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WE HAVE BEEN WARNED

When is a communist not a communist? It is possible in this country to call somebody a fascist as a term of general abuse but it is less easy to call somebody a communist without running the risk of libel. Mr Arthur Scargill is not now a member of the Communist Party though he was in his youth and early manhood. He is a member of the Labour Party but everything he says and does is consistent with a certain kind of communism and receives the full and open support from many close colleagues who are themselves formal members of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

There are basically three kinds of communists in this country: those who inhabit the Communist Party to maintain it as a tightly disciplined and cohesive body; those who inhabit the Labour Party on the grounds that the long-term communist interest is best served by working through the Labour Party which has more opportunities for exercising political power; and those who actually conceal their inner convictions by inhabiting other groups or communities such as the Tory or Alliance parties, the media, the universities, teacher training colleges and any useful institution which can be subverted and manipulated by a communist agent of influence.

Mr Scargill belongs clearly to the second category and on his own admission. He left the Communist Party, in his own words, because he objected to its policy of de-Stalinisation and because he wanted to join a political organization, the Labour Party, where there was real power. But the singular characteristic about this year's miners strike is that for the first time for many years, the communist element is so overt, even triumphalist, that the Labour Party and its leadership has been cowed into following the communist lead.

It is this communist presence, coupled with Mr Scargill's predominant role in the leadership and orchestration of the strike with a permanent coterie of communist colleagues, that

makes it legitimate to examine his origins in the Communist Party and the consistency with which he has pursued his political objectives even after his departure from the Communist Party.

An examination of Mr Scargill's record, ably presented in a booklet published yesterday, shows no evidence that his formal departure from the Communist Party caused any change in his belief in the need to wage a class war in Britain to bring about a totally socialist society. His declared tactics have been first to change the Labour Party from within by removing all bans and proscriptions on far-left groups including the Communist Party. Having created such a "broad left" coalition, the leadership of each trade union would be packed with communists who would use their block votes to change Party policy and enforce such change. They would then proceed to discard what was left of the old social democratic ethos of the right wing of the Labour Party. It would by then have "completely served its purpose".

Such a party, containing all the far-left organizations but clearly run by a nucleus of communists or communist sympathizers as the NUM is now run, would take its struggle repeatedly to the streets. As Mr Scargill described it in the columns of the *Morning Star*, which has given him emphatic and sustained support throughout this strike, his view of the class war would involve "every sinew in every factory, office, dole queue, docks, railway, plant and mill" to be strained to the maximum. "Waiting in the wings are four million unemployed whose numbers could swell the picket line at any time. What is urgently needed is the rapid and total mobilization of the trade union and labour movements to take positive advantage of a unique opportunity to defend our class and roll back the machinery of oppression, exploitation and deep-seated human misery."

This strategy is spelt out in the Communist Party's official

manifesto "The British Road to Socialism". It is thus hardly surprising that Mr Scargill and his lieutenants find it so easy to enlist the support of the Soviet and Libyan authorities. What is more surprising, however, is that such support has been given when there is so little evidence that the country is anywhere near the pre-revolutionary condition in which Mr Scargill would like it to be. The refusal of trade unionists to be dragooned as class warriors is reassuring. Less reassuring is the ambivalence shown to Mr Scargill and the communists by the leadership of the TUC, many elements in the Labour Party, and all those people in the country who seem to have reached some personal accommodation with the ugly violence and class war rhetoric of Scargillism.

So the conditions of a successful revolution have eluded Mr Scargill. Nevertheless he will surely continue to work for these objectives within the Labour Party. We must expect him to be able to mobilize strong-arm groups forged in the crucible of picket violence and loyal only to his bidding in furthering industrial or political thuggery. He will exploit the stab-in-the-back theory to explain the reluctance of the Labour movement to support his insurrection. Sadly, those sentiments will be echoed in many a sectarian Labour committee room which is hostile to Mr Kinnock's leadership.

However, perhaps Mr Scargill has ultimately done Britain a service. One consequence of the coal strike is that Britain has woken up to the much wider involvement of formal and informal communists in industrial and political life than most people realized. The reds are not under the bed. They are on the television screen, or the radio. They share Labour platforms. They patronize the TUC. They intimidate Mr Kinnock. They are feted at rallies. They are cheered when they abuse the police. Their parliamentary allies endorse their defiance of the law. Does this suggest that they have become respectable? Emphatically not. We have been warned.

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