



Mr Arthur Scargill giving a greeting at the pitmen's protest in Mansfield yesterday.

## 20,000 in miners' protest march

Continued from page 1

miners were taking on the establishment in this country.

In a reference to Nottinghamshire miners who have been given a police escort to work, he insisted: "The police, who are now befriending them, will be kicking lumps out of them if they go out on strike".

The syndicalist vein was also pulsing blood. Mr Jack Taylor, president of the Yorkshire miners, said: "We can cross frontiers we have never dreamed of. We can not only stop pit closures, - we can have socialism."

**Scargill**  
They cheered him, as they cheered all the speakers. They did not hear or did not heed the shop girls in the streets of Mansfield telling them: "Get back to work". It was strikers' day yesterday, and nothing was going to get in the way.

## 20,000 in miners' protest march

Times 15 MAY 1984

From Paul Routledge, Labour Editor, Mansfield

It was strikers' day in the heartland of the moderate Nottinghamshire coalfield yesterday, and the citizens of Mansfield are unlikely to forget it in a hurry.

An estimated 20,000 pitmen, and their wives from strike-bound coalfields including Yorkshire, Scotland, South Wales, Derbyshire and Lancashire, together with local miners who are on strike, took part in the biggest demonstration yet staged in the dispute.

They crowded through the town's narrow streets, chanting ribald slogans about Mrs Margaret Thatcher and Mr Ian MacGregor, chairman of the National Coal Board, a two-mile-long procession of militancy designed to attract the pitmen of the Midlands to join the strike.

For the most part, the occasion was more like a miners' summer gala than a protest march, and the police presence was small - a few constables on the kerbside, berated with the now-customary "Sieg Heil" salutes.

But as the public houses closed in the town centre, glasses and bottles were thrown in the market place and there was fighting. Police entered the fray in force. At least 12 officers were injured and there were 60 arrests.

Those rowdy scenes marred what would otherwise have been a classic day of protest, registering the slow-burning wrath of the miners in a way that few outside their communities have an opportunity to see.

With hundreds of banners on show, ranging from the florid and traditional to home-made ones from Nottinghamshire pits bearing legends such as "Calverton strikers - banner withheld by scabs" the demonstration pointed up the differences among the miners as well as enthusiasm for the strike.

It was remarkable, also, for the high proportion of women marching under makeshift banners with slogans such as "We married men, not mice". The involvement of miners' womenfolk has emerged as a key issue in the battle over pit closures.

The demonstrators took threequarters of an hour to pass one point as they left the car park of the Mansfield leisure centre, and the head of the procession was back in the protest arena only three minutes after the tail had got away. The mood was all expectation and confidence. They clambered onto the roofs of buildings nearby to sing "Here We go, Here We go, Here We go", and "There's only one Arthur Scargill".

The speakers did not disappoint them. Mr Tony Benn was there to tell them that they were going to win because Tory ministers had never dug any coal. The parents of Mr David Jones, who died on a picket line at Ollerton, were there to show their support. Mr Dennis Skinner, Labour MP for Bolsover, was there to remind the strikers: "It is no longer a question of heavy picketing. It is all about them and us." The

Continued on back page, col 1