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# Prime Minister makes a resolution to break Scargill's power in NUM

By Anthony Bevins, Political Reporter

The Prime Minister has resolved to break Mr Arthur Scargill's power over the National Union of Mineworkers. In a new year interview for the British Forces network, she says: "One thing that is going to come out of the miners' strike is a tremendous leadership on the part of the many moderates - the working miner.

"When this strike is over, we have to get together with the moderate responsible leaders and see if we can try to prevent this thing from ever happening again."

Mrs Thatcher says that the dispute had dominated her year, and the picket line violence had disturbed her more than anything else.

"I never expected to see some of the scenes of violence which we have outside collieries with members of a union throwing stones and bolts and other things at other members of the same union, who only wanted to go to work. We never thought to see that in Britain, it is totally alien to the British character."

The Prime Minister did not mention Mr Scargill by name during the interview, but senior Cabinet colleagues showed little reluctance to identify the Government's target for the new year.

In a radio interview Mr John Biffen, Leader of the Commons, accused Mr Scargill of obduracy and arrogance and Mr Peter

Walker, Secretary of State for Energy, returned to the attack for the second day in succession when he said that Mr Scargill had told a lie.

Interviewed on BBC radio's *World This Weekend*, Mr Biffen said that Mr Scargill had boasted that he had not budged an inch during the dispute, and he therefore failed to see how constructive talks could take place.

He said: "This is an arrogance on the part of the Scargill element in the NUM; they assume that the Government or the coal board or anyone else will come running to them, and that's against the background that something like one third of the members of the National Union of Mineworkers are coal miners at work.

"It's against the background that a very large number of trade unionists in this country are shifting stocks of coal and are arranging for that coal to be burnt and for oil to be burnt at power stations and for coal to be imported from overseas.

"That's the background. It's not the background against which we are now going to go along cap in hand to Mr Scargill."

Mr Walker said in his Worcester constituency: "Yesterday, confronted on television with the total exposure of his repeated false predictions on coal stocks and power cuts, Mr Scargill endeavoured to evade the subject by telling a total lie.

"He said that having predicted the strike would end in the spring, I had previously predicted the strike would end in September and then at Christmas. Yet again Mr Scargill has uttered words without a fragment of truth in them.

"I have never privately or publicly made a prediction when the strike would end."

Mr Walker said that the strike was without industrial justification, that the miners had been manipulated out of their right to ballot, that union funds had been used to finance mob picketing, that the strike leaders had failed to deplore violence and intimidation and that they had sought finance in the Soviet Union and in Libya.

"It has always been impossible to predict how long such men and such methods could use the miners' traditional loyalty to their union and their community to achieve their purposes and how long the fear and violence would prevail.

"Let every miner consider in the quietness of his home the National Coal Board's offer, the best offer since nationalization, and ask himself whether the Scargill strike should be allowed to continue to damage his union, his industry and his future."

Mr Walker predicted on Saturday that the present level of coal production would ensure that there would be no power cuts for the whole of 1985.