



Labour History Archive and Study Centre

Information Guide No. 3

Miners' Strike 1984-85

Administrative/Biographical History

The strike started in March 1984 when the closure of Cortonwood pit in Yorkshire was announced. The leader of the National Union of Mine Workers (NUM), Arthur Scargill, called his members out without the required ballot for strike action. As a result while the vast majority of miners across the country came out on strike the majority of the Nottinghamshire coalfield did not. The strike lasted for a full 12 months with the miners being backed up by a nationwide network of support groups which collected food, money and clothes etc. During the strike 11,291 people were arrested, of whom 8,392 were charged, mostly for breach of the peace or obstruction.

Sources

- **Labour Party and other left wing publications:** *Labour Weekly, New Socialist, Socialist Youth, Militant, Labour Student, London Labour Briefing, and Marxism Today.*
- **Pamphlet collection** – ref 331.861 includes about 30 relevant pamphlets. As well as dealing with the strike itself there will be material in other areas of this collection that will be of use, pamphlets on *Industrial Legislation* for instance.
- **Labour Party Conference Reports** and the **Trades Union Congress Annual Conference Reports** for 1984 and 1985.
- **National Executive Committee (NEC) minutes of the Labour Party** - meetings held every two or four weeks depending on events, that fully reflect the political background of the strike.
- **Individual MPs papers** - Eric Heffer, Michael Foot and Judith Hart collections all reflect the impact of the strike.
- **Martin Walker papers** - the collection includes newspapers, correspondence, interviews and related publicity material and is more reflective of individual experiences on a day to day basis.
- **Hilary Wainwright papers** - contain material from *Women Against Pit Closures, Miners Christmas Appeal* and copies of *PitWatch* magazine.
- **Lesbians & Gays Support the Miners** campaign group papers which run for about three quarters of the strike period.
- **Communist Party of Great Britain collection** –relevant material includes party statements through to leaflets for fundraising events.

