

Warning: you are about to lose your public services!

Just as the Government plan to sack miners and close coal pits, so they are set to sack Council workers and run down our public services. In Nottinghamshire, the Council have announced over 400 jobs to be lost as the Tory Government cuts their grant by £20 million. In Birmingham 3,000 jobs are to go and in Sheffield over 4,000 have lost their jobs since the start of 1992. Schools up and down the country say that teachers will have to be sacked and schools closed for part of the day.

Why is the Government doing this? They say it's not their fault and blame local councils for financial irresponsibility. From a government that has just gambled £14 billion on the market in an unbelievable blunder, this is a bit rich! That money would have kept our Health Service and councils running for many years.

The truth is that this Government hates local council public services. They are deliberately forcing councils to sell services off to their Tory business chums. Eventually they want to privatise all your public services and make thousands of council workers redundant.

"It is not fair that public sector workers are not suffering the same level of redundancies as the private sector" - said Trade and Industry Secretary Michael Heseltine. Not fair? What is not fair is that we should be governed by such an incompetent government, which has watched over hundreds of thousands of job losses in all sectors, public and private.

What is not fair is this Government creating misery and suffering to thousands by making them unemployed or homeless or both.

What is not fair is that when they gamble our money on the economy and lose, they ask the lowest paid workers in the country, the public

sector workers, to pick up the tab by imposing a 1.5% pay freeze on them.

The closure of our pits, the running down of our hospitals, the sell-offs of our railways, the selling of arms to Saddam Hussain are all linked to one thing - to make a fast buck and damn the consequences. We all deserve better!

The situation for NALGO members in Nottingham demands a firm response. Before Christmas, the County Council announced that they would be issuing 400 redundancy notices in the Education Department alone. Many more will follow in other departments as the County Council looks to cut its budget budget in the next financial year to the tune of £13.5 million. Thousands of letters have been sent to the workforce inviting volunteers for redundancy. Vacant posts are being left unfilled, and many posts are being deleted altogether.

As if this were not enough, employees' conditions of service are under attack, with managers attempting to break both local and national agreements.

NALGO, supported by Nottingham Trades Council and other public sector unions, called a lobby of the Council on 21st January. This was not just about defending jobs and conditions but, at a time of economic depression, about defending the services on which we all depend.

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Solidarity In Action

STRIKE BACK

Newsletter of the Notts. Campaign Against Pit Closures.

Issue 4: 30th January 1993.

NUM - Fighting Against Pit Closures.

by Keith Stanley
President Notts. Area NUM.

The recent report in the UDM newsletter in early January suggests that the UDM alone have tackled the problem of pit closures in the courts, in Europe and in general. This is nothing more than stupidity. They seem to be grasping at straws now to gain any kind of credence to cover up the embarrassment of supporting British Coal and the Government over the last seven years.

The UDM was formed by miners who refused to join the 84/5 miners' strike. Miners nationwide were fighting pit closures *then*. Do the UDM feel that this time it's a different issue? Or, is it merely because Notts' pits are threatened there is sudden concern? The NUM always warned this would be the case.

A few facts the newsletter fails to report on ought to be made clear.

* It was Arthur Scargill who produced the leaked Portillo/Sainsbury document from the DTI forecasting that the closure plan was to be of a very high scale. Immediately, the NUM set the wheels in motion to combat the closure plan. MEPs raised the issue in the European Parliament. The Miners' Parliamentary Group, on behalf of the NUM, raised the issue in the Commons.

* An NUM delegation met the European Commissioner for Energy to set up opposition to the Government's plans.

* In September 1992 the NUM, along with NACODS, sought a judicial review of British Coal's proposed Admin Pack, which was part of the privatisation and pit closure plan.

* On the 15th August 1992 the NUM's special delegate conference agreed unanimously to ballot its membership for action if the closure programme continued. The NUM pledged to support all 31 pits: the pledge still stands.

* The NUM marched in London, in October, the day of the Miners' Debate in Parliament. The following Sunday the TUC affiliated NUM was supported by other Trade Unions, on the biggest rally ever seen in the capital. These marches received incredible public sympathy, forcing the Government to reverse its scheduled closure plan and review the situation again.

* The NUM's 14 point plan to save all 31 pits was produced for the energy Select Committee, and the arguments our union put forward began to enlighten ministers of our case. The case for every pit to stay open was placed before J. Boyd & Co. acting for the Government.

* The NUM have had speakers available for every march and rally during the campaign.

These points alone ridicule the UDM's boasting. If Notts Miners really want to fight the closures they should join the NUM, who have a history of fighting for their rights and are only too aware of the twists and turns British coal and the Government might try.

**Support One Industry - One Union.
Support the NUM.**

s o l i d a r i t y i n a c t i o n

Women's Pit Camp Vigil.

A Women's Pit Camp is now established outside Rufford Colliery.

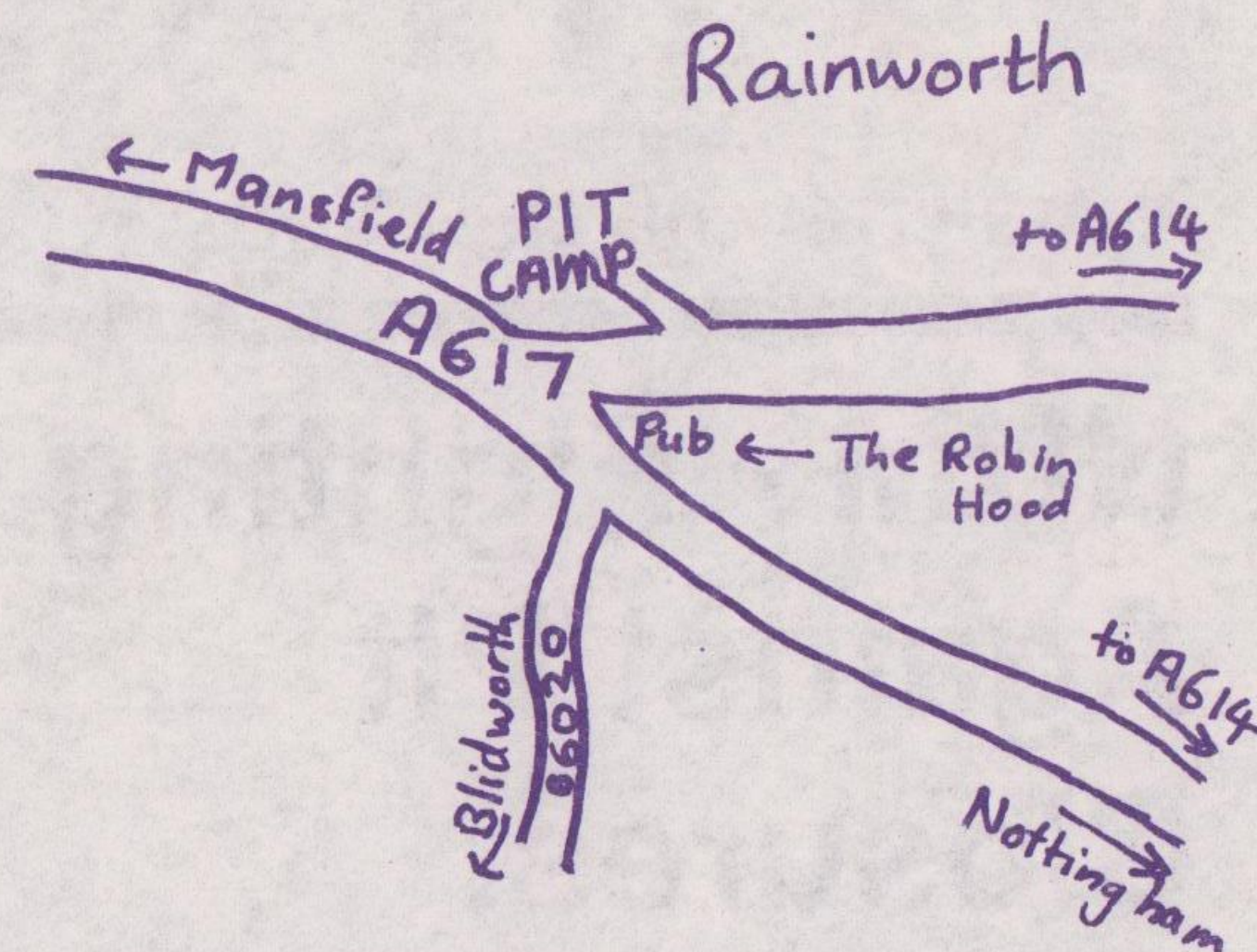
The decision to go ahead was taken at a meeting on the night of Wednesday 20th January and the camp was in place by Thursday tea-time.

Women will remain at the camp round the clock for as long as necessary.

These pit vigils are a visible sign of the fight against pit closures. They are keeping the pit communities' spirit alive, raising public awareness, showing solidarity with the NUM and encouraging others in the fight for jobs, resources and a decent future for ourselves and our children.

On day one of the Rufford Camp, rumours were spreading of a secret deal between the UDM and the government. It was being suggested that the Notts. pits might be 'spared' (in exchange for worse conditions and abandonment of safety) because the government owes a debt to the UDM for breaking the 1984/5 strike.

We are not interested in secret deals. Our debt is to those miners and their families who



battled on throughout the year long strike, facing financial and psychological hardship to gain a better life and more secure future for us all.

We will not give in to divide and rule tactics. Our fight is not to save Rufford, not to save the Notts. pits, but for every pit in Britain. We need the jobs, we need the coal; and we need to maintain our communities.

NOT 31, NOT 21, NOT 10 - NO PIT CLOSURES!

Since Friday morning people and donations have been arriving at the camp. Why not call and see us?

Any woman wishing to do a shift on the rota should go to the camp, or phone us on Nottingham 608363 or Mansfield 843272.

Donations should be sent to Freda, 48 Hillside Road, Blidworth Notts.

Cheques payable to 'Women Against Pit Closures' (Rufford account)

Here We Go!

We are women, We are strong, We are fighting for our lives,

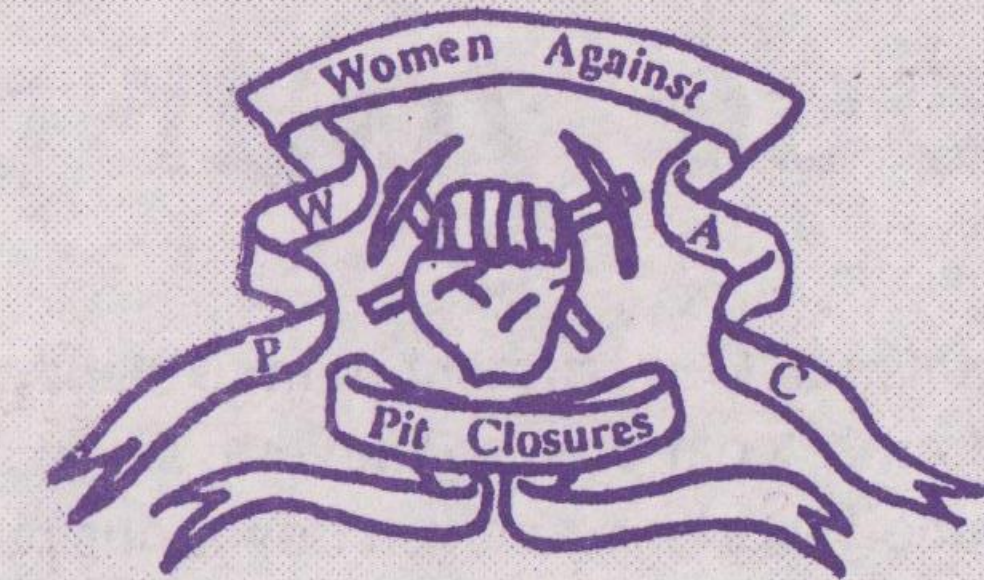
Side by side with our men who work the nation's mines.

United by the struggle, United by the past,

And it's here we go, Here we go, We're the women of the working class.

Women Against Pit Closures

Supported by the NUM



National Demonstration Saturday February 6th

Assemble 11 am
Embankment tube
March to Hyde Park

For details of all camps phone WAPC on 0742 766 400 extn. 295

Laura Flewitt, who wrote the poem below, is the daughter and granddaughter of miners. A 'trapper' was the person employed to open and close the gates through which the carts had to travel carrying coal from the face to the shaft.

The Pit from a trappers point of view

In my mouse hole, opening the gate for passing carts
I can hear the screaming of a child dying in pain.
My ropes seem to have come alive,
I feel tired and frightened.
A girl drops down from pushing the carts, ^{of bed.} dreaming
My master is strict, mean and nasty,
He will beat me if I fall asleep.
A boy comes through with a cut right down his cheek.
I can not feel my legs but I know they are there,
They are curled up tight under my body.
I hear a cave in.
It comes closer and closer.
I want to get out and run -
I am trapped.

by Laura Flewitt
age 9

Nottingham Campaign Against Pit Closures

meets every Tuesday night
at the International Community Centre
Mansfield Road.
Start at 7.30 pm.

Evening Post warns Against Industrial Action.

In a recent editorial in the Evening Post, we were warned against taking industrial action as part of the campaign against pit closures. They said it would be counterproductive, out of date and politically motivated. They also said it would alienate support. Well, defending ourselves is political, and who would deny it! We're not bankers who play stock markets and we don't own newspapers. Our strength comes from supporting each other and taking action together. We rely on our own strength and don't need fair-weather support from Tory MPs. If the decision to take industrial action is made in this campaign, then NCAPC will fully endorse it.