Evaluating tactics for public order policing: the case of Orgreave during the Miners' Strike of 1984

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Abstract

Orgreave is the most contentious industrial confrontation of the latter 20th century. The events on 18th June 1984, in South Yorkshire, exposed a policing style that had been rejected by Lord Scarman yet agreed by the Home Secretary. Shrouded in secrecy, political memoirs have emerged that can be seen to directly influence equally secretive police public order tactics. Orgreave exposes how public order policing can in reality mean political order policing, thereby revealing the nakedly politicised role of the police as a coercive arm of the State: an Orwellian State that is prepared to do whatever it takes to preserve its power.

The road to Orgreave

Orgreave Works, a British Steel Corporation Coking Plant within its Scunthorpe Division, in South Yorkshire, is synonymous with one of the most defining and bleak days – the 18th June, 1984 - in British policing. Matters are unresolved, as yet, to this day, concerning why what happened at Orgreave did in the way that it did and whether enough truthful transparency allows us to judge the event's legitimacy, proportionality or, indeed, legality.

As with any extraordinary event, such as 'The Battle of Orgreave' as it has become known, we need to contextualise things to try and calibrate perspectives. Such contextualisation could start in a number of ways but let me suggest we begin with St. Peter's Field, Manchester on 16th August 1819. Here, a large number of people (estimates suggest some 60,000) were protesting for the right to vote. The Manchester and Salford Yeomanry (volunteer) cavalry were sanctioned to arrest some of the protestors, before the 15th (King's) Regiment of Light Dragoon Hussars were deployed in order to reinforce the Yeomanry (Channing, 2014).

The Dragoons had previously seen field action at Waterloo in 1815, returning to England in 1816, and were trained to charge, on horseback, with sabres drawn. Accounts vary (as they do at Orgreave) but indicate that up to 700 people were injured in the chaos that ensued (Poole, 2019).

Peterloo, as it became known, offers us the contextualisation of horse charges against civilians, with the main difference being 1819 involved soldiers with sabres, and 1984 police officers with extended batons. Peterloo was a large event, but so was Orgreave, and in both instances there was political angst about the implications of the protests taking place and their potential challenge to what was purported to be the existing rule of law.

Disorder or insurrection?

In many ways, Peterloo and Orgreave were approached, politically, as movements of insurrection, as indeed was Tonypandy on 8th November 1910. Tonypandy, in Glamorgan, bears even more striking resemblance to Orgreave because both were (initially) policing operations and both concerned picketing and striking miners.

Tonypandy (like Orgreave) was a single event amongst wider patterns within a miner's strike, but Tonypandy escalated faster since it was a growing culmination of ongoing disorder (the Rhondda Riots). Orgreave, as we shall see, was, in many unexpected ways, more of a planned event rather than a spontaneous escalation.

In the case of Tonypandy, the Glamorgan Constabulary, reinforced by the Bristol Constabulary, faced off miners, in scenes similar to Orgreave. Matters deteriorated though, because Glamorgan and Bristol officers were limited in number (compared to Orgreave, which was a national policing deployment) and assistance was sought from the War Office. Metropolitan Police officers were despatched, but so were a squadron of the 18th Hussars and a company of the Lancashire Fusiliers. Reports (which are mixed, just as at Peterloo and Orgreave) indicate around 500 people were injured (Geary, 1985).

From mutual order to national coordination

An even bigger, national, strike followed in May, 1926 (in solidarity with the miners) and saw troops deployed to both escort workers and break picket lines, but there is little to indicate that such operational military support was activated at Orgreave. Some military facilities are known to have been used for logistics (ACPO, 1985:46) but Tony Benn, M.P. alleged soldiers, dressed as police officers, were operationally deployed, but that account has not been substantiated (Briggs, 1995:134)[1].

What is evident is that the miners' strike of 1984 was the most significant mobilisation of British police officers that has ever occurred[2]. To mobilise in that way was a step change in British public order policing, even though there had been mutual support deployments, for example for Lewisham in 1977 and Brixton and Toxteth in 1981.

Lessons learned from the policing of riots, particularly in 1981, influenced the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) to revise public order policy and practice, creating a National Reporting Centre (NRC), new training and a new *Public Order Manual of Tactical Options* and a *Notes of Guidance for Senior Officers Manual*, in 1983, for all 43 forces of England and Wales. New narratives were emerging to interface the work of Special Branch and the security service, framing social and industrial disorder as requiring stronger intelligence networks (leading to the National Public Order Intelligence Unit and some undercover activities).

It depends on whether you believe in coincidences when weighing up what happened to British public order tactical preparedness in between Brixton and Orgreave because, as it so

[1] M.P. Tony Benn in 2001 placed his testimony on public (media) record but this, alone, amounts to hearsay. M.P. Yvette Cooper, Chair of the 2016 Home Office Affairs Select Committee, wrote to several police forces asking for their records concerning Orgreave to be disclosed but the majority of forces said they had no such specific preserved records.
In addition, there were wider industrial tensions (such as with dockworkers) around this period and a released Cabinet paper dated 13th July 1984 (then marked 'secret') from M.P. John Redwood (who headed the No.10 Policy Unit) indicated that plans were being drafted for troops to be available to move essential supplies, if the effect of dock strikes became substantial, via a state of emergency.

[2] At the (eventually aborted) trial for public order offences, including riot, concerning 95 suspects, in May 1985, at Sheffield Crown Court, before Judge Gerald Coles, ACC Clement reported the presence of 4,600 officers from 18 forces, yet there are differing reports concerning the numbers of both police and miners. The number of miners will always be an estimate but there would have been an exact number of police on duty, known at the time. The trial transcripts are available at: https://otjc.uk/orgreave-trial-transcripts/.

happens, the new public order tactical manual, with its associated national training roll-out, was ready just in time for Orwell's infamous 1984.

Knowing exactly what happened, in what order, and at whose behest, is murky[3]. Some materials are still within restricted archives until 2066 and officers of the time remain subject to the Official Secrets Act; both of these matters are relevant for the continued argument for the mandate possible within a formal Independent Orgreave Enquiry. The emergent public order tactics were representative of a strategy hidden behind them; a trail which leads to the Home Office and Cabinet of the day, and that is where the real answers lie as to what level of strategic orchestration was afoot.

From Saltley to Orgreave

Saltley signalled the end of the 1972 industrial dispute, effectively portrayed as a tussle which the unions had won: this was an unpopular narrative within the Government, and given the additional NUM dispute 1974, all became associated as a feature of the decline of confidence in the Conservative Government of the day, which had been led by Edward Heath. Policing had been found wanting because they were not able to muster the numbers required to keep industry flowing and the Government was perceived as weak under the domination of powerful trade unions (particularly the miners). It has been suggested that following these disputes in the 1970s that plans were sullenly drawn to rebalance national political power and never again allow a union to be perceived to have undermined a Government (Phillips, 2006).

So, there were various reasons why the lessons learned, about being caught short in the early 1970s, were quick and of some priority. From a policing perspective part of the lesson was about having enough people in the right place at the right time. ACPO's *Study Group for the Review of the Policing Arrangements of the National Union of Mineworkers Dispute 1984/85* (1985:14) state that arrangements for the establishment of a National Coordinating Centre (NCR) for all police resources was identified as a need immediately following the 1972 confrontation with pickets at the Saltley Coal Depot. That national coordination function, which ACPO concede was essentially secretive, was exercised during the NUM dispute of February 1974; the prison disputes of 1980; the riots of 1981; and a visit by the Pope in 1982 (Ibid.). The function operated within rooms 1309 and 1310 at New Scotland Yard, modelled upon the Metropolitan Police Special Operations Room, and reported on a daily basis directly to the Home Secretary (Ibid.).

The NRC, as a mutual aid coordinator, was conducting the deployment of 4000-8000 police officers on a daily basis during the 1984 strike (Scraton, 1985:194) of which the operation at Orgreave was the most significant of them all. ACPO (1985:3) report 10,000 officers were deployed to Haworth on 2nd May 1984, and record that 10,000 miners were present at Orgreave (ACPO, 1985:4).

[3] Some Cabinet records were released, under the 30-year rule, in 2014 and 2015. There are crucial gaps concerning what level of direct influence No.10 had over the policing tactics, both in their development and their operational use; for example, via the Operational Order of the day, which had presumably been authorised by the ground commanders, Assistant Chief Constable Anthony Raymond Clement, Superintendent Keith Povey, and Chief Inspector Peter Hale, of South Yorkshire Police. The Hull History Centre holds an archive of files related to Orgreave, on behalf of the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC).

Later questioned at Sheffield Crown Court, on 10th May 1985, ACC Clement said, "my intent from the outset was to police Orgreave with as few police officers as possible", adding, "instead of bringing in large numbers of police officers actually into Orgreave I made arrangements whereby reserves would be held in their transit vans on the borders of Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire and Derbyshire and South Yorkshire, Humberside and South Yorkshire, North and West Yorkshire and South Yorkshire" (Sheffield Crown Court Transcript, Tab 2, 1985:10). ACC Clements himself declared at Sheffield Crown Court there had been 4,600 officers at Orgreave (Sheffield Crown Court Transcript, 1985).

However, there are conflicting accounts of the numbers of officers deployed to the Orgreave operation (ranging from 4,000-10,000) but, even then, it is unclear whether these numbers would relate to those on scene or on standby. It will have been known, exactly, how many officers were on duty attached to the operation, but attempts at Freedom of Information access to clarify the exact number have been denied on the basis that the information is restricted, and its release could be prejudicial to any later enquiry[4]. In any case, given the ratios at Saltley in 1972 were somewhere around 800 police to 10,000 pickets when the police commander had to capitulate, the ratios were much tighter at Orgreave in 1984.

Whilst the police had learned lessons from Saltley, so had politicians.

The Ridley Report: a planned riot?

There is evidence that the Government of the day prepared for a confrontation to demonstrate the power of the State over unions (particular the miners) following the conflict at Saltley Coke works Birmingham, in 1972. Edward Heath had been Prime Minister at the time and some commentators point to the handling of the NUM dispute being a key reason for the Conservatives losing power in the 1974 General Election[5].

Saville (1985) suggests that the NUM disputes, such as Saltley, left a bitter memory for ambitious politicians, Margaret Thatcher included. The suggestion is that a confrontation with the miners was formally planned by the Conservative Party as early as 1977, later supported by the Downing Street Policy Unit in articulating strategy and tactics (Rawsthorne, 2018).

An influence here looks to have been M.P. Nicholas Ridley, who led work to learn the lessons of Heath's defeat at the General Election in 1974. What became as the Ridley Plan (1977)[6] was a proactive strategy to manage any future national industrial disputes; which appears to have directly influenced what happened at Orgreave. Ridley advocated taking the

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[4] FOI request by Gary Kirby on 17th January 2013 to South Yorkshire Police, who replied on 18th February 2013; accessible at: - *htpps://whatdotheyknow.cpm/request/Orgreave_coking_plant_18_june_19/response/361348/attach/html/3/20130068%20Response/*

[5] Saltley, a fuel storage depot, at Nechells Place, Birmingham, in February 1972, saw an estimated 30,000 picketing miners in confrontation with 800 police officers. Operations at Saltley were forced to stop and due to a national threat for fuel to support the National Grid, the Government reached a 27% settlement with the strikers, but the Government of the day from that point onwards established the Cabinet Office Briefing Room (COBR) for future national threat scenarios.

[6] The Ridley Report was leaked and first referenced in *The Economist* on 27th May, 1978 it is available via the Margaret Thatcher Archives at: - *https://c59574e9047e61130f13-3f7d0fe2b653c4f00f3217570e96e7.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/FABEA1F4BFA64CB398DFA20D8B8B69C98.pdf*

initiative within a dispute by choosing the field and timing of confrontation; amassing coal stocks beforehand; and investing in police riot control tactics.

Ridley chaired the Economic Reconstruction Group, and on 8th July 1977 produced the *Final Report of the Nationalised Industry Policy Group*, including a confidential Annex entitled 'countering the political threat'. Here we have some explosive narrative. The report's (confidential) Annex states "we might try and provoke a battle in a non-vulnerable industry, where we can win" (1977: 24), followed by, "we must be prepared to deal with the problem of violent picketing…The only way to do this is to have a large, mobile squad of police who are equipped and prepared to uphold the law against the likes of the Saltley Coke-works mob" (1977: 25).

If we juxtapose Ridley's language of 'provoking a battle' with Alderson's view suggests that *if* the planning of Nicholas Ridely, David Hart, Ian Macgregor, and other Government officials, had influenced an orchestrated confrontation at Orgreave then it would effectively amount to incitement (Alderson, 1998). This is a serious charge, but one that has never been pursued.

It is difficult not to conclude that 1972 and 1984 were inextricably linked. In 1972, the police, and consequently the Government, had to capitulate to the greater physical picketing force of the miners (East, *et al*, 1985). But, by 1984, industrial public order tactics had changed, informed not only by the 1972 strike but also serious street disorders in Bristol, Brixton and Toxteth in 1981. However, it is key to note that the eventual changes to public order tactics were explicitly not in line with the recommendations of Lord Scarman, who carried out the analysis of the Brixton disorders. Indeed, the new ACPO public order tactical manual of 1983, with its 'atmotechnics' and a variety of new 'manoeuvres' was more influenced by Hong Kong colonial public order approaches than the UK Government appointed judicial scrutineer (Northam, 1988; Wall, 2019).

The 1983 ACPO Public Order Tactical Manual

Following disturbances at St Paul's in Bristol in 1980, William Whitelaw, at that point, rejected anything resembling 'paramilitary riot squads' as not in tune with the British policing tradition. In November 1981, Lord Scarman completed his report into the events at Brixton, making it clear he recommended both a dialogue and openness with the public about how the police conducted themselves and also not to change how the police managed disorder as it would likely alienate policing from the public it served. In many ways, ACPO ultimately ignored Scarman, and took a direction of travel that caused some consternation and divide amongst some ACPO officers, such as John Alderson. Alderson's opposition at the time to more aggressive new tactics and the strategy behind them, proved relevant to what later happened at Orgreave.

Following Brixton, then Toxteth (Liverpool), then Moss Side (Manchester), ACPO were in increasingly concerned about the effectiveness of public order tactics and convened an emergency meeting in Preston, Lancashire, to review the options, in September 1981. The Royal Ulster Constabulary related their experience, but so did the Royal Hong Kong Police, via their Director of Operations, Richard Quine, who was invited to explain how colonial and paramilitary policing methods had been used to suppress rebellions (Northam, 1988).

Quine recommended specialist tactical training for riot suppression and ACPO listened, setting up their own Community Disorder Tactical Options Inter-Force Working Group, whose work was led by Christopher Payne, then Chief Constable of Cleveland. A second group, led by Geoffrey Dear, then Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, translated the 238 tactical options into a training programme. The *Public Order Manual of Tactical Options and Related Matters* was signed off by the Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, in the summer of 1983.

The manual used scenarios based on a fictitious Carruthers estate in the town of Sandford. New standardised equipment items, such as short shields, were modelled on the Hong Kong model (contrast these from early footage of British police officers holding dustbin lids). The Manual's Section 17 advocated a show of force, such as beating shields with truncheons, recommending that when facing hostile crowds, police might use chanting or beating their shields as a 'morale booster'. Northam (1987:136) notes the influence here to Roy Henry, Commissioner of the Royal Hong Kong Police, who advocated such tactics as shield beating, and standing in a wedge or line to emphasise any strength of numbers, to create a sense of apprehension, or even fear, amongst a mob, thereby influencing them to disperse.

None of the detail of this work was disclosed to the public: in fact, initially no-one below the rank of Assistant Chief Constable within the police was authorised to read the new manual as it had been designed within ACPO and signed off directly by the Home Office[7]. Its Foreword, by ACPO President Kenneth Oxford, explained the importance of policing by consent but the need for more standardised tactical options for widespread disturbances.

Training began in 1983, in-force (up to inspector level), or at various regional centres such as Ashford in Kent, Bruche in Lancashire, Cwmbran in Gwent and Ryton-on Dunsmore in Coventry (which is still a training centre today) up to chief superintendent; whilst ACPO officers were trained at Bramshill in Hampshire.

At Orgreave, the manual was in use. Police with long shields standing in long lines were deployed, with mounted officers and dog handlers either side. There were 50 police horses at Orgreave, and these were deployed via line breaks into the miners, returning in the same fashion[8]. This action was repeated, sometimes with the horses followed by a short shield snatch squad formation.

In 1985, former Chief Constable John Alderson reviewed police footage of Orgreave as part of a *Brass Tacks* documentary[9] and he commented that there was pushing by the picketing miners and some throwing of stones, but the main proactive, and escalated, action came from the police, when the first horse charge occurred. *Guardian* journalist Tristram Hunt (2016) suggests one of the later charges was particularly unjustifiable, when a police horse deployment followed picketing miners right into the centre of the village streets.

There is little doubt that Orgreave was indeed a battle in every sense of the word, and within it we can see numerous tactics deployed. Yet the battle was within a war where there was a

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[7] Even at the later Sheffield Crown Court trial in 1985, when the existence of the manual became known through cross examination by Michael Mansfield Q.C., there was considerable consternation and legal debate about counsel being able to access the restricted contents.

[8] Chief Constable Peter Wright *Policing the Coal Industry Dispute in South Yorkshire* (South Yorkshire Police, 1985).

[9] BBC TV, 13th March, 1985.

strategy behind the tactics. The Government of the day, orchestrated via the Home Office, instructed by whom we cannot say precisely at this time, allowed the miners to come to Orgreave at a time and place when they assembled, literally, a police army that had been trained, organised and conditioned for the moment.

A matter of timing

Why now? Why here? The timing of the coordination of Orgreave is suspicious. Firstly, the need for coal was at its lowest domestically (being the summer) but it was imperative the power stations remained operational. Orgreave plant had potentially other ways of moving stock, such as by rail, suggesting the use of lorries was perhaps symbolic. There has been a dedicated steel terminal, since 1938, with its own wharf and railway line, at Flixborough (Scunthorpe), which still operates today, staffed with its own specialists. In 1984, this was owned by British Steel (who owned Orgreave coking plant) which means the flow of coke could have been facilitated from inside the steel terminal without the need for road haulier supplies. The implication here being that the picketing of the hauliers moving coke, and the whole incident at Orgreave, may have been orchestrated as part of a planned, yet unnecessary, confrontation, perhaps as a show of force, politically[10].

Within the national industrial strategy, new oil burning power stations and a new nuclear plant were scheduled to be on stream by March 1985, meaning coal would be less critical to the national infrastructure. But, in the meantime, the Government of the day, and its security and intelligence services, were closely monitoring the effect of the Miners' Strike as it represented an interim, and destabilising, threat to the nation's industrial, and political, cohesion (Andrew, 2009: 678).

There had been some element of picketing at Orgreave for a while before the culmination of matters on the 18th June[11]. On 5th June 1984, the office of the Secretary of State for Energy wrote to the Prime Minister, Home Office, Cabinet Office and the Department of Trade and Industry (marked 'secret') explaining a meeting had been held about Orgreave [12]. The letter described the urgency of moving all remaining available coke stock to the Scunthorpe steel plant and indicated that it would alert the Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police of the impending, urgent – and secret - emptying of Orgreave's coke stock. Bearing in mind the police are operationally independent, the letter stressed the police operation must ensure it was "part of a carefully conceived and well executed operation" (as to which operation the Government direction was referring to might be interpreted in a number of ways).

Scunthorpe steel works both knew how much coke it had, and could project what it needed some way in advance, so it as a matter of conjecture as to what extent the timing for the 18th June was a matter of immediate logistical necessity or a matter of pre-planned coordination. Whilst the miners were dynamically trying to second guess where their picketing priority

[10] Because of industrial disruption at the time concerning rail workers and dock workers the options to use rail rather than lorries was not straightforward, but it has been suggested that, if necessary, troops might have been utilised.
[11] Police operations had been scaled up from 25th May 1984, some two weeks before 18th June, increasingly involving the new public order tactics, which might be interpreted as early preparations for what was to follow.
[12] Letter between Private Secretaries Michael Reidy and Andrew Turnbull, dated 5th June 1984, marked 'secret'(unpublished).

need to be, one way or another, the operation concerning Orgreave was no apparent secret, despite the apparent urgency and importance to the national infrastructure.

Secondly, the miners had been on strike for several months with no pay and some areas, such as Nottinghamshire, had waning strike support and pit managers there were watching events carefully concerning their shift productivity. Indeed, the whole country was watching the Miners' Strike. In many ways, for the striking miners, the state of the strike in Nottinghamshire was just as important as what happened at individual coking depots like Orgreave because the national unity and morale of the whole strike was in the balance, and so was the opinion of other union members' solidarity. TV crews had been invited to Orgreave and offered raised viewing platforms behind police lines. It was arguably important to ensure that the symbolic nature of the police control on display was shared as widely as possible, because it mattered 'who won' (although there has been subsequent critical commentary of media bias and even suggestions of political interference[13]).

Thirdly, the weather was hot - so much so many pickets turned up shirtless – but there were no allegations made of any drunkenness in any subsequent detention and charges. The pickets arrived in several hired buses and vans, but none reported being intercepted on their journey, as had become customary in other picketing travel, indeed some testimonies[14] claim that temporary signs had been erected from arterial routes showing the direction to Orgreave.

Fourthly, a very large number of police, with shields, had been carefully deployed from all over the country and positioned, ready in a battlefield formation resembling Roman army infantry and cavalry. This would be interpreted by some that, in a very visible way, policing had been politicised, in a rather brutal way.

Questions after the event

There have been various emergent insights following Orgreave, but there remain more questions than answers overall. The new public order manual arrived just at the point of Orgreave: Orgreave you might say was its first field test. Yet Orgreave was a high-profile affair and understandably, immediately prompted some probing questions (the questions continue to this day). After Orgreave, ACPO (1985:37) explained that lessons had been learned from the NUM dispute of 1972 specifically concerning a lack of standardised equipment, training and tactics, all of which informed the later work for their new public order manual, operationalised in 1984. ACPO also mention that the later NUM dispute provided a very useful testing ground for their changed public order tactics (ACPO, 1985; 1986).

Again following Orgreave, the new manual was debated by a Parliamentary Select Committee on 17th December, 1985, in particular questioning what legal advice had been

[13] The BBC published a letter of apology on 3rd July 1991 stating, "The BBC acknowledged some years ago that it made a mistake over the sequence of events at Orgreave" referring to showing footage of miners, throwing stones at the police, followed by a reactive police charge, on their national broadcast news at 6pm on 18th June, 1984, (although they re-edited this for the 10pm screening) whilst unedited footage reveals the police charged first. That (6pm) news footage version was referred to by the then Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, in media interviews, the day after Orgreave, as justification for the public order tactics used.

[14] Indeed, David Douglas, an NUM Branch Secretary, states that temporary signs had been erected from arterial routes showing the direction to Orgreave (See *Strike, Not the End of the Story: Reflections on the Major Coal Mining Strikes in Britain*, National Coal Mining Museum for England Publications 4, Overton, 2005).

taken over the manual's operational tactics and to what extent the Home Secretary had approved the manual's dissemination. The answer came that the manual was approved by the then Home Secretary, William Whitelaw[15], who served until 11th June 1983 (superseded by Leon Brittain).

The Parliamentary Committee was reassured that the overriding principle of the manual was underpinned by Section 3 of the Criminal Law Act, 1967 (that the police will use no more force than what is reasonable in the circumstances). There were concerns over the use of force, and the threat of perceived force since the new manual, listed baton charges and the use of dogs and horses.

Writing after Orgreave, ACPO (1985) noted that common law 'stop and turn around' tactics had proven useful within the Miners' Strike as a disruption to travelling pickets; the approach having passed legal and civil challenge tests. Yet they fail to explain why miners travelling to Orgreave were not intercepted, since the Orgreave policing operation was planned anticipating considerable confrontation and the disruption tactic benefit was that "potential disorder was avoided without recourse to the police having to take stronger measures to deal with actual disorder" (1985:85). ACPO also later disclosed that specialist intelligence units had been established to cultivate informants concerning picketing (ACPO 1986:22), but these tactics also remain restricted.

The 1983 public order manual came up for discussion at the Orgreave trial at Sheffield Crown Court, where 71 were charged with riot and 24 with violent disorder, when defence counsel included Gareth Pierce and Michael Mansfield. During cross examination of ACC Clement, Michael Mansfield asked about reports of drumming on the police shields, and ACC Clement replied it was in line with the manual's guidance - which then led to uncomfortable questions about exactly which manual was being referred to. This was something of an expose at the time. Court transcripts later became available in the House of Commons Library, which the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign then published[16].

As the court proceedings eventually collapsed, there were then further reviews and critical commentary. The BBC showed some footage of Orgreave in a documentary in 2012[17], after which South Yorkshire Police referred itself to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC). In 2015, the IPCC concluded that there was evidence at Orgreave of the excessive use of police force and *post facto*, false police narratives, but said it would not launch a formal enquiry as it was too long ago.

A further documentary by Channel 4 in January 2024[18] again regenerated calls for a formal enquiry into the policing of Orgreave, but these requests have been so far refused by the UK Government, on the grounds that "there were no deaths" (Rudd, 2016)[19].

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[15] Home Secretary William Whitelaw had also written the introduction to *Public Order and the Police*, written by Kenneth Sloane of Greater Manchester Police and published by *Police Review*, in 1979. Sloan had been a critic of what had been traditional modes of public order tactics and believed in adopting more military methods. Following disturbances at St Paul's in Bristol in1980, William Whitelaw, at that point, rejected anything resembling 'paramilitary riot squads' as not in tune with the British policing tradition.

[16] https://otjc.org.uk/orgreave-trial-trancripts/.

[17] *Inside Out* BBC One, 22 October, 2012.

[18] Channel 4 *Miners' Strike 1984: The Battle for Britain* 25th January 2024.

[19] Commons Statement by Amber Rudd, Home Secretary, October 31, 2016 *https://questions-statemennts.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2016-10-31/HCWS227.*

Conclusion

When does public order policing finish and political order policing begin? Orgreave was not so much about public order, but rather political order. It was not about policing as we like to think about it, either, since the normal local police became a national force. It was a calculated theatrical performance orchestrated by the Government to send a message about their State power. Millions watched it on TV and got the message, yet fifty years later we still do not have the full truth about the Machiavellian campaign behind closed doors that weaponised 'public order policing' to go on the attack in mainland Britain.

With more remaining questions than answers concerning Orgreave, and no immediate likelihood of a full enquiry, the forthcoming second phase of the Undercover Policing Inquiry, led by Sir John Mitting, resuming on July 1, 2024 (examining the years 1983 and 1992) is potentially significant. This may be as near to a full Orgreave Inquiry as we are likely to get in the short term, but given there are questions about the intelligence function and proactive planning around the co-ordination and timing of Orgreave, more pieces of the jigsaw may be revealed.

Orgreave was indeed a number of years ago, but there have been other *post facto* public enquiries at Hillsborough, the handling of COVID-19, and, more recently, concerning the Post Office, which have all been about setting out to put any wrongs of the past, right. These acts of open scrutiny have been shown to bring benefits, via transparent accountability, for the future betterment, and legitimacy, of the public institutions concerned. Without open transparency (better late than never) we are left with questions, denial and silence rather than trust, learning and growth: without the learning we are at risk of repeating past errors. The implication, which should concern us all, is that when it so chooses, the British State can exercise presidential political order without democratic accountability: is such a State, or any of its apparatus, *legitimate*?

In concluding, I should declare, not so much of a bias, but rather an interest, in what happens next. As the son of two generations of miners, I joined the police just after the Miners' Strike had concluded, before then turning to academia. I would like to place on record my support for the ongoing calls for a public enquiry into what happened at Orgreave, in the interests of the miners, of the policing profession, and as a matter of justice.

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