

Industrial Development and Democratic Planning:

The Case of Belvoir

by Ken Coates



At the end of July it was announced that the National Coal Board has finally decided to file its applications for planning permission to develop the Vale of Belvoir coalfield.

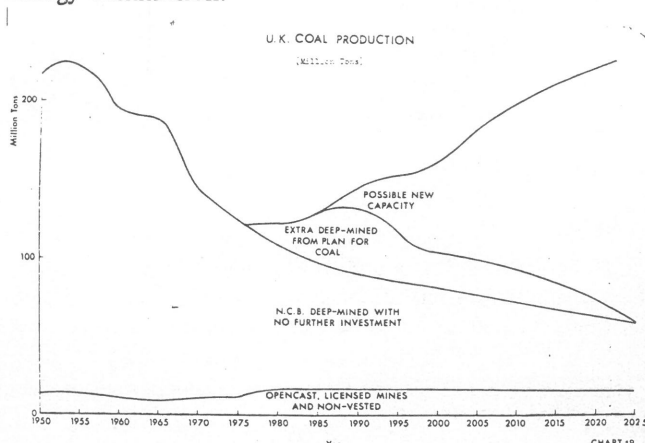
An enormous hostile campaign has been developed by residents of the area who include besides many rural workers, numerous E-type commuters as well as farmers and the Duke of Rutland. Pressure groups like the Vale of Belvoir Protection Group claim 18,000 supporters and their car stickers may be seen throughout the Nottingham and Leicestershire areas. The Coal Board is well aware of this opposition and the bulk of its preparations for the forthcoming propaganda war have been devoted to allaying the hostility of rural conservationists. Board spokesmen are able to present a comprehensive slide show which indicates the most painstaking technical preparation for mining in this rather pretty area. Expensive computer maps have been prepared in order to establish precisely over what terrain the proposed new headstocks will be visible. Elaborate proposals have been advanced for concealing the large tips which will be necessary. The miners themselves will be invisible, since it is suggested they be housed in existing settlements on the borders of the Vale.

The NCB propose to sink three collieries: at Hose, in the centre of the area; at Asfordby, near Melton Mowbray; and at Saltby, not far from Grantham. The anticipated output by the time the pits start full production, will be 3 million tons per annum from Hose, 2.2 million from Asfordby, and 2 million from Saltby. Some work will be brought to local people: the collieries will take 13 years to complete and construction will employ up to 840 people annually, 250-300 of whom might be expected to come from the local area.

Naturally, ordinary people in the Melton area are keen to have more industrial opportunities. In particular, women are most anxious for additional places of work. The local Labour Party is anxious to press ahead with a development which could break the lethargy of a somewhat socially claustrophobic district. A nice place to commute from, the Vale is nothing like so pleasant to be marooned in.

Yet the argument cannot be confined to the local authorities which are directly involved: that is to say, the

Melton District, Ruschcliffe and South Kesteven. It is true that physical installations would be sited in the territories administered by the district councils which govern these areas. But the bulk of the population which will be required to work the new industries will have to come, in the first place, from the old coalfields of Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire. It is here that it becomes crucial to approach with caution. Last year, it became clear that the Coal Board had plans to close many collieries in the western part of Nottinghamshire, and to phase out something between 13,000 and 10,000 jobs in the older part of the Nottinghamshire coalfield. In Leicestershire closures are more imminent, and the Leicester miners are naturally concerned to secure continued job prospects. But the contraction which will take place in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire combined is out of all proportion to the tiny handful of new jobs which will be secured in the three new collieries. 3,800 jobs will become available for mine workers, each of whom will be expected to maintain a productivity between three and four times that prevailing in the best existing modern mines. The Coal Board's plans for the shifting of the focus of mining from old pits into new super-mines can be seen in a diagram which was circulated by the Energy Commission.



Before the Labour movement runs to applaud these proposals, we should make quite certain that a number of important safeguards are established.

Firstly, the exact weight of the Coal Board's plans must be determined. This is more difficult than it seems. When the Board gave planning information to the Nottinghamshire County Council it imposed a strict secrecy on the Council officials who were forbidden to report on what they were told even to elected councillors. It took a major campaign, culminating in the threat of legal action, to secure access for councillors to this information. But by the time the Nottinghamshire planners had released their data to councillors developments had accelerated considerably. A variety of factors changed some of the key calculations. The National Coal Board, after a period in which it refused point blank to give any new information at all to County planners, then apparently

made over a whole series of new projections, which were not subsequently presented by the planners in the form of a comprehensive report, and so, therefore, could never be identified and requested as a total information input by those who have been elected to make the major planning decisions. At the same time, a variety of different stories have been told to different sectors of the National Union of Mineworkers and various Coal Board documents have been unofficially released through local branches of the NUM. To consolidate the picture which emerges from this flow of official information and unauthorised leaks is rather difficult.

Firstly, there is the scheduled Topic Report on Coal Mining in Nottinghamshire, about which all the controversy has raged. Before this was finally released to County Councillors, copies of it were circulated widely through the NUM in the Nottinghamshire area. The forecasts it gives for colliery futures are to be found in its Table 6.^{1*}

Table 1. Colliery Life Forecast*

(Table 6 from Nottinghamshire County Council's scheduled Topic Report on Coalmining)

Strategy Zone	Colliery	Category	1974 Employment	Predicted Employment			1996 Max.	1996 Min.	
				1976	1986	1996			
1	Harworth	A1	1,154	1,142	1,085	1,031	1,154	1,031	
	Manton	A1	1,344	1,344	1,344	1,277	1,344	1,277	
	Shireoaks	A1	582	582	582	553	582	—	
	Steetley	A1	501	501	501	476	501	—	
2	Bevercotes	A1	879	879	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250	
3	Calverton	A1	1,515	1,500	1,425	1,354	1,515	1,354	
	Newstead	A1	1,507	1,492	1,417	1,346	1,507	—	
	Bilthorpe	A1	1,157	1,145	1,088	1,034	1,157	1,034	
	Blidworth	A1	1,150	1,138	1,081	1,027	1,150	—	
	Clipstone	A1	1,601	1,585	1,506	1,431	1,601	1,431	
	Ollerton	A1	1,307	1,294	1,229	1,168	1,307	1,168	
	Rufford	A2	1,472	1,443	1,298	—	1,310	—	
	Thoresby	A1	1,540	1,525	1,449	1,377	1,540	1,377	
	Warsop	A1	1,412	1,398	1,328	1,262	1,412	1,262	
	Welbeck	A1	1,299	1,286	1,222	1,161	1,299	1,161	
	5	Mansfield	A2	1,533	1,502	1,352	—	1,364	—
		Sherwood	A2	921	903	813	—	820	—
Bentinck		A1	2,194	2,172	2,063	1,960	2,194	—	
New Hucknall		B2	708	680	—	—	—	—	
Sutton		B2	858	824	—	—	—	—	
Silverhill		A2	1,089	1,067	960	—	969	—	
Teversal		B2	763	732	—	—	—	—	
Pye Hill		B2	1,101	1,057	—	—	—	—	
7	Moorgreen	B2	1,338	1,284	—	—	—	—	
	Annesley	A2	960	941	847	—	854	—	
8	Babington	B2	1,353	1,299	—	—	—	—	
	Gedling	A1	1,553	1,537	1,460	1,387	1,553	1,387	
	Hucknall	A1	1,126	1,115	1,059	1,006	1,126	—	
	Linby	A1	1,252	1,239	1,177	1,118	1,252	—	
9	Cotgrave	A1	1,610	1,750	1,750	1,700	1,750	1,700	
Totals			36,779	36,354	29,286	22,918	30,511	15,432	

Note 1: It must be stressed that these are only predictions. In the Sub-Regional Study for 1966-76 as the Topic Report points out, 20 collieries were scheduled for closure. Of these, 11 had in fact closed by 1975, all the others

were still open.

Note 2: The above totals are of employment at existing collieries. If any new mining operations begin these employment totals will need to be revised.

*To interpret this table fully it is necessary to read it in the context of the explanatory note reprinted below on page 14.

To reiterate: "it must be stressed that these are only predictions."

The National Union of Mineworkers has established an Agreement that no colliery will close for any reason other than that of exhaustion of reserves. The problem is, however, that the age structure of the mining labour force has become such that unless an enormous recruitment drive is successfully undertaken, there will soon be a substantial contraction in the number of miners available for employment. The Topic Report makes available an age distribution by colliery which shows that 44% of the workers at Manton in 1974 were over 50, as were 48% of those at Shireoaks, 40% of those at Blidworth,

43% of those at Bentinck and Sutton, 45% of those at Pye Hill, 47% of those at Moorgreen, and two-fifths or more of those at Linby, Annesley, Teversal, Silverhill, Sherwood and Steetley.

Taken overall, 38% of the miners in the geographic County of Nottingham were over 50 during the year 1974 and 25% were between 40 and 50. Remembering the encroachment of earlier retirement, it is plain that the re-location of the labour force becomes unavoidable, if profitable mining is to be continued at all. How the Coal Board saw all this in 1974 is revealed in the table of Manpower Deficits by Colliery Group.

Table 2. Manpower Deficits by Colliery Group

(From Topic Report on Coalmining, NCC)

Colliery Group	(1) Forecast	(2) Under 50s at 1974	(3) Deficit (1-2)	(4) Inflow from short-life collieries	(5) Deficit (3-4)	(6) Forecast	(7) 1986/96 Increase (6-1)	(8) 40/50s at 1974	(9) Deficit (7-8)	(10) Inflow from medium-life collieries	(11) Deficit (9-10)	1974-96 Deficit (5+11)
Bevercotes	1,250	650	600	0	600	1,250	0	150	150	0	150	750
Harworth	1,100	700	400	0	400	1,050	-50	250	200	0	200	600
Worksop	2,450	1,250	1,200	0	1,200	2,450	0	500	500	0	500	1,700
Ollerton	3,750	2,400	1,350	0	1,350	3,600	-200	950	750	750		1,350
Clipstone/ Blidworth	2,600	1,650	950	954	0	2,450	-150	700(+350)	550(+350)	550	0(+350)	0(+350)
Warsop/Welbeck	2,550	1,600	950	950	0	2,400	-150	600(+350)	450(+350)	100	350(+350)	350(+350)
Ashfield	5,700	3,400	2,300	700	1,600	5,450	-300	1,450(+350)	1,150(+350)	650	500	2,100(+350)
Nottingham	4,650	2,950	1,700	700	1,000	4,450	-200	1,150(+350)	950(+350)	0	950	1,950(+350)
Sub-total 1.	24,000	14,650	9,350	3,300	6,150	23,050	-1,000	7,150	6,150	2,050	4,050	10,150
Mansfield	3,400	2,350	1,050	0	1,050							
Annesley/ Silverhill	1,800	1,150	650	0	650							
Sub-total 2.	5,200	3,500	1,700	0	1,700							
TOTAL	29,200	18,150	11,050	3,300	7,850							

This table groups collieries into a number of clusters as follows:

Worksop Group	Manton, Shireoaks, Steetley
Ollerton Group	Ollerton, Thoresby, Bilsthorpe
Ashfield Group	Hucknall, Linby, Newstead, Bentinck

Mansfield Group	Mansfield, Rufford, Sherwood
Sutton Group	Teversal, New Hucknall, Sutton, Pye Hill

Nottingham Grp.	Calverton, Gedling, Cotgrave
Derbyshire Group	as specified in Table 4.

It should be read alongside the forecasts given in a table of age distribution by colliery by life expectancy.

The story of a battle for open government:

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by Ken Coates

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Ashfield

What's going wrong?

by Ken Coates

IWC Pamphlet No. 53

Price 30p



Table 3. Age Structure of Labour Force by Colliery Groups

(Source: Topic Report on Coalmining, NCC)

	<i>Under 40 years</i>	<i>40/50 years</i>	<i>50 years +</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Long-term Collieries</i>				
Bevercotes	480	173	204	857
Harworth	429	252	408	1,089
Worksop Group	769	488	992	2,249
Ollerton Group	1,432	968	1,431	3,831
Clipstone/Blidworth	986	684	970	2,640
Warsop/Welbeck	1,008	613	1,039	2,660
Ashfield Group	1,991	1,430	2,274	5,695
Nottingham Group	1,818	1,130	1,490	4,438
Total	8,913	5,738	8,808	23,459
Derbyshire Long-life Group	2,660	4,113	2,415	6,528
<i>Medium-life Collieries</i>				
Mansfield Group	1,399	951	1,392	3,742
Annesley/Silverhill	667	484	789	1,940
Total	2,066	1,435	2,181	5,682
<i>Short-life Collieries</i>				
Moorgreen/Babbington	843	574	1,054	2,471
Sutton Group	1,030	830	1,388	3,248
Total	1,875	1,404	2,442	5,719
Derbyshire Short-life Collieries	2,041	1,385	2,593	6,019

Table 4. Age Structure of Labour Force: Derbyshire Collieries

(Source: Topic Report on Coalmining, NCC)

	<i>Under 40 years</i>	<i>40/50 years</i>	<i>50 years +</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Long-Life Pits</i>				
Shirebrook	685	324	511	1,520
Creswell	499	213	331	1,043
Whitwell	311	217	342	870
Markham	838	465	873	2,176
Arkwright	327	234	358	919
Total	2,660	4,113	2,415	6,528
<i>Short-life Pits</i>				
Glapwell	130	191	369	690
Bolsover	314	166	272	752
Grassmoor	84	34	21	139
Westhorpe	207	132	331	670
Renishaw Park	189	107	183	779
Pleasley	223	167	332	722
Oxcroft	87	79	185	351
Ormonde	22	23	21	66
Langwith	387	224	365	976
Ireland	246	152	331	729
High Moor	150	108	173	431
Others	2	2	10	14
Total	2,041	1,385	2,593	6,019

1996 Forecast Employment –	Shirebrook	2,000
	Creswell	1,100
	Whitwell	950
	Markham	2,350
	Arkwright	950
	Total	7,350

Present Workforce available – 2,660 + 2,041 = 4,701
 1974/96 Deficit – 2,649

There is a lot more information in the Topic Report which requires to be considered more fully. However, more recent figures of Coal Board expectations are available: one

set were released by the Calverton Branch of the National Union of Mineworkers and concern the predictions for the South Nottingham area of the NCB:

Table 5. Actual and Estimated Tonnage, South Notts NCB Area

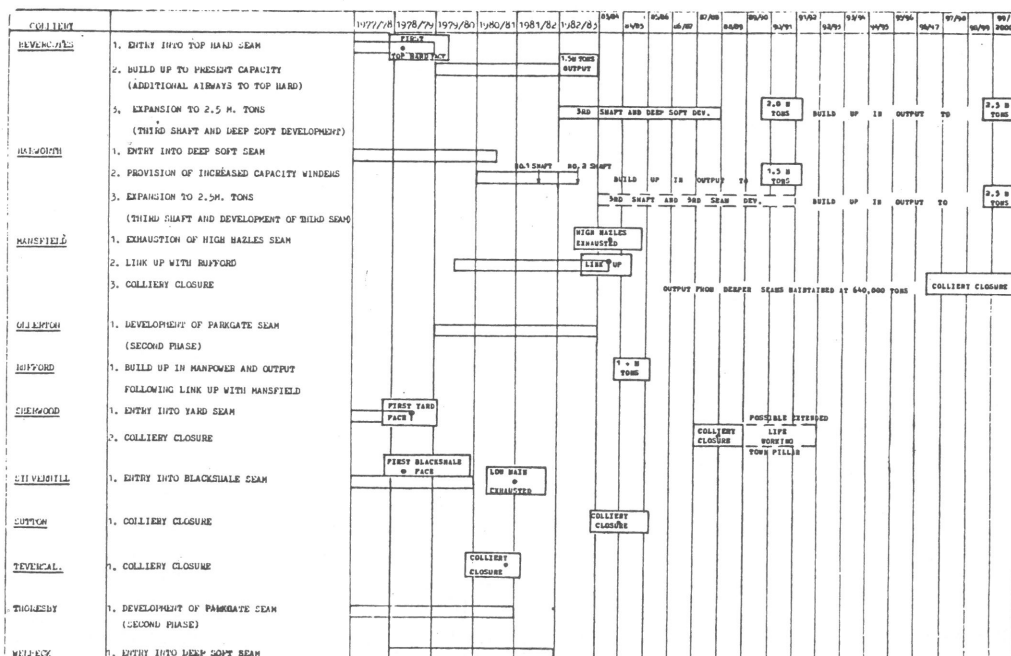
	Actual 1976/77 tons	June Proj. 1977/78 000 tons	1978/79 000 tons	1985/86 000 tons	1990/91 000 tons	2000 000 tons
Annesley	511,513	560	560	600	-	-
Babbington	580,171	620	620	630	-	-
Bentinck	1,232,134	1,350	1,400	1,300	1,300	-
Calverton	731,130	895	900	960	960	500
Cotgrave	1,012,280	1,060	1,100	1,200	1,200	1,200
Gedling	618,201	700	700	850	850	850
Hucknall	923,097	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	800
Linby	443,810	470	600	630	630	-
Moorgreen	637,767	610	700	700	-	-
New Hucknall	355,230	330	300	330	-	-
Newstead	886,040	675	750	900	900	-
Pye Hill	982,414	930	850	520	-	-
Total Collieries	8,913,787	9,200	9,480	9,590	6,840	3,350
Relaxation	-	400	480	490	240	150
Area Total	8,913,787	8,800	9,000	9,100	6,600	3,200
NEW MINES						
Hone	-	-	-	-	3,000	3,000
Saltby	-	-	-	-	450	2,000
TOTAL	8,913,787	8,800	9,000	9,100	10,050	8,200

Source: document published from NCB sources by Calverton Branch, NUM.

Another set of figures has been provided for the North Nottinghamshire area, which predicts colliery closures in Teversal between 1980 and 1981, in Sutton between 1983

and 1985, in Sherwood between 1987 and 1989 and in Mansfield some time between 1996 and the end of the century.

Table 6. North Notts Area NCB:
Outline of Major Changes in Prospect



Link ups will take place between Mansfield and Rufford collieries sometime between 1982 and 1985. Then these two collieries will be merged. Other mergers are at least thinkable.

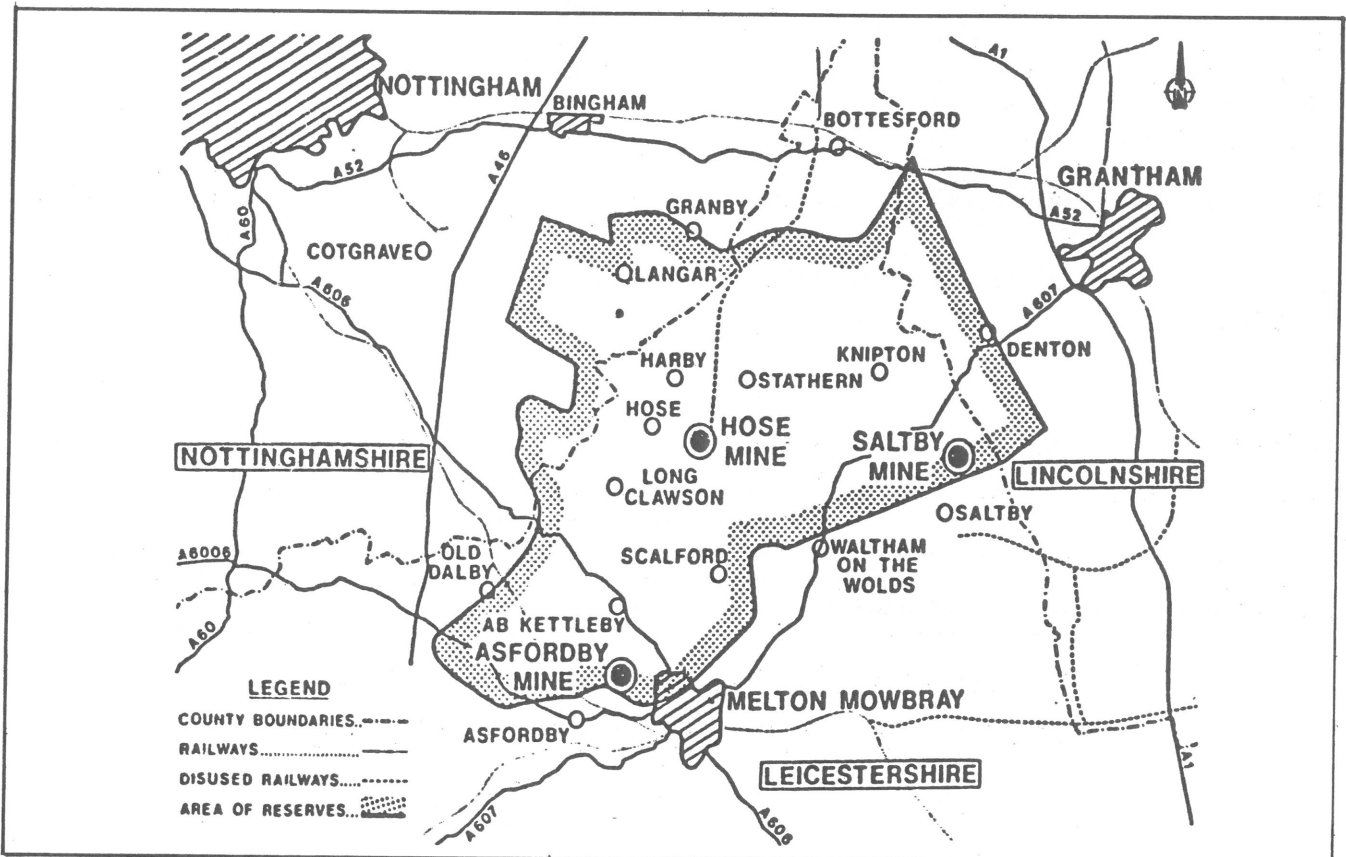
Taken in conjunction, these projections for North and South Nottingham indicate that we may anticipate the loss of many thousands of job opportunities in the Nottinghamshire coalfield. The original forecast given to the County Council put this loss as some 13,500. This was subsequently revised in the published Structure Plan and assessed at 12,700.

After the public outcry which followed the revelation of the existence of the secret Topic Report, the Coal Board informed the NUM that all the figures given to County Council officials were now out of date. Subsequently, on the basis of a press release which was issued to this effect, County planners recalculated their estimate of the job loss, which was drastically reduced. The basis for this

reduction is unclear, and a combination of the currently estimated pit closures for North and South Nottinghamshire will reveal a programme of contraction not very far short of the original projections of 1974.

It seems pointless to speculate further on this matter, since the figures that would enable such speculation to be accurate have not been definitively established. The point is that it is necessary to ensure full disclosure of this information, if there is to be any intelligent public discussion of the social consequences of decline in mining areas.

The development of the Vale of Belvoir, then, is not simply a question of what damage may be done to green fields in the area which produces Stilton Cheese. It is also, very much a problem of what damage may be sustained by long established communities with their own developed institutions. This discussion has hardly begun, and it is necessary to widen it out to involve all those who may be affected.



A Technical Note on Forecasting, by the Nottinghamshire Planners*

'Projecting Future Mining Employment'¹

A number of methods have been tested for projecting future mining employment, all of which have certain merits and certain disadvantages. The two main methods originally employed were a 'colliery life' projection and an 'output-based' projection.

- i. colliery life projection — this method took collieries and other NCB establishments individually and assessed the date they were likely to close, or whether they would still be open in 1996 at the end of the plan period. Information was aggregated for the relevant dates;
- ii. output-based projection — the rationale of this method was to take present output at national, regional and local (County) levels and data on the corresponding output per manshift, and through a series of assumptions about likely changes in these variables over the plan period, 'step down' likely national output into a projec-

tion of local employment. This had three main drawbacks:

- a. data on past trends of output was very difficult to obtain;
- b. a large number of assumptions were necessary and, if a range of error, giving maximum and minimum levels, were allowed for each assumption, the resulting range of possible local employment was too wide to be useful;
- c. at the end of this projection procedure, it was still necessary to find some way of breaking down County employment to collieries which inevitably involved some form of colliery life projection.

Following discussion about these methods with the NCB a modified form of colliery life projection was derived. This applies certain assumptions about the relationships between local and national output and productivity to the tentative

*See above, page 10.

national targets for output and productivity in the 'Coal Industry Examination'.

The Interim Report of the Coal Industry Examination (para.24) states:

"Realisation of the potential output for which these plans provide also depends on realising the assumptions on which the Plan is based, that output per manshift (oms) can be raised by some 4 per cent p.a., through the better application of proven techniques, and from developing new ideas, equipment and systems."

As detailed in para 2.5 above output from present pits was projected to increase by 22m tons p.a. on top of the 80m tons p.a. which was likely based on present trends – that is, approximately 2.5 per cent.

Thus the rate of decline of manpower likely at the national level would be about 1.5% p.a. Due to the more productive nature of the Nottinghamshire coalfield, the rate of decline of manpower in Nottinghamshire would be lower, probably around 1% p.a.² This thesis also applies at the individual pit level. The more productive the pit, the less its employment will decline, since much higher output and productivity levels can be obtained for a given degree of investment; and it is especially into these high productivity local pits that much of the extra finance which the Government is making available, is likely to be channelled.

Thus the modified forecasting methodology was as follows:

- i. the prediction of the likely date of closure of all Nottinghamshire collieries was carried out on the basis of consultations with the NCB;
- ii. a rate of employment decline was chosen for each category of colliery, and for each forecast, and applied to the assumptions in (i) to give medium, maximum and minimum forecasts (see Schedule 1);
- iii. County and zonal totals for various key dates were calculated. The zonal figures are discussed in the next section;
- iv. these projections were discussed with the NCB and the assumptions were amended for certain collieries, namely:
 - a. Bevercotes – this is the newest colliery in the County and has not yet attained its optimum labour force of 1,250, which is not expected to drop until the next century;
 - b. the Workshop Collieries – it is considered that demand for labour at Manton, Shireoaks and Steetley collieries will remain at its present level until 1986, declining a slightly thereafter;
 - c. Cotgrave – the target labour force has not yet been achieved and is likely to remain at 1,700/1,750 until the next century.
- v. the assumptions amended under (iv) above were varied in producing a minimum forecast, based upon an assessment of colliery life with particular reference to the difficulties experienced in the period 1966-71,

rather than just their performance since 1971. This is felt to be a reasonable approach for a minimum forecast, but does not reflect the best estimate of the life of these collieries (Hucknall, Linby, Newstead, Blidworth, Bentinck, Shireoaks and Steetley).

- vi. forecasts were also made of employment in non-colliery establishments and are contained in Table 7.

The revised employment projections for 1986 are almost exactly the same as those contained in the Preliminary Employment Forecast Report, whilst the revised total employment predicted for 1996 is some 7,000 higher, largely due to the improved life expectancy of several collieries.

Schedule 1: Forecasting Assumptions

Medium Projection

1. All A1 collieries will remain open until 1996 and employment will decline at 0.5% p.a., with the exception of Bevercotes, Cotgrave, Manton, Shireoaks and Steetley collieries where employment will remain static or increase.
2. All A2 collieries will remain open to 1986, but close before 1996, and decline at 1% p.a. between 1974 and their closure.
3. All B2 collieries will close between 1976 and 1986 and their employment will decline between 1974 and their closure at 2% p.a.³
4. All percentage rates of decline are simple, not compound, over 10 year periods.

Maximum Projection (1996 only)

1. All A1 collieries will have the same employment as in 1974, except for Bevercotes and Cotgrave, which will increase as in the medium projection.
2. All collieries closing between 1986 and 1996 in the medium forecast are assumed still to be open in 1996, and to decline at 0.5% p.a. over the whole period 1974-96.

Minimum Projection (1996 only)

1. All A1 collieries assumed to be open in 1996 except Hucknall, Linby, Newstead, Blidworth, Bentinck, Shireoaks and Steetley. All A1 collieries to decline at 0.5% p.a. until closure except Cotgrave and Bevercotes.

Footnotes

1. It should be noted that these projections are not dependent upon the likely natural increase of population.
2. It should be stressed that the life of a colliery is limited by its reserves rather than its financial results. Moreover, the higher productivity that can be obtained for a given degree of investment may in fact lead to a fall in manpower at collieries where no increase in output is planned.
3. The category of B1 collieries has not been used. The categories are as follows:
 - i. A1 – long-term collieries.
 - ii. A2 – collieries with a medium or uncertain life expectancy.
 - iii. B2 – short-term collieries."

A Note on Planning Arithmetic

There appear to be a number of arithmetical and/or typographical errors in those of the County Council's tables which are reproduced in this text. As far as we can see, the figures *should* read as follows:

Table 2. Manpower Deficits by Colliery Group

Col. 1	Sub-total 1. 24,050 <i>not</i> 24,000. Total 29,250 <i>not</i> 29,200.
Col. 2	Sub-total 1. 14,600 <i>not</i> 14,650. Total 18,100 <i>not</i> 18,150.
Col. 3	Sub-total 1. 9,450 <i>not</i> 9,350. Total 11,150 <i>not</i> 11,050.
Col. 4	Clipstone/Blidworth 950 <i>not</i> 954.
Col. 6	Sub-total 1. 23,100 <i>not</i> 23,050.
Col. 7	Ollerton – 150 <i>not</i> – 200. Ashfield – 250 <i>not</i> – 300.

Sub-total – 950 *not* – 1,000.

Col. 9	Ollerton 800 <i>not</i> 750. Ashfield 1,200 <i>not</i> 1,150. Sub-total 1. 6,200 <i>not</i> 6,150.
Col. 11	Ashfield <i>omitted</i> (+ 350). Nottingham <i>omitted</i> (+ 350).
Col. 12	Sub-total 1. 10,200 <i>not</i> 10,150.

Table 3. Age Structure by Groups

Derbyshire Long-life Group: 40/50 years 1,453 *not* 4,113.
Short-life Collieries: Total 1,873 *not* 1,875.

Table 4. Age Distribution by Colliery – Derbyshire 1974

Long-life Pits: 40/50 years, Total 1,453 *not* 4,113.
Renishaw Park Total 479 *not* 779.

Nottinghamshire County Council spent £60,000 on an exercise in consultation about its new structure plan. The vital figures given above, however, were withheld even from County Councillors themselves. They demand our attention, and pose

Some Questions Which Need Answering.

It is necessary for trade unions, no less than community organisations, to seek these answers before planning approval is finalised. Once the decisions are agreed, it will be too late to make anyone commit funds to welfare expenditures without an extended political battle.

1. In the developing areas

- a. Who will provide the infrastructure of housing, schools and social amenities? In the event that this responsibility will fall on local authorities, what support will they receive in order to ensure that this is done to the satisfaction both of incoming migrants and the established local population?
At the Nottinghamshire colliery village of Cotgrave, two decades after development, there is still no secondary school, and several hundred children bus to school every day. There have been accidents during this process. The village lacks the social amenities that a secondary school normally provides to parents and other adults in out-of-school hours.
- b. The Coal Board says that it does not intend to encourage the building of segregated mining villages. What enquiries did it make before reaching this decision? What are the opinions of intended migrants? What steps are being taken to discover these?
- c. When able-bodied men move, their families leave behind the support network of the extended family. Maybe some prefer to do so. Many do not. What proportion of ageing relatives would wish to move to stay near their younger kinsfolk? What enquiries have been made about this? Will houses be made available for older, retired people? How will these be financed?
- d. Working class women in the Vale already complain of the shortage of employment prospects. What steps will be taken to provide female employment for miners' wives and daughters, as well as the unemployed women already seeking or wishing to seek work in the area?
- e. It is no use arguing about these matters *after* the basic planning decisions have been taken. Too many authorities have too few usable powers to cope with them, and they will pass the buck forever. Only while the NCB has a vested interest in influencing the outcome will it remain

open to the request that it use its undoubted economic and political influence to help solve them.

2. In the declining areas

- a. All the foregoing questions have some reverse relevance in the areas of decline. Notably, will old people be left in a ghetto? What will happen to people who have bought unsaleable houses, often on mortgages to purchase old NCB properties?
 - b. Above all, if the uprooting of miners is not to be a social disaster, what steps will be taken to encourage alternative local employment? This remains a difficult problem in spite of past efforts, which have involved great labour to produce a comparatively small result. Overall unemployment has now reached the point at which County planners are perhaps more concerned about inner-city blight (a truly serious problem) than about the future of mining areas which *could* send a sizeable proportion of their present employees to distant pits, if they were willing to travel or move.
- ### 3. In both areas:
- a. How can people be informed about what is likely to happen? This is the most important planned shift of resources, but it has scarcely been discussed in the debate which has taken place during the structure plan consultations. The discussion which *did* take place was conducted while even councillors were denied access to the scheduled topic report, which contained all the most important information.
 - b. How can people's opinions be brought out, and distilled into practical proposals about what *should* be done?
 - c. How can trade unions, and working class wives, be encouraged to join in these processes?

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