

FRENCH TROOPS TAKE OVER MINES

As the French coal strike enters its 4th week and industries become crippled by lack of coal, the government acts at last. Troops and police take over pits in the Northern Basin - a district that normally produces half of France's coal. Over valleys accustomed to thick smoke from coke ovens now hang cloudy fumes from tear gas bombs, as government forces move in against stone throwing strikers.

In nearby Bethune, demonstrating miners - carrying the Red Flag - clash with police. Surrounding the prefecture, they battle to release colleagues arrested earlier in the week. It is in this district that the threat of flooding the mines is most serious. Already, the Communist instigated strike costs France nearly a million pounds a day - almost the exact amount she is due to receive under the Marshall Plan. The why and wherefores of this strike are not Britain's concern. But its consequences, which are part of the Communist plan to paralyze Europe's recovery - are of vital importance to the nation.