

ORGREAVE

TRUTH AND JUSTICE CAMPAIGN



The Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign includes ex-miners, Trades Unionists, activists and others who are determined to get justice for miners who were victims of police lies and cover ups at Orgreave in June 1984. The campaign is strictly non-party political and welcomes support from anyone who has genuine concerns about the pattern of deception and cover up that characterised police behaviour not only at Orgreave but throughout the coalfields during the strike.

TEN REASONS WHY WE NEED AN ORGREAVE INQUIRY

1. The incredibly serious and unprecedented nature of what happened at Orgreave

Orgreave involved a massive police operation that resulted in countless pickets being seriously injured, falsely arrested and wrongly prosecuted. Nothing on this scale had ever been seen before.

2. The militarised nature of the police tactics on that day

Orgreave involved officers from all over the country being organised in military fashion, and following a new secret police Manual which permitted the use of force to "incapacitate" demonstrators.

3. The deliberate construction of a false narrative in officers' evidence

Many of the junior officers at Orgreave had parts of their witness statements dictated to them by senior officers, and gave evidence about things that they simply could not have seen. This was an orchestrated attempt to conceal the truth by the police.

4. The deliberate promotion of that false narrative through the media

The media coverage of events of Orgreave was grossly distorted, to present the miners as the instigators of the violence when the police's own recording and amateur footage showed the reverse to be true. This shaped the public consciousness for years and made it very hard for the truth about what happened to emerge.

5. The lack of legal accountability for what happened at Orgreave

No police officer faced criminal or disciplinary charges for what happened at Orgreave or the calculated cover up that took place afterwards. South Yorkshire Police agreed to pay civil damages to 39 of the miners, without any admission of liability. There was no public inquiry into how and why the trials collapsed. The contemporaneous legal system therefore failed to deliver any truth, justice or accountability to the Orgreave miners.

6. The ongoing consequences of Orgreave

The effects of Orgreave have been lasting. Many miners continue to suffer with physical and psychiatric injuries as a result of what happened at Orgreave. Many lost their jobs and marriages. A fundamental distrust in the police has been engendered in former mining communities, which has continued through the generations.

7. The role of Hillsborough and Pitchford

Both Orgreave in 1984 and Hillsborough in 1989 involve South Yorkshire police apparently colluding in their accounts and with the media to promote a false "truth" to the outside world. We believe that if the police lies after Orgreave had been addressed properly, the Hillsborough cover up might not have been allowed to happen. The Pitchford Inquiry has recognised the need to examine the role of undercover police in the miners' strike, so it is important that the role of overt and aggressive policing of the sort that happened at Orgreave is looked at too.

8. New sources of evidence: officers coming forward, the Cabinet Papers and the IPCC report

Officers present at Orgreave have begun to break ranks and tell the truth about the process by which they had had parts of their statements dictated to them. The Cabinet Papers from 1984/5 have now been released, and they raise serious questions about the role of central government in the policing of the strike and the prosecutions of the pickets. Although the IPCC decided not to investigate further in June 2015 much of the evidence it unearthed supports what the OTJC has been saying.

9. The key issues seen at Orgreave still relevant today

We still see inappropriate kettling, excessive force, mass arrests, collusion with the media and police overcharging after demonstrations. Concerns remain about the ability of police to "confer" when recording their accounts after serious incidents. The police continue to use the media to promote their own narrative of events in contentious cases.

10. The law requires there to be an inquiry

There is an overwhelming case for a public inquiry under s.1 of the Inquiries Act 2005, because Orgreave is an event that has caused "public concern". Article 3 of the European Convention of Human Rights strengthens the case for an inquiry because what the pickets were subjected to at Orgreave amounts to "inhuman and degrading treatment".