

# Victory for Scargill 'must be denied'

Dr David Owen, leader of the SDP, said that if Mr Arthur Scargill and the NUM leadership were allowed to claim that the union had bludgeoned the Government into conceding its terms, the present working miners would be the first in the queue for redundancy.

Answering a question about the SDP leadership's view of the strike, Dr Owen said that the closure of Cortonwood had been conducted in a way damaging to the trust of the miners, but the nub of the issue was uneconomic pits.

They should not duck the reality that 15 per cent of the mining industry was providing £330m of its loss-making.

"Although we always want an

amelioration and compromise to find a middle way, there are some people with whom it is almost impossible to reach a compromise" (applause). Dr Owen added that Mr Scargill was very close to being that.

"I do not want a settlement at any price out of these talks and I urge you to think about the 55,000 miners who have been working throughout the dispute and the consequences for them and how life will be if they go back into the pits against the background of Arthur Scargill, Mick McGahey, and their cohorts being able to claim that they have bludgeoned the Government to concede their demand. The first in the queue for redundancy would be those who have been working over the past six months."

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