

# Scargill dispute halts paper

**Times** 11 MAY 1984 By Staff Reporters

Southern editions of the *Daily Express* were not published last night because of an inter-union dispute over giving the National Union of Mineworkers the right of reply to a three-page attack on Mr Arthur Scargill made in the *Express* on Wednesday. The paper's Manchester editions were published.

The print union Sogat 82 insisted a reply should be carried, but the National Union of Journalists in Fleet Street refused to handle copy for the paper.

Management reached an agreement with Sogat 82 that the paper should be published with blank pages where the reply was to have been printed. But the London journalists objected to a small notice explaining that the blanks were caused by their refusal to handle the reply. The Manchester editions carried this notice.

The journalists are backing their editor Sir Larry Lamb, who resigned after Lord Mat-

thews, the proprietor, agreed to allow Mr Scargill to reply. His resignation has not been accepted.

The *Express* London NUJ chapel (office branch) issued a statement after supporting both Sir Larry's right to edit without "interference" and Mr Scargill's right of reply, but rejecting the "shabby compromise" between the management and Sogat '82 and refusing to accept the blame for the reply not appearing.

In the House of Commons, the Prime Minister also rallied to Sir Larry's cause.

Mrs Margaret Thatcher said that press freedom "will soon be lost if threats to stop production succeed in obtaining space in newspapers for the propagation of particular points of view".

Leading figures in the Labour Party, by contrast, were delighted by Lord Matthews' apparent willingness to grant a right of reply.

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