

### *Will the Miners Return to Work?*

It is the consensus of informed and reliable sources in the coal fields that the majority of miners will not return to work under Taft-Hartley injunction. Contrary to what the *Washington Post* writes about the "rebellious miners," it is the miners' fear of becoming victims of Institute terror that will keep them off their jobs.

"Nationalization would only make things worse," said a former UMW official. "They (the Institute networks — ed.) want to get the troops out to help their organizing."

As for violence against coal shipments, sources close to the union say it will be organized only by the Institute crowd.

To institutionalize this situation, the bankrupt UMW has received a \$2 million warchest loan from the United Autoworkers union. It is also reported that the UAW is flooding the mine fields and the UMW offices with experienced strike support "personnel," a development that will heighten the chaos and the potential for terrorism.

The union is also receiving support from the Institute networks in Michael Parkhurst's independent truckers group, Overdrive, and the American Agricultural Movement, a violence-prone alliance that smacks of the fascist strike strategy that led to the overthrow of the

Allende government in Chile in 1973.

"If the government can get these terrorists out of the coal fields, and demonstrate to the miners that they will clean up the pension and welfare mess, people will go back to work," a former UMW official said tonight. Such officials report that the Miners Right to Strike Committee is being told that it has a carte blanche by "their friends in the government." Such friends include former UMW director of public relations Bernie Aronson now working in Walter Mondale's office and Rich Banks, former administrative assistant of UMW President Miller, who now works in the Labor Department.

A spokesman for a large Midwest utility whose coal supplies are running out said tonight that Carter can't wait for the violence to occur...he must act now before the Taft-Hartley injunction comes down." The President, and the law enforcement officials," he said, "should announce that any incident of violence will not only be prosecuted but thoroughly investigated...Schlesinger laid out a scenario for national disaster in Congress...he was quite explicit — brownouts, controlled blackouts, violence, riots...I fear for our country if someone doesn't wake up soon..."

— L. Wolfe

## IPS Networks Mobilize For Terror In Coalfields

*As we go to press, coal field rank and file networks associated with the Washington-based Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) are mobilizing to coerce or mislead miners into defiance of the injunction ordering the opening of the mines under the Taft-Hartley Act. "Strike support" demonstrations are planned in several cities for March 11-13; these demonstrations will channel hundreds of student cadre into areas adjacent to coal fields for their eventual redeployment into strike "picket" activity next week. Their strategy is to create a "civil war" situation in sections of the U.S.*

*We excerpt below interviews with key operatives in this IPS terror deployment.*

*The following is taken from an interview with Ben Bedell, a reporter for the IPS-linked "left" journal, The Guardian. As Bedell indicates, he has extensive contacts in the coal fields with the rank and file movement. Bedell, according to several sources close to law enforcement officials, serves as a "conduit" for marching orders into such operations as the Miner Right to Strike Committee. Copies of this interview have been circulated to relevant police authorities.*

**Q:** I would like your views of the current strike situation.  
**A:** Well, on the Taft-Hartley, I tend to think the government is bluffing and they are just going through the motions. I think what they really see as the solution is seizure of the mines, then negotiations of a somewhat more lenient contract with the miners and on that basis getting them back to work. I wouldn't rule out though the possibility of some violent clashes next week particularly in southwest Virginia where there are a number of

nonunion mines which have not been producing coal since the strike began but... yesterday the Governor of Virginia put the national guard on alert and sent in a large detachment of state police into the area. There are other areas as well where there could be some confrontation if the nonunion coal operators attempt to take advantage of the Taft-Hartley climate and reopen their mines.

**Q:** Like the Kentucky area?

**A:** Eastern Kentucky, Harlan country would probably be one of the more likely areas.

**Q:** How about Ohio.

**A:** Some government spokesmen have singled out Illinois, Ohio, and Pennsylvania as districts where they think they might get somebody to go back to work under the injunction. I don't know how they could possibly think anyone would go back to work there. The district there, District 6, is extremely militant, it turned down the contract 5 to 1. Some locals voted 100 to 1 to turn it down. It's been the center of militancy in this strike ever since it began. How they are going to do it is beyond me. Pennsylvania, likewise, I don't see how anything is going to open up there. Illinois though is a different kettle of fish, the district three, District 12, is almost all surface mines, strip mines which would be easy to open in terms of guarding, physically guarding the mines against sabotage, and the miners against any kind of attack. The political situation there is somewhat different than in the other districts. I don't think he would open it up under

Taft-Hartley, or under a seizure but he might go for negotiating a separate agreement either in the district or with the major coal producer which is Peabody Coal.

Q: What other areas. In southern Ohio, Virginia and Kentucky the militants seem to be very well organized. Are there any other areas where that is the case?

A: Indiana, southern Indiana. I really don't know too much about the situation there, but they've been really tearing up the pea-patch down there. In a town called Rockport, it's right on the Ohio river. And they float a lot of coal down the river and off load it at Rockport and five or six times they've shut down this coal loading facility. And just today they dumped a whole lot of nonunion coal into the river. So there is something going on there....it seems pretty well organized.

Q: Do you see any back to work movement developing inside the union.

A: Not under Taft-Hartley, but if the government seized the mines and said it would operate them under terms favorable to the miners, there is no doubt that they would go back. In fact I think it would be a victory for them. In fact seizure is rapidly becoming a demand of the rank and file in this strike. They don't see any other way their demands are going to be met. The companies are not going to do it and I think they realize that in the last two cases where the mines were seized the miners came out on top. In 1943 they won portal pay and 46 they won the benefit funds. And I think they believe they can win again...

*The following is excerpted from an interview with Mike Branch, the self-proclaimed spokesman for the Miners Right to Strike Committee. Branch, a leader of the terrorist cadre from the IPS-controlled Revolutionary Communist Party which dominates the MRSC, reportedly organized "terror squads" of "roving pickets" during last summers' wildcat activity which were responsible for keeping tens of thousands of miners out of the coal mines.*

Branch: I think it has to be clear what this strike is and what it represents, and from our stand it represents a crucial battle not only for miners but for all working people. That's based on the fact that the crisis in this country has put the ownership class in a situation where they are trying to stabilize their workforce, and get the largest production out of their workers. In relation to this the miners and workers are headed for quite a period of time of major obstacles because of wildcat strikes and so on against the present conditions, the need to advance our own force and our own causes and stuff. This has become a major battlefield for them. What they (the owners) want to do, and what they want out of this contract is to smash our movement down here, and hold that up as a big flag or banner to other working peoples saying to them that "you can't stand up against them, you can't win, and even if you do it's futile," and so on. From our standpoint, what we're saying and what we're

trying to organize towards, is to show not only ourselves but all working people that you can stand up against them, you can fight them and in fact you can win concessions, but it takes two months of sacrifice and it needs more organization. What they tried to do was to get over a federal contract that would tie our hands... An obvious sign of growing strength we have shown is the fact that from the very beginning of the strike they have had to depend very heavily on federal intervention, whether it is use of police, FBI, Grand Jury...and now they have had to bring in federal intervention which didn't work in their mediation.

Q: How do you see the possibility of government seizure?

A: We oppose it. Because it still represents the same forces acting in opposition to the miners.... What we are saying is that all their actions are strike breaking, whether its Taft-Hartley or whether its government seizure, they represent the same thing.

Q: I understand the government has put the National Guard on alert, is that true?

A: You mean Gov. Rockefeller? I don't know, that may be true, I hadn't heard that. I know the Governor of Virginia had called to concentrate the state police in the coalfield area, and if he was unable to maintain "law and order" then he would put the National Guard on Alert. I'm sure that's the case to one extent or another in all the coal states. Indiana for some time has been using the National Guard.

Q: With the Taft-Hatley injunction. When it comes down tomorrow do you think that the coal operators are going to try to take advantage of it? That could be dangerous for you people down there, what do you plan to do?

A: We're not going to work under Taft-Hartley. I guess what you're trying to say is what about those who are going to try to work. Well, ha, ha, that is not something I want to talk about over the phone. I think people are prepared to deal with it.

Q: You're the head of the Miners Right to Strike, is that right?

A: No I'm not the head of it, I'm just a spokesman. The head is not a public guy so we don't give out his name.

Q: What is the breaking news down there that you would like to get out?

A: Well we are going to have a major rally this Saturday and we're asking workers from around the country, you know, steel workers, electrical workers, auto workers, all kinds of workers to come to this rally in Charleston on Saturday and take up a more active support of the miners. You know the support we've been getting from other workers has been great, letters, telegrams of support, donations of money and food and clothing. But you know how things have been, the ante is being upped on the situation with the Taft-Hartley... I will be speaking and the Miners Right to Strike Committee will be an official sponsor.