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Miners and mining communities are to be admired. Miners are men of character with a strong sense of community spirit and a great tradition of loyalty.

I support the miners. 14 years ago as the Secretary of State for the Environment I was horrified at the depressing atmosphere of their poor housing conditions, and at the slag heap dominated environment of many mining communities. I concentrated public expenditure on a massive programme of landscaping and removing the slag heaps, and on modernising the housing in these communities. Three years later as Secretary of State for Trade and Industry I passed the Coal Industry Act, which Joe Gormley, then the miners leader, described as the most beneficial Act for miners since nationalisation. With my present responsibilities for coal, I obtained the support of my Cabinet colleagues for a capital investment programme in the mining industry double that of the whole of the rest of the European Community, for a wage increase which would put miners' earnings way above average industrial earnings, and for the provision of several hundred million pounds so as to guarantee that not one single miner will be faced with compulsory redundancy.

I only wish Mr Scargill had the same enthusiasm as I have for improving both the industry and the prosperity of miners. His enthusiasm is, and always has been, to achieve the creation of a socialist state. He sees life as a class war, in which conflict by workers achieves a Government which will be led by men like him.

When the TUC deliberate next week, they should remember that when Len Murray visited Solidarity the TUC passed resolutions expressing support for Solidarity

and its objective of a free trade union movement in Poland. Mr Scargill alone of Britain's trade union leaders attacked Solidarity, describing the organisation and its leaders as a threat to the socialist state of Poland. Solidarity would like the right to be able to ballot for industrial action. The Polish socialist state, like Mr Scargill, is opposed to such ballots.

It is six months since the attempt was made to call a national miners strike without a national ballot. The attempt failed because a third of Britain's coalfields decided that, in accordance with all past precedents, they would have a ballot prior to taking strike action. The result of the ballot was decisive. 70,000 miners voted and more than two thirds of them voted against strike action.

Next week the TUC needs to consider whether it will support those miners who democratically and by a massive majority decided not to strike, or whether it will support Mr Scargill and his close comrades on the National Executive of the National Union of Mineworkers, who have manoeuvred and plotted so as to deprive the majority of miners the right of a ballot for the first time in more than half a century.

The reason why Mr Scargill deprived miners of the right of a ballot is clear. On three previous occasions the Scargill desire for industrial conflict had been defeated by the miners in a ballot. The result of the ballot of those who were able to express their views on this occasion clearly showed that if Scargill had abided by the normal procedures of the NUM he would have been decisively defeated for the fourth time.

After six months of violent and unsuccessful industrial action we should remind ourselves of the total lack of any reason for this strike.

It is certainly not pay. The Labour spokesman for Energy has categorically stated in Parliament that this is not a dispute about pay. How could it be? Last November, in spite of the enormous losses of the National Coal Board, the Government made available to the NCB the cash needed to see that miners earnings would be increased, so that they would continue to earn 25% above the average industrial wage. A sharp contrast to the Benn years, when during the period that he was Secretary of State for Energy in the last Labour Government, for two successive years there was a substantial fall in miners' real earnings. For the majority of Mr Benn's period in office miners were receiving nothing like 25% above average industrial earnings.

The strike has no justification in terms in any lack of investment or financial support for the industry. This Conservative Government has invested £2 million per day in capital investment in this industry - in cash terms twice as much as its Labour predecessors. The Conservatives have invested £650 million more than was envisaged in Plan for Coal which was agreed to by the National Union of Mineworkers, the NCB and the Labour Government. This has been in the immediate past, but for the future the Government has committed itself to a massive further £3 billion capital investment programme for the industry.

Scargill has pretended that the strike is to save jobs and to stop pit closures. He has said that there is a hit list. There is not. He has made speech after speech suggesting that there are plans to close scores of

collieries and sack 70,000 miners. There are no such plans. Pits have always closed when they are no longer economic. ^{On average,} Thirty pits a year closed during the last 11 years of Labour Governments. The National Coal Board told the National Union of Mineworkers that there was a need to close the small percentage of existing production which was losing £200-300 million a year, but that this would be accompanied by positive investment in new pits like Asfordby and Selby and by investments in new machines and new coal faces elsewhere. This would enable a low cost, high production industry to emerge which could win markets at home and abroad. The Board presented no hit list of pits but guaranteed that the programme would be discussed at regional level, and that the procedures for examining any uneconomic pit selected for closure would be procedures agreed to between the NUM and the NCB - procedures which had worked well over past Labour and Conservative Governments.

The Government has sometimes been accused of failing to intervene in order to settle this dispute. The Government has intervened on a massive scale to see that there was never a justification for this dispute. They have intervened to finance the good wage offer, and also to guarantee a massive investment programme for an industry that was insolvent. There have been two further interventions of considerable importance. The first involved the provision of several hundred million pounds to ensure that there would not be the need for a single compulsory redundancy in the mining industry. Where a pit was to be closed every miner would be offered a job at another pit, or if he preferred early retirement, this would be taken on terms more generous than are provided in any other industry in this country or in any coal industry in the world. The second intervention was the creation by the National Coal Board of a new enterprise company. This will have funds and skills to help provide finance, advice and encouragement for new enterprises in mining communities.

There cannot be a union leader attending the TUC Congress next week who would not rejoice if the employers in his industry offered a good wage increase, a massive investment programme, a guarantee of not a single compulsive redundancy and an early retirement programme of unsurpassed generosity. That is why every delegate at the TUC Congress must recognise that those miners who voted two to one against the strike and those who continue not to work are only kept on strike by unprecedented violence and the efforts of the paid mob. Why, if Scargill has a good case, does he need to use the method of the paid mob? If strikers believe in the strike why can he not rely on six peaceful pickets at each colliery gate - the method of picketing laid down by his own union. A week of peaceful picketing and the great majority of miners would be back at work. They would all be back at work in a day if given the opportunity of a ballot - such is the total lack of grievance by any miner in this country.

From day one of this dispute Scargill believed that mob rule would succeed. It has failed due to the police fulfilling their responsibilities to see that it was the rule of law and not the rule of the mob which prevailed. More than *Over 6,000* 5,800 arrests for criminal ^{offences} acts have been made, not one of them deplored by Mr Scargill. The paid mob tried to close the collieries that had voted to work. They failed. The paid mob tried to close Ravenscraig, Scunthorpe and Llanwern, and to destroy the steel industry - their second best customer. They failed. Scargill chose Orgreave, a small coke works, to prove the paid mob could succeed. The days he personally led the mob were the days of greatest violence and most interest. But he failed. He tried to close the power stations. He failed. He tried to stop the lorries and the trains. He failed. His only success is the damage he has inflicted on the miners and on the coal industry itself.

Every miner forced by a lack of a ballot or a mob to strike has lost £4,200 in pay - a loss that has plunged many families into debt. Losses that will never be recovered. 15 coal faces have been closed due to the lack of maintenance. Many of these coal faces would have provided jobs for years to come. In addition Polkemmet is seriously flooded. Another 16 coal faces are in serious danger and a further 59 are causing concern. This is the pit closure programme created by Scargill's strike. Closures of economic coal faces, not the closures of uneconomic faces.

The miners have lost customers for their industry on a massive scale. 1984 would have been a year in which hundreds of industrial firms would have converted to coal with the aid of Government grants. Instead many coal burning firms are contemplating turning to gas or electricity.

Large export orders have been lost to the Continent. These are markets which will be impossible to regain after the strike if the Scargill type of rhetoric continues to dominate Britain's coal industry.

The industry will have lost several hundred million pounds of new capital investment scheduled for 1984 - made impossible by the strike. The National Union of Mineworkers has lost millions of pounds of their union funds, not money spent on the wives and children of strikers, but money spent to pay the unsuccessful mob. The impact on the economy has been minimal because we had a billion pound coal mountain stocked at pits and power stations, which had been built up from the surplus production of past years. It is the adverse impact on the miners which has been Scargill's achievement. In the coming weeks the

TUC and the Labour Party have to decide whether they are going to appear as lackeys at Mr Scargill's command, or whether they will support the great majority of miners who given the chance to vote would have overwhelmingly decided not to strike. Scargill has never disguised his desire to achieve his objective of a total socialist state by industrial conflict. I would like his leaflet "The Myth of Workers' Control" to be compulsory reading for all TUC delegates and Labour Party members. This was a leaflet prepared with his American Marxist friend Peggy Kahn. It opposed the demands of the Labour Government and trade union leaders at that time, who wanted to improve employee participation. Mr Scargill vigorously argued that conflict not participation was what was required. He argued that to go for participation within a free enterprise system was to compromise with an unacceptable system - in the way, he argued, that Labour Parliamentarians compromise with a mixed economy when they participate in Parliament.

In order to continue with conflict Mr Scargill has concentrated on one demand, from which he has never deviated. The demand that every pit, no matter how uneconomic, no matter how devoid of any benefit to the industry, should be kept open until all the coal in that pit is exhausted. No Government in British history and no coal industry in the world has ever agreed to such a demand. Stanley Orme has posed as a peace maker. In reality, in spite of his genuine desire to end the strike, he has been unable to persuade Mr Scargill to move an inch from this absurd demand. The reason being that Mr Scargill has no desire to settle, for the terms of a generous settlement were available before Mr Scargill contrived to organise a strike without a ballot. The tragedy for the Labour party is that the influence of Scargill and his friends in block votes, in financial backing for the Labour party, and on the

selection of parliamentary candidates in a host of safe Labour seats, has meant that neither Kinnock, Orme or any of the Labour Shadow Cabinet have uttered a word of criticism for the way he has acted throughout the strike. Thousands of miners who in democratic ballots voted against a strike have received not a word of support from the leaders of the Labour Party. The Labour Party will deserve to be permanently damaged if it continues to allow within itself elements which disobey the law with enthusiasm and endeavour to use union funds to pay mobs to destroy other peoples' jobs. Let the TUC and the Labour Party recall that in 1972, unlike in 1984, the mob at Saltley organised by Mr Scargill did defeat the rule of law. Several years after Saltley Mr Scargill wrote in a left wing magazine about his reflections on this triumph. He wrote "We took the view that we were in a class war. We were fighting a Government. Anyone who thinks otherwise was living in cloud cuckoo land. We had to declare war on them and the only way you could do that was to attack the vulnerable points. They were the points of energy, the power stations, the coke depots, the coal depots, the points of supply and this is what we did. The miners union was not opposed to the distribution of coal, we were only opposed to the distribution of coal to industry because we wished to paralyse the nation's economy. It is as simple as that." It isn't as simple as that. It means that all who support industrial parliamentary democracy must see the mob does not prevail. In February this year Scargill told the miners that there were only eight weeks of coal stocks at power stations. He tried to persuade them that a quick victory was available. It was a lie. Nearly six months later he wrote to other trade union leaders for support, and stated he had inside information that the Government were about to take powers enabling them to introduce power cuts in August. That too was untrue. At the beginning of September we have many months of endurance for

the power stations. It is alas the miners who have suffered from the Scargill simple approach to politics. It is time for the TUC and the Labour Party to show their adherence to industrial and Parliamentary democracy for this is what is at stake in the battle in which we have, alas, so unnecessarily been involved.