

'Neddy' under threat MP joins Forest campaign

The campaign to save Rolleston's Forest of Needwood School has been joined by Burton MP Mr Ivan Lawrence.

The National Economic Development Council may be scrapped following a decision of the TUC General Council to boycott the body until the TUC Congress in September.

Mrs Thatcher has been keen for a long time to abolish the NEDC, which has been in existence for 21 years. It has a

define the new catchment areas, that no decision had been made on the site or on the community issue.

The closure of a school in Burton is still being discussed — no decision has been made on which one will disappear, although Forest of Needwood has been proposed.

Mr Lawrence said: "I understand that with 1,500 fewer secondary school pupils in the Burton area there must be school changes.

Nevertheless the Forest is extremely well regarded for its high educational

achievements and the service to the local community given by the school and its buildings.

"Staffordshire County Council simply cannot expect the people most closely affected to surrender this school without a determined struggle and they cannot expect the Member of Parliament for Rolleston area just to sit idly by while so many questions remain unanswered.

"The people of Rolleston will take a lot more persuading that the closure of Forest is a sensible and desirable move — and so will I."

MARCH 7, 1984

THE fight to keep the Forest of Needwood School open, despite possible closure under County Council education cuts, goes on.

Latest move in the battle over the Forest was the public meeting in Burton this week. Here the Trader continues to put the spotlight on a very worrying problem for the area.

'Time to fight together'

STOP fighting among yourselves and join together in attempt to halt any plans to close schools.

That's the message to the supporters of both the Forest of Needwood and Wulfic schools who are involved in a bitter debate over which of them should close under county education cuts.

Councillor Marek Trelinski, Liberal Alliance parish councillor for Rolleston-on-Dove, says that the two factions have "played completely into the hands of county bureaucrats who find that such arguments strengthen their hand as they develop their assault on our education system.

"I firmly believe that we must all fight to save all our schools because we need them all and we shall continue to need them all in the future.

"The County Council base their figures on the school population in 1990; they conveniently ignore universally accepted predictions that it will return to present levels by the year 2000."

Councillor Trelinski claims that any school that is closed in the near future will have to be rebuilt to cope with the envisaged demand later — and that will prove a very costly exercise.

"I would strongly urge all Forest and Wulfic parents to stop fighting each other and join in the common struggle to save all our schools," he adds.

"Together they are invincible. Divided they shall fall easy prey to a County Council which is looking for a short term saving to solve short term problems.

"If present divisions continue the secondary school system in this area will be irretrievably damaged for a generation. Let us stand together for all our children's sake."

LETTERS

Sir,

I refer to Rob Watt's letter published in the Trader on 29th February, in which, yet again, that word 'hysteria' is used, to describe what is no more than a real consideration of all the possible ramifications of the proposed closure of the Forest of Needwood High School.

The Forest is first and foremost an educational establishment, and a fine one at that. However, as far as the communities of the Dove Valley are concerned, it is much more than this. The existence or otherwise of the school has an extremely serious influence on community life and far from criticising this community for being far sighted enough to consider all the possible consequences of the authority's proposals, they should be congratulated.

Not everyone in the school's catchment area has a direct interest in the educational aspects of the school, but everyone does have an interest in the life and the environment of their community. This is one important factor the authority, (by their own admission) have ignored and one which Rob Watts appears to feel is irrelevant.

I should point out, that I was not the Trader's original source of information on their 'Prison article' and I was not their inspiration for running it. I was merely asked to comment on information from the national Press (Sunday Times 18th December 1983). In running the article, the Trader has brought an important issue to the notice of the whole of Burton. What does happen to school buildings and property in the event of closure? People should be aware of this.

Rob Watts does me a great injustice if he assumes that I am perfectly happy to see the Wulfic School close. I don't believe anybody involved in the current debate wishes to see any school close. As we see it, based upon the facts as presented to us, it is