

Margaret Thatcher speaking about the miners strike on it 25th day.

“This year, as before in our history, we have seen men and women with brave hearts defying violence, scorning intimidation and defending their rights to uphold our laws. By their action, we have seen a new birth of leadership in Britain, and that is the most important thing that is going to come out of this coal strike, a new birth of leadership.”

“You said tonight that when a recalcitrant minority breaks the rules, you say there can be no consensus, we can’t negotiate with them. Is that true of the mine workers’ unions?”



“Well, I think the unions are obviously one body where a fanatical, a tiny fanatical minority can and seem to be able to take over a whole union. Some of the tactics they use are to hold meetings on very short notice in places not advertised and they somehow take over. You get the same thing, sometimes in students ‘unions where those who are keen on work can’t go to meetings and stay on and on and on, and they find that the votes are taken when there are only a few left, and those are the fanatics. This, I am afraid has become almost a standard tactic both in Britain and in other countries as well and we must watch out for it because they are not the true representatives of the minority and sometimes, they deny the right to speak because they know they won’t support the tiny minority.”

“Well, you talk about the “ruthless manipulating few”. Will you not negotiate with them ever?”

“I will never negotiate with people who use coercion and violence to achieve their objectives. They are the enemies of democracy; they are not interested in the future of democracy. They are trying to kill democracy for their own purposes.”

