

nary scene which understandably still lingers in many memories, another man was shot dead close by immediately afterwards

about the fact that Washington has already begun to talk with the resurgent democratic opposition.

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dom of Schumacher

of Canterbury agreed to "let it happen."

One would have to choose whether to join the strike, or report for work, or return to the "neutral" status of an ordinary parish priest: the easy way out with at least a 30 per cent increase in income and the happy approval, no doubt, of all the conventionally minded people.

We think we should support the strike, take turns on the picket lines, and make it quite clear that we are, like a majority of miners, totally opposed to intimidation and would not treat working miners as moral outcasts. We know very well the pressures put on people, especially those with families, by cold and deprivation, often compounded by quite genuine doubts about the wisdom of the NUM leadership.

We would remain on strike until a general return to work took place because: we have a fellow-feeling for all who feel themselves clobbered by Government big sticks; the appointment of Mr MacGregor was a barefaced, ill-judged act of provocation; we are suspicious, like Arthur Scargill, of the

term "uneconomic pits."

The NCB indeed made an offer, but only after the strike had been going a long time.

When, however, does a locally uneconomic pit become genuinely "uneconomic" from a national point of view? That is a question no one at the NCB seems prepared to answer.

Mr MacGregor can depart to a well-heeled retirement whenever he gets tired of it all. He has no need to be patient. Miners have no such choice.

John and Veronica Strong.

GRO-C
GRO-C Dorset.

Sir, — Those who are urging that the Government and Mrs Thatcher be magnanimous in victory over the NUM should be prepared to answer the question how much magnanimity would Arthur Scargill have shown her or them if he had been victorious? After all he has repeatedly said his aim was the defeat and destruction of the Tory Government.

W. K. Stead,
GRO-C
Cornwall.

Behind racialism's symptoms

Sir, — I live in the street from which Mrs GRO-C was evicted for racial harassment. The TV Eye programme which focused on the problem of racial disharmony in our street was exaggerated and simplistic in its approach.

While there are doubtless people in this area — as in others — who hold and express racist views, the vast majority of tenants have friends from many cultures. The programme was exaggerated — even racist — in its isolation of the Asian experiences from those of the rest of the community.

All the residents here suffer from time to time from harassment. This can be verbal abuse, vulgar graffiti, broken windows, or the theft and destruction of property. The perpetrators of this harassment? Mostly children, some as young as five or six.

It was simplistic of the programme's producers not

gramme, Racial Outlaws, we feel bound to point out what the actual fears and criticism were.

The programme did not set out to expose racism. As its basis it questioned the advisability of any legal action against the perpetrators of racist attack; but it did not once address itself to the use of the criminal law.

We are extremely concerned at the programme's effect on Tower Hamlets. The community groups and individuals who have complained to the IBA, are not "blaming the reporter for reporting bad and sad news," but are blaming the reporter providing an incentive for racists to organise and publicise their obnoxious views. (Cllr) Dennis Twomey, Community Alliance for Police Accountability, London E2.

Overheated about blood

Sir, — I sympathise with Mrs Harrison (Letters, January 23) in her anxiety that all English haemophiliacs should have a sufficient supply of British heat-treated factor VIII. To allay the possible distress which her letter may have caused to other sufferers, however, I must correct some of the mis-statements in her letter.

The facts are these: Aids was first described early in 1981 and the first case in a haemophiliac was reported to the Centre for Disease Control in the United States later that year. Medical intelligence travels fast and these facts were well known to this as to all British haemophilia centres at that time.

Although the occurrence in haemophiliacs provided strong evidence that the disease could be transmitted by blood products, however, it was not until 1984 that the causative virus was identified. Heat-treatment of factor VIII had meanwhile been introduced in the attempt (unfortunately so far unsuccessful) to prevent the transmission of hepatitis, but there was no rationale for its use to prevent Aids until this had also been shown to be caused by a virus.

Fortunately the Aids virus (HTLV3) seems to be more sensitive to heat than hepatitis B virus and it is very much hoped that the heat-treatment introduced for the latter disease will prove effective in preventing the former.

With regard to the production of heat-treated British concentrate, Mrs Harrison was certainly not told by this hospital that "only minute quantities would be ready in April." In fact, we are already beginning to use this material and supplies will fully replace those of the old unheated concentrates by April or May this year. There is as yet no evidence that heat-treated American concentrate carries the risk of Aids. — Yours faithfully,

(Professor) R. M. Hardisty,
Director, Haemophilia Centre, The Hospitals for Sick Children, London WC1.

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