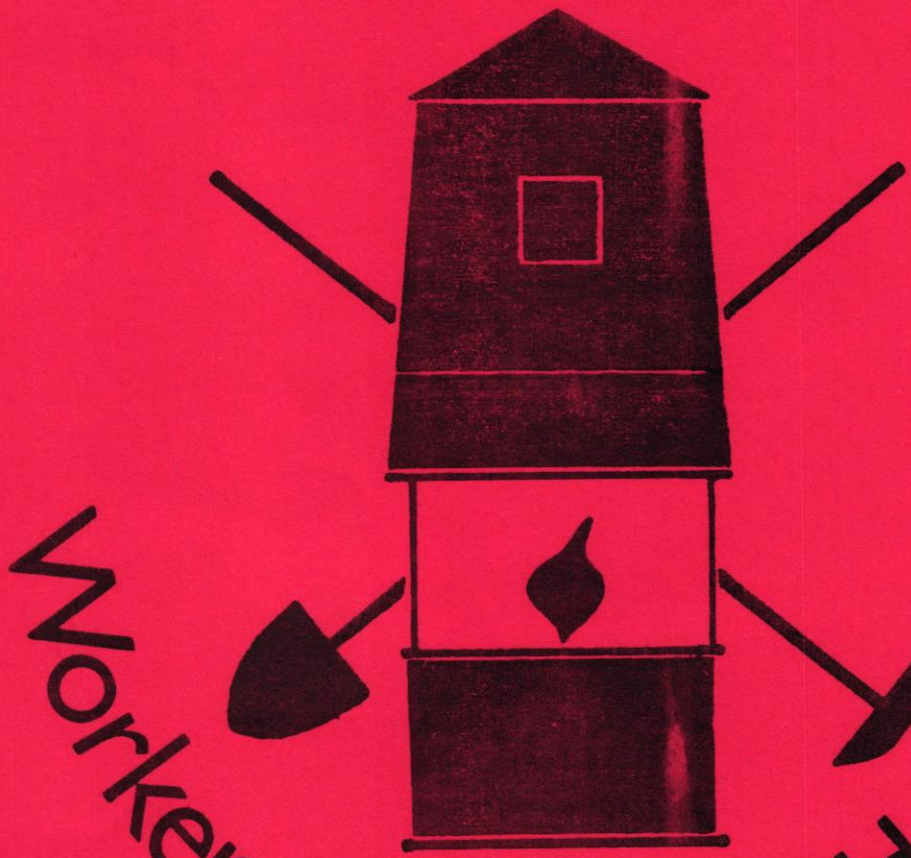
THE RED MINER

NO.14 JAN/FEB 87



workers power Bulletin for miners and their families 10p

RED MINER EDITORIAL

The New Year brings with it two certainties for miners. First, there will be a general election. Second, British Coal's attacks will continue.

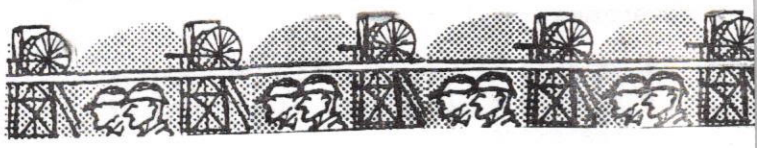
Regular readers will know Red Miner'sanswer to the second certainty. We must not simply wait for an election. We must fight BC's attacks with industrial action. The recent victory by Manton miners, over water-money the management were refusing, shows this can be done successfully.

But what about the prospect of an election? Every newspaper is talking openly of when, not of. Red Miner, for once, agrees with the papers. What is our view of what miners should do faced with the prospect of an election?

Nearly every miner who struck in 1984/85 wants to get rid of the Tories. The handful who don't are craven scabs, bosses men and likely to be fully paid up members of the UDM. In Nottingham the UDM will be doing its bit for the Tories by fielding candidates against pro-NUM Labour candidates. (See article.)

The real question facing most of us though is how do we make sure that, in getting rid of the Tories we don't end up with a Labour government like the last (Wilson-Callaghan) one? It is a bit alarming that our official leadership doesn't seem to worry about this prospect. It wants Labour in at any cost and is refusing to fight to improve union policy on the Labour Party so as not to embarrass Kinnock. In fact with good glasses you can see the gag that Rees, Taylor, McGahey and co. put in Scargill's mouth every time they are at a gathering of the labour movement bigwigs.

The Tories have been vicious. No two ways about it. But we forget at our cost the way - sometimes more subtle - Labour has carried out the bosses' work in the past at our expense. The 1974-79 Labour government carried through a massive closure programme that is only now just being surpassed by the Tories.



1974 STRIKE

Wilson came to power, to a large extent, thanks to our militancy. It was our strike in 1974 that sent Heath scurrying to the polls. The Labour government was frightened by that militancy. It conspired with Gormley and the then NCB boss Ezra to impose an area based productivity deal that would divide and weaken us. They did this in defiance of our ballot rejecting the deal. And, it was not only the right wing playing this game. Tony Benn as minister for Energy was a key figure in ramming through the productivity deal that revealed its real splitting purpose in 1984.

We do not want a re-run of this if we manage to get rid of the Tories. How can we minimise this danger? In the first place we must get stuck into Labour's election work. We will pull out the stops to get a Labour vote. But at every meeting of every prospective M.P. we will demand something in return. And these demands should not be confined to speeches at meetings. We should formulate them now and pass them at every level, including national conferences of the union and the Labour Party.



pto

We must do our best to tie Kinnock's hands. He showed that he was far from being a friend in need during our strike. He saved his praise for the police. He cannot be trusted to act on goodwill. We must demand, for starters, that a Labour government will:

* Release <u>all</u> miners still in jail
* Reinstate <u>all</u> miners victimised by the state.
* Reimburse the NUM for every penny stolen from it by the judges and the repeal of the anti-union laws that allowed them to get away with it.
* Guarantee not to close any pit unless union appointed and controlled specialists deem it exhausted or unworkable and introducem a massive investment campaign in the industry.
* Abolish the Area Investment Scheme and all local productivity deals agreed since. For a national agreement starting from a basic pay for all that is based on the highest bonus payments currently being received.
* Introduce a four day week with shorter shifts and the recognition of workers' control of all aspects of production within British Coal.
* Nationalise the forty plus private licensed coal producers (largely opencast) with no compensation to their bosses and under workers control.
* Withdraw all negotiating rights from the UDM recognise an NUM closed shop in the industry.

These demands will go a long way to meeting our basic needs and help the industry and union recover from the battering thay have taken. Thatcher has been ruthless on behalf of her class. We demand of Labour that it act equally ruthlesslessly but this time on behalf of the workimg class.

By fighting for these demands now we can go some way to preventing yet another Labour betrayal. But even if we get these demands won on paper there is no guarantee that Kinnock in Number 10 will meet them. That is why <u>Red Miner</u> says be wary of illusions in a Labour government. Vote Labour , yes, but organise to fight.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

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REGIONAL ROUND-UP

KENT

OBITUARY

Jack Collins

Red Miner readers will be saddened at the news of the death of Jack Collins. With the passing of Jack miners have lost a true and loyal class fighter.

Throughout the Great Strike Jack Collins stuck to his guns against all those in the leadership who wanted to climb down or compromise. At the fatal meeting that ended the strike he openly declared his opposition to the decision and support for Kent area's attempt to keep the strike going. While others turned their backs Jack Collins continued to speak out for the victimised men left outside the gates.

We had our political differences with Jack Collins but we salute him as a fighter for the working class. We owe it to him to fight to keep the NUM out of the hands of those who could never stand knee high to him.

*

JACK COLLINS

1930-87

CLASS FIGHTER

NORTH EAST

SEAHAM

The future of the campaign to save Seaham Colliery looks grim. In recent weeks the campaign scored a number of successes, notably in getting the pit into the review procedure.

The Area Coal Board management backed down on their decision not to consider the colliery "rationalisation" as a closure. On October 29th miners and mechanics officials put a plan to the area review meeting which involved separating B and C seam coal to ensure the colliery could supply the money making household market.

Despite these proposals it seems that the NUM through branch votes at a local level have given up the ghost and decided not to fight the closure.

The Durham Mechanics have opposed this and are fighting to put the matter through the review procedure. They are joined by Durham Miners still opposed to the closure. These NUM members are pushing the National Union to take up the campaign and put the matter to a ballot. Unfortunately it seems that those who have given up the ghost may win the day

And now for the GOOD NEWS

JUSTICE FOR MINEWORKERS CAMPAIGN

Slowly but surely successes are being scored inn the fight for the reinstatement of the sacked miners.

At a meeting between the Area Coal Board and the NUM in the North East on December 19th (part of Haslams review), 8 sacked miners were reinstated including 4 at Merton Colliery.

There has been no decision yet on how many sacked men from the Mechanics are to be set on. The Mechanics executive is still discussing with the Board.. In the meantime the decision of the Mechanics Council has been to suspend industrial action until it is clear how many of the Mechanics the Board will set on.

p.t.o.~~

As these negotiations went on the North East Justice For Mineworkers Campaign launched a highly successful sacked miners christmas appeal, this raised a massive £5,000 to help the victimised men and their families through the festive season. The response to the appeal from trade unionists in the N.East was magnificent, with engineering factories and CPSA, NALGO and NUPE members among others sending in their cheques and collections.

The response from shipyard workers was particularly impressive, with cheques for more than £500 coming in from many trade sections in the yards. This solidarity is now being repaid through the support the NUM and the Mechanics are giving to workers at Austin & Pickersgill shipyard in Sunderland, who have been on tsrike since mid December against redundancies and the threatened introduction of sub-contractors.

MESSAGES OF SUPPORT AND DONATIONS TO:

AUSTIN & PICKERSGILL STRIKE APPEAL
LYNAS HOUSE
FREDERICK STREET
SUNDERLAND SR1 1MA

WOMEN

Last RED MINER reported that Pat Curry, canteen assistant at Merton Colliery was the 1st women to be voted on to an NUM lodge committee.
WRONG- she is the 2nd.

The North East is leading the way for women's rights in the union with not one but two women on lodge committees. The first women was Freda Dean voted onto the Philadelphia lodge in May.

Both women are pledged to take up the fight for equal status for canteen workers and to fighting for the reinstatement of sacked miners. The position is a major breakthrough for the 2,000 women in the NUM who feel (and quite rightly) they have been ignored by the union.

FIGHT FOR THE NACK SEAHAM

NOTTS

REINSTATE GEOFF POULTER

British Coal's even-handed approach to both the real trade union in Notts the NUM) and the Federation of Bootlickers (the UDM) continues. UDM members get favours. NUM members get sacked.

The area management are picking off key NUM activists. First Paul Whetton and Mick McGinty, now Geoff Poulter from Bolsover Pit.

The management were not at all coy in telling Geoff why his services were no longer required. It had nothing to do with his skills as a miner or his work record.

"You have been sacked for your union activities,"

he was told by management.

Geoff, like all the others sacked in Notts must be defended. His reinstatement must be won. And in Notts this will be won as part of a fight to smash the UDM once and for all.

SOUTH WALES

It seems that the massive closure programme carried out by British Coal in South Wales has come to a halt, at least temporarily. The Area Director announced in early December that the coalfield was to receive another £9 million investment, around 100 jobs for 18 year olds, no further closures, and that all the remaining collieries were expected to be in profit by next March. Even the long-promised Margam development is now likely to get the go-ahead. All the indications are that the coalfield is about to begin a period of relative stability.

PRODUCTIVITY

The new investment will go to three pits: Cynheidre, Deep Navigation and Merthyr Vale, mainly on new working equipment. 8 out of 14 pits are now making profits, with the other 6 targetted for profit by the end of the financial year, or before.

This turnaround has been achieved because of a 70% increase in productivity since the end of the strike - due mainly to the loss of around 8,000 jobs. Productivity is now at an average of 2.75 tons/manshift and was expected to reach 3 tons by Christmas. At the so-called "sleeping giant" power station coal pits at Deep Navigation, Taff Merthyr, Trelewis Drift, Penallta, Blaenant, and Lady Windsor

productivity is well over 4 tons/manshift - some of the highest output figures in Britain.

The coalfield now produces more coal than it did before the strike, with half of the pits! There are now 13 high tech. faces in operation (with more planned) compared to only one before the strike. The most dramatic change has come at Oakdale, which is now in profit after losing £7 million last year, although this has cost over 100 jobs.

The mining problems at Tower seem to have been overcome following the introduction of a new high tech. face. However the future of the linked Mardy colliery will only be secured after a vote by the workforce following problems with the main coalface. Six Bells colliery in Gwent has now been fully merged with nearby Marine, securing its immediate future. The fears expressed in the last issue of Red Miner about further closures have therefore not been realised as yet.

Redundancies

However, Tredegar workshops are to close after all. The offer by BC to keep them open with a reduced workforce was accepted by only 90 men (the rest took redundancy). B.C. then decided they would not be kept open with only 90 willing to stay on.

Furthermore, of the 1,323 men offered transfers in the wake of the closure of Cwm and Nantgarw collieries, less than 200 have opted to transfer to other pits. This was not surprising given the lure of high redundancy payments and the general uncertainty over the future of the coalfield.

NUM area President Des Dutfield hoped to retain Cwm as a development pit, based on the massive resrves remaining. However, his sole reliance on Welsh Labour M.P.s to persuade Peter Walker to keep open the pit was always doomed to failure - only strike action would have done that.

Overtime Ban Called Off

The four month long overtime ban on coal production in South Wales was called off in early December. A delegate conference voted strongly in favour of the NUM Area Executive recommendation that the ban should be lifted. The ban resulted in 700,500 tons of lost output and £3.44 million in lost revenue for BC.

The only real gain won by the ban was the £360 average in back pay (conceded by BC nationally) covering the period between November 1985 and September. 1986. However, even this money was paid only after the NUM leaders (except Scargill) accepted that any future strike action of over one week would no longer qualify for contributions to the pension scheme.



The other main reasons for the overtime ban - opposition to further closures and hardline management methods - have now been conveniently forgotten. During the ban Nantgarw and Cwm collieries, together with Nantgarw coke ovens all closed. Despite this, according to Des Dutfield "the key reason for the coalfield action has been solved"!

Pay Claim

Given the large increases in productivity mentioned above, its time that miners gained the benefits from their pits becoming profitable. This year must see the NUM in South Wales and nationally fight for a substantial pay rise that reflects these changes.

At present the high productivity is paid for by miners in the form of increased accidents and management pressure - this must be changed now - the threat of privatisation is a very real one

YORKSHIRE

The Coal Board continue their attacks in Yorkshire. Their attempts to overturn agreements are becoming everyday facts. One of the latest examples at Goldthorpe shows what hypercrits our managers are.

Before Christmas, as you might have read in the Yorkshire Miner or the Coal News if you were desperate, men from Goldthorpe worked 10 days solidly round the clock to save a coal face. They had hit a water pocket and had to get through it as quickly as possible. The Board were obviously pleased judging by the write up and pictures in the Coal News..

P.T.O. →→→→

★★★★★★★★★★★★

During the deputies strike soon after men were unable to work in the pit and were either given work above ground (120 of them) or sent to other pits. On the Tuesday the other pits NACODS members refused to take extra men and they lost 4 days work. The usual ex gratia payment given in such circumstances was not forthcoming. Instead the management offered them £7 a day. This was refused and the issue was taken into procedure with a new and equally unacceptable offer following from management of £10

Other pits with men in similar circumstances are reported to have been paid less than the usual amount but not anywhere near as little as that offered to the men at Goldthorpe. Obviously all that can be expected if we do the management a favour is a kick in the teeth.

SACKED MEN

There is still no movement on getting any jobs back in Yorks. Rossington still have 24 men demanding reinstatement. Although it seems that Scargill and Heathfield are to donate their own backpay to the sacked miners fund an example that those on the executive who haven't done so would do well to follow.

WARWICKSHIRE

On Monday 12th Jan. the power group at Coventry Colliery struck in support of the demand to re-instate Clive Ham, one of their members sacked in the strike. Although the management have been told by an industrial tribunal to take him back, they continue to refuse. The strike was successful with only 50 men crossing picket lines (mainly surface workers), out of the 3 shifts of 1200 workers. NUM members joined the picket only to see their branch President scab! There will now be moves to get rid of him by union members disgusted by his action. Power Group pickets on the picket told RED MINER how their union officials had tried to sabotage the action by 'loosing' the letter informing them of the proposed ballot etc. They kicked up a fuss and the letter mysteriously re-appeared. They intend to continue the campaign for re-instatement and want to see the involvement of the local and national NUM in industrial action on these types of issue.

Miners transferring from Birch Coppice, now closed, to the notorious UDM stronghold Daw Mill, were given a taste of the way management tries to build the scabby bosses' union at the expense of the NUM. NUM officials from Daw Mill arranged with Birch Coppice management to go and see men before the move.

When the NUM got there, they were told they couldn't meet the men on the premises, so they met in the club. When the Birch men got to Daw Mill, they were interviewed one by one and told a condition of their getting a job at Daw Mill was to join the UDM! 'Local UDM 'officials' always deny this in the press.' So they joined the UDM, left the managers office and went and signed up again as NUM members! So much for "freedom and democracy" the UDM are always telling us about! The local UDM are also trying to persuade the Labour Party to recognise them, by threatening to stand an independent UDM-backed candidate...haven't we heard this somewhere before?. In this marginal area in the next General Election! Of course if the Labour Party had backed the strikers properly in the first place, the UDM wouldn't exist to come up with this pathetic blackmail. No deals with the UDM! Keep scab orgainsers out of the TUC and Labour Party.

The Coventry Evening Telegraph on Dec 16th, announced 'Pitmen dig way to top of the pay table' and led all its readers to believe that Coventry was surrounded by pits full of well-paid miners earning £300 a week! What it really meant was that in one particular week, top grade face men at Daw Mill on 100% bonus earnt about £280. What it doesn't say is that many others take home less than £100 a week for dangerous and unhealthy work eg. a miner with many years experience training new entrants to the job travelling 20+ miles to and from work daily takes home £84. Isn't it time the divisive bonus scheme came under attack and was done away with. What about the record breaking instances of accidents, increased strain and sickness and poor safety as less miners produce more coal. The dole queues get longer, more old people die of hyperthermia and electricity prices rise. For whose benefit?



SCABS TRY TO BLACKMAIL LABOUR





Super scabs in the UDM are planning to stand their own 'independent labour' candidates against Labour in the next election. This could pose a serious threat to Labour, especially in the key seat of Mansfield where the Labour majority is small. By standing in such marginal constituencies the UDM threaten to split the Labour vote and pave the way for a Tory or SDP/Liberal Alliance victory.

Matters came to a head recently in Mansfield where the sitting Labour MP, Don Concannon, is resigning at the next election. His place as official Labour candidate is to be taken by Alan Meale, who supports Scargill and is associated with the left wing Campaign Group of MPs.

Meale's selection has upset the UDM who believe that he is going to be less sympathetic to their scabbing operations than was Concannon. To some extent they are probably correct - Meale is unlikely to be so supportive. Ever since the Great Strike Concannon has been at the forefront of moves to get the UDM treated on equal - and sometimes superior! - grounds to the NUM.

Like Kinnock and Willis he has consisitently overlooked the scabby nature of the UDM, preferring to speak of the need to "heal the wounds" and re-build "unity". Red Miner readers will know that we have always argued for the greatest unity amongst workers and for the unification of all miners in one strong union. Yet we have always made clear that this "unity" should not be unity at all costs - we need unity on the basis of fighting together against the bosses not unity with traitors who sell out and betray.

This is something the Labour leadership don't understand - or don't want to understand! Kinnock, Hattersley, Concannon etc. have over the last few months been making repeated overtures to the UDM to try and get them to re-join the fold. They have been supported by other Nottinghamshire MPs such as Joe Ashton in Bassetlaw and Frank Haynes in Ashfield.

Stan Orme, Labour's chief energy spokesperson, is travelling to the East Midlands coalfield on January 27th for talks about 'healing the rift' between the local Labour Party and the UDM.

Some of these moves by the Labour leadership towards acceptance of the UDM have been successfully stopped by NUM and Labour Party members. Yet all attempts must be stopped in their tracks. We must have no truck whatsoever with the scab-herders in the UDM.

As the events in Mansfield are showing, Lynk, Prendergast and the other arch scabs will stop at nothing to spread their poison. The longer they are allowed to get away with it the stronger they become. That is why Red Miner has consisitently argued ever since the founding of the UDM that all UDM members should be expelled from the Labour Party and only the NUM be recognised by the Party and the TUC.

All those who argue against the expulsion of UDM members help strenghen the scabs. By giving them credibility, confidence, and the opportunity to organise within the official channels of the labour movement their cancer spreads. Like a cancer, to be stopped they must be cut out and discarded.

Labour Party members must link closely with the NUM to smash the UDM. There is no time to lose.

* No to scabs in the Labour Party - expel UDM members!
* No recognition of the UDM - force Labour leaders to drop the scabs!
* No to scab unionism - smash the UDM!
* For a fighting national union - full support to the NUM!

WHAT IT HAS COST

The refusal of the trade unions to mount a determined fight against Murdoch has enouraged the other print bosses to step up their own attacks on jobs. Since 1981 SOGAT and NGA between them have lost some 14,000 jobs in London. Of those over 12,000 have gone in the last year. Apart from 5,500 at News International the other major cuts have included:

2,000 redundancies agreed at the Mirror Group last December when it was already widely known that Murdoch was about to transfer to Wapping.

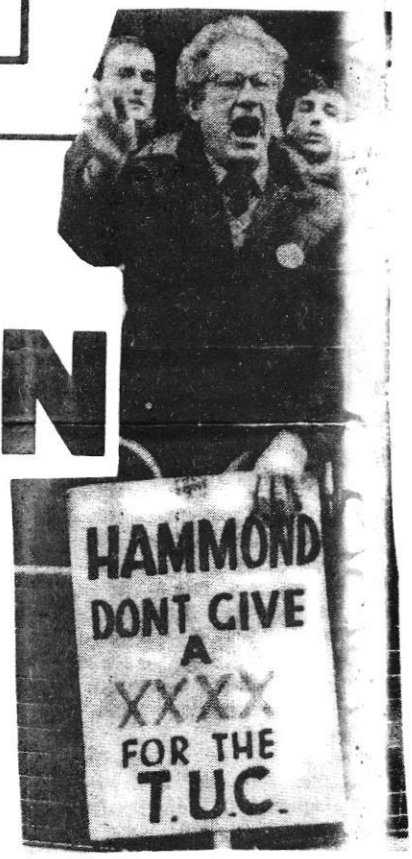
1,800 out of 3,300 at the Telegraph, this includes 50% of the NGA compositors and 84% of the foundry workers. SOGAT machine shop will lose 400 out of its previous total of 550.

2,300 jobs from a total of 7,000 at the Express were signed away in the Spring.

400 out of a workforce of 1,500 have gone from the Financial Times, half of them NGA compositors.

200, 20% of the total, have gone at the Guardian.

WAPPING- ONE YEAR ON



WAPPING
A YEAR OF STRUGGLE

On January 24th the Wapping strike will have been in progress for a year. Twice the strikers have rejected by big majorities Murdoch's compensation offers. Their will and determination to win remains intact.

The first year of the strike has seen the print union leaders failure to press on towards victory. Instead they have advised caution and the winning of "public opinion", and the disastrously passive boycott campaign. Even worse, at a time when the whole of Fleet Street faces attacks on jobs, no serious steps have been taken to get a national print strike.

Meanwhile the TUC assistance has been conspicous by it's absence. despite resolutions at the TUC very little has been done to build mass pickets and effective solidarity action, and nothing has been done to deal with Hammond's scabbing operation in Wapping.

Despite the treachery of the offi... leaders, the rank and file themselves ...e made a number of attempts to shift ...e strike in a more militant direction ... ...e attempts have and should be supported ... other rank and file workers.

That's why on January 24th the ...st anniversary of the strike, there needs ...o be the maximum possible mobilisation ...o join the demonstration and picket line ...n Wapping. This could then help the stri... ...s to take the struggle forward to victor... ...n 1987.

BLOODY SUNDAY

★ MARCH ★

On Sunday January 30th 1972 British paratroopers shot dead 14 unarmed nationalist demonstraters in Derry. These innocent people were demanding civil liberties, jobs and a future denied them by the Northern Irish state. Their demands were answered by a hail of British army bullets.

Every year since, commemoration marches have been held in Ireland and in Britain. This year's march in Britain will be held in Sheffield on Saturday 31st January.

Every day since 'Bloody Sunday' the British army has continued a policy of repression of the nationalist community in the north with house-to-house searches, plastic bullets, strip searches of women, CS gas and a web of 'supergrass' informers.

British Troops Out Now

The British presence in Ireland has always been opposed by a majority of Irish people. Britain's partition of Ireland in 1921 was Britain's way of preventing the people of Ireland from deciding their own future. Until Britain goes this democratic right remains denied.

That's why the Bloody Sunday march is more than a commemoration of the slaughter. We need to use the march to say - as long as Britain occupies Ireland there will always be repression and slaughter of the nationalists. British troops should get out now.

Our Common Enemy

The British labour movement has a particular duty to support the march. Miners know only too well from the strike what British state repression means. The police occupation of pit villages, arbitrary arrests, police brutality and the rest - these are all tactics perfected by the British state during its occupation of Ireland since 1969. British workers and Irish nationalists have a common enemy - the British state.

When Thatcher (mimmicked by Kinnock) talks about "protecting the national interest" she means protecting the profits and prestiege of her class - not workers' interests. The same goes for foreign policy - what do British workers gain by British ruling class repression in Ireland?

By supporting the Bloody Sunday march miners will be saying to the nationalists in Ireland and to other British workers that we all have a common cause - a defeat for the British state in Ireland will be a victory for us all!

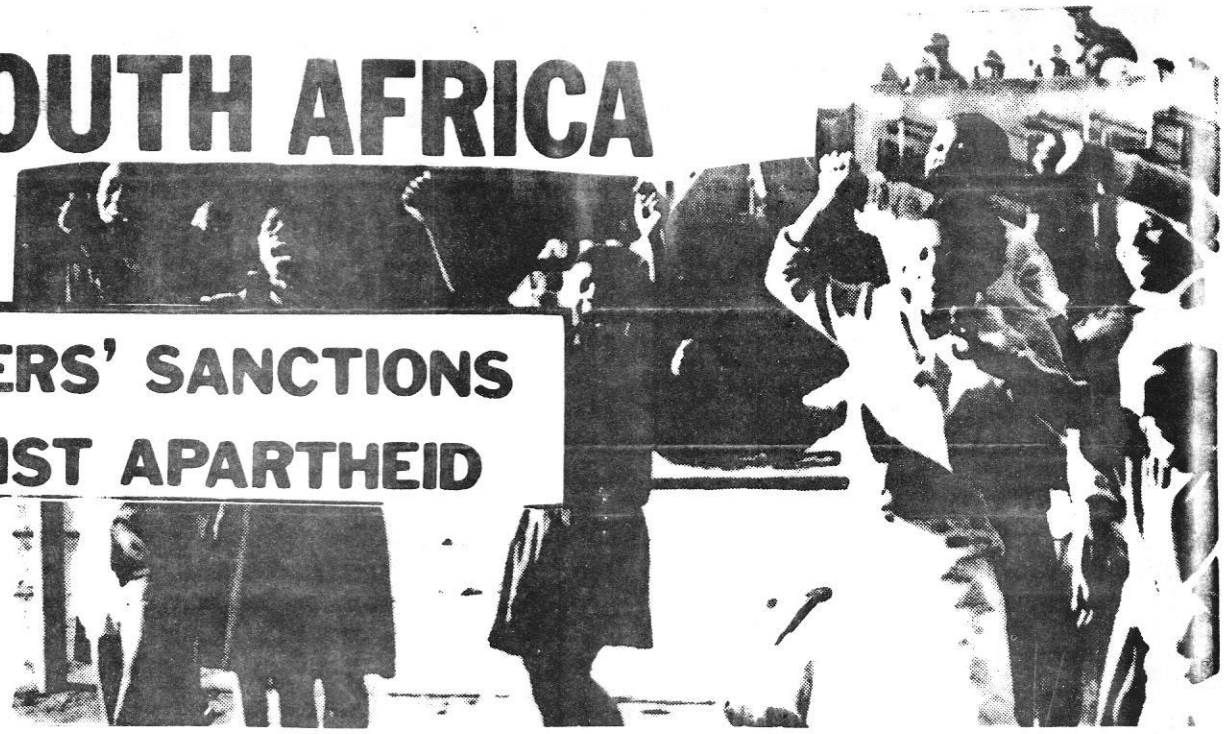
Red Miner urges the maximum attendance of miners and their families at this year's Bloody Sunday march. Pass this model resolution at your NUM branch:

> 1. This branch supports the Bloody Sunday march on Saturday 31st January in Sheffield on the basis of:
> - Troops Out Now
> - Self Determination for the Irish People as a whole.
>
> 2. This branch therefore agrees to organise transport from..... to the march.

Bloody Sunday March: Assemble 1 pm Caborn Corner, Sheffield. March to rally at City Hall. Saturday 31st January.



SOUTH AFRICA



WORKERS' SANCTIONS AGAINST APARTHEID

The campaign to stop the import of South African coal is gathering momentum

In November a Doncaster branch of the NUM Hatfield Main took a lead by organising a picket of the Coal importing Wharfs at South Humberside. Although recognising that this action was initially a protest action it was to designed to hammer home the need to actually stop these imports.

Dave Douglass of Hatfield Main NUM explained the aim of the action to a meeting of the campaign for Trade Union Sanctions against South Africa held in London on Sunday the 11th January. It was not a chauvinist action against miners of another country, it was done in response to a call by the South African National Union of Mineworkers who wanted the maximum pressure exerted against the apartheid regime and the South African Mineowners.

The Apartheid bosses cost cutting practices cause the deaths of hundreds of South African miners every year. It is in the interests of miners everywhere to see the downfall of apartheid, the availability of cheap apartheid coal drives down wages and conditions worldwide.

The Campaign for Trade Union Sanctions held it's first conference in December in Birmingham. Delegates representing 58 Labour Movement bodies resolved to step up the fight for really effective action in the workplaces to boycott goods and services to and from South Africa. They elected a steering committee and agreed to publish a newsletter which will build for future boycott actions including further attempts to stop coal.

The detailed discussion of action at that conference was in sharp contrast to the 2 day AGM of the Anti Apartheid Movement, only an hour was spent on the question of trade union action and RED MINER readers were horrified when the discussion on trade unions was introduced by JACK JONES! on behalf of the NUM executive

Fortunately not all Anti Apartheid activists take the same dissmissive attitude to trade union action There were many resolutions on the order paper on the question of workers sanctions.

Chesterfield AAM called for the majority of the movements resources to be devoted to winning trade union action, recognising that it is workers action that can really stop apartheid trade.

Trade unionists in the Campaign for Trade Union Sanctions against South Africa will be building future actions against the racist regime. The first is a demonstration to demand the release of trade unionists and all others jailed by the South African government.

PICKET
SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY
TRAFALGAR SQUARE
LONDON SAT. 21st FEB
2pm-4pm

for further details contact
Bronwen Handyside
17 Porden Road
Brixton
London SW2 55A

FRENCH WORKERS HIT BACK



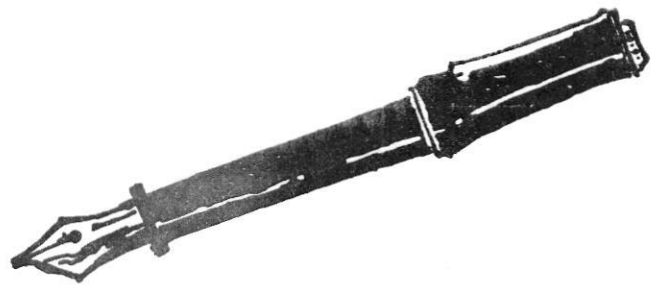
France's Thatcherite government under Prime Minister Chirac are preparing to do battle with the French miners. Their intended onslaught is part and parcel of a massive package of attacks on the French working class which the French railworkers are leading resistance to.

The government intends to slash every single job in the North French coalfield and concentrate all mining in Lorraine. All miners over 45 will be compulsorily retired. The workforce will be cut to 30,000.

British miners owe a historic debt to the French miners for their solidarity in the great strike. As the french miners brace themselves for struggle every lodge must pass motions of support and immediately re-activate the bonds of solidarity that were forged in 1984-85. Chirac must not be allowed to do to the French miners what Thatcher did to the British coalfields.

o o o

Dear Red Miner,



Let it be a warning to all miners about who the executive are choosing to speak for them that the NUM decided to send arch scab Jack Jones to the recent AGM of the Anti Apartheid Movement. Not only was he their delegate but he was sent to propose a resolution on trade union action to boycott South African goods.

WHAT ARE THE NUM EXECUTIVE DOING!!!!!

This man scabbed all the way through his own members strike. The South African workers are dependant on workers all over the world taking boycotting action. The miners in Britain have a vital role to play to take action against the import of South African coal and other goods.

All NUM branches must send resolutions to the executive condemning their decision to send Jack Jones moreover this protest should be sent to the leadership of the AAM

yours

Jane Bruton

(Secretary of Leicester Trades Council Miners Support Committee)

WORKERS HISTORY



RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

PART 5 ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS !

This is the concluding part of the history of the Russian Revolution The first time in history that the working class took complete political power from the bosses The lesson is clear.....
...IT CAN HAPPEN AGAIN!

General Kornilov's defeat at the hands of the Petrograd workers opened the final phase of the Russian Revolution. The workers were in arms once again. The ranks of the Red Guards had grown dramatically. A new confidence was given voice in factory meetings throughout the capital city. Factory after factory replaced their Menshevik or Socialist Revolutionary delegates with Bolsheviks. Resolution after resolution passed at mass meetings in early September took up the Bolshevik call for all power to pass to the soviets and challenged the soviet leadership's collaboration with the Kerensky government. The workers of Langezipen told those leaders

"..we suppose that the Kornilov rebellion has washed your sleepy eyes clear and enabled you to see the situation in its true light.

We declare that you have long spoken for us, but not our views, and we demand that you begin to speak the language of the proletariat or else we reserve for ourselves freedom of action."

Bolsheviks

It was the growing identification of the most active workers with the Bolshevik party that marked the most important change in the mood of the working class. Tireless agitation and propaganda to expose the treachery of the soviet leadership had initially fallen on stoney ground. It was now beginning to bear fruit. By October Bolshevik party membership stood at 250,000 compared to around 30,000 at the beginning of the year. The bulk of its members were workers who were increasingly being chosen to take leading positions as soviet delegates, on factory committees, in the Red Guards because they had proved their politics to their workmates.

Votes

On September 1st. the Petrograd Soviet passed its first distintively Bolshevik resolution calling for a government of the revolutionary proletariat and peasantry In opposition the Mensheviks could only muster 15 votes out of a 1,000 delegates in support of the Provisional Government ' The Moscow soviet passed a Bolshevik resolution 4 days later. In local government elections in Moscow in late September the Bolsheviks received 51% of the vote. The other contenders for proletarian leadership either whithered and declined, as was the case with the Mensheviks, or they were gripped by splits and instability. The Socialist Revolutionary party split with the left SR's supporting the call for soviet power against their ex leaders. The bulk of the Petrograd SR organisation backed the left reflecting the mood of Red Petrograd.

Leaders

At the helm of the Bolshevik party was a brilliant array of revolutionary leaders. It was not only workers who were flocking to the banner of Bolshevism. More and more revolutionary militants who had previously opposed Lenin joined the party that was now committed to the programme of socialist revolution. In late July Trotsky's loose inter-district organisation (the Mezhraiontsi) fused with the Bolsheviks immeasurably strengthening the party's laeding cadre. The party leadership was by September standing at the head of a mass party whose militants were the acknowledged leaders in most areas of proletariat struggle.



delegates to the Congress of Soviets in Russia in 191

The days of the Provisional Government were numbered. While Kerensky tried desperately to shuffle the pack of his coalition it was increasingly obvious that his government was heading for destruction either at the hands of counter-revolution or at the hands of the revolutionary workers. Kornilov's defeat swung the initiative to the workers. But the efforts of the bourgeoisie to grind the workers down continued. Petrograd and Moscow industrialists attempted to run their plants down so as to sack or demoralise their workers. In early December with the backing of the Government and in the name of 'National Defence' plans were made to evacuate Petrograd's factories so as to disperse its militant workforce. The Putilov factory committee discovered management loading lathes onto barges for evacuation. The committee had to halt the movement of the barges. The militant Parviainen factory was earmarked for evacuation to Yuzovka in the South.

The factory committee sent a delegation to inspect the new plant. When they returned they reported having

"found that fourteen totally unfinished structures had been prepared for the factories and even the floors had not been laid. Little houses were being built for the workers that you could puncture with an iron rod."

Either the bosses would disorganise production to their own ends in order to starve the workers into submission or the factory committees would have to take the maintenance of production directly into their own hands.

At every level of society the dual power created by the February revolution was at breaking point. Initially the workers had looked to their organisations - the Soviets and the factory committeess - to oversee the government and the bosses and defend their interests. But the chiefs of staff were not prepared to play that game in the armed forces. Neither were the bosses in the factories and the mines. Kerensky didn't want to play that game at government level either.

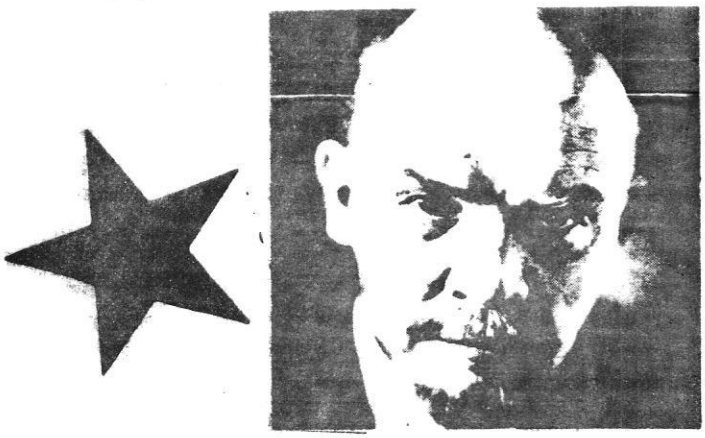
By the summer and early autumn another important force in the Russian revolution was making itself increasingly visible. The number of seizures of landowners land and ransacking of landlord's villas and mansions increased dramatically as the Russian peasants used to put it "the Red Cock has crowed". This served to intensify the pressure on the Provisional Government either to carry out serious land reform or to restore order for the landlords. The Government, containing representatives of the peasant based Socialist Revolutionary Party, attempted to do the latter.

On the 10th October the Bolshevik Party Central Committee endorsed a proposal from Lenin that the party set in motion the preparation of the armed overthrow of the Provisional Government. Some leading Bolsheviks - such as Zinoviev and Kamenev - dissented but in general the party's ranks enthusiastically rallied to the call. Quite rightly the party leadership realised that the working class had to resolve the crisis in Russia on its own terms by taking power into its own hands. As Trotsky told an all-Russian Congress of factory committees on 18th October

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"There are two extreme wings, and if the revolutionary parties were to draw back from Civil War now, the right wing would all the same carry out its attack on the revolution and all its achievements. Desertion by the parties would not avert civil war. It would merely unfold in an unorganised form, in a haphazard and scattered manner and, one may assume, to the benefit of the propertied classes. Civil War is imposed on us by the economic situation and by the course of our history."

The armed insurrection was planned with military precision to coincide with the opening of the second all-Russian Congress of Soviets on October 26th. The rising was to make it possible for that congress to declare itself to be the power in Russia and elect a government responsible to it. Planning was primarily the responsibility of the Petrograd Soviet's Military Revolutionary Committee whose leading bureau was presided over by Trotsky. At its command were the key naval detachments and infantry regiments in the vicinity of Petrograd.



LENIN

During October it stepped up the training and arming of the workers Red Guards as well as increasing recruitment. It was organised in battalions which were in turn ordered into companies and squads of ten. The commanding staff were elected. The guards received compensation for any loss of pay from their factory committees and functioned with strict military discipline.

Behind these ordered and drilled ranks chosen to do the business of toppling the Provisional Government stood a working class that had, in the main, been won to support for the Bolshevik programme.

Only one factory in Petrograd seems to have passed a resolution counter to the intension of the Soviets taking power.

mood

One S.R. later described the mood in the factory meetings with the words "our speeches seemed doomed to us". on October 22nd mass meetings were held throughout Petrograd as a "Day of the Soviet" 30,000 workers packed the Central People's House to hear Bolshevik orators explain their call to take power. The same SR reported

"The day of the Soviet took place amidst a tremendous upsurge of spirit. Trotsky so electrified the crowd with his speech that thousands of hands rose in a single outburst of emotion at his call, swearing loyalty to the revolution, to struggle for it -to the mortal end."

A similar pattern was being repeated at mass workers meetings the length and breadth of Petrograd.

During the early morning of October 25th the Red Guards took the key bridges, telegraphs and stations with next to no resistance. By that night the Provisional Government was arrested cowering in the Winter Palace.

For the first time in history state power was in the hands of the organised revolutionary working class. The Soviet Congress enthusiastically declared itself to be the source of power and showed its commitmnet to the goals that the working people of Russia had set themselves , - bread, peace and land, for all power to the Soviets and for the construction of a socialist order on a world scale.

Party

70 years ago the Bolsheviks led the Russian workers to power. Much was to happen later to isolate and eventually to betray the revolution. Yet in remembering the epic battles of the Russian workers of 1917 certain lessons and examples are as relevant today as they were then. The working class showed that it can organise itself to take power and overthrow capitalism - its soviets, factory committees and Red Guards showed that. And the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky showed that in order to win that final victory the most advanced workers must be organised in a party that can think for and lead the working class. In remembering the Russian Revolution miners steeled in the battles of the Great Strike must remember that lesson and support Red Miner and Workers Power's fight to lay the foundations for just such a revolutionary party.

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