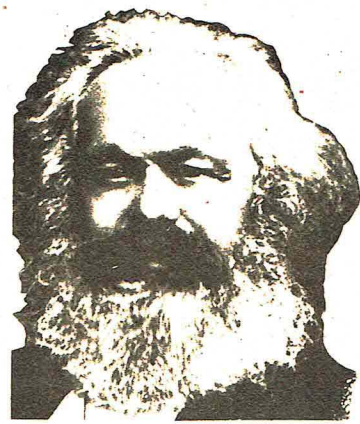


# Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 641  
11 March 1983

20p



Marx's  
Capital

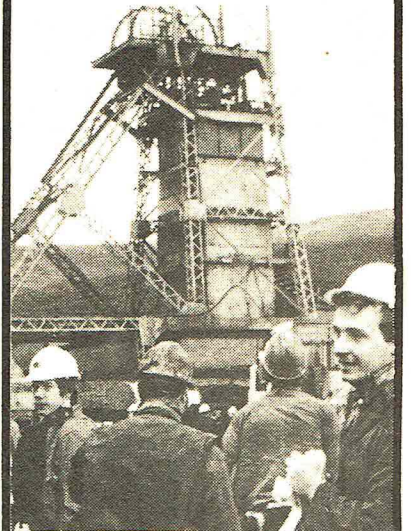
Pages 7, 10

## NUM Ballot Setback



Photo: Militant

Pit closures  
still a  
national  
issue



Pages 8-9

Area reports

Page 15

Life in the mines

Page 13

# Fight For Jobs Will Go On

The 'no' vote from the national NUM ballot is a setback for Welsh miners, for miners throughout Britain and for workers in general.

By Brian Ingham

But the miners have shown enormous resilience in the past and are capable once again of pulling themselves up by the bootstraps.

Three times in the last two years the NUM has gone to the brink of a national strike, three times they have drawn back. They have chosen not to use their power, but their power remains intact.

If there had been a miners' strike, it would have been taken by workers everywhere as the signal for a national

fight-back against the policies of the Tories—policies that have devastated whole industries and regions, cutting back social services and pushing four million workers on the dole.

But despite the result of the ballot, the issue is by no means settled. The Tories and the NCB may be ringing

the bells today, but they could just as easily be wringing their hands tomorrow.

All the Jeremiahs and faint-hearts in the labour movement will now be preaching doom and gloom, but even in the aftermath of a serious set-back such as this, it is possible to distinguish positive features. The young miners especially have not lost any confidence in their trade union and showed a clear willingness to fight.

Thatcher may celebrate a 'victory', but in reality she has not even faced a battle—yet. No amount of wishful thinking in Fleet Street can wipe away the enormous power of the miners' union. If the Government and NCB imagine that they can now begin to butcher the coal industry, they will be in for a

big shock.

Rather than spilling tears, active miners will want to draw the lessons of the ballot, the better to prepare for the future.

The fight against unemployment is the most difficult of all; particularly if the carrot of redundancy is held in front of a miner who has worked for twenty five or thirty years in the bowels of the earth. There can be successful struggles, and there will be, when the miners have clear demands in front of them and where they are confident they can win.

Unfortunately the miners going into the ballot were up against the legacy of 20 years of right wing leadership in their union, 20 years of allowing the industry to be whittled away year by year. Worse still, they were

## Young Miners For YS Conference

"I'm sick to death of MacGregor and Thatcher. I'm turning up to the LPYS conference to start the fightback against them.

I first attended the LPYS conference after the steel strike in 1980 and I've been back ever since.

In the last 3 years under the regime of Ian MacGregor over 13,300 jobs have been slashed in the steel industry. Now Thatcher wants to move MacGregor to the NCB to butcher miners' jobs.

The miners have made it clear they won't sit back and allow their industry to be destroyed but if they are to win their struggle they must

up against the legacy of the last three years which has seen the TUC sit back and accept massive job losses in all the major industries.

The attitude of the TUC

CONTINUED ON  
PAGE EIGHT

CONTINUED ON  
BACK PAGE

Become a  
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London E8 3PN



# LABOUR'S UNCLEAR STRATEGY

**LABOUR'S** draft election manifesto, which is due to be published in a week or so, contains only the most ambiguous and equivocal commitment to unilateral nuclear disarmament, despite the overwhelming feelings of the rank and file of the Party.

The section on defence does give welcome commitments to cancel the Trident programme, stop the deployment of Cruise and Pershing missiles in Britain and reject the establishment of any new nuclear bases.

But on the central question of unilateral nuclear disarmament, the handful of right wingers in the Shadow Cabinet seem to have outweighed the millions of votes cast at Labour Party conference.

The conference resolution on defence, carried by 4,927,000 votes to 1,975,000, called for a manifesto containing "an unequivocal unambiguous, commitment to unilateral nuclear disarmament and for the PLP, including spokesmen on defence, to actively campaign on this policy in its first year in office."

Since that decision was reached, the right wing on the NEC and in the Parliamentary Labour Par-

ty have conducted the most vicious campaign against *Militant*, a paper which supports the conference decision, while they themselves have campaigned actively to undermine it. Right wing leader have made it known publicly that they would not be prepared to serve in a Labour Cabinet that carried such a clear commitment to unilateralism.

Those who have drafted the campaign document of the Party have, in effect, yielded to the moral blackmail of these right-wingers and they have tried to stitch together two incompatible policies. The document, incredibly, states: "Unilateralism and multi-lateralism go hand in hand".

Every unilateralist commitment is followed in the document by a "but" or "however", or some such qualification. For example, it states, "we are against moves that would disrupt our existing alliances..."

## Stick by conference decision

The document calls for the rejection "of any fresh nuclear bases or weapons on British soil, thus enabling us to become eventually part of a much wider nuclear-free zone in Europe. However, all this cannot be done at once, and the way we do it

must be designed to assist in the task to which we are also committed—securing nuclear disarmament agreements with other countries and maintaining co-operation with our allies."

What it boils down to is this: if NATO objects (as it will) unilateralism will be put permanently on ice. The document, therefore, is not really even a compromise, it gives the appearance of being unilateralist, while conceding the substance of the policy to Denis Healey's views, to those of the Pentagon and NATO.

Labour Party branches and trade unions should protest this disgraceful emasculation of a clear and overwhelming conference

decision. It is not too late to force the NEC and the leadership to change course.

The issue of unilateral disarmament and the related issue of defence expenditure are not small ones, especially where four million are condemned to the dole and essential public services are slashed. These issues have caught the attention of millions of workers, especially the youth, and their votes in the coming general election will depend largely on whether the Labour Party is prepared to stand and fight on conference policy, on unilateralism as well as other issues, or whether, under pressure from the right wing, it fudges them.

## London rejects expulsions



Militant Editorial Board member Keith Dickinson leaves London Labour Party conference after a move to allow him to stay was defeated. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

**GREATER LONDON'S** Labour Party conference saw a rejection of expulsions and a move to the left on the executive.

The Sunday papers brayed about a 'crushing defeat' for *Militant*. Nothing could be further from the truth.

A move by the Chair, Arthur Latham, to allow Keith Dickinson (one of the expelled *Militant* editorial board members and a delegate to conference from Hammersmith North CLP) to remain as a visitor with speaking rights was rejected.

Pressure had undoubtedly been put on delegations by Labour Party and trade union officials. Many delegates were unwilling to go through with conference only to find its entire proceedings declared invalid by the National Executive.

But conference later went on to pass resolutions rejecting the register and witch-hunts.

An emergency motion moved by the LPYS was passed by 496,000 to 254,000. This called for an end to expulsions, reinstatement of the *Militant* editorial board members and rejected the attack on Cambridge Heath Press.

Significantly, seven well-

**By Ian Ilett**  
(Vice-Chair, Tower Hamlets Labour Party & conference delegate) personal capacity



George Williamson, *Militant* supporter, elected to regional executive from the trade union section.

known *Militant* supporters were elected to the regional executive committee.

Bob Labi, a long standing executive member was re-

ected, despite sabotage by a section of the left. Nick Bradley, Eddie McParland and Teresa Wrack took the top places in their section.

Two other *Militant* supporters took the LPYS positions on the executive and George Williamson of USDAW made a breakthrough for the left with his election in the trade union section.

The media have also been busy blaming *Militant* for the defeat of Lambeth councillor Ted Knight. The truth is that it resulted from the rejection by delegates of his recent activities, particularly his support for rate rises and his stance on the expulsion issue in Norwood Labour Party.

The right wing's sole spokesman, John Spellar MP attempted to lay the blame for the Bermondsey defeat at the door of the left.

He was well answered by Bernie O'Connor from Bermondsey: "The monkey on our back was not Peter Tachell but John O'Grady, Bob Mellish and decades of neglect by a right wing Labour council."

A successful *Militant* readers meeting held on the Sunday lunch-time attracted about fifty delegates.

## MANCHESTER - The thought police move in

**By Phil Frampton**  
(Moss Side CLP)

**IN A scandalous and potentially dangerous move, Manchester's right-wing councillors have taken the witch-hunt against *Militant* beyond the boundaries of the labour movement by launching an attack on basic democratic rights in society itself.**

On 2 March the City's ruling Labour Group decided by a narrow 30-to-27 majority to ban from council premises a Labour Party Young Socialist meeting on 3 March to which Lynn Walsh, one of *Militant's* expelled Editorial Board members, had been invited to speak.

This crude attempt to bar the right's political opponents from public facilities is a dangerous precedent which could later be used by the Tories against other labour movement meetings. When left-wing Labour councillors tried to challenge this "act of political censorship" in the next morning's council meeting, however, 29 were told they would be expelled from the Labour Group.

The right, who have been defeated in the debate over policy among Labour's ranks and who are terrified at the growth of *Militant's* support, clearly have an almost unbounded contempt for democracy.

Needless to say, the Tory leader also voted for the ban.

The ban on Wythenshawe LPYS using the local social centre came at only 48 hours' notice. It was imposed under council standing orders which say facilities may be withheld if there is a danger to council property and equipment, or a threat of injury to persons. Even the council chiefs have not dared openly to make such an allegation, after years of peaceful *Militant* and LPYS meetings.

The head of the local social centre expressed personal disgust at the ban. He said he had never had any reason to complain about

LPYS meetings.

In a crude attempt to justify their undemocratic move, the council press department issued a statement containing pure tripe. They claimed the meeting was banned because council leaders did not like the way it had been advertised, and because one of the leaflets appealing for people to attend the meeting also advertised *Militant*.

As if thought control wasn't enough, however, the Chairman of the Education Committee declared that the meeting was banned because *Militant* was no longer a "recognised political grouping", implying that Manchester Council has the right to apply the NEC's internal disciplinary bans to society at large!

### Feeble pretext for ban

The objections to the publicity for the Wythenshawe meeting were soon shown to be a feeble pretext. It also came out that the council had banned the *Militant's* Karl Marx 100-Year Memorial Meeting from the Town Hall lecture theatre. They are organising their own celebration: a sherry party for local dignitaries (including a local Tory) at the rate-payers' expense!

After the group meeting on the 2nd, the 29 expelled councillors were warned by letter that, following an NEC enquiry into previous defiance of the Labour Whip, they would face suspension if they tried even to raise the issue of the ban in the next day's council meeting.

As Councillor Graham Stringer remarked, they had been expelled for upholding Labour Party policy. This is to grant access to council facilities to all but racist and fascist groups. In the past, the leaders of the Labour Group were only stopped from allowing fascists to use council buildings by the pressure of the labour movement.

The right wing have exposed their real colours. But they have also shown that they cannot win.

Despite the short notice, a new venue was found for the meeting, at the Polytechnic, also Council property! Despite uncertainty as to whether the council would attempt another ban it went well. Instead of the expected 50 people, well over 100 turned up. A colossal £340 was raised for the *Militant* Fighting Fund.

Councillor John Byrne called on the City Party to call a special conference of all affiliated organisations to demand:

★ No withdrawal of the Labour whip from the 29.

★ A Labour Group commitment to give all sections of the labour movement normal access to council facilities.

★ That the Labour Group abide by its manifesto commitments.

**READ THE TRUTH ABOUT MILITANT**

Read:  
**What we stand for**  
Price: 20p + 10p postage and packing, from *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

# Scottish Labour Party Conference

## DEVOLUTION

### The socialist case



Campaigning in Glasgow in 1978 for the Assembly. The campaign lost support due to the limited powers over the economy which were on offer. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report) II

**DURING** the past three and a half years, the question of Scottish devolution and a Scottish Assembly has taken a back seat as workers attempted to fight off the Tory onslaught on Scottish industry.

Yet this year over 14 resolutions on devolution have appeared on the agenda of the Labour Party Scottish conference to be held this weekend (12-13 March).

Clearly the labour movement is undergoing a resurgence of interest in the idea of devolution and a Scottish Assembly.

To understand why this is happening now it is important to understand how devolution became a major issue in the mid-70's. In 1964 the SNP received only 50,000 votes in the general election. Yet by October 1974 it received 850,000 votes, won 11 seats in Parliament and came second in 35 of the 42 Labour seats.

Originally winning support mainly from the middle class and the Highlands, the nationalists using opportunist methods and slogans began, by the mid-70's made major inroads into the working class vote in central Scotland as many workers

**By Frank White**  
(Labour Party Scottish Executive, personal capacity)

saw conditions rapidly worsening despite the decades of Labour controlled councils.

Support was lost particularly of the young who rallied to the SNP's virulent nationalism and calls for the benefits of North Sea Oil to be used for the 'Scottish People'.

Instead of embarking on a bold programme of house-building and an expansion of social services, the Labour Party opportunistically raised the subject of devolution as a desperate attempt to stem the flow of support for the SNP. The idea of a devolved Assembly with limited powers was a far cry from the demand for Home Rule for Scotland enthusiastically campaigned for by Labour prior to the First World War.

Although initially in favour of devolution as an attempt to dampen nationalist sentiment in Scotland, the capitalist class and their representatives in the Scottish Tory Party quickly changed their minds. Labour seemed sure to have a dominant position in any Assembly.

In the run up to the Assembly referendum opinion polls showed a clear majority for the setting up of an Assembly. Several factors however cut across this. The ruling class launched a well financed campaign to try to persuade workers that an Assembly would only be the first step to separation—talk of border posts, separate passports etc.

**An Assembly with real economic powers**

A major factor acting against a YES vote though was the limited powers available to an Assembly under the Scotland Act—Tourism, Health, Law etc.—but no real economic powers to enable socialist measures to be successfully carried out. Not surprisingly, many workers couldn't see any direct benefit out of this plan. However, after nearly four years of Tory rule, Labour activists have sensed a revival in the mood of workers for the issue to be discussed again.

Scottish workers understood what a Thatcher-led Tory government would mean, and in the 1979

general election stood solidly by Labour. But despite this loyalty the Scottish labour leaders, not only in parliament but also in the Scottish TUC, have unfortunately failed to mount any major fight against the Tory jobs holocaust.

Sections of workers, who in the past voted Labour without hesitation, are now beginning to feel that possibly the SNP offers the best prospect for fighting an 'English Tory Government'.

Labour activists are therefore demanding that the issue of the Assembly be discussed again. The general theme of the resolutions is that any Assembly must have more economic powers, several CLPs suggest that an Assembly should have the power to nationalise and direct investment.

**Spur to all workers**

Undoubtedly, the idea of an effective Assembly able to tackle the devastation caused by capitalism in Scotland would win overwhelming backing from Labour voters.

Already several Labour MPs and leading individuals in the labour movement have talked of a campaign of parliamentary disruption attempting to make 'Scotland ungovernable'. But this would be a disastrous tactic to fuel the poison of nationalism and aiding the SNP.

Our position must be clear. A campaign must be launched as part of Labour's programme for Scotland, not merely around the issue of decentralisation but to show that an Assembly with real powers could begin to tackle the results of the decrepit capitalist system in Scotland and act as spur to workers throughout Britain.

If Labour wins the forthcoming general election a Scottish Assembly with full economic powers must be established.

If the Tories win the general election the Assembly will become an increasingly important issue in the minds of Scottish workers. The fight for the Assembly should be linked to Labour's socialist policies on jobs, opposition to cuts and mobilisation against nuclear weapons and not isolated as a single issue.

Unless Labour either mobilises Scottish workers to fight the Tories, or, in office carries out fundamental socialist change, then nationalism will grow and cut across the unity of British workers.

A Scottish Assembly, with economic powers to tackle unemployment, poverty, bad housing etc., would not only win Labour a crushing majority but would also help to rekindle the mood of 'Red Clydeside' when, rather than adopting a purely nationalist stand, the workers used their power and class solidarity to help spread the mood of socialist change throughout the whole of Britain.

## LIVERPOOL VICTORY

LAST WEEK, in a local council by-election, held in Derby Ward, Liverpool, the Labour Party chalked up a victory and put paid to the 'Bermondsey myth' that workers don't want socialism.

The council seat was won by the SDP last May, beating Labour who had held the seat for 40 years. However in this by-election the Labour candidate, a member of ASLEF, said at his election meeting that he would like to see the campaign aimed at women and youth, as well as being

fought on national policy, such as nuclear disarmament. Canvassing began immediately, with much support from party and LPYS members. Faced with socialist policies, the SDP fell flat on their face.

Through the campaign we have recruited 14 new members to the Labour Party and have a host of names and addresses to follow up.

**By Christine Onions**  
(Derby Ward Labour Party)

## Right wing get their answer

AN EXCELLENT *Militant* Readers Meeting in Knowsley answered the activities of the local right wing Labour councillors.

Over 90 attended the meeting, about half new to the ideas of *Militant*, to hear Clare Doyle, one of the 'Militant Five'.

Unfortunately the meeting had to be cut short as it was learnt that the venue, a school, had to closed at 9pm.

Indeed, local Labour Party activists have found it strange that council venues for meetings of *Militant* supporters or critics of Knowsley council have been difficult to secure. The local YTURC have been unable to secure a venue for their debate with Knowsley Councillor Mr Keats, on the situation at the Cantril Farm Estate (see *Militant* 637).

The meeting will now be held in a pub, **the Fur and Feathers, on Monday 14 March.**

Labour Party members and ordinary voters have

been angered by the statements of the right wing councillors over the mass privatisation of Cantril Farm Estate. Now a new pilot scheme to sell off another 200 council houses is going ahead. The council leader and the parliamentary candidate have even said, following Labour Party activists buying their council homes, that this is a "matter for the individual"! It appears Labour Party policy doesn't come into it.

But the opposition to these councillors can be measured by the massive increase in the sales of *Militant* in the area. In a few hours 117 copies of *Militant* were sold in the Cantril Farm Estate with another 35 being sold at local bus stops.

By Mick Bagan  
(Huyton LP, personal capacity)  
& Jim McGinley  
(Ormskirk LP)

## DARLINGTON BY-ELECTION

**DEFENDING a majority of 1,052, Labour's election campaign in Darlington got underway last week.**

Labour has held the seat since 1964, but always with a small majority. By tradition the Tories are the runners up to Labour.

But the whole of the local and national press are now rooting for the SDP in a blatant tactical ploy to undermine Labour, and so—to the thinking of the strategists of capital—undermine Michael Foot as leader of the Labour Party.

However, it is not just because of the defence of the Labour leadership that workers in Darlington should vote Labour.

The media has focused upon how "nice" Darlington is and show scenes of the local countryside. But below the surface of media polish, it is no different from any other British town that today faces the brunt of the Tory axe.

Last week I bought a copy of the local Darlington paper which bore all the horrors of Tory Britain.

The front page had a

photograph of a distraught father whose one year old son had died from pneumonia. Due to government cuts, baby care facilities at the Darlington hospital were not suitable to deal with the respiratory problems of the baby. It took 10 hours to get the child to a hospital 30 miles away in Newcastle for the correct facilities, but it was too late.

Another article was on bad housing and how a 9 year old girl suffered from asthma because her parents' council house was so damp.

A few pages on, and another article was about a 20 year old glue sniffer. This lad moved into his own flat last November. He was unemployed and broke and out of desperation turned to glue sniffing and crime. The week before Christmas he broke into a local community centre and stole a jar of coffee worth 50p and Mars Bars, which was all he lived on over the Christmas period.

These three articles speak volumes about the horrors of Tory Britain.

**By Ed Waugh**

# £50,000 needed by April 9

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 9th April
Eastern	999		2700
East Midlands	948		2850
Humberside	359		1500
London East	1306		3300
London West	510		1650
London South	1055		2500
Manchester & Lancs	858		3000
Merseyside	1157		3100
Northern	543		3750
Scotland East	307		1850
Scotland West	397		2800
Southern	1061		4000
South West	600		2000
Wales East	255		1500
Wales West	320		2000
West Midlands	861		2800
Yorkshire	938		3700
Others	861		5000
<b>Total received</b>	<b>13,343</b>		<b>50000</b>

## DOUBLE OUR MONEY AND DOUBLE AGAIN THIS WEEK £2,867

**TIME is getting short if we are going to reach this quarter's target. There is now less than a month to raise £37,000.**

We did it last time. But don't leave everything to the last minute.

We need regular donations now, in the fight against expulsions and for the return of a Labour government committed to socialist policies. How about showing your support for socialism, by giving and getting £1 for each paper sold this week.

The labour movement does not want expulsions. This is becoming evident at the public meetings being held up and down the country: Peter Taaffe spoke at a meeting in Bermondsey which raised £213, and one in Barking which raised £102. Lynn Walsh's meeting in Islington collected £289, whilst Ted Grant's in Coventry raised £184 and in Hammersmith, £140. Working people, the unemployed, housewives, all made

**By Kath White**

donations.

The letters we receive each week really show how people feel, Stephen Cullen, a Boilermakers Branch Secretary wrote to us: "Dear Comrades, please find enclosed cheque for the sum of ten pounds being a donation from this branch, towards your appeal to help fight expulsions."

In another letter Will Woodhead, who donated £10, says "we must fight on and there is a donation to help the good work along." And a donation of £2 from Brian Foster who says "The National Executive decision was a disgrace. Good luck to the Editorial Board, long live

socialist ideals!"

We have received some great donations this week; £95 from the Militant meeting at Yorkshire Labour Party Young Socialists Regional Conference, £25 from an NHS worker from Reading, £20 from Labour Party members in Fife, C. Tod a bus driver from Leith £10, West Ham POEU supporters £10.

We have been pledged regular donations from supporters in Bath; R. Hohl has promised £4 every week, S. Sweeney £3 every week, Pete an AUEW shop steward £1 every week, and P. Ward 50p every week. Supporters throughout the country should follow their excellent example. Even a regular 10p or 20p every week from

every supporter would have a good effect on the Fighting Fund.

Thanks also to all our other supporters who also made donations this week; including Eric The Red (NALGO Sheffield), tenants on Hillingdon Rise, Kent £2.60, M. Sanderson (Hull NUPE) £1.50, J. Warburton (water worker Wirral) £1, two NUM supporters (Jar-row) both gave a £1, J. McIver, K. Smoult and Mrs M. Hepworth Bradford £1.

Thanks also to the supporters who have already given £1 this week for their papers; J. Murdoch (East Midlands), T. Buckley (Avenham ward Preston), M. Marshall (Basingstoke), and R. Adams, (Leicester). Sorry we cannot mention you all.

Edinburgh West constituency collected £20 when asked for a donation to send "May Day" greetings.

There are hundreds of ways of raising money as our supporters continually show. But we must keep asking ALL OUR READERS for regular donations if we are going to get back on target.

### MILITANT MAY DAY GREETINGS

Show your solidarity with a socialist newspaper. Get your trade union, Labour Party, LPYS, Women's Council, Shop Stewards Committee or Trades Council organisation to send greetings to *Militant*, on the traditional workers' day.

All copy to reach Circulation Department, *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN by WEDNESDAY 20 APRIL. Rates: 3 col. cms £4; 6 col cms £6; 1/16 page £10; 1/8 page £20; 1/4 page £40.

## Pit sales reach a new record

OUR SELLERS up and down the coalfields had a tremendous response with the *Militant*. Practically all areas have either sold out of papers or recorded record pit sales.

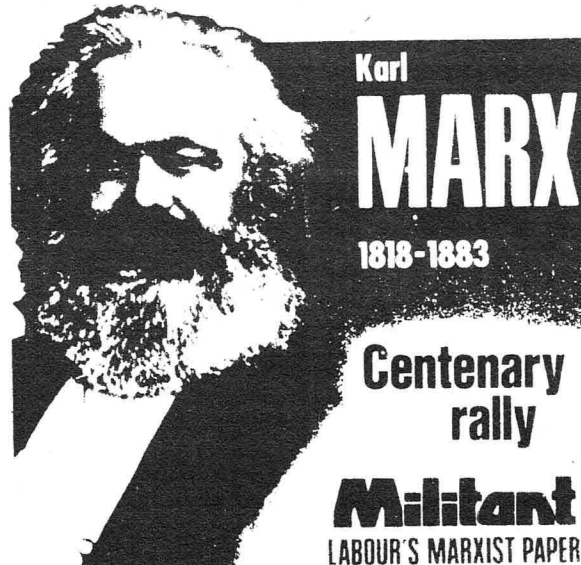
Bentrick in Nottinghamshire sold 45, one pit in Rhondda sold 50 and at an estate sale in a tiny pit village in Caerau, near Maesteg 50 were sold in an hour; as one of our three sellers said, "I've never seen anything like it, practically all the houses bought one".

The sellers in Glasgow sold 110 in an afternoon at the railway station and 40 were sold in Blackwood, Gwent on Friday morning. Several areas have doubled and trebled their sales; these include Poplar, Dundee, Basildon, Durham,

Hounslow and Springburn (Glasgow). Brighton sold out of papers within an hour of receiving them!

During the Bermondsey by-election hundreds of papers were sold, the record being 78 outside a tube station in an hour and a half. With recent publicity, sales in shop, bookshops and newsagents have shot up. Have newsagents and shops been visited in your area and asked to take *Militant* on a sale or return basis?

The present struggle in the mining industry means that our message is needed more than ever. Will you become a seller of our paper? For more information ring 01-986 3828 or write to *Militant* Circulation, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.



This year is the centenary of the death of Karl Marx, who died on March 14 1883. Throughout his life, Marx provided the labour movement with an analysis of capitalist society as a preparation for the emancipation of the working class.

*Militant*—Labour's Marxist paper—has organised a series of regional rallies to commemorate the event, and explain the relevance of Marxism today.

LONDON: Sunday 20 March. Speakers: L Walsh P Taaffe, + 'Sam the Man' CAST Theatre Group.

# ads

NEW RATE  
CLASSIFIED: 10p per word, minimum 10 words.  
SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres.  
All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY.

## Militant readers meetings

**NW LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE**  
*Militant* Readers Meeting  
Speaker: Keith Dickinson (*Militant* Editorial Board) on Saturday 19 March—lunchtime at Opera House, Circle Lounge, Winter Gardens, Blackpool.

CARLISLE: Marxist Discussion Group held fortnightly. For further information contact: Ian Campbell on Carlisle 21068.

MIDDLETON: *Militant* Discussion Group. "The ideas of Marxism—Their relevance today", on Friday 11 March, 8.00 pm. Middleton Labour Club, Long Street, Middleton. Speaker: Phil Frampton.

**NEW POSTER**  
Historic 'Murmansk' poster, featuring Bolsheviks' appeal to British troops who invaded Russia after the Revolution. 25p each (+ 15p p&pp) or 20 for £3 (including p&pp) Available from E Phillips, 66 Sprindale Rd, Broadstone, Poole.

**NEW MILITANT** leaflet out now! It's an election year special! Advertise your local readers' meeting with this new leaflet. Free, from 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

SHIPLEY Marxist discussion group.  
Thursday 24 March "Socialism and war". Shipley Pride, Shipley at 8 pm.

### CLASSIFIED

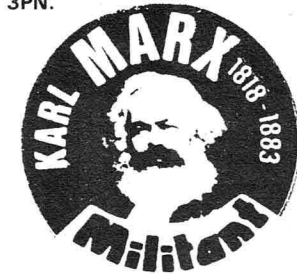
#### MISTY AND ROOTS

Top Reggae band will be playing at LPYS CONFERENCE which takes place over Easter weekend, 1 to 4 April, at Spa Theatre, Bridlington.

For further details about Conference, contact: LPYS, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

#### KARL MARX CENTENARY BADGE

Only 20p each (in: red, white and brown). Bulk orders: 20 for £2 + 50p postage/packing. Send cash with order (cheques payable to *Militant*) to *Militant* Badges, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.



#### FELTHAM Militant Supporters YOUTH DISCO

Saturday, 12 March, 8.00 pm. Bedford Lane Community Centre, Feltham.

Entrance: £1.50 waged; £1.00 unwaged.  
**BE THERE**

SNOWDONIA: Bed and Breakfast in comfortable cottage. £4.50 nightly, £28 weekly. Telephone: Llanberis 870062.

#### KENT LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS

"Unite against the Tories" Speakers: Jack Collins, secretary, Kent Area NUM; Kevin Ramage, National chairman LPYS; Steve Love, Prospective Parliamentary Candidate, Dover CLP.

Cherry Tree pub, Dover at 7.30 pm, Tuesday 15 March.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE: Labour and trade union youth day school. Saturday 19 March, 10.30 am, at Gladstone Community Centre, Cromwell Road, Peterborough.

Speakers: Kevin Ramage (LPYS National Chairman), Dave Nellist (Labour PPC Coventry SE), Brian Richman (Peterborough TGWU), Bob Childs (Cambridge ASLEF). (All speakers in a personal capacity). For further information contact Chris Ballard, (0223) 211229.

BLACK WORKERS AND THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM Black and Asian discussion group.

OLDHAM, Sunday 20 March at 2.30 pm. on "The fight against unemployment and racialism".

For further details phone: 061-226 3189.

Camden Town Hall, Euston Road, NW1.

EDINBURGH: Saturday 19 March, 10.00 am. Speakers: R Apps, E Grant. Playhouse Theatre, Edinburgh.

BIRMINGHAM: Saturday 19 March. Speakers: L Walsh, Dave Cotterill. The Assembly Hall, Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham.

NOTTINGHAM: Sunday 13 March, 10.30 am-5.00 pm. Speakers: K Dickinson, P Jarvis. Byron Lecture Theatre, Trent Poly, Shakespeare Street.

SWANSEA: Monday 14 March, 7.30 pm. Speaker: P Taaffe. Dynevor School, Kingsway, Swansea.

CARDIFF: Tuesday 15 March. Speaker: P Taaffe. Royal Hotel, St Mary's Street.

LIVERPOOL: Sunday 20 March, 12.00. Speakers: E Grant, K Dickinson. AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant.

NORTHERN REGION: Saturday 26 March, 10.30 am. Speaker: C Doyle. The Oval Community Centre, Concorde, Washington, Sunderland.

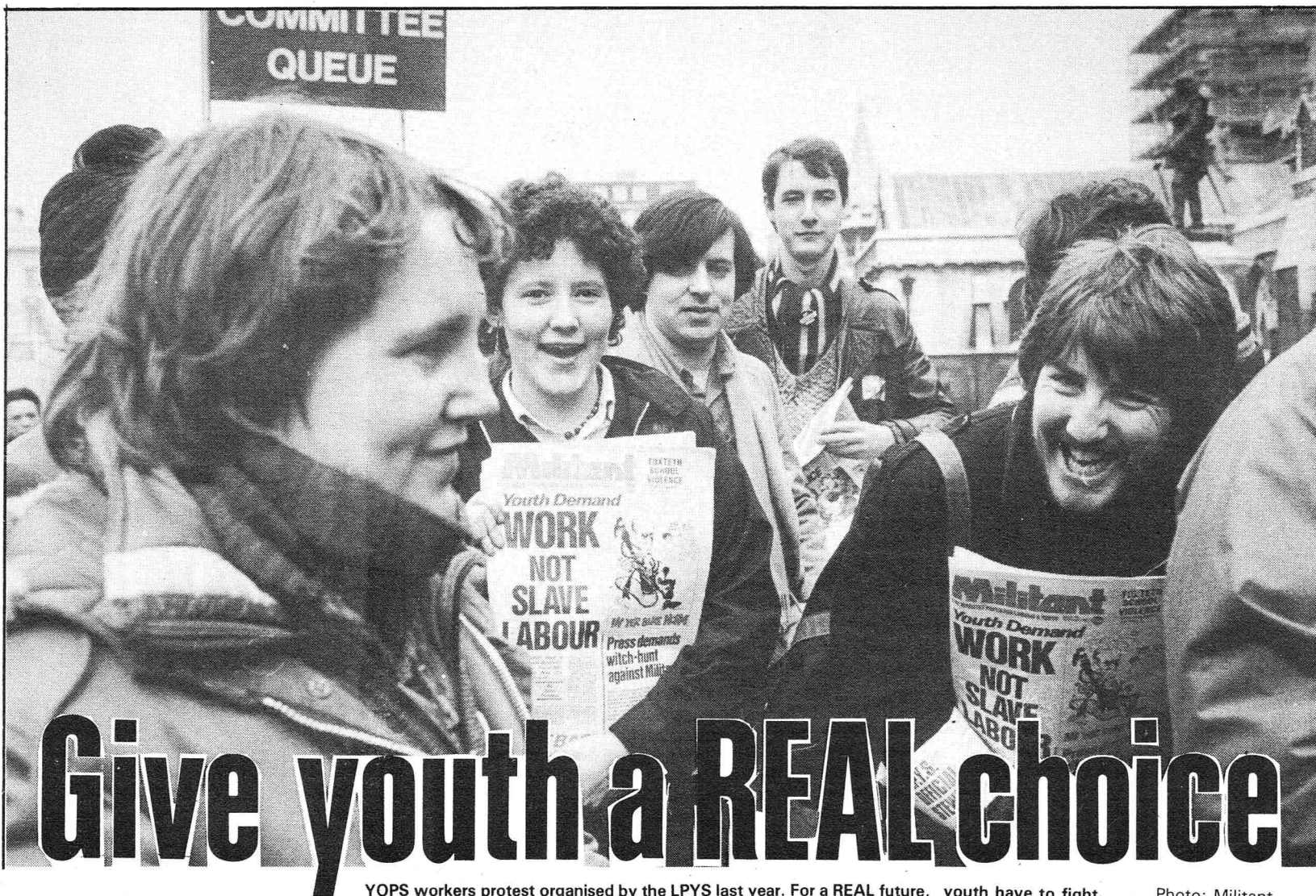
LEEDS: Saturday 12 March. Speaker: T Saunois. The Swarthmore Education Centre, Woodhouse Square, Leeds.

GLASGOW: Monday 14 March, 7.30 pm. Speaker: E Grant. The Mitchell Theatre, Granville Street, Glasgow.

HUMBERSIDE: Saturday 19 March, 12.00-4.30 pm. Speakers: J Pickard, T Saunois. Trades & Labour Club, Beverley Road, Hull. (Social in evening)

BRISTOL: Monday 14 March, 7.30 pm. Speaker: L Walsh. The Swan, Stokescroft, Bristol.

MANCHESTER: Thursday 17 March. Speaker: R Sewell. Room RC2, Renold Buildings, UMIST (off London Road), Manchester.



# Give youth a REAL choice

YOPS workers protest organised by the LPYS last year. For a REAL future, youth have to fight.

Photo: Militant

## “NO CHOICE AT 16” is the title of the latest Child Poverty Action Group survey into grants for those staying on at school or college.

It proves beyond doubt that millions of working class youth have no choice but to leave school at 16 and go on the dole.

Nearly half the Local Education Authorities have cut their budgets for discretionary grants in real terms since 1979/80. Some like Powys, Sutton, Manchester and Humberside have cut their budgets by 40% to 100%!

The average maximum discretionary award paid to FE students in 1981/82 was £7.60 a week which was only paid, in most cases, to people with incomes below the Supplementary Benefit level. No wonder, especially in areas of high unemployment, that the ‘staying on’ rate in schools and colleges is so low. One school in Liverpool in 1981 had a sixth form of two pupils!

This shows the importance of achieving the National Union of Students (NUS) claim for a minimum grant of £25 a week for all students in Further Education.

Militant supporters in NUS welcome this claim. Ever since the introduction of the YOP scheme in 1978 Militant supporters have campaigned for FE students to have a grant equal to the allowance paid to YOP workers (£25 in 1983) as the first step to a full university grant for all students over 16.

However, the ‘left’ groups that have led NUS since 1970 denounced this demand saying that it continued the ‘elitism’ of higher education where university students get a better deal than FE students.

They have supported the right for a full grant now for everyone in full time education over the school leaving age ever since the ‘Radical Students’ Alliance’ (Liberals, Communists and Labour ‘lefts’) declared in favour of this demand in 1967! Even the Federation of Conservative Students sup-

ported this call in 1977. But this paper commitment against ‘elitism’ has won nothing for FE and school students. The reason lies in the false approach of the NUS leaders.

Arguing the need for an ‘all party’, non-political approach they have failed to realise that, for students to win a major reform, they must join forces with the labour movement. This is especially so with the demand for a £25 grant for FE students which the Child Poverty Action Group estimates would cost £500 million, more than the cost of the 1982 miners’ pay claim. A massive campaign, linking the grants claim with the issue of education cuts and the Tories’ attacks on the public sector as a whole and working for support from the labour movement would be necessary to win this demand.

## Get the strength of the unions behind us

Yet the NUS leaders have looked elsewhere for support. On a NUS leaflet, ‘NUS: The Student Voice for 60 Years’, the NUS leaders boasted that they had support from the Archbishop of Canterbury for the grants campaign. Indeed, along with Ted Heath (!), Archbishop Runcie was invited to speak on the 9 March NUS demonstration. The NUS leaders should turn from looking to the heavens for support to the actual situation in the FE colleges.

There they will find part-time students who are apprentices with trade union membership, with a weekly wage of £40-£50—won by the strength of their trade union!

The NUS leaders’ approach contrasts with the campaigning activity of the

LPYS.

In 1981, following the riots, the LPYS produced a ‘Youth Charter’, a programme of ten demands to be included in the Labour Party Manifesto, which included the call for a grant equal to the YOPS allowance. The LPYS took the Youth Charter to the labour movement for support. As a response to the pressure of the LPYS the Labour Party NEC declared in ‘Labour’s Programme ’82’, subsequently ratified by the 1982 Party Conference, that: “A Labour government would introduce legislation to give all young people on recognised full time courses...the right to an educational maintenance allowance of at least £20 a week (at 1981 prices) for 52 weeks.” At 1983 prices this would virtually reach the NUS claim for £25 a week.

However, the same big business interests that back the Tories’ attacks on education would face a Labour government. The bosses would resist the demand for a £25 a week grant (see article).

There is the danger that the Labour leaders, reacting to the pressure of the bosses, will drop the commitment in ‘Labour’s Programme ’82’ from Labour’s election Manifesto. For this reason the LPYS-backed YTURC (recently renamed the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign) has launched a petition calling on Labour’s NEC to pledge that the following promises in ‘Labour’s Programme ’82’ are included in the Labour Party Manifesto and carried out by the next Labour government:

★ All school leavers to be guaranteed the right to a decent job at a decent wage OR

★ Training with trade union rights to negotiate pay and standards of training OR

★ To stay on at school or college with a minimum grant of at least £20 a week at 1981 prices (at 1983 prices this must be £25 a week).

LPYS branches will be taking the petition to FE colleges up and down the country. Join the LPYS in our campaign to give a real choice at 16!

AS PART of our campaign, comrades should use the petition to visit every college in their area. Every YTURC supporter or LPYS branch should ask each FE Student Union to speak at a General Meeting in order to launch the petition and explain the aims of YTURC’s campaign. The petition will later be presented to the NEC so that Labour’s leaders can see the wide support for a £25 grant amongst FE and school students.

As part of the campaign, leaflets aimed at FE and school students produced by Hackney Central LPYS can be used. The leaflets cost £5 a thousand.

As another step in our campaign YTURC are planning to have a delegate lobby of some of the Labour leaders in April to impress upon them the importance of including the demands for a £25 grant or decent training with trade union rights for all 16-18 years olds in the election Manifesto.

By Leo McDaid

## Why the bosses will resist our demands

YOPS, ORIGINALLY introduced by the last Labour government as a reform to alleviate the effects of youth unemployment, has become a counter-reform in creating a vast army, half a million strong, of cheap labour for the employers to use to attack the rights, pay and conditions of the labour movement.

The new YTS, starting in September, is merely an extended YOP programme, with the same £25 allowance, aiming to wipe out apprenticeships altogether.

But if 16 and 17 year olds could get a £25 a week grant to stay on at school or college, why would they enrol on a cheap labour ‘training’ scheme unless it offered trade union rates of pay and a guaranteed job at the end of the scheme? Why would they stay on the dole to draw £15.80? A £25 a week grant would be a Plimsoll line below which wages, training, allowances and the dole could not sink.

It would fatally undermine the efforts of the bosses to use youth unemployment to undercut trade union rates of pay for youth, apprenticeships, etc. That’s why the Tories and big business will be determined to resist this demand—even if a Labour government is elected to office.

This was the experience of the last Labour government. ‘Labour’s Programme ’76’

promised “full mandatory awards to students who stay in full time education after the school leaving age.” This promise of a full grant became, two years later, a mandatory but means-tested grant of £7.50 for all 16-18 year olds in full time education.

This scheme would have cost £110 million. But in October 1978, reflecting the pressure of big business, Shirley Williams, then Labour’s Education Minister, withdrew the scheme declaring that: “The climate for public expenditure has become more difficult since May, owing to there not yet having been an agreement on incomes policy.”

This was in the middle of the strike by the Ford workers against the Labour government’s 5% wage limit. In other words, if the labour movement didn’t accept attacks on their living standards through wage restraint, big business would have to use the weapon of youth unemployment instead!

This shows how the fight for a grant is linked to the fight for a Labour government committed to socialist policies, starting with the nationalisation of the major monopolies under workers’ control and management, to end the power of big business.

## LPYS ON THE MARCH Cleveland

AT ICI in Cleveland, the entire intake of 100 apprenticeships is ending up on the unemployment scrapheap.

This is the first time that no jobs have been offered after the four-year apprenticeships.

Already there are 5,278 youth registered with the careers service with a further 4,758 on YOP schemes, hidden from the unemployment figures. These are the bleak prospects facing youth in Cleveland, which has the highest percentage of unemployment of any county, second only to the Western Isles.

The Cleveland LPYS have taken the initiative with a campaign called ‘Save Cleveland from the Tories’, with a special appeal to youth in the factories, FE colleges and on the dole to fight for a socialist programme for Labour.

**KICK THE TORIES OUT! March and rally on Saturday 12 March Assemble 11 am, Church Road. Rally at 12 noon at Corporation Hall**

Speakers:

John Linnigan (President ISTC)  
Frank Cook (PPC Stockton)  
Peter Mumford (Asst. Ed. Socialist Youth)

## Leicester

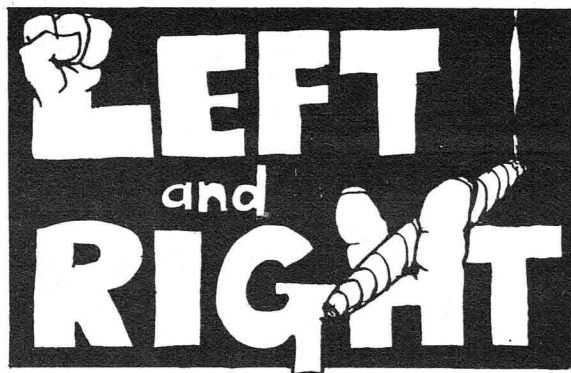
“IN THE old days the hosiery firms were crying out for more workers, now they ask for three ‘O’ levels for a knitter. At my husband’s place they advertised one job vacancy and 70 people turned up. I saw an advert in the paper which wanted four ‘O’ levels for a job filling shelves at Tesco’s!”

These comments by one woman summed up the situation facing many unemployed workers in Leicester. 30,000 jobs have been lost in the hosiery industry in the last six years and a third of those have been in Leicestershire.

For these reasons the Leicester Youth Campaign Against Unemployment, supported by the local LPYS branches, has called a demonstration on Saturday 12 March in protest. We will be marching through the Saffron Lane Estate, one of the hardest hit areas in Leicester, starting at 11 am from the Saffron Lane Recreation Ground.

Speakers will include David Lambert, President of the National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers; Jim Marshall, MP for Leicester South; and Willie Griffin, editor of Socialist Youth.

**By Steven Score**  
(Leicester West LPYS, Secretary, Leicester YCAU)



### Witchcraft returns...

CRITICS of *Militant* say we are unfair to the Tories and big business, that we don't have a good word to say for them. This isn't true, we've got lots of good words though most of them aren't printable. But two flowers of the entrepreneur class have come up with their very own answers to unemployment. So to be fair we'll pass them on.

The mail order shop "Sorcerers Apprentice" specialises in black magic. They can offer you a "getting a job kit" complete with spells, incense and mini altar for a mere £26.50.

Tory MP Richard Needham has similar ideas: he wants to save jobs by freezing dead animals. When a pork factory in his constituency threatened closure, he suggested everybody should buy a dead pig (cost £72) and stick it in a freezer (one big enough will cost you £200 at least) to retain the jobs. Thank you, Mr Needham, don't call us...

### ...and a witch-hunter goes home

GUESS WHO is the new Tory parliamentary candidate for Swansea West? Dr Julian Lewis. Name ring a bell? Lewis is now research director of the anti-CND propaganda outfit, 'Coalition for Peace through Security'. But from 1976 until 1978 he was a member of the Labour Party and with another right-winger, McCormack, took court action in an attempt to prevent the deselection of the then Labour MP Reg Prentice in Newham North East.

Now Dr Lewis has followed turncoat Reg into the ranks of the unofficial monster loony party, he insists that his involvement was only to oust "extreme" left wingers from Labour's ranks. According to the *South Wales Evening Post*, stopping the left "could only be waged effectively from within the Labour Party itself and he immediately rejoined the Tories once it was at an end" (our emphasis).

### Rags to rags, Riches to riches

WHO SAYS the Royal Family have no use? When Prince Charles got black eyes skiing, laughs were heard on dole queues up and down the country. When Princess Margaret's son, alias Viscount Linley, went to the theatre wearing only an overcoat and shoes, which would have had him arrested if he had been, say, an unemployed steelworker, this is good political education. It shows there's one law for the rich and one for the poor.

And obviously the Royal's extravagant life style produces lots of happy well paid workers providing their needs, doesn't it? Well, no. Designer Chris Clyne is certainly doing all right. She has a contract to provide Princess Diana with dresses for her Australian tour at £500 a go.

The machinists whose labour creates this elegant clothing, though, get paid about £61 before stoppages and may take home as little as £40. The rag trade pays very poorly, with an average wage of £66.71 for a 38-hour week. And making royal rags bring no more pay than making workers' off the peg clobber.

### Fifty years ago

After the collapse of many banks in the American Great Depression, there was widespread criticism of bankers. In his inaugural speech as President on 4 March 1933, Franklin Roosevelt denounced, "the money-changers who have fled from their high seats in the temple of civilisation".

At a Senate inquiry a few months later, leading banker, JP Morgan admitted that although he was one of the richest men in the country, he had not paid any income tax for three years. Also that he had given secret loans to leading government officials, including former Vice-President Dawes. Dawes in his spare time had written the popular song, "It's all in the game". Morgan's own game was to sell shares 50% below market price to the American Treasury chief, and the head of America's Army. Al Capone got locked up for tax avoidance but Roosevelt denounced the Morgans of the world only in words.

Tax avoidance is a big "industry" today as Lord Vestey's firm Dewhurst's proved in 1980 when it transpired they had quite legally only paid £215 tax on £8.8 million profit while their workers were on £55 a week basic. Vestey himself paid no tax the year before to give him more spare cash for his polo which cost him £50,000 a year.

# Bertolt Brecht

## 1898 - 1956

LAST month marked the 85th anniversary of the birth of Bertolt Brecht, the German Marxist dramatist.

Bertolt Brecht was the first socialist to use theatre as a political weapon. Unlike bourgeois theatre, that aimed to reassure predominantly middle-class audiences of their self-satisfied views of society, Brecht's work was directed towards raising the political consciousness of his working-class audiences.

Born into a middle-class family, he first began writing to express his revulsion at the brutality of the First World War. He committed himself to the cause of the labour movement, and from then on, his writings reflected workers' experiences in the stormy upheavals in German society: the Spartacist uprising of 1918/19, the founding of the German Communist Party, the *Kapp Putsch* of 1920, the abortive revolution of 1923, the strengthening of reaction, and Hitler's coming to power in 1933.

In 1933 he was exiled to Denmark for his opposition to the Nazi régime, and was forced to leave Denmark by the Nazi invasion in 1939.

He then went to America where he worked until in 1947 he was called to trial as part of the McCarthy anti-communist witch-hunt.

He returned to Europe

and was invited to work in East Berlin. He preferred East Germany to the capitalist West, but saw it as "the lesser of the two evils"; he spoke out in opposition to the bureaucracy's suppression of democracy and their control of literature and drama, in particular opposing the putting-down of the rising in East Berlin in 1953. He died of a heart attack in 1956.

Brecht wrote, in a down-to-earth style and language, about workers' lives, demonstrating how we are controlled by the society we live in. However as a Marxist, Brecht understood that in order to get his message across, it was vital to control not only the content of his plays, but also the way in which they were produced.

Brecht's aim was to distance the audience from the characters and the story, so that instead of becoming absorbed in the action or identifying with the people involved, they could question the characters' actions and motives.

Brecht trained his actors, many of them left-wing workers, not to become submerged in the part they were playing, but to maintain a critical attitude towards the character. Brecht used popular music and slides, while stage sets were very simple and sparse,



Bertolt Brecht,

and brightly lit; they were not a place for emotional or hypnotic illusions of reality, but an arena for questions and debate. Brecht always tried to produce his plays in places where workers met, like pubs, clubs, meeting halls and workplaces.

Brecht today is discussed in university seminar rooms, at the same time completely burying the real revolutionary content of his ideas. Brecht has become probably

the most discussed and least performed of playwrights. On the rare occasions when his work is performed, it is inaccessible to the workers Brecht aimed to reach.

By Andrea Stark  
and Amanda Brennan  
(Bermondsey LPYS)  
and Kevin Miles  
(London LPYS  
Regional Committee)

## The CIA's Nazi links

THE RECENT publicity over the capture and extradition of the Nazi war criminal Klaus Barbie has shone the spotlight onto the activities of the US Central Intelligence Agency after the second world war.

Barbie was allowed to escape by the CIA's predecessors because of his anti-communism and the intelligence he had acquired about Czechoslovakia.

But this was not simply an isolated case. A recent book by John Loftus, *The Belarus Secret*, exposed the use of ex-Nazi war criminals by the CIA to help undermine and overthrow the countries of the Eastern Bloc.

In 1948 Frank G Wisner, a leading official in the CIA was authorised to set up the Office of Policy Co-ordination (OPC). The OPC directed some of the CIA's most ambitious covert operations.

Its agents were Nazi collaborators who were smuggled into the US: in fact many were known war criminals.

All this was done in defiance of directives by President Truman. When the US Congress and Justice Department started to delve into the OPC operations some years later, files on the Nazi collaborators had mysteriously disappeared.

The book deals mainly with the OPC recruits from the Belarus Brigade of the Waffen SS which operated in Byelorussia (White Russia). Its strategic position (east of Poland) and its large Jewish population made it of importance to the Germans who installed Radislaw Ostrowsky at the head of their puppet regime.

Recruitment into the Belarus Brigade for Byelorussian collaborators depended on successfully passing the 'loyalty test'. To do so only one quality was necessary—enthusiasm for pogroms against the Jews of the area. Those people who

helped the 'Einsatzgruppen', the Gestapo's mobile murder squads, were accepted for Belarus.

Their cruelty was limitless. One example described by Loftus was to drop Jewish children down wells and then throw hand grenades after them. One of the most ruthless was Stanislaw Stankievich—"The Butcher of Borrisow". In 1941 he was given charge of that city by the Nazis. He then ordered the systematic murder of over 7,000 Jews.

All in all hundreds of Byelorussian Nazi collaborators were imported into the United States by Wisner's OPC. In a CBS programme last Spring Loftus estimated that at least 300 had been brought over to serve the CIA. Their purpose was quite simply to organise a secret war against Russia and the Eastern Bloc.

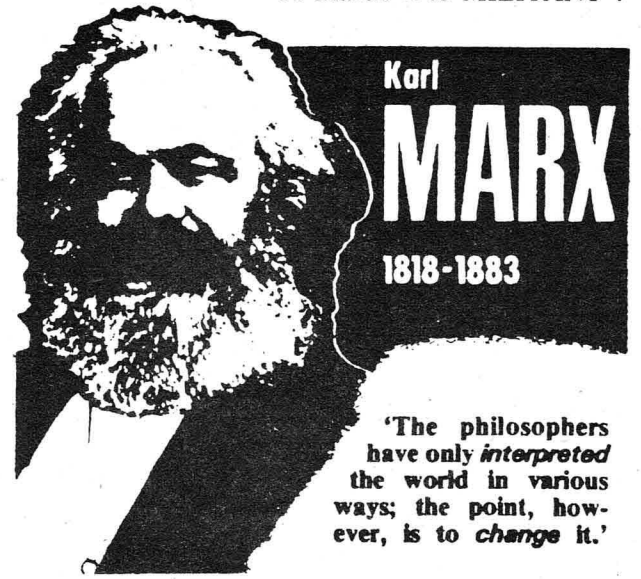
There was no shortage of cash or resources for the ventures either. By 1952 this uncontrolled organisation had an annual budget of \$82

million half the CIA budget. It employed over 4,000 agents in 47 world wide locations and was capable of doing real political and economic damage. By 1955 the American National Security Council had secretly given the go-ahead for Wisner to incite revolts in Eastern Europe. Those revolts came to nothing. The mood of the masses was opposed to any attempt to return to capitalism, and the OPC spy rings collapsed.

Today, the CIA are less crude in their tactics to save capitalism—at least as far as we know. But they are equally as dangerous having turned much of their work from just attempts to undermine the Stalinist states of the East, to active involvement in infiltrating genuine workers' movements.

By Eddie Phillips  
(Provan CLP)

# MARX'S *Capital*



**"THE SECOND half of 1982 was the worst period for the whole economy since the early 1930s, with output falling in nearly all the large industrial nations and collapsing in many low-income countries dependent on commodity exports."**

*Times* Editorial, 7.1.83.

**"Capitalism has a future—it will continue to be the most dynamic and efficient economic system ever practised."**

Carlo de Beneditti (President of Turin Industrialist Union), *Times*, 7.10.75.

The prolonged economic upswing of the 1950s and 1960s, where the productive forces of industry and technique grew at an unprecedented rate, has finally collapsed. And with it have crashed all the cherished 'theories' of the reformists that post-war capitalism had overcome crisis and could function harmoniously, thus rendering the economic theories of Karl Marx completely outdated.

The right-wing Labour leaders of the 1950s, Crosland, Gaitskell, Jay, echoing the strategists of capital, promised that mass unemployment and crisis would never again return. All that was required, they argued, was the application of the theories of John Maynard Keynes, of deficit financing, and everything would be solved—at least for the advanced capitalist world.

Nevertheless, despite the constant refrain that Marx was 'outdated' and 'irrelevant', each year without fail some academic published another 'final' refutation of Marxism!

The return of economic crisis, and the danger of hyper-inflation, pushed the capitalist economists to junk their old god Keynes and readopt the classic methods of 'sound finance', of monetarism, in a vain attempt to reach a solution. Although the economic theories of Keynes were bankrupt, the application of the opposite policy, monetarism, in Britain and the USA, has deepened the recession.

All theories are tested by events. The slump of 1974-76 and that of 1979-82 has completely vindicated the economic theories of Marx, who for the first time laid bare the laws of motion of capitalist society.

## The "Bible" of the working class

Marx swept away the mysticism surrounding economic relations which dominate people's lives, and exposed the contradictions of capitalism that result periodically in devastating crisis. He spent more than three decades studying the capitalist economy in order to arm the working class with a clear understanding of

Marx toiled through absolute hell to complete this life-work. In fact only the first volume was ever completed by him (published in 1867), the remainder being edited and published by Engels after Marx's death (vol 2 in 1885 and vol 3 in 1894).

Between 1905 and 1910 Karl Kautsky, using only a fraction of the material left by Marx, published a further three volumes entitled *Theories of Surplus Value* (the so-called fourth volume of *Capital*). The main reason why Marx himself was unable to complete *Capital* was undoubtedly the wretchedness of his existence, ill-health forcing him to abandon writing it himself in 1878.

Marx himself was on occasions even unable to go out of the house as his clothes were in pawn. In early 1852 he wrote, "The atmosphere is very disturbed: my wife is ill, Jennychen (Marx's daughter—Ed.) is ill, and Lenchen (Helene Demuth,

life-long household servant and friend of the Marx family—Ed.) has a kind of nervous fever. I couldn't and can't call the doctor, because I have no money for medicine. For eight or ten days I have managed to feed the family on bread and potatoes, but it is still doubtful whether I can get hold of any today...I have written no articles for Dana (the publisher of the *New York Tribune*, for which Marx wrote—Ed) because I had not a penny to go and read the newspapers...Besides there is the baker, milkman, greengrocer, an old butcher's bill. How can I deal with all this devilish filth?"

By March 1857, Marx was again forced to pawn 'everything possible'. He wrote, "I have absolutely no idea what I shall do next, and now I am in an even more desperate situation than I was five years ago. I thought I had already swallowed the ultimate filth. *Mais non*. And the worst of it is that this crisis is not tem-

porary. I cannot see how I shall get out of it."

By this time three of his children had died. He was able to carry on only because of the generosity of his life-long friend, Frederick Engels, who was employed by his father's firm in Manchester. If it wasn't for Engels' constant financial support and a small inheritance, Marx would never have been able to overcome penury and *Capital* would never have been written.

He realised the irony in his position, writing: "Never has anyone written about 'money in general' amidst such total lack of money in particular!"

Yet he was plagued not only by debt but by recurring illness: migraine, insomnia, eye inflammations, liver and gall trouble, rheumatism, painful boils and abscesses, all due to poor diet and over-work. He developed tuberculosis at the end of his life and died at just less than 65 years old.

As a man who devoted himself to the cause of the working class he stood out like a giant. While continuing his endless studies on economics he actively participated in the foundation and life of the First International, writing its main manifestos and addresses. He maintained his relations with the Chartists and took part in the struggles of the German movement and emigrant circles.

## The early economic manuscripts

Marx's preliminary economic studies began in 1843-44 in his *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* although plans were made to write a deep analysis of capitalism. In 1851 Marx said he would have it ready in five weeks! However, it was not until six years later that a rough draft of *Capital* appeared, only to be published as the *Grundrisse* in 1932.

Then appeared his uncompleted *Contribution To the Critique of Political Economy* in 1859. By this time the project had expanded enormously with the material he had gathered from the British Museum filling several dozen notebooks. The more he looked at the subject the deeper he went until between 1857 and 1868 he had developed fourteen different plans to write *Capital*.

Marx worked ten and twelve hours a day to complete *Capital*. On 30 April 1867 he wrote to an old friend Siegfried Meyer explaining why he hadn't written sooner: "Well, why didn't I answer you? Because I was constantly hovering at the edge of the grave. Hence I had to make use of every moment when I was able to work to complete my book, to which I have sacrificed

health, happiness and family...But I should have really regarded myself as impractical if I had pegged out without completely finishing my book, at least in manuscript."

But finally, at 2 o'clock in the morning, 16 August 1867, Marx wrote to Engels: "So this volume is finished. It was thanks to you above all that this became possible. Without your self-sacrifice for me I could never possibly have done the enormous work for the three volumes. I embrace you, full of thanks."

In *Capital* Marx was the very first to uncover the laws of motion of capitalist economy, in which its contradictions and tendencies were clearly defined.

These ideas were not simply sucked out of Marx's thumb, but by using the dialectical method, and a thorough study of the facts and processes, he was able to unravel the mysteries of capitalism that were merely hinted at by the classical economists. The latter, such as Adam Smith and David Ricardo, genuinely attempted to understand the mechanism of capitalism, but due to their class outlook and prejudice came to a one-sided, distorted view of economics.

Marx, in his criticism of political economy, explained that he had assimilated the best of English capitalist economics which were the most advanced of its time—but had developed, deepened and extended them to achieve a qualitatively correct, rounded-out understanding.

Even the best of classical economists, Marx explained, "remain more or less in the grip of the world of illusion which their criticism had dissolved, as cannot be otherwise from a bourgeois standpoint, and thus they all fall more or less into inconsistencies, half-truth and unsolved contradictions." (*Capital*)

## Marx deepened the Labour Theory of Value

Marx stated categorically that there were no external "economic laws" of nature, but simply historical laws that arise and fall with each separate organisation of society. Capitalist society was only a stage in the development of human history which—according to its own laws—has developed the productive forces through a world division of labour and a world market. Such a development was preparing the material basis for a new higher stage of society—socialism.

He explained that capitalism began (the period of "primitive accumula-

CONTINUED ON  
PAGE TEN

By Rob  
Sewell

the system it would have to eradicate to achieve its own emancipation.

This prolonged effort resulted in the production of Marx's most famous and brilliant work, *Das Kapital* (*Capital*), which became widely known, particularly on the Continent, as "the Bible of the working class".

While living in London,

Karl Marx in 1861, while he was still working on *Capital*.



# PIT CLOSURES STILL

## NCB provoked Welsh miners' strike

By  
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**DESPITE Fleet Street and NCB propaganda the miners' strike in South Wales was not simply sparked off by the threat of closure of the Lewis Merthyr pit.**

This proposed closure was the blue-touch paper which ignited the struggle to save thousands of miners jobs all over Britain and to preserve the future of the South Wales coalfield which is in jeopardy.

If Lewis Merthyr were to be closed, as proposed by the National Coal Board, that could be the green light for a wholesale butchery of the mining industry, led by MacGregor at the NCB, backed by the government.

Norman Siddall, the present head of the NCB, is quoted in the *Guardian* on March 3, as saying that the National Coal Board proposed to close 60 pits over the next decade, between 10 and 16 of these pits being in the South Wales coalfield,

with an estimated loss of 10,000 jobs.

The so-called safety of the jobs of the miners of Lewis Merthyr, where they're supposedly all to be transferred to pits 12 miles away, with a £1,500 transfer allowance is a complete 'white-wash'.

### NCB strategy

The real long term policy of the NCB is to strangle pits in the South Wales area and elsewhere by lack of investment with the aim of establishing a few profitable 'super pits' around the country.

Investment in the pits in the South Wales area has been desperately low—only £15 million of investment in the South Wales last year, compared with £800 million in Yorkshire. In Pits like Lewis Merthyr and Maerdy, in the Rhondda, some of the machinery has preservation orders on it. The National Museum of Wales exhibits equipment still in operation

in S. Wales pits.

The proposed closure would be the start of a wholesale decimation of the coal industry. The number of pits in production in Great Britain has fallen from 958 in 1947 to 219 in 1980. The number of men employed in mining has fallen from 705,000 in 1947 to 220,000 at present.

After a period of some investment in the 1970s following the miners' strikes of 1972 and '74 it looks as though the NCB and the government are again preparing to wield the axe.

### No recruitment

Already many pits in the South Wales area have lost men through a recruitment ban. Maerdy colliery, where a lot of Lewis Merthyr miners expect to be transferred has lost a hundred men through lack of recruitment in the last year.

Both Tower and Maerdy pits, where most of the transferred miners will go,

are deemed unprofitable in the eyes of the NCB. An addition of extra men would either mean that these pits would become artificially more unprofitable or redundancies would have to occur at these receiving pits.

The NUM has made it clear many times to the NCB that they will accept closures of old uneconomic pits, provided that new investment and new pits are forthcoming. For example, the possibility of opening a new pit at Margam in Port Talbot, with massive reserves of coal has been turned down by the NCB as not being profitable in any way, or enough to warrant investment.

The responsibility of the NCB for many unprofitable pits has not escaped the workers in the industry.

Despite the chronic lack of investment and treacherous working conditions in the South Wales area, productivity has increased by 6% in 1981. Overall productivity per man in the British

coalfield has doubled from 1977 to 1980.

### Subsidies and interest payments

If pits in Britain were receiving the same subsidies as in France, Germany or Belgium then no pit would be unprofitable. Pits in France, Germany and Belgium receive subsidies from their governments of between £14 to £34 per tonne, whereas here the subsidy is £1.62 per tonne.

However, the real reason that the NCB has decided that so many pits are unprofitable is the enormous amount of money they are giving out every year in interest and compensation.

In 1980 an incredible £180 million was paid in interest to banks and financial institutions. This is almost double the figure of investment for pits and subsidies that was given to the whole South Wales coalfield in

1982.

Compensation paid to many former coal owners will be continued until 1990—for pits that were nationalised in 1947!

Many of the former coal owners re-invested their compensation in the mining industry supply firms and are making big profits at the expense of the nationalised industry.

In 1980, for instance, Dowty engineering made a trading profit of £31 million. Dowty is only one of a number of firms who supply the mining industry and push the price of coal up.

### A socialist policy

This farcical situation will only be ended if an integrated mining industry is established with nationalisation under workers control and management. That goes too for the supply firms and

## JOBS FIGHT

FROM PAGE ONE

over ASLEF affected the NUM ballot last year on wages and jobs. Coming soon after this other setbacks in the mining industry, like the decisions over Kinnell and Snowdown, at a time more favourable for a national strike, have increased the caution and doubts among many miners voting this week.

If every miner had been absolutely certain of the full support of the TUC, of its rank and file, but especially of the leaderships of the main trade unions and TUC spokesmen, then the question of the accumulated coal stocks would have been irrelevant. The fact was that many miners who would have been prepared to have a go voted against the strike because they were not confident of a quick victory.

The capitalist media built up the issue of MacGregor as the central theme—and indeed miners were aware of his record in BSC. But miners were not clear as to the specific demands of the strike—what specific concessions from the NCB, what stage would have to be reached before a strike was called off?

The NCB consciously chose to close Lewis Merthyr, as the mine around which it could launch a propaganda campaign; the press, of course, seized upon it gleefully. New proposals to close other workable pits in Wales or in other areas will, however, carry much less conviction among miners.

Even despite all the difficulties, however, a national strike may have developed last week before the ballot was called, because of the spontaneous solidarity shown towards the Welsh

miners. But the break in the momentum must have had some effect in undermining the resolve of sections of the union membership.

The NUM rank and file, especially the lodge and area militants, must look to the future. A campaign should be waged throughout the union to build up the Triple Alliance now—not waiting for another strike but preparing and building up rank and file committees of the Triple Alliance union now, in order to be able to mobilise effectively in the future.

The NUM was offered the support of the Transport and General Workers Union, through their executive. The NUM, the TGWU and other unions should now begin to pressurise the TUC as a whole to campaign far more effectively and boldly against the policies of the Tories.

The same trade unions that were prepared to support the miners should now be equally prepared to use their power and influence in the TUC to turn that body into an effective and militant 'General Staff' of labour, fighting to bring down this government.

Above all, it must be realised that the fight for jobs, no less in the mines than anywhere else, is a political fight.

The mining industry, although nationalised, is linked to the market and the operations of the capitalist economy. The deep recession in the British economy has contributed enormously to the loss of coal markets.

Not only that, but whole sections of the economy have been laid waste, living standards forced down, while millions of workers who could be productive are forced onto the dole. But recession and economic waste are not unavoidable—they are

only unavoidable in the context of a capitalist system.

It is no accident that the NUM has historically been at the forefront of the battle to establish and maintain the Labour Party. The fight for jobs, decent wages and conditions in the industry are in the final analysis a fight for socialist change. The NUM must now redouble its efforts to get the Labour Party to adopt a socialist plan for fuel, a fully integrated policy, involving coal, oil, gas, electricity, and other energy sources, as a fun-

damental plank of their election campaign.

The setback in the recent ballot must be the occasion for stepping up the fight in the political sphere—for the election of a Labour government committed to fundamental socialist change, for the introduction of a socialist plan of production, involving the public ownership of the major industries and monopolies, within which a socialist-run National Coal Board would play its part.

## Arthur Scargill

At a meeting in Sunderland on Monday 7 March Arthur Scargill spoke to Ray Physick.

Every miner should back the executive.

If they don't they are backing the Coal Board policy, and at present they will be supporting the closure of mines.

If we don't get a 'yes' vote and Mr MacGregor becomes chairman of the Coal Board then the consequences could be enormous for the mining industry, because the Coal Board will see this as a 'green light' to close pits.

As regards scare tactics about stock piles and so on, well, the Coal Board used the same sort of tactics in 1972 and '74 and my view is that the majority of stocks are held at the pit-head, and not at the power stations, or in the industries.

If we do have a national dispute we shall be able to control and contain those stocks at the pit-head, in the same way as we did in 1974.

I firmly believe that we can win this dispute and bring subsidies into line with those of Eastern and Western Europe, providing

that we stand firm.

This dispute is extremely important for the mineworkers' union; it's important because we are faced with the threat of the decimation of our industry in the same way as we are seeing the decimation of steel, and the same way as the Serpell report envisages the decimation of the railways.

If we get the vote it is vitally important that we get the support of other trade unions, and I am sure that as in 1972 and 1974 that they will do just that, because we have always given support to other unions when they have been in dispute.

I know that the Coal Board has a hit-list of 70 pits, and they can envisage a run-down of about 70,000 men by the combination of pit closures and the use of high technology. This is beginning to be introduced in the industry very rapidly.

For these reasons we need the strike and we need to win.

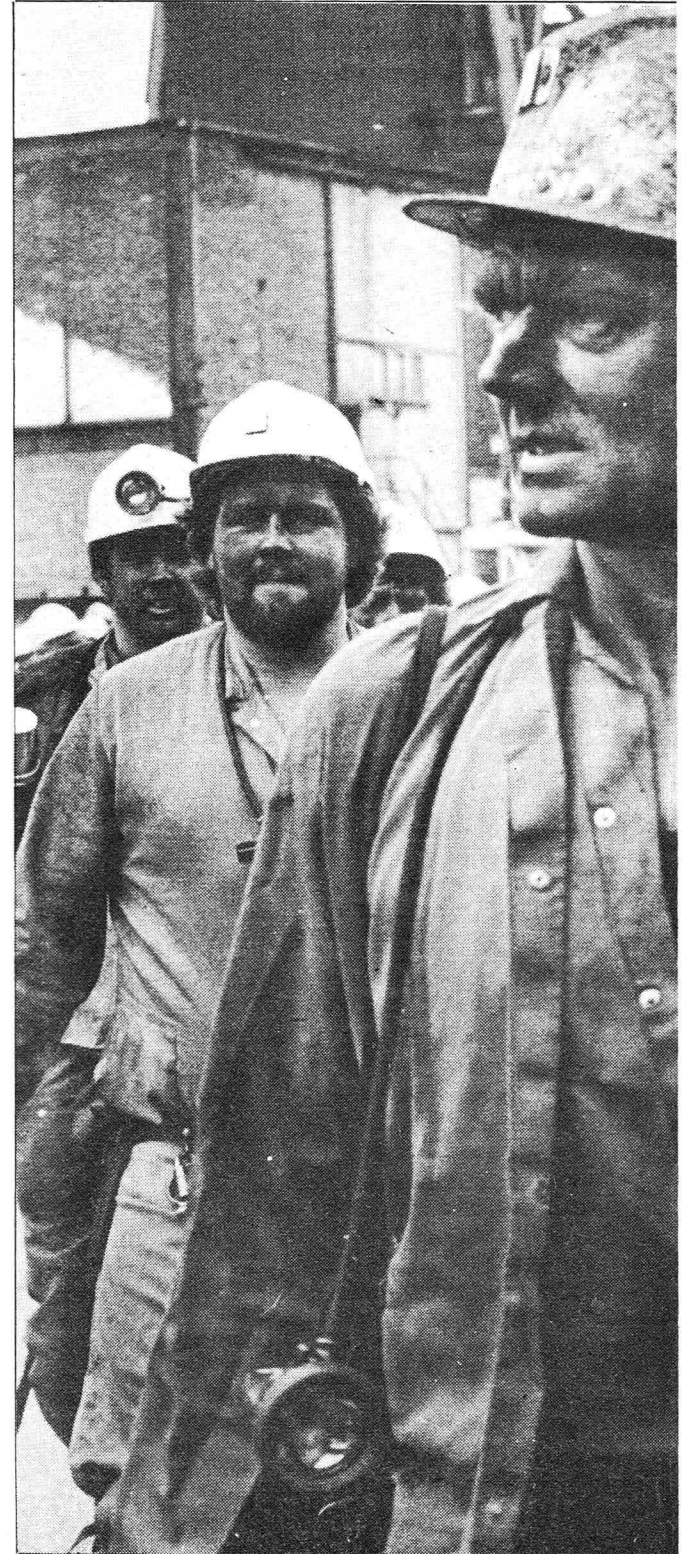


PHOTO: Denis Doran (Militant)



# A NATIONAL ISSUE

**Tyrone Sullivan**  
Tower Colliery,  
South Wales)

## 'We are not Luddites'

**Militant talks to Henry Richardson, of the Mineworkers' National Executive about the issues facing the NUM.**

**Henry, a member of Creswell NUM and a leading left-winger in the Notts coalfield, was elected recently by Notts miners to the NEC and in a subsequent ballot, to the position of area agent.**

**This marks a further step towards a militant, fighting leadership for the union nationally and in the previously 'moderate' Notts area.**

The NEC's main task must be to protect pits. Our demands for early retirement and better conditions mean nothing if the collieries are to close.

The NCB's assurances have been proved to mean nothing. Either the miners fight for our industry, or we just let it go.

The Coal Board wants to close what it calls 'uneconomic' pits. The CBI chairman has even said we're running 'social services in the coalfields'. Pits can be made 'uneconomic' just by shuffling figures across account books.

In the South Notts area, Moor Green and Pye Hill are the only pits to show a profit, yet they are on the hit list! A colliery is not like a market stall, it needs investment.

My fear is that if the NCB is allowed to get away with the 'uneconomic' argument, they will make any pit they want closed uneconomic by starving it of investment.

Already we see whole coalfields like S Wales getting less than odd pits in other areas.

The Board's plans for computerisation threaten miners' jobs.

Research commissioned by the NUM has shown that if the NCB is successful in introducing its three computer systems, FIDO, MINOS, and IMPACT, 55% of miners' jobs could be lost (over 100,000).

Their main intention is to increase work available time by a third, in other words face-capacity. So they will be bound to propose job losses, although not necessarily 100% straight away.

We aren't Luddites; we co-operated with the introduction of new machinery which meant the loss of 300,000 jobs in 20 years.

But we are not prepared to throw jobs away. New technology should mean a shorter working week and early retirement. With the potential shown by this research, we can easily talk of a three-day working week.

A major threat to our industry comes from the plans of the CEBG to introduce



Henry Richardson

nuclear power.

The CEBG's new chairman was appointed because he was so pro-nuclear. Thatcher has stated that she wants 15 nuclear power stations in ten years.

The first of these is to be the Sizewell enquiry that which has already proved unsafe in the USA. A public enquiry is being held into it—but it's already two-thirds built!

The next is planned to be at West Burton on the Trent. It would replace the West Burton, High Manham and Cottam power stations. At present these stations take 80% of Notts coal.

Obviously this would be disastrous for Notts miners.

The NUM is arguing at the Sizewell enquiry that that there is a 300 year supply of coal in the ground and so no need for nuclear power.

### Integrated socialist fuel policy

We are for an integrated fuel policy but only on the basis of copper-bottomed guarantees on safety.

I agree with the idea of the energy trade unions getting together to draw up such a policy. It would also be a step towards having one power trade union.

But an integrated fuel policy can only be possible under a proper socialist government, which would guarantee jobs for all.

We might be able to use nuclear power under a socialist government. The priority then would be safety rather than cheapness. But we can't plan it under a capitalist system.

I believe any apathy among our members is only

temporary. The leadership must lead men into standing their ground when it comes to crunch-time.

No-one wants men to strike willy-nilly, but only a strong leadership can save our industry. When it comes to the crunch on jobs the miners will unite again.

The media is trying to destroy the authority of Arthur Scargill's documents on pit closures, but we've caught the Board playing a tricky game.

In the 1960s, Robens said NCB policy was an open book, but since the last ballot the NCB is openly saying, 'you've no right to see certain documents'.

We believe any worker in any industry—especially a nationalised one—has the right to see documents that affect his future.

The consultative procedure is being used by the NCB as a backdoor method of getting conciliation matters through rather than taking on the union direct. And they will use it to close pits.

A glaring example of this being used to talk out the union was at Teversal where the colliery eventually closed.

If they are not prepared to open the books we should suspend the consultative procedure.

### Open Coal Board books

For a strong united trade union it's important that representation on the NEC is changed so that each Area has fair representation. Then, we'll get genuine rank and file feeling at NEC level.

I'm all for five-yearly election of officials, with the proper safeguards. But we must be wary of interference. Hopefully the NEC will come up with a proper change of rule next year.

In past years, we've tended to make officials' salaries too lucrative. They should be more in line with wages in the coalfields with a little added for the responsibility. This would go a long way to restoring faith in the leadership.

A strong united trade union can resolve these issues easily. We don't want Tebbit interfering with us!

Propaganda for a 'non-political' union is nonsense. Political decisions control our lives.

The NUM must fight for more miners' MPs and they must fight alongside the miners.

If we select MPs they should be accountable to the union. That was the whole idea of the unions forming the Labour Party anyway.

I am the chairman of Bolsover CLP and our opposition to the witch-hunt going on in the Party is being proved right.

Instead of pursuing the right wing's Healey-led ambition to form a coalition with the SDP, the NEC should stop the witch-hunt immediately. And get with the CLPs, fighting to protect the working class and end the Thatcher regime.

## SOCIALIST COAL POLICY

★ No pit closures; No selling jobs; No redundancies; A four-day week; For a fight to protect every single mining job.

★ A living basic wage for every miner and an end to the divisive incentive scheme.

★ Full and adequate financing of the Coal industry to ensure the necessary investment in all coal fields, decent wages and a realistic pricing policy.

★ An end to the miners subsidising the bankers. Cancel all debts to the banks and finance houses.

★ An end to the profiteering of the supply and distribution companies at the expense of the NCB and the miners. For the nationalisation and integration into the NCB of all the mining supply and distribution monopolies.

★ For workers' control and management of the NCB with one third of the board elected by mine workers through the unions, one third elected through the TUC to represent the interests of the working class as a whole and one third appointed by a socialist Labour government.

★ An end to the insane situation where nationalised industries compete with one another. For a rational integrated plan incorporating all nationalised industries geared to the needs of working people, and under democratic workers' control and management.

★ For the nationalisation of the top 200 or so monopolies which together control about 85% of the national economy, under democratic workers' control and management.

★ For a democratic socialist plan for energy and the economy aimed at meeting the needs of ordinary working people.

## Blunt the Tory axe

**Before the ballot, Militant interviewed Phil Bowen, chairman of Blaenant Lodge, South Wales.**

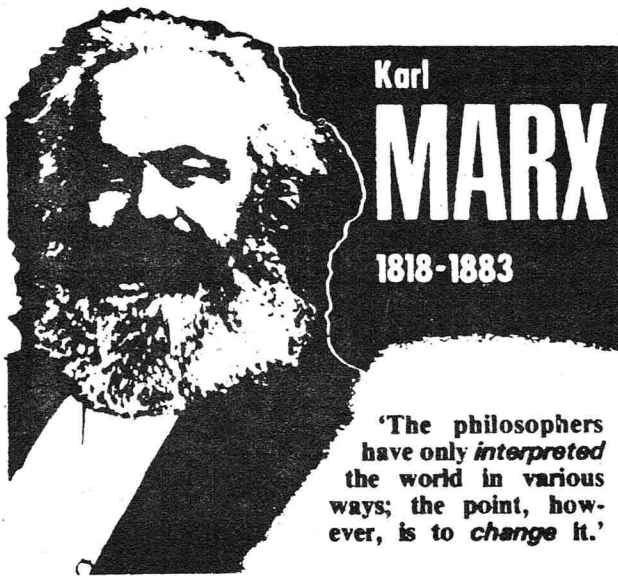
IT IS essential, if we are to win this strike, that we convince all other sections of the British coal field that the fight is not just to stop the closure of Lewis Merthyr colliery but to ensure that the NCB are not allowed to go ahead with their plans to close the other sixteen pits in South Wales under threat and also to stop them axing the rest of the British coal-field.

The NCB in many ways is similar to the railways. Both these nationalised industries are facing the chop. British Rail are already planning to axe 3,500 jobs in British Railways engineering,

BREL. Links can definitely be forged at the grass roots level between the railway workers and the miners together with the steelworkers.

In that way the triple alliance can put effective political pressure on the Tory government while at the same time involving other workers in the struggle which affects both miners and themselves in the fight to protect our jobs.

There is now a growing feeling by the workers throughout Britain that a fight is needed. Workers are no longer prepared to face the Tory axe.



# MARX'S Capital

CONTINUED FROM PAGE SEVEN

tion") in the most violent manner, where the means of production were forcibly taken from the masses, turning them into propertyless proletarians. "If money... 'comes into the world with a congenital blood-stain on one cheek', capital comes dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt." (*Capital*)

Marx's penetrating mind deepened the *Labour Theory of Value* developed particularly by Ricardo but taken no further by him. Using this theory, Marx discovered the origins of *surplus value*, of profit, in the exploitation of the labour of the working class.

In order to engage in production, the capitalists, who own the means of production, enter the labour-market to hire so many 'hands'. For them the energies of the workers are simply another commodity necessary for production, just like any raw material. But Marx explains that the worker sells not his labour, but his capacity to work (which Marx calls labour power).

As value can only be meaningfully expressed as the real cost of production in terms of expenditure of human effort, it follows that the value of things is determined by the amount of labour time *socially necessary* for their production (i.e. necessary by the average standards of technique in society). So too with the value of labour power for which the capitalist pays.

The amount of labour time necessary for the worker's maintenance (to restore his capacity for work) is the time needed to produce his and his family's subsistence: food, clothing, fuel etc. Skilled workers need more for education to develop their skills for increasingly complex industry.

But unlike the values of other commodities, a moral and historical element enters into its calculation: the means of subsistence not only includes goods which are essential, but also those that are part of everyday life. Wages can deviate from the average value of labour power if the capitalists are prepared to pay *more* if labour-power is scarce, or pay *below its value* if it is plentiful.

As Ian Buchanan, the ACAS mediator in the water dispute recently put it: "Large-scale unemployment has made its impact on terms

and conditions of employment, particularly the rate at which these terms and conditions have changed."

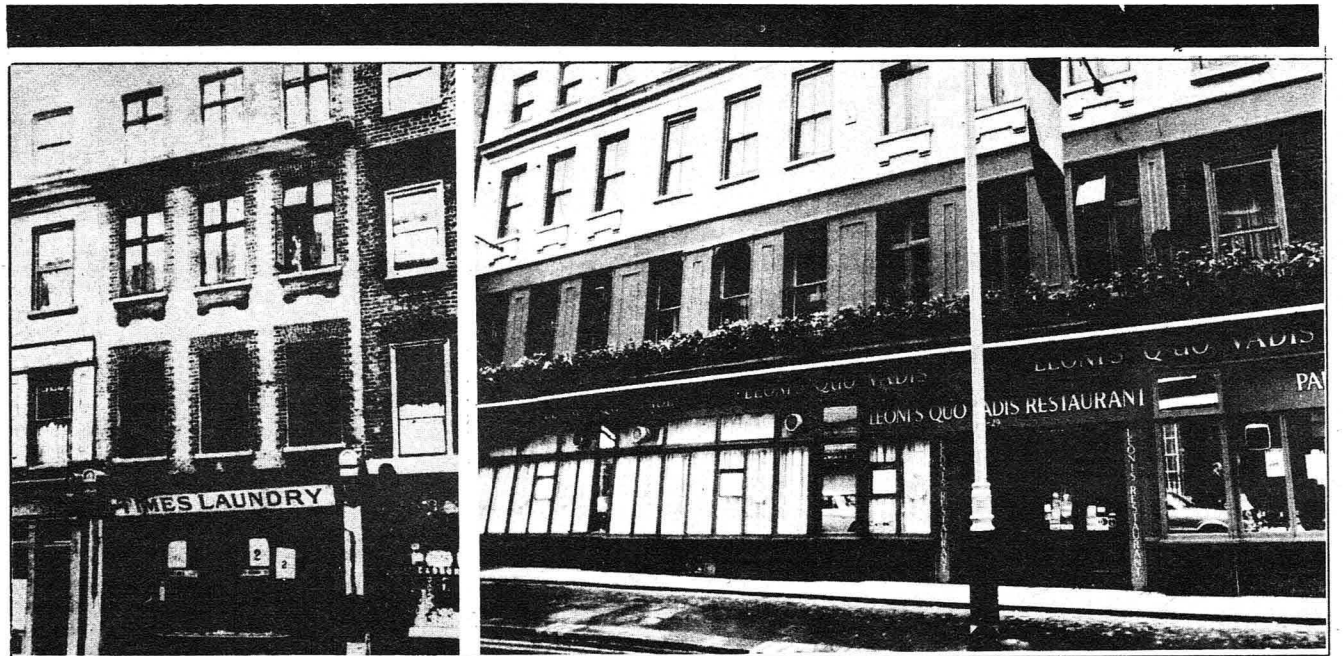
Although the worker extends credit to the capitalists by allowing his labour-power to be consumed before it is paid for, he has not been cheated. As with all other commodities, equivalent values are exchanged and the labour-power is sold at the 'going rate'. If the worker is not satisfied, he can leave freely...for the dole queue.

So if the worker is not cheated, where does exploitation come from? How do the capitalists make their profit?

## The unpaid labour of the working class

It was Marx who unraveled this mystery by explaining that labour-power is the only commodity that can produce more value above and beyond its own value. Once the capitalist has bought the labour power he may use it as he wishes, like any other commodity. He therefore immediately puts it to work to make more value.

Marx's wife Jenny with their daughter Jennychen, around 1854



Marx's London home. 28 Dean Street, as it was in the nineteenth century

28 Dean Street, as it is today, a restaurant

Marx draws a distinct line between the two types of capital employed in production. Firstly, there is *constant capital* ('dead labour') such as raw materials, machinery, capital equipment, etc. which on being used simply transfer their values into the product (gradually in the case of machinery, through depreciation) and nothing more.

Secondly, and more importantly, there is *variable capital* ('living labour'), or that which is spent on labour power, which imparts value to the product greater than its own. It is from this variable capital that *surplus value* is produced.

Equally, the labour performed by the worker is divided into two parts: *necessary* and *surplus labour*. The period of necessary labour is that undertaken to produce just enough value to cover the wage bill (the cost of variable capital), whereas the period of surplus labour is the remainder of the working day which produces surplus value for the capitalist. The surplus value can only then be realised once the commodities are sold on the market.

Under the systems of slavery or feudalism, necessary and surplus value was clearly seen. A peasant, for example, might work on

his own land for a time and on his 'master's' land the rest of the time, or he would simply give up a proportion of his crop. But under capitalism the surplus labour is obscured from sight.

To illustrate exploitation under capitalism the example can be used of a worker who is employed to spin cotton into yarn. Suppose he works an 8-hour day and is paid £1 an hour. After half a day (four hours) he produces 100lbs of yarn at a value of £20, which is made up as follows:

Raw material (cotton, spindle, power, etc.) = £11  
Depreciation (wear and tear) = £1  
New value created = £8

Up to this point, the new value created is sufficient to pay the worker's wages for a whole day. The capitalist has covered all his costs, but as yet no surplus value has been created.

During the next half day (four hours) another 100lbs of yarn is produced, valued again at £20, made up from the value transferred from raw materials, wear and tear, and also £8 of new value.

As the wages have already been covered for the whole day, this new amount of £8 becomes surplus value. This surplus value is then divided between rent (to the landlord), interest (to the bankers) and profit (to the industrialist).

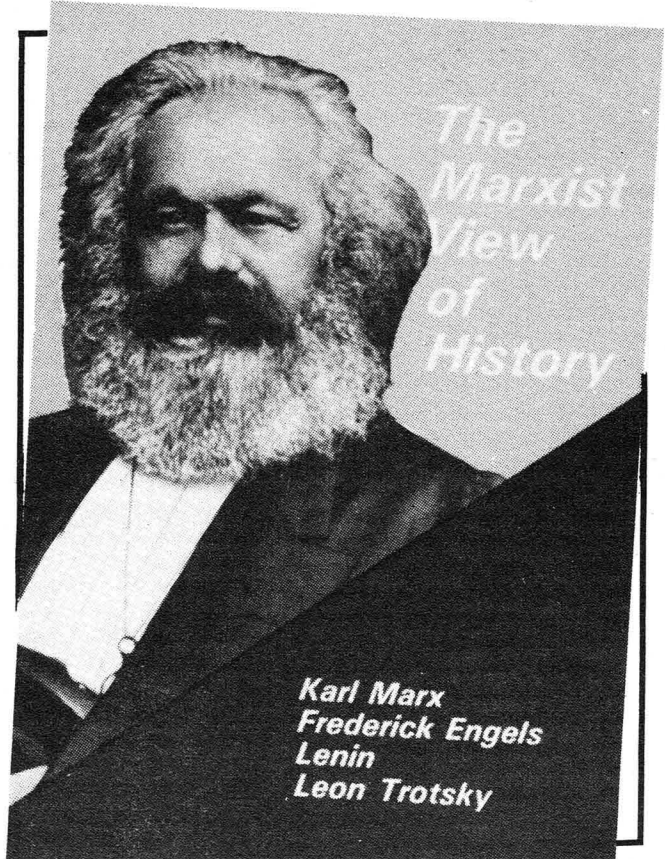
Thus surplus value (or profit) in the words of Marx, is the *unpaid labour of the working class*.

Under the pressure of competition, the capitalists are forced to constantly modernise their plant and technique—to revolutionise the productive forces—and increase capacity. But this means more and more is invested in constant capital and the *proportion* of variable capital falls.

## Periodic crises of capitalism

Because it is the variable capital which is the sole source of surplus value, the larger amounts invested in machinery etc. results in a tendency for the rate of profit to decline. To overcome this tendency the capitalists are forced to increase the intensity of exploitation by speed-ups, and longer hours.

The contradictions of capitalism culminate in periodic crises of overproduction—both in consumer and capital goods. As Marx explained, capitalism "has conjured up such gigantic means of production and exchange, is like the sorcerer, who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells.



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"...In these crises a great part not only of the existing products, but also of the previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed. In these crises there breaks out an epidemic that in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity—the epidemic of overproduction.

"Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed; and why? Because there is too much civilisation, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce.

"The productive forces at the disposal of society no longer tend to further the development of the conditions of bourgeois property; on the contrary they have become too powerful for these conditions, by which they are fettered, and so soon as they overcome those fetters, they bring disorder into the whole of bourgeois society."

These words were written over 130 years ago, but how better to describe the decade of the 1980s!

The destructiveness of capitalism with its slumps and crises, and its wholesale writing off of accumulated capital, is a clear indication of the impasse of society.

Capitalism has entered a period of organic crises.

Only by the overthrow of such anarchy can unemployment, slump and chaos be eliminated. Only with the elimination of production for profit and the introduction of conscious planning internationally can the productive forces be developed to undreamed-of heights, and the way be paved for a harmonious classless society.

To mark the centenary of Karl Marx's death, the press and media will be producing many "tributes" from the serious to the absurd.

One of the better analyses is likely to be the BBC 2 series of six programmes 'Karl Marx: the legacy' written and presented by historian Asa Briggs. The first programme will be transmitted on Thursday 17 March on BBC-2 at 7.50 pm.



# West Germany AN ALLY FOR THATCHER AND REAGAN

**THE ELECTION** of the conservative Christian Democrats (CDU) and Christian Socialists (CSU) ushers in a period of instability and crisis in German society.

The fact that the CDU Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, has been congratulated on his election by Thatcher and Reagan is an indication of the policies his party stands for.

The election was brought about because the liberal Free Democrats (FDP) withdrew from their coalition with the socialist SPD last October.

The SPD were then ousted by a vote of no confidence, and the fact that their votes went down significantly shows the disillusion of workers with a party that has been in office in Germany for 13 years, and tried to 'manage' capitalism without putting any policies towards a socialist change of society. 'Managing capitalism' in a period of boom is one thing—in a period of world recession it means passing economies onto the backs of workers. The SPD government has been associated in recent years not with economic boom but with cuts, unemployment and higher taxes.

Many of the voters who are looking for radical solutions and who would have voted for an SPD putting forward socialist policies turned, in confusion, to the peace/ecology party, the 'Greens'.

Many of the Greens' voters are "natural supporters" of the left. The fact that although they got 5.6% of the votes, their vote among the youth was far higher than this, is an indictment of the policies of the last SPD government. The Greens, however, will be forced to take up positions in Parliament on social issues,

By Lorna Watson  
(Hackney Central CLP)

as well as on 'ecology' questions and this could create dissension and splits in their ranks.

The Greens cannot provide an alternative to the established workers' party, the SPD, as the social issues come to the fore, workers, the youth included, will turn back towards the SPD.

Under pressure of the worsening economic conditions, which will be exacerbated by the right-wing policies of Kohl and Co., the SPD will be forced to move to the left and take up policies in the interests of the working class.

The election marks a turning-point in post-war Germany. It is the political expression of the fact that the "economic miracle" is at an end, and it ushers in a period of industrial unrest, and political instability. It will be through a left-ward moving SPD that the Ger-



Chancellor Kohl



SPD's new leader, Hans-Jochen Vogel

man workers will seek to restore the German "economic miracle", but this time on socialist lines.



The new Christian Democrat government will face opposition in its monetarist policies from the strong West German labour movement, seen in action in the protest against closures (photo above).

A survey in 1982 by IG Metall (the German metal workers' union) into 32 Hamburg companies revealed that 40 per cent are on short time work with almost 4,000 redundancies planned in engineering companies such as AEG, Messerschmidt, etc. Thirteen companies will be the hardest hit, but the worst of all is the MAN diesel engines group.

Six hundred jobs are to go initially (50% of the workforce) but later there will follow the complete closure of MAN. MAN workers are in the forefront of the struggle against redundancies and closures, especially under the newly elected government. So it is significant that MAN workers have carried out this struggle in an exemplary way. As works council chairman Addi Janssen said, "They have their backs against the wall."

They must fight and win and they have the iron will to win. Concrete help from workers in other engineering companies will be vital. Addi Janssen said, "The factories should belong to us," and requested this paper (*Militant*) should urge workers at similar diesel motor factories to send resolutions of support.

Send to: zu Händen v., Addi Janssen, Betriebsrat, Vertrauenskörper und Belegschaft, MAN Werks Hamburg, Rossweg 6, 2000 Hamburg 11, Germany.

By Greg Powell (Hamburg Altona SPD)

## Australia LABOUR VICTORY A MANDATE FOR CHANGE

**WORKERS internationally will be enthused by the election of a Labour government in Australia.**

Malcolm Fraser of the coalition government called the General Election on the question of 'Who runs the country?', just like Edward Heath did in February 1974 during the miners strike. Fraser received the same answer as Heath. Labour

under the leadership of Hawke got over 50% of the popular vote.

It looks like Labour have got a majority of up to 29 in the House of Representatives although they have not got an overall majority in the upper house, the senate.

According to the Times 'Fraser badly misjudged the mood of the electorate by offering them only more blood sweat and tears when most people felt they had enough

of belt tightening. Mr Fraser's campaign offered only negatives and lacked optimism.' That is a real mandate to the incoming Labour Government to introduce socialist policies to overcome the problems in the economy.

However one of the main slogans of the Hawke campaign was one of 'National Unity'. Any attempt to solve the economic crisis by unity between the trade unions and

the employers' organisations will mean workers not bosses paying for the crisis and to a waning of support for the Labour government. But a bold campaign to implement a socialist programme, including the takeover of the commanding heights of the economy, would receive enormous support.

By Heather Rawling

### CHILE:

Bankers exposed but bankers rule on

**ROLF LUDERS, one of the "Chicago boys", the monetarist disciples of Milton Friedman, has been dismissed from his post of Finance and Economy Minister in the Pinochet government in Chile. It is the third**

**cabinet reshuffle by the military regime in under a year.**

Bayonets and hardships for the Chilean masses have not solved the "grave economic social and moral crisis" and the "developing chaos" that the junta used as their rationale for seizing power nearly ten years ago.

It was mainly the disastrous plight of the banks and finance companies that brought about the sacking.

Chile's capitalists, encouraged by the thought of the military junta defending their profits, borrowed

heavily from foreign sources for their investments in recent years and have been hit by the world capitalist recession. Chilean money is invested abroad, while foreign money is no longer reaching Chile.

Largest debts

Many of the large banks ended the year with hardly a peso to their name. The government stepped in to liquidate eight banks and finance companies and to

renegotiate \$2.8 billion foreign debt obligations which were due in 1983 and 1984.

The government's original intention to disown the private debts seems to have been abandoned when they realised the debts of the banks exceeded their total assets. If the private sector had welched it would have left the banks holding the monetarists' baby, and would have ruined credit ratings for industry, banks and government. Chile has one of the largest per capita debts of any country in the world.

Leaders of some of the troubled banks were under virtual house arrest awaiting investigation. The Central Bank president Carlos Caceres and Miguel Martin, a friend of Pinochet and leading shareholder in the private Banco Sudamerico have not suffered this fate. They have been made Finance and Economy minister respectively!

The scapegoats have been sent into the desert but Pinochet and the ruling class are determined that the same vicious gang of generals, bankers and "safe" civilian politicians will govern Chile.

### GREECE

Coups and rumour of coups: the right threatens, workers respond

RECENTLY, there has been speculation of a coup attempt against the PASOK socialist government in Greece. Army manoeuvres on 27 February of 'exercises of limited readiness' late at night in and around Athens led to the 'rumours'.

Despite official denials by both the PASOK government and representatives of the ruling class, it strongly appears that an attempt at a coup, even if half hearted, has been made against the PASOK government possibly to test the reaction of the workers to a coup. Within days, 14 generals and two Air Marshals were retired in a move by PASOK to stop manoeuvres by army officers.

Despite the 'hush hush' of PASOK, the working class have given an immediate reaction. Throughout Greece there have been meetings of PASOK and Communist Party rank and file to discuss the events of the coup attempt and how to fight against it.

Workers manned party offices on stand by. In Salonika students massed at the university. Later, they were joined by workers and demonstrated in the streets chanting, "Fascism will not pass", and "No to the new coup", and demanding that the government tell the truth about the weekend's events.

There have been demonstrations all over Greece. 100,000 demonstrated in Athens on Thursday evening. Originally, the demonstration had been called against US bases but it was transformed into a demonstration against the army.

From reports, it is obvious that at this stage, the army's rank and file would be unreliable in a right-wing coup. Soldiers' committees demanding trade union rights and supporting PASOK have been formed.

The workers' reaction to a coup attempt explains why the ruling class are trying to deny that an attempt took place. They fear that if it was admitted that the Greek ruling class were trying to overthrow PASOK, there would be a civil war which they could lose.

Why are the PASOK leaders trying to cover up for the ruling class? Far from doing this, PASOK leaders should learn from recent Greek history of the colonels' junta and the pre-war Metaxas regime. The Greek capitalists are looking for a chance to overthrow PASOK. PASOK must go on the offensive and mobilise the workers to transform Greece along socialist lines.

By Tim White

# Letters

IEWS? COMMENTS? EXPERIENCES?  
CRITICISM? WRITE ABOUT THEM TO  
MILITANT, Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

## Thatcher exposes Siddall

Dear Comrade,  
"New jobs are being created, says Thatcher", was the *Sunday Times* headline. Despite the title I read on: a report of a Thatcher speech. I found two remarkable statistics, I couldn't but accept, (I mean who ever heard of statistics being wrong).

The opening argument said wages were forced up by nearly 350% during the '70s but the increase in output was "a miserable 15%".

Well, 15% output in 10 years is miserable, but that is only to be expected from this system. I know it's miserable because I spent three years out of work.

But it wasn't the 15% output that really caught my eye it was the 350% wage rise in 10 years, which got me thinking (and adding and multiplying).

After a lot of hard multiplying, my somewhat rusty maths arrived at my present earnings of £600 a week.

Wait a minute, I don't earn £600 a week, where has all this back pay gone? The



shop stewards told us we were only getting 5% again this year.

My rusty maths soon blocked the pay office with back pay enquiries, to no avail. When I took another look at it I thought, perhaps someone else had it.

Then like a flash I realis-

ed where my back pay went Siddall, the NCB Chairman—after all he just got a £165 rise.

Yours fraternally,  
Nigel Thomas,  
Loughor,  
Glamorgan.

## Listen Mrs T

Dear Comrades,  
Is it any wonder that, after the Labour Party's disgraceful show of dis-unity (entirely due to the right-wing of the NEC and PLP), Peter Tatchell had such a crushing defeat in the Bermondsey by-election?

If, as the Tory media would like everyone to think, he lost because of his left-wing views, then why was it not John O'Grady (a rabid right-winger if ever I saw one), who beat him with a 9,000 majority, and not Simon Hughes?

Mrs Thatcher expressed her happiness that the "Militant element" of the Labour Party had been beaten!

Well I've got news for you Mrs T—we're not beaten yet, and if you and your media are worried about us then we must be doing a good job!

Yours fraternally,  
Michelle O'Neill,  
Washington LPYS.

## FPG assault force

Dear Comrades,  
The Tories remind me of the German Nazis, giving kind names to vicious policies.

The latest after the "Housing 'Benefit' Scheme" is the Family Policy Group, quickly dubbed the FPG, because it will be an assault force like the SPG. It would destroy the Social Services.

Granted, Newcastle is one of the better authorities (Labour) with free travel and very good day centres which means that old people can travel to cheap markets for food and get a bit of company. But the pressures on

the social services are enormous. And if it wasn't for home helps (two hours a week!) and neighbours some of them would lead desperate lives.

For instance, the old lady who lived next door, 87 and almost blind and very deaf relied on us (me 66, my husband 76) for company and errands. We were out all one day and when we came back, she was lying on our path with a broken hip and died of hypothermia.

The government's plan in the FPG to make people 'self reliant' is a sick joke for people like this.

Daisy Rawling,  
Newcastle East CLP,  
Member of Old Age Pensioners Association.

## Press Bury social conscience

Dear Comrade,  
When the FOC of our NGA chapel stuck your front page article about media lies during the water strike on our canteen notice board I decided it was time the balance was redressed.

Despite the views expressed in the left wing press there are NUJ members around the country who don't work for *Militant*, the *Morning Star* or the *Socialist Worker* who have a social conscience and believe in telling the truth during industrial disputes.

Please show a little moderation in your attacks on the press as last week I was accused of being a capitalist and a management lackey (where have I read that before) on a picket line. The strikers refused to speak to me and thus lost the chance to put over their side of the story to a fellow active trade unionist and Party member who would have given them a fair hearing.

Can I use your pages to appeal to all trade unionists in dispute to speak to their local papers. If necessary ask reporters to show you their NUJ cards but bear in mind the fact that if only the managers speak only the managers can get publicity. Thank you.

Miles Barter,  
Acting FOC *Bury Times*  
NUJ chapel,  
Chair, Bolton Branch  
NUJ.

## Capitalist Crisis

Dear Comrade,  
I have just finished reading *Capitalist Crisis or Socialist Plan*, a *Militant* pamphlet, and I found it very encouraging.

I particularly liked this passage from page 73:—"If General Motors is capable of planning of its worldwide operations (according to its own interests of course) why should not a workers' government in Britain apply the same system in planning the British economy?"

Yours fraternally,  
Kenneth B Stamp,  
West Sussex.

## Alternative shipyards

Dear Comrades,  
The article in *Militant* No. 638 mentioned the question of alternative work to combat shipyard bosses' closure plans.

In 1977 during the battle to save Western Shiprepairers on Merseyside, the unions drew up a 17-point plan for alternative work.

This included such things as a cleaning and repair facility for road oil tanker vehicles, structural and fabricated steel work, sand blasting work, also a design was submitted for a work boat to supply oil rigs.

The Western's Action Committee argued that if work was slack in their particular trade other work could be found.

Incidentally, the 1977 Labour conference passed a resolution from Wavertree CLP calling for the renationalisation of Westerns...yet another conference promise broken.

Yours fraternally,  
R Knights,  
Wavertree.

## Bermondsey and the left

Dear Comrades,  
In the wake of the Bermondsey bye-election it's clear that Fleet Street doesn't have the monopoly in slander and smear tactics.

David Whitefield's article in 26 February *Morning Star* claims as part of Peter Tatchell's defeat "canvassers openly sold *Militant* on the knocker—guilty or not Tatchell was tarred by ultra-left conspiratorial manoeuvres."

On this lie the *Morning Star* finds itself in the company of Fleet Street.

The check is that the CP stood against Labour and their candidate's magnificent 50 votes was nearly 100% less than the "Raving Loony Monster Party".

I await an honest analysis from the *Morning Star*.

Fraternally,  
Bob Faulkes,  
Hackney Central CLP.

## Golding's post-mortem

Dear Comrades,  
I have just watched the BBC 2 programme *Saturday Briefing*. John Golding was interviewed by three journalists.

He gave a post mortem on Bermondsey (blaming the defeat on Tatchell's "extreme" left wing views of course), talked about the leadership struggle and why he rejoiced about the expul-



Bermondsey's *Militant* Readers' Meeting. The by-election defeat for Labour only increases *Militant* supporters' fight for socialist policies.

sion of five good socialists from the party on the previous Wednesday.

He even "assured" the electorate that he would "deal with" any person involved with *Militant* who held positions of responsibility in the wards and constituencies.

He should use the television opportunities to explain Labour Party policy.

Yours fraternally,  
Paul Ellis,  
Garston LPYS.

## Monstrous

Dear Comrades,  
Amidst all the wailing and gnashing of teeth about the Bermondsey by-election, one feature stands out clearly for all to see:

Apart from Peter Tatchell, there were two other "socialist" candidates—Eden (Revolutionary Communist Party)—38 votes, and Gordon (Communist Party)—50 votes. Combined, these two had a total of

88 votes, that is 9 fewer than the idiot from the "Official Monster Raving Loony Party"!

Clearly, if the demand for a Tommy Steele monument (Lord Sutch's "manifesto") is more attractive than either of these parties then the place for all socialists is the Labour Party.

Comradely,  
Pat Seery,  
Cathcart Labour Party.



## workers' viewpoint

# Wet, dusty, dirty and dangerous

**IT WAS a real shock when I first came in contact with a three foot coal-face. I couldn't see it.**

I was walking along looking for the face. I said, "Where is it?"

They said, "That's it, down there." Just nine foot wide and only three feet high.

You may have to crawl along it perhaps for as much as 150 yards with only the light of your cap lamp. At our pit now the colliers who work the three foot seam won't stand being messed about. It's so repressive.

Often you're on a slant with water coming from the roof or floor. At Craig Merthyr mine, now closed, miners had to work in a three foot high seam which was six to seven inches deep in water.

Even at Brynlliw, you are sometimes clearing out the coal from under the water.

On a three foot seam you work without a break as you're wet throughout the shift. How long you're at any face depends on how far into the mine you have had to go. At my present seam I'm there for about three hours, as it takes so long to get to the face.

On TV you see miners getting into trains, spakes we call them, which take them miles into the mines, then in less than five minutes they are at their place of work. In most of South Wales, this doesn't take place.

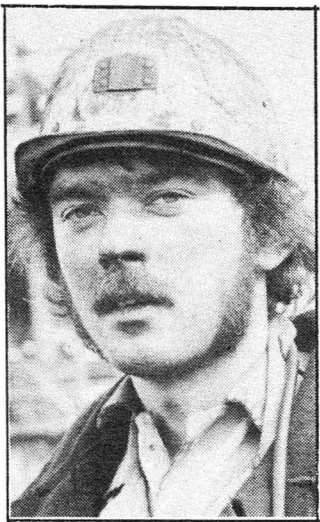
### Walk & crawl

Because of the faulting we have, it's just not on. At my seam now, we have one lift on a spake for half a mile. Then it's a walk for 300 yards, another spake down, a further 880 yards, and then a bloody big hill, a 'drift' about 110 yards long.

It's hard work, especially on the Monday morning, after the weekend before. Some of the old miners—and you work underground till you're 60—find it especially tough. They'll have a spell before they think of starting on the drift, then another in the middle and be gasping at the top. After that it's level.

Well I say level, but it's uneven with things in the way. And then after leaving the 'roadway' it's a walk, or crawl, to the face itself. It's ridiculous there's no transport. I mean every part of the mine where coal is cut, there's coal being transported out of the mine; it could easily be arranged so that men could be taken in. On my shift you get to the mine about quarter to six, go down at twenty to seven, but don't get to the face till half past eight, nearly two hours after going down.

The seam I'm working on now is six to seven feet high. I have to get the conveyor over to where the machine is



Meirion Evans, fitter to face-worker but now back on shifts thanks to cut-backs.

### Interview with Meirion Evans (Brynlliw Lodge, South Wales NUM)

I hated shift work, especially the night shift, walking through town to work at nine at night past music playing, and everyone dressed up to go out. But now with the cutbacks I'm back on shift work.

### Comradeship

What makes the whole job, however, is the people you're working with. There's no atmosphere quite like

working down a mine. The jokes swapped going to and from the face and if the machine breaks down, someone is soon on the tannoy swapping stories.

There's a comradeship as well. I remember one time when one miner was retiring, we secretly smuggled down a cake for him. At break time, everyone moved to the supply gangway, rigged up a table with a foil table cloth and placed on it his cake with 'Happy Retirement' decorated on it (no candles of course).

Up to four or five years ago the Coal Board did not issue you with free clothing. So people took any old coats to work in. A real strange assortment. They didn't give tool bags either.

I remember one character

carrying around his tools in his white handbag. You know Corporal Klinger in MASH—well that's where they got the idea from. One day one of the higher-ups came down on a visit and this guy went by carrying his white handbag. The higher-up couldn't understand what was going on.

### Stopping and starting

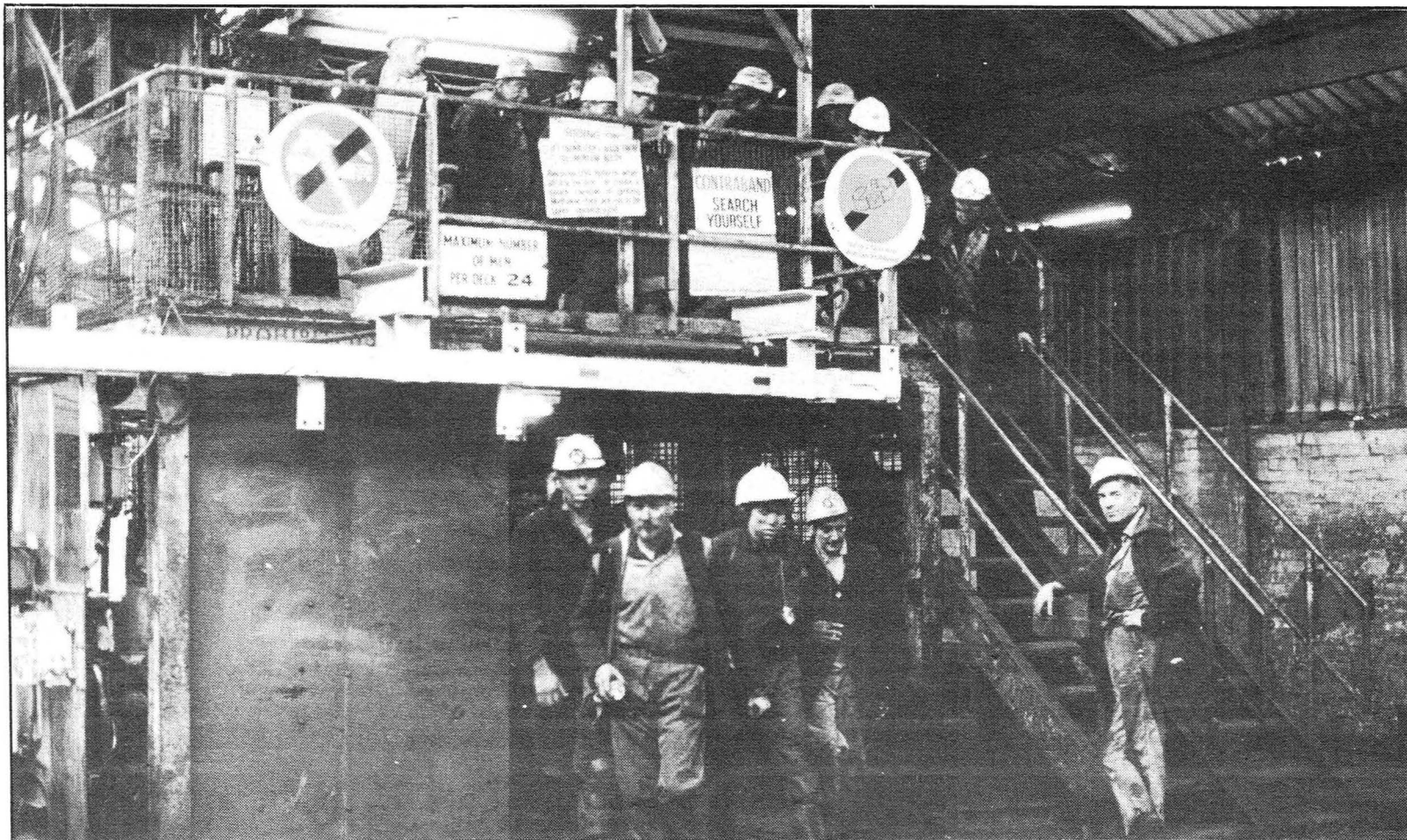
But it has been a real struggle to get decent clothes for the men. We now have overalls. The Board had objected, claiming that they didn't want to see miners in 'uniform'. Well we have won that battle. But we still have to fight to get decent

clothes, especially for men working in cold conditions. They have promised us thermal wear, but by the time we get them it will probably be summer.

We have had some successes since we showed our strength in 1972 and 1974. We have been encroaching much more on management over day to day matters.

We have to chase them up now to get decisions on such things as manpower. As far as we are concerned, we're there to produce coal. Men don't like standing around all day, stopping and starting.

The fight we're in now though is whether or not we're going to be standing around all day every day, unemployed waiting for work.



Miners leaving their cages at Brynlliw Colliery, South Wales. If this strike goes ahead they will savage the Tories.

PHOTO: Militant

cutting the coal and put up the steel supports. It can be noisy sometimes, with the motor of the conveyor belt and coal-cutting machine going. For those boring holes with air-compressed drills, noise is incessant.

### Shift work

Only recently have those miners been issued with ear muffs. And it's not possible for others, who have to listen out for the bells which monitor the running of the conveyor. On a face you can have anything up to twenty people working, with others, non-colliers, bringing in the materials.

When I first went down the mine, it was as a fitter. But I gave that up, because

## Drink up, gentlemen, please

ONCE we had a one-day strike that went into two shifts. It was over the water.

The management have to provide us with good clean wholesome water as part of the health and safety and the coal mines legislation.

There was something wrong with the drains, a burst or something, and the water was coming out a funny colour.

The water board man came out and everybody, all the gaffers were telling everybody that the water was OK.

They were holding it up and saying, 'well, this is good wholesome water' and we'd say, 'well drink it then.' We were just taking the mickey out of the bloke.

He must have drunk about a gallon of it. Then he refused to drink any more. So we said, 'there must be something wrong with it because you'll not drink it.'

The water man was the same. He was saying, 'it's alright, nothing wrong with it, good wholesome water'.

Suddenly one of the lads came running up, saying, 'don't touch any more,

there's five men down in first aid who've just collapsed with that water.'

They stopped the pit and they came out from Gateshead. We got our shift and everything paid at the time. The gaffer said we'd have to make do, but the lads just stood by and refused to do go down the pit. But they got paid for it.

It's important to have good drinking-water because of the dust. You can take tea but the flasks get broken easily down the pit.

We got the shift paid which proved they were try-

ing to tell us we were alright, but the men said no, 'we're not going to drink it..Why should we? Get us some good water and we'll go down the pit'.

One of the gaffers said, 'if it had been brown ale you'd have got drunk on it' and one of the lads said, 'yes and if it had been whisky it would have been fenced off for you lot'.

By Stan Pearce  
(NUM Wearmouth  
Durham)

# Industrial Reports

## GROSVENOR HOUSE STRIKE



Picketing outside Grosvenor House Hotel on 3 March.

PHOTO: Militant.

**TRUST HOUSE FORTE have sacked shop stewards and thirty other workers. Banqueting staff at the £85 a night Grosvenor House Hotel in Mayfair applied through their union the GMBATU, for contracts of employment.**

Trust House Forte's response was to sack their shop stewards—and later the 30+ workers who took

strike action in their support. The picket now is 24 hours—with pin-striped management goons also at the gates to intimidate workers into crossing the line.

They are employed on a loose basis; some weeks without work and other times doing a hundred-hour week. They suffer harassment and bullying, suspensions from work without pay for being off sick, delays of five months in receiving holiday pay.

Management are out to smash the union and maintain their workers on a Vic-

torian "be thankful we employ you at all" basis. Undoubtedly other hotel managements will be watching this dispute closely.

On Thursday night, with Princess Anne due to arrive for a stuff-your-face banquet, seven strikers were offered back their "jobs"—provided they dropped their silly fetish about having a contract of employment. But the strikers are out for real employment.

This hotel, with its idle rich guests, ruthless management, and Oliver Twist working conditions is a small scale model of the Britain the

Tories have in store for us unless we stand up to them and their class. Support the Grosvenor House strikers!

Financial assistance and physical support to the picket line. (Otherwise make cheques payable to GMBATU and address envelope to Grosvenor House Strike Committee, GMBATU Euston Area Office, 4-6 Dukes Road, London WC1 9AD.

**By Steve Poole**  
(Paddington Labour Party Young Socialists)

### CORRECTION

#### Flexible Ducting Strike

The address for support and donations to be sent is **Brian Christie, 61 Drumore Rd, Glasgow 15. The strike against sacking of subconvenor Andy Martin is still solid.**

## Universal Redundancies

UNIVERSAL workers at Stafford have been told that 150 will lose their jobs. So much for statements by Tory ministers of the recession coming to an end. The firm has been on short-time since last November, and in fact the workers have not worked a full year since Thatcher came to power.

Although there can never be a good way to tell a worker he's been made redundant, the way the company handled this is nothing short of disgraceful. The redundancy programme was announced on Monday and the workers were led to believe names would be announced on Friday at 9 o'clock. As Friday approached so did the apprehension and fear amongst the workforce. Then, on Friday morning workers heard that they would not be told until 2.15 pm.

The workers downed tools, and demanded to know if they still had a job, some sat down and others did very little during the day. As they waited for 2.15 to arrive, nerves were stretched to breaking point. One bloke smoked his first fag since he gave up 14 years ago.

The management had twisted the knife by saying that this redundancy programme will only provide a short-term improvement, and that: "Further protective measures will be required to ensure the viability of the company." This had increased the fear and the sense of helplessness amongst the workers and so cut their resistance.

The foremen began to call the men, one at a time, into his office. All each man could do was sit and hope they would not be called. The feeling when the foreman approached was sickening, and groups of men froze.

Some AUEW members were asked what they could do if they felt they could win, "In the absence of a Labour government the trade unions must organise the fight against redundancies on a national basis, linking it to the need to bring down the Tories and elect a Labour government committed to socialist policies to end the misery of mass unemployment."

**By Dave Griffiths**

## BREL HORWICH workers defend jobs

**WORKERS in British Rail Engineering Ltd. (BREL) see the so-called offer to Shildon workers as a sick joke.**

The figure of 500 jobs saved which featured in the press has been called exaggerated even by the management.

One BREL worker at Horwich said that you have to be over 18 years of age and live in Darlington in order to have any chance of having your job saved at Shildon. It's seen as nothing more than a cheap election gimmick with no guarantees after the by-election takes place.

The only way jobs will be

saved and the industry maintained will be through a serious fight conducted by all the unions involved.

At the workshops' delegate conference, last week, a Horwich resolution which called for industrial action if redundancies and closures were not rescinded was held in abeyance pending further discussions with management.

### No delay in fight

However, any delay in organising a fight to save the jobs and to halt the closures will be disastrous. The date for the run-down at Horwich

## Rouquinet Deroy

Joanna Slattery interviewed Mrs Brenda James, wife of one of the workers sacked in the dispute over shift system.

Mrs James told me how on the day of the last deadline she was phoned twice by the dye house manager who each time asked for her husband and then told her very forcibly that if her husband hadn't signed to go back by four o'clock he had lost his job for good.

She hadn't been the only one who was 'phoned up. It had been an organised attempt to pressurise selected workers to go back with others being told, unofficially, that they'd never be reinstated. Mrs James said all the wives she had spoken to were backing their husband a hundred percent, and having survived five weeks

they'd easily last a sixth week until they could claim dole.

Her final comment was, "I didn't know what Daleside (Rouquinet Deroy's other name—eds) was like until the strike or he (her husband) would never have worked there."

The workers are under increasing pressure. Their test case to claim benefits was lost. They were told they'd have to stop picketing before they could claim full benefits.

Donations and messages of support to Daleside-Hadden strike committee, Martin Lawson, 1 Eugene Gardens, Meadows, Nottingham.

**By Joanna Slattery**  
(Nottingham East YS)

## Bury council workers strike to keep service

ON Wednesday 2 March, staff and manual union members employed by Bury local authority staged a successful one day strike in protest at the council's underhanded proposals to sell off the bins service.

The council had previously agreed not to go private in March 1982. However, the Tories were re-elected and decided again that they wanted to go private and put the service in the hands of some 20th century robber baron.

The unions took the case to the North West Provincial Council which ruled that the unions were right and that the council should not go out to tender but should talk to the unions about improving the existing service—if that was possible!

The Tory Council, even then, were not prepared to listen to the unions, even

though the union side came up with a new system for the bins that could have saved the authority £430,000.

The strike of over 2,500 people from NALGO, AUEW, GMBATU, NUPE, T&GWU and EETPU, brought the authority to a standstill. Libraries, admin buildings and schools were all shut.

The bin wagons stood unused in the depots and all town centre car parks stayed shut. MATSA members refused to cross picket lines at the town centre college and made it only half-operative.

The action was given full support by the public who stopped to talk to pickets and tooted their car horns as they drove past.

**By Dave Greenhalgh**  
(Bury NALGO and Secretary of Prestwich and Whitefield LPYS)

campaign to defend jobs please write or telephone:

**Keith Sherrington**, / Shaftsbury Avenue, Lostock, Bolton, Tel Bolton 292611;

**Ron Hardman**, 467, Gloucester Avenue, Horwich Tel Horwich 691310;

**Stan Davis**, 51 Fernhead Avenue, Horwich Tel Horwich 692503

**By Gerry Lerner**

At Horwich, the action committee is still organising propaganda locally and building up their fighting fund reserves. They're planning a local charity concert to raise money with the backing of local artists and they've organised raffles. If you want to help the Horwich workers in their

# Industrial Reports

The interviews carried in the paper this week were done before the result of the vote on national strike action was known. Nevertheless, we hope readers will find them informative about the conditions, problems and mood in coalfields around the country. You certainly won't get the truth from the bosses' press.

## Divisive tactics

**Militant interviews Tyrone O'Sullivan, Secretary, Tower Lodge, S Wales NUM.**

Two major things here are going to affect us. First the refusal to invest in the replacement anthracite plant at Aberavon. This is a smokeless fuel plant that takes coal from seven pits.

£50 million is needed to give it a future, a very small figure today but it has been turned down completely by Norman Siddall, the Coal Board Chairman.

The other thing is the Margam mine. If we are to develop any future at all in South Wales we need new mines. We thought Margam would be a long term project but that's not the case. They don't want the coal that could be mined there, and this puts not only Margam but the whole future of coking coal at risk.

The Coal Board's strategy

is to import cheap coking coal from abroad when the steel industry picks up. The reason it's "cheap" is that it's highly subsidised. But South Wales produces the cheapest coking coal in Europe.

They don't want coking coal pits in South Wales, at least under present conditions and that's the truth of it.

There could be very rich privately owned anthracite deep mining in South Wales in years to come, and that would be their ideal situation. By promising anthracite miners a future and telling the coking pits that there's no money they are using a divisive tactic.

They want to mine anthracite in South Wales but not under the Coal Board. They're going to get rid of as many pits as they can, weaken the union, and then mine the profitable pits under private enterprise.

## S. Wales prospects

Billy Davies, Chairman Abernant Lodge NUM, South Wales spoke to Alan Woods.

Before the strike ballot there was an element of apprehension. Many asked themselves the question: 'Would we get the support of other areas, or would we end up fighting on our own?'

But since the vote in South Wales the feeling has grown stronger. Some of the boys who voted against the strike now tell me they'll be voting for.

There has been a certain turnover in the workforce in recent years. Many of the younger miners have had no experience of the big strikes of 1972 and 1974. We also

have the problem of bonus schemes which are clearly divisive. Yet once the chips are down, the strike here has been solid.

The NCB claim that the closure of Lewis Merthyr does not mean a loss of jobs but that is a load of nonsense. The jobs they talk about are on a one for one basis, they will send the men to other pits within a radius of 12 miles.

But what about the people in those other communities? The miners sent from outside will be taking jobs away from those places! Whichever way you look at it the closure means hundreds of jobs less for the future.

## Police undermined

On the picket lines I have noticed that we have had nothing but support from local people.

At a picket line which my father was on they were giving out sherry, cups of tea plus plenty of grub to go with it. So if you see any miners singing on the picket line you'll know what has happened.

Down at the Diamond Coal Reclamation works, while on picket duty we had a visit from two policemen in a squad car.

The discussion began over pay. One of the policemen in a comic way commented that the miners were earning a fortune. One miner replying said that "Thatcher had given her boys (policemen) a rise of 10%".

It was then pointed out to

us that it was a 5½% rise (below many workers) and 4½% was put automatically on to their pension donations. This was done without consultation with the vast majority of policemen.

He also pointed out that the PFGB (Police Federation of Great Britain), their so called 'union', had accepted the offer without taking any notice of the policemen whatsoever.

One officer said "with many ex-colliers in the force it's very difficult for us, my own father was a collier". To cap it all a policeman took a *Militant*.

**By Tudor Parsons**

(Blaenant NUM)



Photo: Denis Doran (Militant)

Kent miners coming off shift at Bettshanger. Despite their vote not to fight over Snowdown it looks as though they voted for national action against closures.

## 'It's not personal but....'

**Jack Collins, Secretary of the Kent Area NUM spoke to Eric Segal.**

EMPHASIS has been put on MacGregor being given the job of taking on the chair of NCB. But I don't think that the ballot should be down to personalities. It is not a personal fight.

I am opposed to all those that oppose the miners. If MacGregor is, then I oppose him, if Thatcher and the Tories are, I oppose them.

MacGregor is being brought in to smash the union and the Coal industry. This is a struggle over those things that Macgregor represents. It is important to

oppose arguments such as 'there is not enough coal' or 'too difficult to work'

The NCB would be foolish to pick a pit with a first class case. They are preparing to destroy the NUM and the industry. They will select collieries that look in their terms 'poor economic propositions'.

It seems their strategy is to pick off collieries ie Lewis Merthyr, divide the men and destroy the influence of the union. When that time comes it won't be just small pits going but big ones.

The Coal Board are trying to turn the struggle into an anti-Scargill attack. They called for a ballot. But we're not given the chance to vote on whether or not we agree with MacGregor getting his job. The ballot paper will ask if the NEC will give its authority for industrial action against colliery closures.

If the Kent miners wanted to think again, that would have to be considered by the area council. I personally would not object to that being raised. If the ballot goes the way it should, then the Triple Alliance should be brought on the scene. At all levels not just at the top.

## 'There will be other battles'

**Bill Mullins talked to Austin Fairest, secretary of the High Moor NUM, North Derbyshire and George Dolman, President, on 8 March.**

High Moor is one of the most militant and best organised pits in the Derbyshire coalfield. This interview took place as the High Moor miners were balloting on the strike.

Austin Fairest: "We expect at least 70% 'yes' vote from this pit".

George Dolman: "The lads here have learned that to make any gains you've got fight for them".

Austin: "We've put to the men the council decision last Tuesday to support the

South Wales lads, and they voted unanimously to stop work. That was the day-shift. There was only two against on the afternoon shift. The night-shift didn't even bother coming in. We stayed out till Monday.

"At the meeting on Sunday, the majority of the 400 attended thought a national ballot was unnecessary. Union policy was to oppose closures".

Both Austin and George explained some of the history of the pit. "The men opposed the introduction of the incentive scheme as divisive, but once it came in the only way to destroy it was to make it as expensive as possible for the NCB. The result is we are one of the

highest earning pits in the area.

"The lads keep meticulous records of output, breakdowns, etc, which means that every week we haggle with the gaffers over earnings.

"Unlike other pits, charge-men and heading charge-men (supervisors of work at the pit face) are nominated by the union. They are mostly members of the Lodge committee. They used to be gaffers' men. Not any more."

Asked about the outcome of the national ballot, they were unsure. But as Austin pointed out: "Even if it goes against, there will be other battles in the future".

## GRIMETHORPE DISTORTED

**Some members of Grimethorpe NUM have contacted Militant.**

They want to put the record straight about the meeting held on 2 March that called for a ballot.

Only 400 to 450 men out of 1700 attended it. "Grimethorpe already had a decision stating that Grimethorpe would stand by any pit threatened by closures. Why did the media, ask the members, home in

on one side of the argument, when it seems to have been only a minority view?

"At the following Saturday's special meeting, called to hear the executive's report, the meeting wholly supported the Welsh miners. Where were the press then?"

"If there had been no dissension at Grimethorpe, there is no doubt that cameras would never have arrived.

"Obviously the first

meeting at Grimethorpe was used by the media to attempt to explode a rift within the whole of the NUM. Instead of arguing amongst ourselves, showing a split, we need to unite as in the past."

**Bob Ellis, Mick Glover, Brian Gregory, (Grimethorpe NUM) personal capacity)**

## COAL TO GAS

If there was a proper co-ordinated energy policy, resources would be devoted to using coking coal for conversion into gas.

The technology exists to build plants throughout the country to provide gas, by burning about 50 million tonnes of coal a year. Oil companies like BP have, I understand, plans to build such a plant near Swansea.

The unions believe this would be an ideal plant for the coal from the new Margam mine, a mine which is nearly as big as the Selby coalfield. It has extensive reserves and would be capable of producing over 1 million tons every year for 40 to 50 years.

Unfortunately such is the crazy logic of capitalism that the Tories are not developing Margam because they claim there is no demand for coal.

**By IAN ISAAC (Secretary, St John's Lodge, South Wales NUM)**

## Durham

**Ray Physick talked to miners in Durham about the proposed action.**

**TOMMY CANNAN, General Secretary of the mineworkers of Durham:**

The hit-list implies that the weakest go to the wall while the strongest survive. Most Durham pits, even the likes of Wearmouth, Westoe and Easington, which are big pits and do not make heavy losses at this stage would be under threat when the likes of Selby started coming on stream. Then we would really be talking of possible closures of the big pits.

**GEOFF CAMPBELL is a member of Wearmouth Lodge:**

"Every young lad should vote and 'gan with his union. We've got 30 years to 'gan in this pit and we've got to fight for our jobs.

"If we don't support the union then we'll face massive job losses. We'll get murdered. It's as simple as that. If we don't support the union the NCB will make Durham something like Consett."

**JOHN SMITH of Dawdon Lodge:**

"A threat to one pit is a threat to all of us. If we all unite and stick together there is only one winner at the end of the day and that's the NUM."

**KENNY KING, Hawthorn Colliery:**

"There are no young 'uns being taken on. In ten years time, if there are any pits we'll have no manpower left. This strike should have happened years ago when the Robens Report came in."

**ALAN MARDGHUM, Wearmouth Lodge:**

"Twenty years ago you might have had another job to go to. Now there is nowhere to go. We have to stand and fight. There is no future in a place like Sunderland. The shipyards are going down. Wearmouth Colliery is the second biggest employer in Sunderland, Southwick dole is the biggest."

# OVER 3,000 HEAR MILITANT'S CASE

Workers have shown massive support for Militant in its fight to re-instate the five members of the paper's editorial board who have been expelled from the Labour Party.

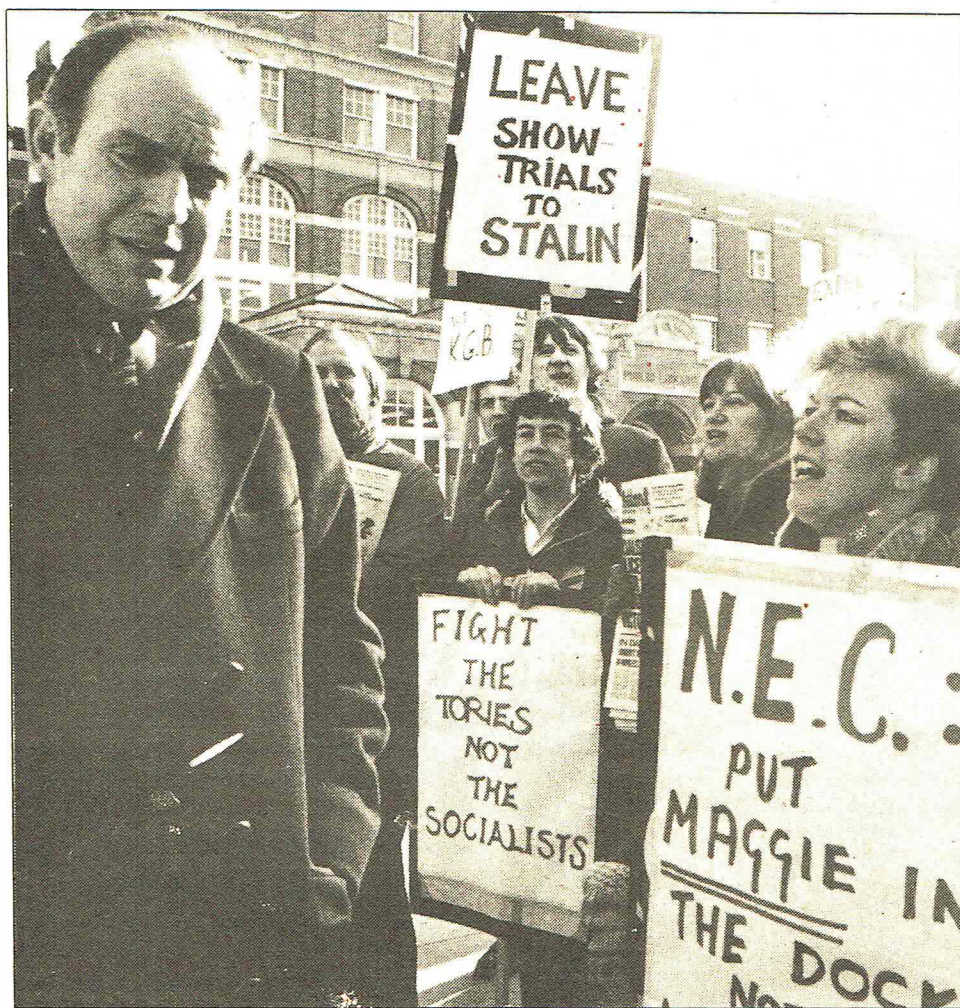
Over three thousand workers have attended the campaign meetings up and down the country in the past two weeks, with over £3,300 raised in collections at the meetings to help Militant fight the witch-hunt.

In the past week, 200 people attended the Liverpool readers meeting, 80 at Kirkby, 150 at Portsmouth, 70 in Hull, 85 at the Yorkshire Labour Party conference, 70 at Barking, and 40 at Leeds. No matter which part of the country Militant raises its banner, there is a thirst for Marxist ideas.

And right wing Labour MPs should take note of the success of the meetings held in their constituencies. At Small Heath, Birmingham (Denis Howell's constituency), nearly 80 crammed into a local pub to hear Peter Taaffe, editor of Militant.

He said it wasn't just a case of stopping the expulsions but it was vital to secure a socialist leadership of the labour movement. Pointing to the nearby Saltley coke depot, scene of the mass pickets in 1972, Peter explained that resolute action like that of the miners was needed then against Heath. Yet compared to Thatcher, Heath was like a 'cooing dove'. The labour movement must be even tougher now in the battle against Thatcher.

At Newcastle-under-Lyme (John Golding's constituency), there was an audience of 127, predominantly miners, engineers, electricians, secretaries etc. At the end of the meeting one pensioner asked if he could have a paper for nothing—he'd



Militant supporters lobbied Labour Party members on 23 February when the expulsions were carried out. Opposition to the purge is shown in the mass meetings addressed by the five editorial board members. Photo: Militant

given his last fiver to the collection!

A pensioner also made his mark at the meeting down south in Littlehampton. Giving a pound to the fighting fund he wished Militant good luck and told the meeting to 'get stuck into the right wing.' Even in a true blue Tory area like this, 80 attended the readers meeting, raising £186 in the collection.

When Keith Dickinson addressed a meeting in Ipswich, 40 people attended, which was more than the SDP/Liberal Alliance could

muster when they held a meeting with their 'hero' from Croydon Bill Pitt a week earlier! An excellent £70 was raised for the fighting fund. Full time TGWU official for agricultural workers in Suffolk, Peter Medhurst, chaired the meeting saying although he did not always agree with Militant, they had the right to put their views in the Labour Party.

Workers want to get on with the job of fighting the Tories which is evident where Labour Parties have turned out to the public to

build support for socialist policies. A splendid example is the meeting held last week in the mining area of Newbridge, Gwent where Tony Benn addressed a mass meeting of 700. Militant supporters went out to the pits and villages to build support for this meeting, selling over 150 papers.

It is becoming clearer with every day that the rank and file of the labour movement want nothing to do with the suicidal course of a purge and expulsions set for the Party by the right wing.

## Young miners

FROM PAGE ONE

win support from other workers.

The LPYS conference will be an opportunity for young miners, steelworkers, and railwaymen to get together and discuss how we can build the Triple Alliance.

The LPYS conference will discuss how to bring down the Tories and hammer out a socialist programme that can guarantee a future for all steel, coal and railway workers.

It is essential that every

young miner who is thinking about the future of his industry comes to LPYS conference.

Yorkshire NUM have already sponsored visitors to conference. Individual NUM lodges like Blaenant in South Wales have agreed to sponsor any young miner wishing to go to conference.

The LPYS in Yorkshire and South Wales have produced Young Miners' bulletins including appeals to the miners to join the LPYS and attend conference. These examples should be followed by every LPYS regional committee that

covers a coalfield.

In Kent the LPYS are arranging a rally with miners' leader Jack Collins speaking, and are confident of attracting many young miners to come along to conference.

Graham Williams from Manvers NUM in Yorkshire summed up why he is coming to conference.

"The most pleasing thing I've found since I've become active in the Labour Party is having seen the LPYS.

"The tremendous amount of work done by the LPYS in building a socialist Labour Party, raising the consciousness of older workers

as well as the youth reminds me of the words of a Russian philosopher who said 'On the side of the government there are only scoundrels bought with money squeezed from the poor. On the side of the people there is all that is fresh and youthful. All that is capable of thinking and doing. What is dead and rotten must of itself fall into the grave; all we have to do is give it a final push and cover the stinking corpse with dirt.'

"I'm coming to the LPYS conference and I'd urge every young miner to do likewise".

# Militant

## REPLIES TO THE EXPULSIONS

LAMBETH: Room 119, Brixton Town Hall, SW2, Thursday 10 March. Speaker; Clare Doyle.

SCOTTISH LP CONFERENCE: Waverley Hotel, Perth. 6.30 pm, Friday 11 March. Speaker; Ted Grant.

SOUTHERN LP CONFERENCE: Eastbourne, Saturday 12 March. Speaker; Clare Doyle.

NORTH WEST LP CONFERENCE: Blackpool, Saturday 12 March. Speaker; Keith Dickinson.

PRESTON: Wednesday 16 March, 7.30 pm. Speaker; Clare Doyle. Textile Centre, Sedgewick Street.

BLACKBURN: Trades Club, St Peters Street (off Freckleton St.). Thursday, 17 March, 7.30 pm. Speaker; Clare Doyle.

MEDWAY: Chatham Town Hall. 7.45 pm, Thursday 17 March. Speaker; Peter Taaffe.

BRIGHTON: Friday, 18 March. Speaker; Clare Doyle. See local sellers for details.

## Birmingham convenors oppose witch-hunt

The following letter has been sent to Moss Evans, General Secretary of the TGWU:

Dear Brother,  
We are appalled that Bro. Alex Kitson, our representative on Labour's National Executive Committee, voted for the expulsion of the Militant Editorial Board when last year the General Executive (of TGWU) came out incontrovertibly against witch-hunts.

We believe the interests of the TGWU membership will best be served by a Labour victory at the general election. The maximum unity against the Tories is therefore vital, and unity and purges are incompatible.

We demand that in future Bro. Alex Kitson adheres to the spirit of Union policy.

Yours fraternally,  
Ray Sherlock, Convenor TGWU Landrover, Bordsley Green, Birmingham.

Eric Charlesworth, Convenor TGWU BKL Extrusions, Kings Norton, Birmingham.

Joe Harris, Convenor TGWU Landrover, Solihull.

Ken Dell, Convenor TGWU MEM, Tyseley, Birmingham.

Ted Wise, Convenor TGWU Enfield Rolling Mills, Erdington, Birmingham.

Ian Schofield, Deputy senior steward Rangerover, Solihull.

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