

# STRIKE BACK

news letter of the notts campaign against pit closures

## The Way Forward

The campaign to save the pits has been going strong for 7 months now. Last October over 350,000 people attended 2 London demonstrations in one week. These people are still behind the fight to keep all the pits open, and many more have since been won over by the NUM's irrefutable arguments.

So why do we not yet have the victory that should be ours? Unfortunately this government is not in the least interested in the wishes of the majority of the country. It rides rough-shod over public opinion, workers rights, and if necessary its own laws and agreements. For 7 months we have rallied, marched and petitioned; pits and British Coal offices have been occupied. But in all this time, and despite increasing attacks on virtually all sections of the workforce, there has been neither action nor leadership from the opposition parties or TUC in defence of miners or other workers. With over 4 million unemployed closures, redundancies and further erosion of conditions and rights are announced almost daily - Leyland Daf, Timex, Burnstall, Swan Hunter, Rolls Royce, Bus and Rail workers, Fire-fighters, and on and on. With so many now threatened why can we not UNITE ? The government may think it can pick off the miners; if they do, who will be next? Dockers? Car Workers? YOU ? But they cannot take on the whole country united in action.

'Step by step the longest march can be won  
Many stones can build an arch, singly none  
And united what we will can be accomplished still  
Drops of water turn a mill, singly none.'

We do not have to wait for directions from 'leadership'. We cannot afford to. It is up to each individual. We are our own leaders. We know that you are with us; but sympathy is not enough.

WE MUST ACT. ACT NOW. AND ACT TOGETHER. Tomorrow may be too late.

Fight for the pits. In winning this battle, we are on the way to winning all the others; and securing the future for all workers, and burrchildren.

## THE LIVING COAL

Deep down the mine it lies in wait  
For men to come to seal its fate  
This living coal doesn't want to die  
And yet we show it cannot lie  
Its resting place we take from it  
By means of work, sweat and grit  
We cut its heart and move it out  
We clean it up then ship it out  
To homes it goes without a tear  
And yet its fate is oh so near  
This living coal just sits and waits  
For man alone to seal its fate  
We scoop it up to light the fire  
Its heart it glows for our desire  
And when its dead we clear it out  
Like miners' jobs, its heart ripped out  
This living coal that filled our needs  
Like miners' lives, its done its deed.

P Currie, Miner,  
Markham Main.

## NO SURRENDER

We have 'lost' the court battles.  
Cotgrave and Silverhill have been closed.  
Is the battle over? NO. IT'S ONLY JUST BEGINNING.

More and more people have begun to realise that the courts do not mete out justice. They serve the government and the interests of big business. The most recent court decision, that there had been a proper inquiry into the viability of the 10 listed pits - despite the fact that there was no consultation with the NUM, no scrutiny of the pits individually, no oral or expert evidence allowed - shows this quite clearly. The fact that Cotgrave and Silverhill in Notts. were actually shut 3 weeks before the court even sat is further proof of the charade that took place.

But we had the same over the Poll Tax. Several times the courts flouted the law they were supposed to uphold. When this was proved at appeals and in the High Court the law was simply changed overnight, so that they could continue with those actions that had been proved to have been illegal.  
AND WE STILL GOT RID OF THE POLL TAX !

We did this by mass action; mass defiance; mass solidarity.

### WE CAN DO THE SAME OVER PIT CLOSURES

The working class cannot win by playing by the rules made by those who are attacking us. We must play by our own rules.  
And the first of these is SOLIDARITY.

Take this fight to your workplaces; to your communities; to the streets.  
It affects you all; the outcome will affect your children's lives.  
It can be won. It must be won.

They came for the miners, and I did nothing because I wasn't a miner  
Then they came for the transport workers, and I did nothing because I  
wasn't a transport worker  
Then they came for the dockers, and I did nothing, because I wasn't  
a docker

Then they came for me - and there was nobody left to help me.

Fight for the pits. Fight for yourself. NOT 31, NOT 21, NOT 10, NOT 1  
NO PIT CLOSURES !

Notts. Campaign Against Pit Closures meets every Tuesday  
7.30 pm, International Community Centre, Mansfield Rd., Nott.  
All welcome.

Stall every Saturday 9.30 - 3.30, outside St Peter's Church, Broad Marsh.

Notts. Campaign Against Pit Closures  
Box 5, 118 Workshop, 118 Mansfield Rd., Nottingham NG1 3HL  
Tel. Nottm 608363

STOP PRESS : Banner Theatre presents 'SALTLEY GATE'.  
Songs, music, stories and slides to celebrate the 20th anniversary  
of the historic victory won by the united action of the NUM and  
other Trade Unions and workers at Saltley Gate.  
Friday 11th June, Mansfield Labour Club.