

# Scargill may face re-election

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By David Felton, Labour Correspondent

Working miners yesterday started a process that could lead to a High Court action to compel Mr Arthur Scargill, president of the National Union of Mineworkers to seek re-election.

Lawyers representing the National Working Miners' Committee, based mainly in the Nottinghamshire coalfield, have taken counsel's opinion which is understood to argue that they would have a case invoking a section of the Trade Union Act 1984 covering elections to union executive which comes into force from October 1.

It appears under the Act that Mr Scargill, as a voting member of the NUM executive, would need to stand for re-election

within five years of his election or by December next year at the latest.

Working miners' leaders are expected to write to Mr Scargill asking if he will offer himself for re-election and if he agrees they will pull away from court action. An alternative strategy for Mr Scargill would be to renounce his vote on the executive, which would remove the necessity for re-election.

Working miners are determined to seek the removal of Mr Scargill's influence, preferably by his defeat at the ballot box. Mr Colin Clarke, chairman of the working miners committee, said last night: "If the membership re-elect him as president then that will be the situation,

but at least we want to give the membership a choice to say whether they want him there or not.

"From close contact I have had with people in the area, the sooner he is gone the better. He has destroyed the finest union that was ever created," Mr Clarke said.

Mr Scargill's election in 1981 guaranteed him a job for life and a change in the union's election system would require rule changes. The NUM's policy is not to entertain such changes as part of its opposition to the Government's labour laws.

Working miners will mount strong campaigns behind any moderate challenges to militants on the executive.