNING

To win the support needed, Red Miner urges branches and our area and national leadership to immediately issue an invitation to representatives of the newly formed C.O.S.A.T.U. and tell our members and those of other unions about their struggle against apartheid. Pits should also twin with gold mines in South Africa in order to aid directly rank and file miners in South Africa. Security problems are great in this area, but commitment to the principle of rank and file solidarity can make it possible.

REVIEW: 'WHOSE LAW?'

Part of the unfinished business of the Great Strike is the 40 miners and supporters still in jail and the 700 miners victimised by the board. These people are the heroes and heroines of our movement. they gave everything in the year long battle against the Tories and their class.

But, of course there are those such as Kinnock and co. (not to mention certain sections of the NUM itself) who believe that those jailed and victimised get their just deserts because they "broke the law". This video gives the lie to those who think like Kinnock: it shows clearly that the law and those who enforce it, the police and courts, are not somehow neutral but are there to prop up the capitalist order. And the video is particularly effective on this score because the points are made by miners and supporters themselves in interviews and episodes from the strike. It should be added that the video "Whose Law?" not only has good politics but good production as well. It is genuinely interesting and entertaining to watch.

The full forces of the law, police, and courts were needed to crush the miners and those sections of the working class who supported them. During the course of the Great Strike almost 10,000 miners and supporters were arrested. Most were arrested on trumped up charges under Public Order offences. Many were arrested under ancient laws like 'besetting' which, as one miner charged and jailed under this offence says, 'is the only law you can get charged with and they are more or less 100% certain of finding you guilty on it'. Small wonder then that the capitalists have never bothered to repeal such ancient laws: during the strike such laws allowed the capitalists and their police agents to target and remove from the fray leading militants. Liz French, the wife of Terry from Betteshanger in Kent (sentenced to four years inside), tells how the police charged into the picket line, dragged Terry out, handcuffed him away singing 'We've got Frenchy'!

MASS SACKINGS

Similarly, the mass sackings engaged in by the N.C.B. were designed to remove the activists from the pits once and for all. This point is hammered home by a lad from Kent NUM, sacked for his part in the occupation of Betteshanger: 'there must have been up to 200 people involved in the

whole of the occupation and it seems as if it is only the real activists that have been sacked'.

CLASS LAW

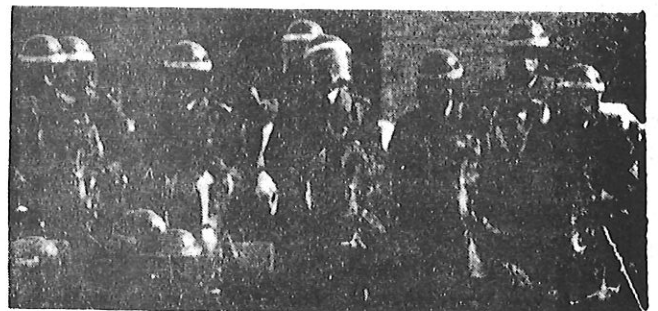
It is not only in the Great Strike that the law has been used to crush working class militancy. As a miner from Hatfield Main (Yorks.) rightly points out: 'The law in Britain exists primarily to defend private property. It's therefore diametrically opposed to organisations of working people. It has been right throughout history, through the miners' history in particular. We've had to break the law to fight for our trade union and for everything we've won'.

Moreover, the Tories are adding to their 'law and order' armoury even more laws; the Public Order proposals are designed to render unlawful every effective working class action from mass demos to mass pickets.

This video should be shown by every NUM branch and support group, not only as part of the amnesty campaign for those jailed and sacked but as a warning to all workers of what we are up against. The only way to gain an amnesty and defeat the bosses' attacks, including the new class laws, is summed up in one very memorable image from the video - A silhouette of a clenched fist above a mass demonstration; naked class power.

.....

"Whose Law?" campaign video available from South Wales Miners' Video Project c/o Video Workshop, Market Road, Canton, Cardiff CF6 1GE (£12.65 inc. p&p - for loan to support groups FREE).



Dear Red Miner,



Dear Red Miner

No surrender!

The fight goes on!

Guerilla warfare in the pits!

We have not suffered a defeat!

What bloody crap, the NUM is retreating so fast it's passed Roy Lynks outfit twice. We were led back to work leaving some of our members outside the gates which was disgraceful, deserting men who had backed their union up to the hilt. Shove them a bit of conscience money to keep them quiet and forget them seems to be the attitude, and we call ourselves trade unionists.

On the UDM issue, our officials keep telling us "it's a bosses union", "spencerism", "backed by big business", "will sell it's members out". The UDM we were told signed away all the rights of their members for their pay rise. We were told to fight this cancer in our midst! What do our branch, area, and national officials do to fight? Railroad a dirty deal through branch meetings, with no time for discussion, knowing full well

there would not be many members at these meetings to stop this sellout deal going through.

Their idea of fighting the UDM is to make the NUM the same as the UDM in the hope that the men will have no need to leave the NUM. What a load of crap! These officials either have no idea how to fight, or have no will to fight. Sod the members, let's look after our own backs. And with the performance of some of these officials during the strike I tend to be of the second opinion.

So come on you members who want a fighting union. Get to your branch meetings, stop the sellouts, and force these officials to defend our rights. If they want to work with management let them join NACODS.

A North Derbyshire miner.

Dear Red Miner,

Thank you for the article on the Irish war ("Britain - Ireland's Enemy Within") in Red Miner 5. Most importantly, you are clear and unequivocal about why workers in Britain must give unconditional support to the Irish nationalists and the IRA in their fight against our common enemy, British imperialism - the collective British bosses.

However, nowhere in your article did you mention socialism. You also ended the piece looking forward to "the day when peace through national liberation, can come to Ireland" (my emphasis). But a purely national solution will not bring peace to the vast majority of the Irish people (ie: the workers) as they will still be living in a capitalist society, where all power remains with the bosses' class. This, of course, does not mean that socialists and workers in Britain should

withdraw their support for the nationalist struggle. But, while we support the IRA - no matter what strategy they choose - our international duty to the Irish working-class is to explain the importance of a socialist strategy as well.

I'm glad you have started such an important debate with your timely article. Could you please continue it by clarifying your position in this one area of confusion? In addition, I think it would be useful to discuss the relevance of the recent Anglo-Irish "accord", and also what kind of solidarity action British workers must take if we are to help our Irish sisters and brothers inflict a crushing defeat on our common enemy, British imperialism.

Revolutionary greetings,

J Drinkwater (Cardiff)

PS. The workers history series will continue in Issue 7 with an article on the 1974 Strike.

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.