

# SUPPORT THE MINERS' STRIKE

Eighty per cent of pits lie idle whilst only partial production is possible in many others. Coal stocks remain at pit-heads with the bourgeoisie unable to move them as a result of solidarity action by transport workers. Sections of industry, especially the steel industry, are being increasingly hit by coal shortages and the CEEGB, which during the strike has continually floated propaganda as to the alleged "huge size" of its coal stocks, has stopped providing information on coal stocks; it is continuing to receive no coal supplies from abroad.

The miners have continued in the past week to picket pits, power stations, docks, transport terminals and other industries using coal. They have continued to mount pickets several-hundreds strong. On April 12 over 3,000 miners lobbied the meeting of the national executive of the union to demand that the strike be continued and intensified, and they vigorously denounced the labour traitors who are assisting the bourgeoisie's attempts to break the strike.

On the weekend of April 14/15 tens of thousands of miners up and down the country took part in rallies and demonstrations in support of the strike. Ten thousand miners, along with print, rail, health, engineering and local government workers, took part in a militant march and rally in Nottingham. Five thousand miners demonstrated in Doncaster, 4,000 in Chesterfield, 2,000 in Aberdare, South Wales, 2,000 in Sunderland, and so on.

The strike is also winning increasing support from other workers in the mining industry as well as workers in other sections of industry. On April 10 colliery overmen, deputies and shotfirers voted for strike action against closures. A general strike is to take place in Scotland in solidarity with the miners' strike, whilst a one-day strike in the engineering industry is to take place in Dundee, and

many factories in Fife are also holding strikes in support of the miners.

The state is continuing to launch savage attacks on the miners and their struggle, with hundreds more miners arrested in the past week alone. Though the police are no longer releasing figures on arrests, the number of miners arrested during the strike is clearly around 1,000. The miners are defying the attacks on picket lines and the assaults of the police "snatch squads" and are organising to break through the cordons the police have set up around pits. The police are also increasing the use of phone-tapping and other surveillance of miners, whilst a high court injunction was granted last week against miners picketing the Port Talbot steel works. Striking miners and their families are being forced to eke out an existence during the strike on state benefits far below subsistence level.

The Thatcher government and the bourgeoisie planned to break the miners' strike through the savage attacks of the police, through the huge anti-miner propaganda campaign in the capitalist press and television, and through the activities of the labour traitors who echo the propaganda of the bourgeoisie about the "need" for ballots, who, like the bourgeoisie, condemn "violent picketing" and call for the withdrawal of pickets. Increasingly, however, the bourgeoisie has come to realise that this strategy is not working, that the miners are increasingly uniting against the NCB, the government and the state, that the determination of the miners to continue the strike to victory is increasing. This, and the mounting support for the miners amongst other sections of the workers, poses an increasingly serious threat to the bourgeoisie and its plans for unloading the burden of the crisis onto the working class. On April 16 the stock market fell by £3 billion, close to its

biggest-ever fall during the miners' strike of 1974. Under these conditions the Thatcher government, which has previously attempted to present itself as "aloof" from the miners' strike, has established a "war cabinet" to deal with the strike. The "war cabinet", based on that established for the Falklands war, will contain a minister for the armed forces, in addition to the Home Secretary and other senior ministers. Three of the ministers were involved in the series of national emergencies declared during the Heath government and the miners' strikes of 1972 and 1974. The establishment of such committees confirms that it is the entire bourgeoisie, its state and its executive, the government, which are deployed against the miners, just as they have been from the beginning. It confirms also that the government is preparing conditions for the sending in of troops to break the miners' strike, to suppress the miners' struggle and the solidarity of other workers, and is hoping to inflict a

serious blow on the miners and through this, on the entire working-class movement.

Under these conditions the fraudulent propaganda of the Labour Party chieftains as well as of the labour traitors and the opportunists, that the miners should concern themselves with ballots, is sharply exposed, as is the propaganda of the Labour Party and Kinnock which attacks the miners' struggle under the guise of "opposing violence from all sides". Also sharply exposed is the propaganda which tells the workers that all they should concern themselves with is the "day to day struggle" for wages, jobs and conditions, the "present

struggle". The workers can and must fight the savage offensive of the bourgeoisie, fight each and every attack on their rights, but they cannot restrict themselves to this alone. They must, in the