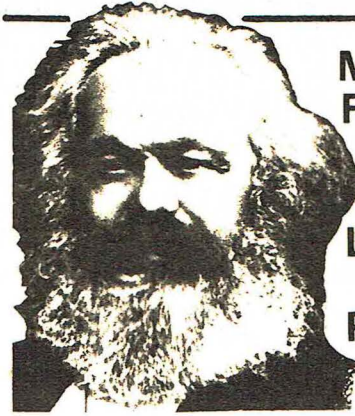


# Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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18 March 1983 20p



Marx Memorial  
Feature Pages  
7 and 10

Lessons of the  
Miners Ballot  
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# NO HOPE FROM HOWE



Photo: D. Doran

No hope! that was Howe's Budget message to the unemployed, the pensioners and in fact any workers struggling to get by on even average earnings.

It was only a "family" Budget if you were an aristocrat, a stockbroker or earned more than £600 a week. If not, then tough.

By Jim  
Chrystie

Steve Jones and Elaine Gibson live on a South London estate with their six year old daughter. They are both out of work, and don't see things changing:

"The Budget has given us no prospect of getting a job", they complained, "That's what we wanted...A job with a decent wage. All they've promised is that another 300,000 workers are likely to be joining us.

"We've got a 4% rise in social security and 65p more child allowance. They say the rate of inflation's about 5%, but for us it's about 15% in gas, electricity and rates. Children's clothes too.

"All our clothes come from second hand shops. The girl's coat was a Christmas present, but we have to save up to get her a pair of shoes. It's not a Budget for people like us, it's real Tory Budget."

Tory press propaganda has gone into overdrive, trying to con people. The increase in tax allowances are trumpeted as a massive benefit for everybody. "We're quids in", squawked the Sun. What they fail to point out is that despite these new tax allowances, ordinary people will still be paying far more in tax than when the Tories took office.

The rich will get ten times more than those in lowest

earnings. A married man earning even up to £300 a week will be only £2.02 a week better off. A single worker earning up to £240 a week will be £1.27 better off. A big part of these tax cuts will disappear, in any case, when the National Insurance payments go up in May.

On the other hand, the top earners will reap rich rewards. For those earning over £40,000 a year, single or married, the extra cash in hand amounts to about £20 a week.

Tyneside housewife, Sue Doyle told *Militant* that the Budget would not benefit her family at all: "The £2 extra in tax and 65p in child allowance won't even cover the gas bills. This winter our gas bill has gone up to £95 despite the fact that we used 80 therms less than last year. The Tories deliberately raised the cost of gas.

"Heating's important when you've got young children. You've got to keep them warm. This Budget's pretty pathetic really. There's nothing in it for us."

Not everyone's suffering however. We could not get an interview with the Queen, but she might not be unhappy to learn that her subjects are coughing up an extra

# Sack the Tories now!



"The Budget has given us no prospect of getting a job".

Photo: D. Doran.

Become a  
**Militant**  
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Name .....

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**Don't just take it.  
Fight back with the LPYS**

From the beginning of April, unemployed sixteen and seventeen year olds living with their parents will receive only £15.80 a week supplementary benefit.

This represents a cut of 16.4% from the present benefit level of £18.90.

The cut is due to the new Housing Benefits Scheme, under which the DHSS will treat under 18's living at home as dependents. This means that they will lose the £3.10 that they currently

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# Fleet Street champions Blackburn 'report'

**The General Committee of Blackburn Labour Party have voted for their party executive to carry out an inquiry into local Labour Party members following the so-called Gregory Report.**

This 'Report' consists of two documents written by ex-public schoolboy Michael Gregory. He claims to be a 'defector from Militant'; his report consists of personal calumnies, factual discrepancies, bogus historical details and political smears directed against *Militant* supporters in Blackburn. It is full of tales of secret caucuses and conspiracies etc. (these allegations were answered fully in *Militant*, March 4).

Those named in the report are some of the most active Labour Party members in Blackburn including GC delegates, leading members in the Young Socialists and Women's Council—it even puts the finger on one party member of nearly 50 years standing!

It is clear that the right wing in Blackburn have interpreted the expulsion of the five members of the *Militant* Editorial Board by Labour's National Executive, as a green light for a local witch-hunt. Incapable of answering politically the growth in influence of the ideas of *Militant*, they have used a snooper's report as an excuse to implement organisational and bureaucratic measures against their political opponents.

At the Blackburn General Committee on Monday, March 14, a regional Labour Party organiser was present who read out the constitution of the party—the procedure was that the GC could vote for the executive to carry out an inquiry into the affair and then come back to the GC with its findings. Many delegates were more than surprised to find however that, under constitutional procedure, **no discussion was allowed before this vote!**

The vote was carried by 34 votes to 19. But delegates who attend the GC regularly noted the larger than usual attendance, seeing many faces present who had not been seen for months on end.

With no discussion before the vote it was felt that some delegates were left open to the nonsense in the Gregory Report and the accompanying horror stories in the Tory press.

It has been a one sided affair. Gregory's two reports (about 40 pages in all) were circulated to all delegates through official Labour Party channels. Yet a reply by the Labour Party members named in the report to these scurrilous accusations was not allowed similar facilities.

Needless to say, the press both locally and nationally have trumpeted Gregory's Report. *Militant* would not accuse Michael Gregory and the Blackburn right wing of collusion with the Tory press. But no doubt some party members would ask if it was just pure coincidence that Gregory's first report appeared in the national press in the run up to the expulsions of the *Militant* Editorial Board on February 23, and the Bermondsey by-

**By a Militant reporter**

election a day later.

By a second 'coincidence', the second Gregory Report appeared in the *Guardian* on Saturday March 12 on the same day as the North West Regional Labour Party conference, and the weekend before the Blackburn GC.

Also the *Daily Mail's* northern edition, under the headline 'Revenge of the Left', carried an interview with Michael Gregory the day before the Blackburn GC. In the article Gregory claimed he had been physically attacked by an 'extremist' and he said he had suffered "threats of violence, strange phone calls and (was) constantly intimidated by extremists."

The Tory press seized on unsubstantiated allegations like these. The Fleet Street hacks must have been delighted to be handed dirt like this to throw at the Labour Party in the run up to the Darlington by-election!

With the coming general election it should be 'all hands on deck' for Labour Party members to fight for the return of a Labour government. *Militant* supporters in Blackburn have always fought hard to secure Labour victories in local elections. Even those that presently pursue the witch-hunt recognise this!

One right wing councillor at her ward meeting last week moved that five of the Labour Party members named in the report should be expelled. Yet two years ago, that same ward wrote to some of the *Militant* supporters she named, congratulating them on the work they put in helping out with canvassing—and helping that particular councillor win her seat!

Michael Gregory himself during the five occasions he attended the Blackburn LPYS (which has met regularly for the past four years) often called on the Blackburn Young Socialists to help him out with canvassing when he was selected as a prospective council candidate.

Indeed, at the North West Regional Labour Party conference held at the weekend the two democratically elected delegates representing Blackburn CLP at the conference, were two of the party members named by Gregory!

*Militant* supporters in Blackburn are confident that they can answer this political smear campaign, and that the ranks of the Blackburn labour movement will reject this local witch-hunt and demand that the Blackburn Labour Party leadership uses its organisation and machinery, not to peddle the myths of some poorman's Eddie Shoestring but get on with the task of fighting the Tories.



Labour candidate Ossie O'Brien talks to local workers

Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

## Labour must win Darlington

**"We've been married for five years and out of that my husband has only worked 3 months. He goes to the job centre every day but there's no chance of work. I'd like to hang Thatcher."**

This comment from a young unemployed woman was typical of the reaction on the run down housing estates of Darlington during canvassing for the by-election on 24 March. The mood on the doorsteps is definitely anti-Tory.

Labour are defending a 1,052 majority which is entirely possible to hold given the growing level of unemployment, especially amongst the youth and with the threat of the closure that is hanging over the nearby

Shildon works.

If Labour is to win it will depend on the party rank and file to get the policies across on the door step. We cannot rely on 'opinion poll elections'; the Tory press have not published their latest opinion poll findings for over a week now—presumably because Labour are ahead! The pollsters obviously wait till they get it 'right'.

The Tory vote looks likely to collapse in Darlington. But people are looking for an alternative and they must look to Labour to provide it. We cannot allow the SDP to get away with their usual ploy of putting themselves forward as a radical alternative and something new. It must be hammered home to the Darlington electorate that the SDP are yesterday's men with yesterday's failed policies.

The Labour Party na-

tionally is pulling out all the big guns, with public meetings addressed by the party leaders and front bench spokesmen. It is vital that Labour wins this by-election, but to do so it must be party policy that is at the forefront of the campaign.

The key to the election could be the youth vote. The SDP have recognised this and their leaflets cry crocodile tears about youth unemployment. Yet at the same time they support the 'mixed economy'—the very system that put 3 million on the dole.

Darlington LPYS have produced a youth leaflet which should go down well at the dole queues and the tech college. A regional LPYS day of action and a mass canvass will be held in Darlington on Saturday 19 March.

**By John Hird**

## CPSA leaders urge Labour vote

**THE CPSA National Executive Committee has submitted a motion to the union's Annual Conference in May urging members to vote Labour at the forthcoming General Election.**

The motion, submitted by full-time officer John Macreadie, was as follows: "Conference notes the attacks which are being made by the Conservative government on CPSA members' jobs, job security, living standards, working conditions, trade union rights and social services. Conference recognises that the re-election of a Conservative government would lead to further major attacks on members' interests, in particular through privatisation, manpower cuts, and cuts in public expenditure. The union's success in defending members' jobs, pay and conditions, depends to a large extent on the election of a government whose political policies will aid us in our work to defend CPSA members and working people generally. The National Executive Committee and

conference calls on all members to vote Labour at the forthcoming General Election—the only party that puts people who work for their living—or who desperately want to work—as their top priority."

The executive also agreed a separate motion for the conference from the union's General Secretary inviting the main political parties to submit their policies on the issues facing civil servants, and CPSA members in particular, and that their replies should be circulated to union members and the public for consideration prior to the General Election.

In separate developments at the NEC meeting, held on 10/11 March, the executive agreed to the proposed ballot rule for the membership ballot on re-affiliation of the union to the Labour Party. By law, this year's Annual Conference must agree the specific ballot questions and procedures to be used following the 1982 conference decision in favour of the principle of re-affiliation.

The date for the ballot has

not yet been fixed, but the campaign has now been launched by the executive in favour of re-affiliation.

The executive has also agreed to press ahead with proposals to go to this year's conference, for the election of the union's full-time assistant secretaries (National Officers), following the decision of the 1982 conference in favour of the principle of election and re-election.

Some Broad Left members of the executive were in favour of deferring the issue for a further year, to allow for discussions with the full-time officers' own union APEX.

But the majority of the executive agreed with *Militant* supporter, Pat Byrne, when he pointed out that the APEX deputation to the meeting had made it clear that they were opposed to the principle of election, not the particular method being proposed. Conference 1982 had agreed the principle of election and re-election, therefore the time for consultation with APEX on the principle question had been held and was now over.

## East Midlands conference

**The major issues facing the labour movement at present are to the fore in the resolutions for the East Midlands Labour Party Conference.**

Five resolutions are directly aimed at the witch-hunt. Delegates seeking a clear and comprehensive stand against the attacks on *Militant* supporters, the LPYS and CLPs should vote for the **AUEW Nottingham resolution, No 10**, as well as supporting **Nos. 11 to 13**.

The Tories' attacks on the infirm and unemployed have swelled the section on 'Welfare and Social Security'. **Resolution 19 from Harborough CLP** calling for the implementation of widespread reforms in work practice should be passed. **Mansfield's** resolution on the NHS, **55** goes beyond the working conditions to the root of the crisis.

The Tories' obsession with private profit makes the section on privatisation and public ownership major issues, so **Nos. 29 to 37** inclusive deserve to be carried. Undoubtedly the best method of integrating these various demands is offered by **Bolsover's resolution 39 (as amended)** which calls for the control of the commanding heights of the economy and meets workers' demands for a 35 hour week and a £90 minimum wage which will create the enthusiasm for its implementation.

It is particularly important at the present time that the section on coal and nuclear power is not only passed but campaigned on in the next year. Also **Nottingham East's** call for a local conference involving the NUM and the Save Energy campaign should be vigorously taken up in addition to its call for defence of pits.

**By Dave Jones**  
(Delegate Nottingham West CLP)





# Five Tory Budgets

## ALL TAKE - NO GIVE

**HOWE'S "gift" of tax relief was greeted with sycophantic joy by the Tory press.**

They won't tell you that four years of Tory government has left all but the very rich paying more tax than they did under the previous Labour government.

Remember the promises Thatcher and Howe came out with in 1979? "People need to keep more of what they earn, so that hard work, talent and ability are properly rewarded." That was Howe in his first outing as Tory Chancellor of the Exchequer. He called his nasty package an "opportunity budget".

Ask any worker misguided enough to vote Tory in 1979 why they did it, and only masochists would say they voted for four million on the dole, slashed services, deep recession and for most of the Tory term in office, raging inflation.

Working class Tory voters were usually disgusted with the actions of a right wing Labour government which hit workers' jobs and wages. Many people, though were

**By Roger Shrivs**

also beguiled by Tory promises of tax cuts.

Howe's reputation as a "tax-cutter" is nonsense. While he has been Chancellor, the level of personal taxation has risen sharply for all except the very highest earners. Workers are keeping less of what they earn.

For the very low paid, the news is even worse. Poor people are heavier taxed in Britain than in any European country. More low paid are liable to tax than when Thatcher came to power, while the wealthy are making a far smaller contribution, according to figures published by

the Low Pay Unit.

The starting rate for tax on the low paid was put up by Howe from 25p to 30p in the £, the highest in the EEC, for a two child family and tax now has to be paid on incomes **£25 lower than the official supplementary benefit poverty line.**

No less than 85 per cent of all those eligible for Family Income Supplement have part of it clawed back in tax. It was scandalous enough back in 1978 when the figure was only 60%. But nobody except the very rich has benefitted from Tory tax measures. A look at successive budgets shows why:

★ **The June 1979 budget** cut the top rate of income tax, and brought down the basic rate from 33p to 30p in the £ and also raised the thresholds at which different levels of tax were paid. But at the same time they nearly doubled the rate of Value Added Tax from 8% to 15%.

Indirect taxes like VAT always affect the lower paid far more than the well off and far more than direct taxes on income. The tax cut only saved a married man with two children £3.75 a week out of £90 a week. This was more than eaten up by the VAT increase, by doubling of prescription charges, cuts in services, higher interest rates, dearer cigarettes, petrol, etc.

The executive on £30,000 a year, though got 4,329 more pounds in his oversize pocket. Half the country's surtax payers were exempted from payment and the rich got one of the lowest top rates of taxation in the advanced capitalist world. It was the lowest maximum rate of taxation in Britain for half a century. But what has happened since then?

★ The Tories introduced their **1980 budget** as part of a "medium term plan" to revive the economy. That was at the beginning of what has now become 39 consecutive months of rising unemployment. The Tories now need a "medium" to contact the economy, let alone revive it.

The labour movement has squeezed some concessions

out of the bosses over the years for workers thrown on the scrap heap, and now over three million people have to be paid at least a certain minimum level of social security. At the same time, there are fewer in work, so even though services have been slashed, more money has to be raised in taxes from fewer people. Taxes now represent 40% of national output compared to 34% in 1978-79.

In 1980's budget, alongside reduced services, increased charges and the abolition of earnings related benefit came plans to tax sick pay and social security and the ending of the 25% reduced rate taxation band for low incomes. The good tax news was only for the Tories and their pals. Corporation tax came down and "entrepreneurs" in free "enterprise" zones were offered cheap factory space with practically no taxation, rates, etc. Already for the bulk of the population though, taxes had never been higher.

★ This was made worse by the **1981 budget**. Despite an official inflation rate of 15%, tax thresholds were left unaltered and hundreds of thousands of the lowest paid were liable for tax for the first time in years.

At a stroke, costs for the poorest went up by 6%, for the average worker by 4% while the £600 a week executive once more got off with a mere 3% rise in prices.

★ Even when the **1982 budget** did bring up the tax thresholds they still lagged behind 1980 levels. And while the Tories were giving with one hand they were taking back through increased national insurance contributions.

The overwhelming majority of the population are paying more in income tax now than under the last Labour government. To restore tax levels of all kinds, direct and indirect, to the 1978/79 level would cost £9,000 million—**equal to a 9p in the £ drop in income tax.**

National insurance contributions have also gone up from 6.5% in 1978/79 to the new rate of 9% due to start on 1 April, despite a 5% cut in NI benefits so that a sick, disabled or unemployed male with a wife and two children would be £5.50 worse off than before, and even though earnings related benefit which workers paid in for years is now just a memory.

Taking income tax and NI together, only those people earning over £30,000 a year are better off. How many *Militant* readers reach that level of pay? Those on average or below earnings are far worse off, particularly given the crippling level of indirect taxes like VAT.

Thatcher's government have given us an extra two million on the dole and vastly increased spending on Cruise missiles at the expense of useful expenditure. They have also handed us the bill.

All the "incentives" to the rich have not stopped the British economy sinking into serious decline, but our lives have been made harder by these Tory tax plans.

The Tories now have to face an election in the next year. Income tax concessions as a bribe to voters are nothing new for Tory politicians. But they can't hide the facts. Overall the tax burden on the working class is still far heavier than in May 1979.

## No hope from Howe

Continued from front page

£217,217 this year. It's a real Royal Family Budget for them. They will get a full £4,833,900; and that's before all their income from shares, land, investments, etc.

Most old age pensioners are going to have to wait until November for their miserly 4% increase. Only one gets her rise now—the Queen Mother. And her 4% rise means an extra £15,000 (£300 a week) kitty, giving her a pension of a third of a million pounds.

And as Howe tells us that this is a 'family' Budget, the royal youngsters don't miss out. Prince Edward is getting £20,000 this year, just because he's nineteen. Other unemployed youngsters are not so lucky. When we asked Tyneside youth Steve Corkhill, who's been unemployed for two years, what he thought of the Budget, he told us: "you can't print how I really feel, it's unprintable."

There's no hope for the unemployed in Thatcher's Britain. Because of Tory economic policies, a further 1,000 jobs will be lost each day, every day, throughout the rest of this year. Bankruptcies are running at the record rate of 30 a day.

On Budget day itself, Littlewoods announced that 1,900 jobs are under threat on the Clyde.

In his speech Howe boasted that the Tories had cut the numbers working in the Civil Service by 80,000 since they came into office, and that 24,000 more would go in the next year. That means more unemployment and a worse service for those on welfare.

And the treatment of pensioners and those subsisting on social security by Chancellor Howe is disgusting. He has deliberately cut their benefit by 2%, by altering the date on which



Margot Spear, a single parent living in South London commented: "This Budget gives me just £1.50 more. If I was a young stockbroker, I'd get about £17. My girl's ten years old and a new pair of shoes costs £17, that's eleven weeks increase."

benefits are calculated. Instead of basing the new benefits on the annual inflation rate up to November, when Howe calculates inflation will have risen to 6%, he has changed the date to May, when he expects inflation to only be running at 4%.

In his speech, he tried to claim that those who had made the sacrifices in the past would now get the benefits. How sick. He has sacrificed millions to the job scrap-heap for the benefit of the rich and their profit system.

Pensioners, who have given a lifetime of work are treated to a pittance. Earlier

this year pensioners lobbied Parliament for a decent benefit. One pensioner who went on that lobby told us what she thought of Howe's response:

"We asked for two-thirds of the average wage, which would mean something like £100 a week. We have no power. We eat little meat and don't drink. What spare money we have goes on entertainment, reading books and TV. A 4% increase will only mean an extra £2.10 for us as a couple."

But whilst she and her husband try to get by on a third of average earnings, the Tories are rushing to hand out money to the rich.

Their youngsters at Eton and other public schools still deemed to be charities will benefit by this Budget, because grants to charities are now totally tax free.

Tory business supporters will benefit. The oil companies have been given an immediate £800 million in tax concessions with more to follow. In a cynical election ploy, £100 million has been given to small engineering firms in the West Midlands, where there are eleven marginal parliamentary seats.

None of the measures in the Budget will lead to sustained economic growth, or any reduction in unemploy-

ment. None of the measures will reduce the bitterness and hatred that working people feel for this Tory government. On the contrary, they will increase their determination to ditch this government at the earliest possible opportunity.

● **Brian Millet, who is on a long-term disability pension, commented:**

"The 4% rise will not even cover my increases in rent, garage, rates and general living expenses. If you're earning over £30,000, you'll get help, but there's nothing for me."

Photo: Militant.



# £50,000 needed by April 9

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 9th April
Eastern	1457		2700
East Midlands	1148		2850
Humberside	468		1500
London East	1474		3300
London West	558		1650
London South	1235		2500
Manchester & Lancs	1035		3000
Merseyside	1353		3100
Northern	909		3750
Scotland East	449		1850
Scotland West	776		2800
Southern	1324		4000
South West	688		2000
Wales East	368		1500
Wales West	346		2000
West Midlands	951		2800
Yorkshire	1103		3700
Others	889		5000
<b>Total received</b>	<b>16,540</b>		<b>50000</b>

# 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

**TUC WOMEN'S CONFERENCE**  
*Militant* Readers Meeting "What we stand for" on Thursday, 17 March, 7.30 pm at Library, Vernon Street, Scarborough. Speaker: Margaret Crear (Chairperson Rochdale Labour Women's Council).

**SHIPLEY Marxist Discussion Group.**  
Thursday, 24 March "Socialism and war". Shipley Pride, Shipley at 8 pm.

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

**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.

**OLDHAM, Sunday 20**  
March at 2.30 pm on "The fight against unemployment and racialism".  
For further details phone: 061-226 3189.

**Militant Readers Meeting, NORTHWICH:** Thursday 24 March at 7.30 pm, at the "Lion and Railway", opposite Northwich BR station.

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

**ROCHDALE:** "Fight the expulsions". Tuesday 29 March, 7.30 pm. Lamplighter Club, Dane Street, Rochdale. Speaker: Peter Taaffe.

## 4 weeks left to treble our money!

When the right-wing launched their witch-hunt, they suffered from the delusion that they could destroy Marxism. But all they have done is to 'expel' the ideas deeper into the labour movement.

And judging from our postbag more and more workers are attending our readers' meetings and backing us with cash.

This week we have received our largest ever contributions from readers meetings, outside national events such as the LPYS conference. A magnificent £1,224 has been raised at local meetings up and down the country.

Over £100 was raised both at meetings in Newcastle and on Teesside, and over £70 in Stevenage. Further donations came in from Southampton, Falkirk, Paisley, Sheffield, £179 in Portsmouth, over £100 in Cardiff, £50 in Lambeth, £186 in Chesterfield, over £50 in Waltham Forest, £70 in Ipswich, well over £50 in Norwich, £150 on Merseyside and so on. Thanks to everyone who contributed.

A special mention this week must go to John, a seventy-year old pensioner from Motherwell. John is suffering from cancer, but

he has told local sellers that he wants to make a regular £5 contribution to our fighting fund for as long as he can, because he is determined that future generations should be able to enjoy the benefits of a socialist society.

The attitude of the movement's rank and file can be seen by the collection Manchester Airport workers had for us, the £25 which came from delegates at the TUC Youth Conference and the tea money which came from a nurses' home in Scotland. Nearly £2 in 'extras' came from Derbyshire miners buying *Militant* this week, while members of NALGO and ASTMS sent in their expenses. Thanks to those at the Scottish EETPU conference, and especially to Torness workers, including steward J Greechan, who donated £7.00.

Thanks to Labour Party members, including those in Stevenage and Hampstead who contributed to our funds at GMC's, and to delegates and visitors to the London Labour Party conference who attended our meeting, and young socialists in Fransworth, Gosforth, Benton, Edinburgh, Paisley, and in the West Midlands. Portsmouth Poly Labour Club sent us a fiver.

Individual donations of

£20 or over came from D Etheridge (Ipswich), H Watson (Glasgow AUEW), S Knolly (S London), student J Ellen (Kent) and a supporter in Saddleworth, Lancs, £21.50 was collected on an appeal sheet on Tyneside, and tenners came from J Riach (Strthclyde NALGO), M Housby (Newcastle N LPYS) whilst £22 and £15 came in respectively from Bristol readers J Bleaken and J Bailly.

Thanks to the following for £4 or over: J Stevenson, (retired Clydebank) £6, J Harris (Croydon) £5, Susan's Dad (Barnsley) £5, 3 Lanark NALGO members, M McColloch (Camden), S Forster (Sparkbrook YS), R Saunders (UCATT London), S Barrett (Hitchen, M Rabbley (Washington), and A Boardman (Little Houlton LPYS, Lancs). Smaller amounts came in from a

number of other comrades, including M O'Connor (Edinburgh UCW), G Gasson (Cardiff), I Smith (Bournemouth), D Murray (water worker, Rochdale), Abby from Dagenham—a very young socialist, G Coles (Penarth), a Lake District holiday-maker, among others.

We need £33,500 in the next four weeks. This sounds a big figure, but what's at stake is large in comparison: no less than the guarantee of a future of our class.

Henry Richardson (secretary, Notts NUM and NEC member NUM) paid £1 for his paper this week. How many people do YOU know who would be willing to do the same? And have they been asked?

By Steve Cawley

## THIS WEEK: £3,196

### 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.

## NEW SALES BOOM

Everywhere *Militant* sellers have gone on the streets, a tremendous success has been recorded. In the build up to readers meetings in Blackwood, Gwent between 150-200 were sold; at a Tony Benn meeting in Newbridge, Gwent—150 papers were also sold.

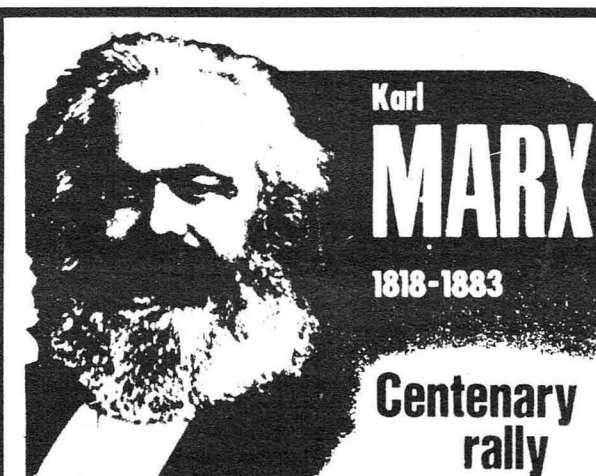
In Ipswich 40 papers were sold in a street sale before the readers' meeting. Our centre pages on the miners' dispute has had a great response, following the previous week when nearly all the areas with pits sold out of papers. It is vital that all sales at pits are continued as there will be new battles in the months to come.

Many more areas are reporting increased sales this week. They include:

Craigton (Glasgow), Eastbourne, Northwich, Port Talbot and Ellesmere Port. Excellent sales were reported from the NUS demos and all student sellers should ensure that weekly sales are held on every campus. One of our readers in Caernafon (North Wales) asked his local newsagent to sell *Militant*. This initiative should be followed everywhere.

If you wish to join the growing army of *Militant* sellers, please contact: *Militant* Circulation, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN, or phone 01-986 3828

P.S. Any seller not going to LPYS conference and can sell at the CND Demo's at Greenham Common, Aldermaston or Faslane, please contact Circulation.

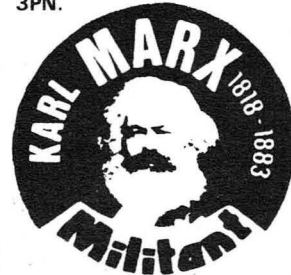


This year is the centenary of the death of Karl Marx, who died on March 14 1883. Throughout his life, Marx provided the labour movement with an analysis of capitalist society as a preparation for the emancipation of the working class.

### CLASSIFIED

**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.



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

**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 Road, Broadstone, Poole.

**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 Ballad (0223) 211229.

### MISTY IN 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.

### RALLY IN SUPPORT OF PARTY POLICY ON THE EEC

Tuesday March 22, Congress House, Great Russell Street, WC1. 7.30 pm.

Speakers: Jim Mortimer, Tony Benn, Jo Richardson, Ron Todd, Richard Balfe, Alf Lomas, Glenys Thornton, Jim Jayzell, Barry Seal.

Chair: Judith Hart.

Sponsors: Group of six MEPs Against the Market, GLLP, RACS and CRS London Region Political Committees; SERTUC, T&GWU Region 1 and over 50 other Labour Movement Organisations.

*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. 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.

**LIVERPOOL:** Sunday 20 March, 12.00. Speakers: E Grant, T Harrison. AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant.

**NORTHERN REGION:** Saturday 26 March, 10.30 am. Speaker: J Pickard. The Oval Community Centre, Concorde, Washington, Tyne and Wear.

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



# Police charge Colin Roach demo

The demonstration by black and white people in Stoke Newington, East London, over the death of Colin Roach at the local police station, again erupted into violence as police waded into the march to make arrests.

Right from the start of the 300 strong demonstration it was clear, given the large number of police present with others in coaches and vans parked up the side roads, there was going to be trouble.

The mood of the demonstration was one of restrained anger towards the police and the authorities for not allowing an independent inquiry into Colin's death.

## Tension heightened

I was near the front of the demonstration where the majority of black people were. There were constant incidents involving the police constables pushing the black demonstrators and the black youth responding by pointing at the officer shouting "beast, beast..."

Instead of removing the PC concerned, the inspectors after a brief talk decided to leave them there which only heightened the tension.

When we finally arrived at Stoke Newington police station, speeches were made from the back of a van, calling for an independent enquiry with no cover up.

All London LPYS branches should put pressure on Labour councillors to call for an independent inquiry. The Stoke Newington police's record of harassment of black workers is notorious.

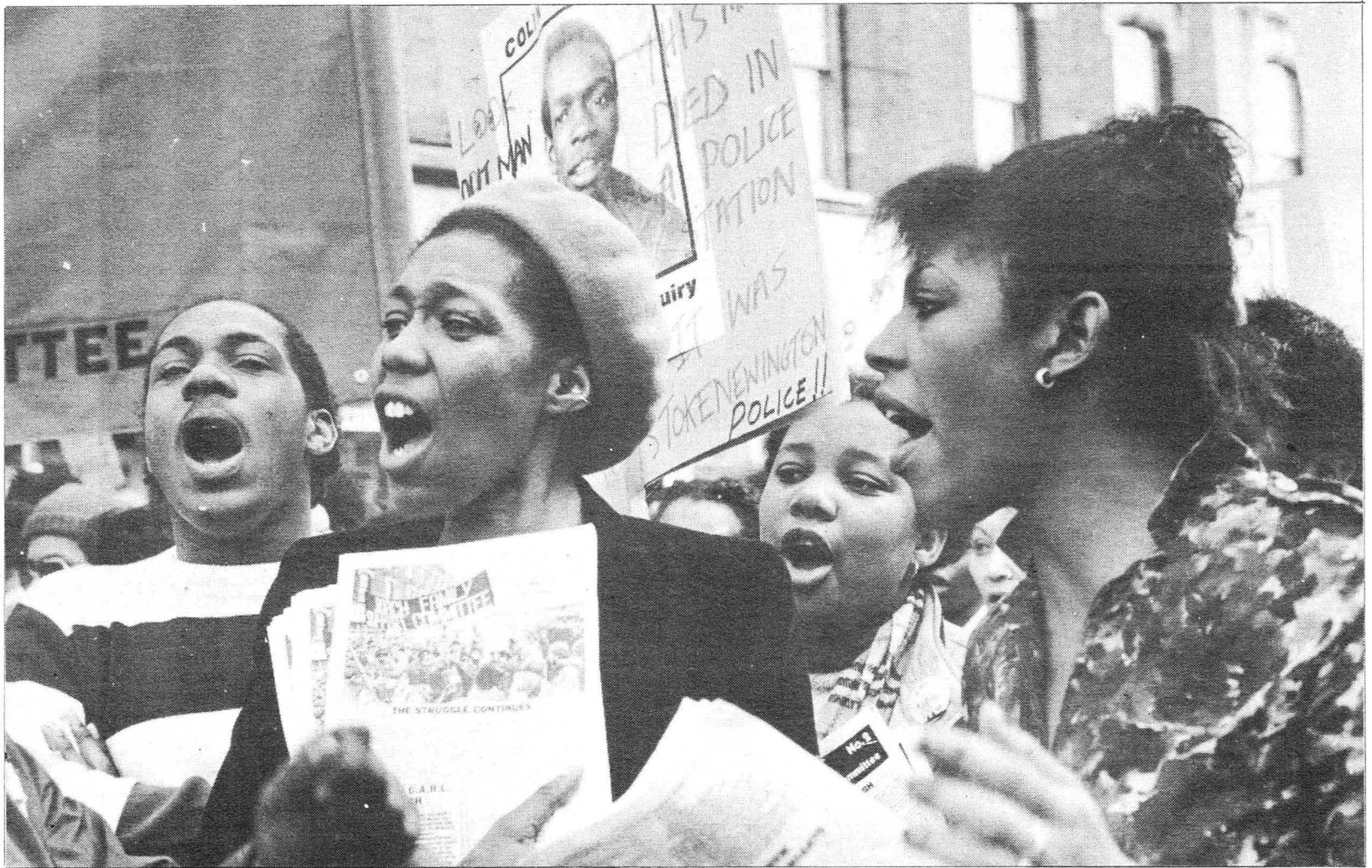
The attitude of the police can be summed up by one incident I saw. As I was standing behind one black man he asked a police inspector if he could tell him how Colin died—the inspector looked at him and laughed.

## Police snatch squads

Outside the police station the demonstration attracted about 100 black youth who walked along the pavements instead of the actual march. The police decided to block the pavement but this was a useless exercise because the youth just walked in the road past them and then went back to the pavement.

When the march was on its way back down the High Street, which was crowded with Saturday shoppers, the police again blocked the pavement. This was seen as provocative action by the black youth and the demonstration stopped as heated arguments broke out between the marchers and the police.

Sensing 'trouble' the police started to put on the chin straps of their helmets which only inflamed the situation further. Finally the anger boiled over into violence when police officers blocking the pavement decided to make arrests. Within seconds police rushed in grabbing anyone



Only an independent enquiry can establish the truth about Colin Roach's death. Police credibility is at an all time low.

Photo: D Doran

(especially Rastafarians who the police dragged along by the hair).

I was standing next to the van where the arrested blacks were taken. They were bundled into the van with their arms and legs held back behind them while they were handcuffed. They were forced to either lie down on the floor or put on a seat with police holding down their heads.

About 30 seconds later police vans came speeding out of the side roads. They rushed down the road and police jumped out of the back and waded in making more arrests.

The side window of the demonstrators' van was smashed and the police arrested the driver and Colin Roach's mother, and drove it off down the road still with the speakers on the back. Colin's father was also arrested as well as the spokesman for the defence committee, and a local Labour councillor needed hospital treatment following action by police snatch squads.

Saturday's demonstration was yet another blatant example of police harassment of black youth, and this in an area that is already reaching boiling point.

By a member of the LPYS

**CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACIST LAWS**  
**Demonstration against racist laws and the Nationality Act**  
**Sunday 27 March**  
**Assemble 12 noon at Jubilee Gardens (next to County Hall) Waterloo, London SE1**

## Nationality Act protest called

Along with high rates of unemployment and the worst pay and conditions, black workers and youth have to face discrimination and harassment through the racist immigration and Nationality laws.

A series of laws and rules have been brought in to keep blacks out of the country, irrespective of the effect on families, splitting up wives, husbands, fiancés, brothers

or sisters, by thousands of miles—with the onus on them to prove they have a "genuine" relationship. The laws, as well as intimidating blacks, also try to give the impression that if only blacks were kept out, then social conditions would improve.

With the worsening crisis, this inevitably brings about racist attacks. There is already an increase in in-

idents of racial violence, which continues without any preventive action being taken by the police.

The labour movement must prevent any growth of racism. Labour should point out, in its general campaigns against unemployment and bad housing, that far from blacks being the cause of these problems—they are the worst affected by them.

Labour must fight for

workers unity in the struggle for better conditions for all. This should include an end to discrimination in jobs, housing, education and social services, and for the repeal of the immigration laws and the Nationality Act.

By Kevin Fernandes

## Magnificent demonstration of 700

A magnificent demonstration was organised by Swinton LPYS and Dearne Valley Labour Party at the end of February. Nearly 700 young workers joined the demo.

It passed through the town of Mexborough which has the highest level of unemployment in Yorkshire (over 24%) and through local pit villages—several NUM lodge banners were present as were many members of the steel workers' union, the ISTC.

Speaker after speaker at the rally paid tribute to the campaigning work of the LPYS. This was the largest demonstration ever organised by the LPYS in Yorkshire and the largest in living memory in the Dearne Valley. Over 80 papers were sold and dozens of youth joined the LPYS following an appeal from LPYS National Committee member John Hunt.

By a Militant reporter

## West Midlands LPYS conference

Over 100 delegates and visitors attended the West Midlands Regional Labour Party Young Socialists' conference held on March 5-6. Fraternal speaker Lawrence Coates, the YS representative on the NEC, confirmed that the Young Socialists will as always be the hardest workers in election campaigns.

The West Midlands YS were not deterred from this task by the witch-hunt launched by Labour's right. Conference overwhelmingly

opposed the expulsion of the five members of the *Militant* Editorial Board.

Addressing the conference, right-winger Dennis Howell MP, chairman of the NEC Youth Subcommittee, defended the expulsion of the five. Although, under determined questioning from the conference, he did say "we do not want to go in for wholesale expulsions".

Also while giving no guarantee about the threat to the YS paper, *Socialist*

he did announce that "I think it would be lamentable if we ask you to launch a great Youth for Labour campaign, if you have not got *Socialist Youth* to assist in the campaign."

In the elections *Militant* supporter Les Kuriata was re-elected onto the YS National Committee by 17 votes to 5, and all but one place on the Regional Youth Committee were taken by *Militant* supporters.

## Who's next asks Skinner?

Scottish Labour Party Young Socialists held their most successful conference ever—250 young workers attended the event.

The debates were lively and in some cases entertaining, as comrades related their experiences about life in Tory Britain.

One young unemployed person called on conference to mount a campaign on the question of free travel for the unemployed—this was overwhelmingly carried and the regional committee will be initiating and campaign-

ing on this issue.

Undoubtedly the highlight of the weekend was the debates on Ireland and the Middle East. The document distributed from the regional committee on the Middle East helped greatly with the discussion.

Many fraternal speakers were heard including Dennis Skinner MP who delivered an amusing yet serious greeting. He talked of the appalling events prior to the Bermondsey by-election—the smear campaign of the right wing and their friends in the gutter press, and par-

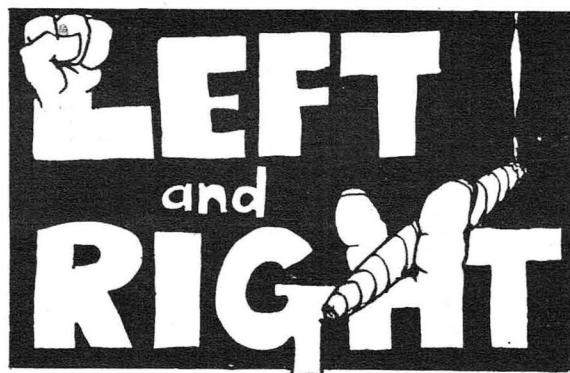
ticularly the expulsions of five socialists on the eve of the election. He said, "It's the *Militant* five this time—who will they come for next?"

But the biggest message to come out of the conference was to fight for a Labour victory in the coming general election, resolving to campaign amongst the youth on socialist issues.

By Joanne Coyle

(Cathcart LPYS)





### Surviving '30's-style, in Canada

From the *Financial Times*, 28 February: "Hard-hit Canadian farmers have revived the tactics of the 1930s to fend off creditor banks trying to recoup their loans. Bank officials who were owed \$400,000 in loans on a herd of beef cattle by one farmer John Otto, arranged an auction sale of his \$100,000 worth of farm equipment. Came the day of the sale, and 300 other farmers turned up, took over the proceedings and bought the lot for \$20. A £40,000 tractor went for \$2.20.

"The buyers took the equipment away but plan to return it in the spring when Otto will need it. 'We can't let the vultures grab it', said Robert King, a member of the recently formed Militant Farm Survival Association."

### Feet in the trough

Expressing the outrage of the Tories at the water-workers successfully breaking their pay limit, Lord Hailsham, alias Quintin Hogg QC, moaned; "The great mass of people have come to believe that it is not only foolish but wicked to seek to improve your own standard of life by depriving your fellow countrymen of the necessities of life..." (*Sunday Times* Feb 27).

Unlike the 'great mass of people', Lord Hailsham is on a salary of at least £27,825 a year. And as he lives in an official residence, which comes free of charge, he doesn't have to pay for his 'necessities of life' like water, fuel and light, unlike the rest of his 'fellow countrymen'.

### The rantings of a 'sensible' railman

Remember those far off days of January when the Fleet Street press was full of praise for the 'Federation of Professional Railway Staff'? They were supposed to be the embryo of a mass breakaway from the National Union of Railwaymen of 'sensible' railwaymen who were 'fed up of going on strike all the time' etc. Things have not gone well however.

Their inaugural meeting in Birmingham in January (reports Paul Foot in the *Daily Mirror*, March 9) attracted only 16, which hasn't made much of a dent in the NUR's 150,000 membership. And two of these were visitors from the Tory Party (although of course, according to a similar mass rally in Derby last week, the FPRS is 'non-political').

Making quite a song and dance at the Birmingham meeting was one Victor Churton who announced he was resigning from the NUR. Churton is certainly well known amongst fellow Birmingham railmen. He was reprimanded by British Rail earlier this year for writing "Pakis go home" and "All Asians smell" on guards vans.

### Ken and Deidre—new shock

*Coronation Street* has a new fan. It is Lady Anne Tennant, wife of a multi-millionaire and lady-in-waiting to Princess Margaret. She says, "It's a fascinating programme because it is something people can identify with. It could, perhaps, be happening to one." Hmm. Can one really imagine her ladyship identifying with recession-hit Stan Ogden, or our Deidre tied to the kitchen sink, or those who slog their guts out at Mike Baldwin's sweatshop? No, one can't, can one.

### Fifty years ago

Strange isn't it that every winter the Royals somehow manage to find some nice warm country which suddenly needs their presence. It didn't quite work out for the Queen recently in California, but undaunted, Charles and Di are now off for a tour of Australia.

Fifty years ago the King was not abroad, just relaxing on his Sandringham estate. It was announced in March 1933 that he would not be coming to London for a while, because of the danger of catching influenza.

No such provisions were made for a Mrs Wearing, who lived on the LCC Downham estate with her seven children and unemployed husband. Faced with a totally inadequate scale of relief, she half-starved herself to feed her family and was too weak to resist the influenza. Over 1,000 people died in one week alone. Just as nowadays, when disease or hypothermia is given as the official cause of death, the real reason is still the same; poverty.

# The story of the miners' struggle

Struggle by Welsh miners is nothing new. Their militant tradition stretches back to the bitter battles of the '20s, the '30s and even before the First World War. That period—among the most turbulent in British history—is depicted by Lewis Jones in his novels, *Cwnardy* and *We Live*.

The author, born in the Rhondda in 1897, started work in the pit at the age of 12, and became the youngest-ever chairman of the Cambrian Lodge of the South Wales Miners' Federation. Turning to Marxism after the First World War he joined the Communist Party, like many other militant young miners.

Imprisoned for his role during the 1926 General Strike, Jones later became a leading figure in the National Unemployed Workers' Movement. In the mid-1930's he became the first CP member elected to Glamorgan County Council. He died in 1939.

Despite many faults—especially a tendency to overblown rhetorical writing—Jones's two novels give a vivid insight into the struggles of the South Wales mining communities between 1900 and 1939. He describes with equal force the everyday lives of the miners—especially the back-breaking physical labour—and the heroic struggles waged by the workers against the bosses and their government.

All the major events of the South Wales coalfield in

those years—the 1910 Tonypandy riots, 1926, unemployed workers' demonstrations etc.—are reflected in the books. It is the experience of these events which leads the main characters, Len and Mary, to draw political conclusions, to support Marxist ideas, and to join the Communist Party.

The author shows the enormous capacity of the workers for struggle and sacrifice, and their natural gravitation to the cause of socialism. Jones also shows how the heroism of the workers is matched by the ruthlessness of the hated private coal-owners. He brings out clearly the role of the police, the law-courts and even the schools as weapons in the hands of the capitalists, designed to maintain the class structure of society and stamp out the opposition of the workers.

Politically, the books have two main weaknesses. The novels suffer from a certain insularity. Because he limits the horizons to a single mining community, important national questions—like why the General Strike was betrayed—are left unanswered.

Secondly, there is little attempt to analyse the role of the CP itself, and no real mention of the zig-zags in policy caused by slavish adherence to the line of the Stalinist Comintern.

Nevertheless, both novels are well worth reading for their portrayal of working class life before the war, and especially to re-discover the fighting traditions of the miners.

By Brian George

## Tories want fingerprinting for 10-year-olds

A new Bill designed to give the police more powers is presently going through parliament and, if not defeated, offers grave dangers to the labour movement.

Not satisfied with such powers as the Criminal Trespass Law and the Prevention of Terrorism Act this new Bill will not only infringe personal liberty but seriously affect the legitimate protest of working people.

If passed the police will have the power to:

★ Fingerprint anyone over the age of ten with or without their consent.

★ Detain someone suspected of a 'serious' offence for up to four days without charging them and deny them access to a lawyer for two days.

★ Search the confidential records of lawyers, doctors, social workers, journalists, accountants, looking for evidence.

★ Set up road-blocks for

seven days and search any vehicle on that road.

★ Stop and search anyone suspected of carrying something which might be used in a theft or burglary.

'Policing London', the Greater London Council's publication, has called this new Bill 'policing by coercion', and says that its new powers of detention effectively abolish the right to silence. It is vital that the labour movement mobilises a campaign to defeat this Bill.

It is designed to strangle the democratic rights won by working people over the years. When the powers of this new Bill are combined with the increasing militarisation of the police force, it is clear that the Tories have only one response to the ills their system has created—repression.

By Dave Farrar

D. DAVIS & SONS, Ltd.  
FERNDALE COLLIERIES.

## NOTICE!

The attention of all workmen is called to the fact that the output obtained from these Pits is so low that the question of continuing working is being seriously considered.

Unless the OUTPUT per man employed is IMMEDIATELY IMPROVED the Pits must stop.

F. LLEWELIN JACOB,  
GENERAL MANAGER.

1st November, 1921.

The threat of pit closure in Rhondda back in 1921. Despite nationalisation, miners' jobs in 1983 are still threatened.

## The sad wreckage of Arthur Koestler

Glowing tributes in the capitalist press have marked the death of Arthur Koestler, the Hungarian-born former Stalinist whose novel *Darkness at Noon* played a similar role to Orwell's *1984* in the Cold War.

*Darkness at Noon* is a realistic novel about the prison experiences of a member of the Communist Party, imprisoned by the Nazis, released only to be imprisoned and ultimately shot in Moscow.

Koestler himself was imprisoned by the fascists during the Spanish Civil War and his prison experiences really bring home to the reader the horrors of interrogation. The hero in the novel spends his life in prison reflecting on his memories of the Comintern; persuading workers not to black arms shipments to Germany during the Stalin-Hitler pact; convincing a German communist that Nazism is just a passing phase.

Like the defendants in the notorious Moscow Trials of the 1930s he ends up confessing to crimes which he did not commit because he is completely demoralised. Although he had survived torture under the Nazis, the moral pressure of the Stalinist interrogator proves too much.

Koestler even relates Stalinism with the backwardness of Russia. The interrogator explains that 'Trotskysts' and 'saboteurs' have to be blamed because the workers are too backward to understand the economic

problems of the Soviet Union. The arrogance of the bureaucracy is well captured in this kind of "explanation".

However, like Orwell, Koestler has no positive programme to offer the working class movement. *Darkness at Noon* ends on a semi-mystical note which leaves the reader disappointed after the realistic beginning. Koestler's speculations on the nature of the soul are all very interesting but they do nothing to explain the betrayals which he describes so well.

In later years Koestler devoted a good deal of time to the pseudo-science of parapsychology, in particular a very cleverly written book called *The Roots of Coincidence*. Having lost all hope in the socialist future of mankind, he sought salvation in the mystical world of telepathy and telekinesis—tricks which any decent conjurer can perform were studied as scientific "experiments".

Such folly might have satisfied Koestler's desire for intellectual stimulation but it contributes nothing to the advancement of human knowledge or society. It is evidence of the sad wreckage of an intellect which could have contributed a great deal to the socialist cause if he had not recoiled from his experience of Stalinism so far that he ended up throwing out the baby with the bath water.

By Derek McMillan





# MARX the REVOLUTIONARY

**“The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways. The point however, is to change it”.**

These now famous words were written by Marx in 1845. They fully convey the spirit in which he was to live out his life over the next 38 years.

No one has ever understood more clearly than Marx the importance of theory to the working class movement and his contribution in the theoretical field has been acknowledged ever since by all the great teachers of socialism as second to none.

But Marx was not the white-haired academic recluse which, since his death, countless historians have attempted to depict. He was to his core a revolutionary fighter, an organiser, speaker, publicist and pamphleteer, vigorously struggling to free society of class oppression, exploitation, misery and want.

After Marx's death in 1883, Engels, his lifelong friend, co-thinker and intimate political co-worker, paid tribute to the theoretical legacy which Marx “the greatest living thinker” had left to the workers of the world. “Marx”, Engels added, “was above all a revolutionary, and his great aim in life was to co-operate in this or that fashion in the overthrow of capitalist society and the state institutions which it had created, to co-operate in the emancipation of the modern proletariat, to whom he was the first to give a consciousness of its class position and its class needs, a knowledge of the conditions necessary for its emancipation. In this struggle he was in his element, and he fought with a passion and tenacity and with a success granted to few”.

When only 24 years old, he had collaborated with sections of the Rhineland liberal capitalist class in establishing the radical *Rheinische Zeitung*, of which he soon became the editor. Engels later commented that the *Rheinische Zeitung* “wore

By Brian  
Ingham

out one censor after another. Finally it came under double censorship...that also was of no avail. In the beginning of 1843 the government declared that it was impossible to keep this newspaper in check and suppressed it without more ado”.

Marx was never intimidated by such acts of oppression. On the contrary, they merely steeled his resolve to continue the struggle in an even more steadfast manner. On this occasion he left for France where he was able to gain more experience of the socialist and communist ideas circulating outside Germany, and where he began his lifelong collaboration with Engels.

## Utopian Socialism rejected

The two clarified the basic tenets of scientific socialism, and they began to work painstakingly to build the very first foundations of a party based upon these principles.

Various groupings of intellectuals existed in Europe at that time, each peddling some utopian socialist scheme, but each also devoid of any real contact with the working class. Marx and Engels refused to join any of these organisations most of which still cloaked themselves in masonic-type conspiratorial airs. Instead, they formed their own tiny propaganda group.

Marx later explained that in this period: “We issued a series of pamphlets, some of them printed, other lithographed, mercilessly criticising the mixture of Anglo-French socialism or communism and German philosophy...and putting

forward instead a scientific insight into the economic structure of bourgeois society as the only tenable basis, explaining this in a popular form and pointing out that the task was not to work out a utopian system but to participate consciously in the historical process of social transformation taking place before our eyes”.

In January 1847, Marx and Engels were persuaded to join the ‘League of the Just’, an organisation, mainly, though by no means exclusively, made up of expatriate German artisans, which had been formed in a number of European centres. The leaders of the League had been won round to the ideas and organisational methods of Marx and Engels.

## Communist Manifesto

Under their influence it changed its name to the ‘Communist League’ and reorganised itself for active propaganda work among the working class. It also dropped its old slogan: “All men are brothers” in favour of the battle cry: “Workers of the world unite”.

It was the Communist League which commissioned Marx and Engels to write the *Communist Manifesto*. This appeared only a matter of weeks before the February Revolution in Paris began a revolutionary earth-quake that reverberated around the whole of Europe.

Marx was to emerge as one of the central and most decisive leaders of the German revolution of 1848-49. He had been prepared for the epic part he was to play, by his political and revolutionary activity over the previous 10 years or so. Now his painstaking propaganda work gave way to energetic activity in the maelstrom of great historical events.

Having been hounded out of France in 1845, after pressure from the Prussian government, Marx now faced arrest and banishment from his new home in Belgium. Momentarily he returned to Paris, where a representative of the Provisional government elected in

February was offering him both refuge and citizenship.

Then he moved to the Rhineland as editor of the newly founded *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, a paper established mainly with money from liberal capitalist shareholders.

In both France and England, revolutionary conflict unfolded between the working class and the capitalists, as foreshadowed in the *Communist Manifesto*, but in Italy and Germany it was still necessary for the infant proletariat to ally itself with the emerging liberal industrialists in order to successfully conclude the struggle with feudal despotism.

The capitalist class, however, proved to be contemptible allies, even in their own revolution! At every serious test they gave way to reaction.

Marx fought through the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* and through tireless personal activity to stiffen these temporary allies, but in vain. The liberal bourgeoisie in general retreated under pressure from the reaction, and as they did, those con-

nected with the paper withdrew their financial support so that Marx was compelled to plough his own meagre savings into the paper as the only means of keeping it alive.

## Capitalists betray German Revolution

Marx attempted to lead the movement in the Rhineland back onto the offensive. Special editions of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* called for: a boycott of taxes to the victorious counter-revolutionary government; for the arming of the people; and for armed resistance against “the enemy”.

For this stand he faced arrest and trial. But neither Marx nor the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* were that easily silenced. At his trial he stood firm, defended the revolutionary movement and mercilessly attacked the forces of reaction. As a result the jury acquitted him and the foreman even thanked him for his instructive remarks!

The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* continued for a

short time after this until the reaction had gathered enough strength to close it down altogether and expel Marx from Prussian territory. The last defiant issue after 301 issues in all (sometimes appearing 7 days a week), appeared in red ink on May 19th 1849, warning the people against any attempt to seize power while the military situation was unfavourable, thanking its readers for their sympathy and support, and declaring that their final word always and everywhere would be: “The emancipation of the working class”.

Marx was again forced into exile, first in France, and then, compelled to move once more, he settled in London where he lived for the rest of his life.

Initially he worked to help re-assemble the Communist League, in the preparation for the expected renewed revolutionary upsurge. This upsurge, however, did not materialise. By 1852 it was clear that the tide of European revolt had temporarily ebbed.

The Communist League began to break up into different squabbling sects. Marx and Engels stepped to one side, finding the atmosphere of these groups increasingly sterile. Marx began to devote his energies primarily to his important theoretical work on economics and to earning a precarious living as a correspondent of the *New York Tribune*.

Nevertheless, he still kept in regular active contact with the emerging working class movements, especially in Germany and Britain. He was, for instance, a frequent contributor to *The People's Paper*, the paper founded in 1852 by the revolutionary wing of the Chartists.

It was not until 1864, however, that Marx was able fully once again to pick up the threads of his practical revolutionary activity. By then, Engels wrote: “The Labour Movement in the various countries of Europe had so far regained strength that Marx could entertain

An anniversary commemoration of the Paris Commune, showing Marx as a speaker.

ANNIVERSARY OF SOCIAL REVOLUTION  
OF THE 18th OF MARCH, 1871.

PUBLIC MEETING  
WILL BE HELD IN  
ST. GEORGE'S HALL,  
LANGHAM PLACE, REGENT STREET,  
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE  
Members of the International, the Democrats of London,  
and the Refugees of the Commune.

ON MONDAY, MARCH 18, 1872,  
AT FOUR P.M. AT THE COMMUNIST  
SOCIAL REVOLUTION OF PARIS.

President: CITIZEN JUNG.  
Vice-Presidents: RANVIER.  
HALES.

FRENCH SPEAKERS:  
RANVIER, Member of the Commune  
LABAGARAY, National Guard  
LOBOCET, Member of the Commune  
VAILLANT  
THEISE  
LEON FRANKEL  
MERRILLIER  
LEFRANCOIS  
ABRAHAM  
DELAHAYE, Member of the Labour  
Committee  
COURET, Member of the Commune  
CARRELLAT, Director of the Mint  
KREDA, Member of the Commune

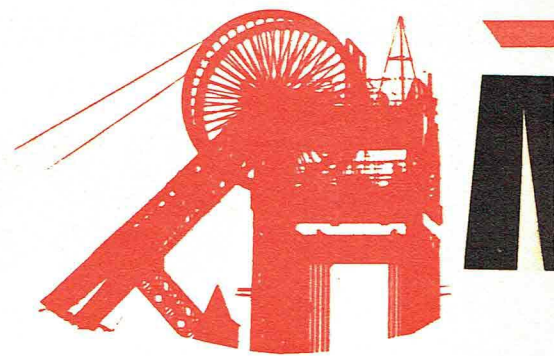
ENGLISH SPEAKERS:  
DR. KARL MARX  
HALES  
MILLS  
WESTON  
McDONNELL  
JOHNSON  
BOOK

LE MOISEL, Commissary of Public  
Safety  
BOURNIER, Member of the Central  
Committee

Continued on page 10



# Lessons of the



**What are the lessons of last week's miners' ballot and what are the future prospects for miners and for the struggle of the labour and trade union movement against the assaults of the Tories? These questions are now being widely discussed by trade union and Labour Party activists.**

After any significant reversal it is always necessary for the active layers within the labour movement to take stock, carefully re-appraise the relationship of class forces, see if there has been any significant change in the position of the working class, and, in this way, to prepare all the more thoroughly for future struggles.

This approach is particularly important at the moment, because of the inevitable feelings of deep disappointment that now prevail, and not just among South Wales miners, or among others in the pits who voted for action, but among activists throughout the labour movement. This is partly because this vote comes after other blows which have hit the labour movement in recent months, but more because of the special respect which other workers have developed for miners.

Miners have earned this respect partly because of the perils of their work, by their example in organisation, solidarity, militancy and socialist traditions.

Above all, workers today remember that it was the mineworkers who brought Edward Heath's Tory government to its knees in 1972 and who then, in 1974, chased Heath out of office.

The miners strikes of the early 1970s helped dramatically to increase the confidence of all workers in their organisations, paving the way for a massive upsurge in trade union membership and militancy. Major improvements were won in this period in living standards, social rights and working conditions.

A miners' strike would undoubtedly have had a similar effect in today's industrial climate. Workers everywhere would have drawn strength from it especially once other trade unions began to line up in support, as inevitably they would have done. The entire outlook and combativity of the working class could have been transformed. Such a movement would have also shattered quickly the uneasy veneer of self confidence which has been summoned up in recent months by the Tories and big business.

But while miners have always affected the outlook of other groups of workers once they have taken to the path of struggle, it is clear also that mineworkers are no island unto themselves. They themselves are affected by the general moods prevailing in the ranks of the working class, the level of confidence in trade unions and the Labour Party, and the preparedness for action.

Miners have now stepped aside from industrial action on three or four occasions in the last two years. They have not developed a new sense of "moderation" or "realism" as some Fleet Street commentators would have us believe. Those who believe in such fairy tales should try explaining why miners only recently elected as their President, Arthur Scargill, or why the very same miners were prepared to lose pay in support of the health workers.

The general, but temporary mood of caution in the labour movement is the main reason why the miners have stepped aside from national strike action at the present time. The heady attitude inside the labour movement following the miners' victory in 1972 has gone.

Then, in part, a semi-syndicalist outlook reigned in the minds of some militants, who thought that anything was possible merely by industrial action or by the threat of it. It was particularly at this time that the movement for workers' control swept through industry.

So-called managerial prerogatives were elbowed to one side as in one industry after another rank and file workers' representatives gained a measure of control over hiring and firing, overtime, and even in some cases, the day to day running of the productive process.

This shop floor power, however, more and more came into conflict with the underlying crisis of British capitalism. Rather than being willing to concede reforms, British capitalism was demanding drastic counter-reforms.

The only way to maintain the gains brought about by trade union militancy and power was for the Labour Party and trade unions to carry the struggle to its logical conclusion by taking industry out of the hands of the bankers and millionaires, ending forever the anarchy of capitalism.

The Labour government of 1974 could have done just that. If it had seized this historic opportunity society would have been free at last from the deadweight of the profit motive. The massive untapped resources in society could have all been harnessed to begin to solve the many deep-seated problems facing the working class.

But rather than going forward in the direction of socialism, the labour leaders drew back, abandoned their programme of promised reforms and, under pressure from big business, unleashed a series of attacks on living standards and the welfare services. A vicious incomes policy was maintained by the Labour cabinet despite the eventual opposition of both the TUC and the Labour Party Conference, and major cuts in government expenditure were begun. Thatcher would never have been elected but for the way in which these attacks demoralised and disorientated traditional and potential labour voters.

But where there was deep disenchantment with the Labour government, there is now a burning hatred of the Tories. The Thatcher government has presided over the biggest collapse of British industry ever. Manufacturing industry is struggling along at a new 15 year low. Whole areas of the

country have been reduced by unemployment to the level of ghost towns. Other areas are being driven in that direction.

In this situation, Labour, the mass party of the working class, should now be poised to inflict upon the Tories a crushing defeat. Yet, tragically, Labour has lost key by-elections, and there is even a widespread fear that Labour may fail to win the forthcoming general election.

Millions of working people are desperately searching for a way out of the nightmare of Thatcherism, but few have real confidence that a new Labour government will bring about lasting beneficial change. The memory of previous Labour governments is too fresh.

Working people are no longer prepared to give unquestioning loyalty to the Labour Party. They see the Labour Party and a Labour government, not as ends in themselves, but as means to an end. They want to banish forever misery, uncertainty and fear for the future. Yet they see the labour leaders defending the same old failed policies, and even preparing to serve these policies up anew—including 'incomes' policy.

While some sections of the working class, especially the youth, will rapidly draw the conclusion that the only way forward to any lasting security and prosperity is by the socialist transformation of society, for the mass of workers, it will take time before these conclusions are reached.

The gradually improving living standards of the 1950s, 60s and early 70s left a deep impression on the minds of the older working class. It seemed that tomorrow life would be a little better than today, and the day after tomorrow a little better still. The embers of these hopes and illusions will not vanish overnight.

Throughout its history, the British working class has always come to new ideas slowly, ponderously, and after a long experience of struggle. But if the authoritative leaders of the trade unions and Labour Party made a decisive break with the right-wing policies of previous Labour governments, and boldly campaigned for socialism, then tens of thousands, or millions of workers would rapidly be convinced.

By refusing to explain the case for socialism the leaders of the labour movement are denying the working class the only practical alternative to Thatcherism. In despair some workers have even said that they might vote for the SDP "to give them a chance," or even Thatcher, hoping that maybe her policies might at last bring some success.

All the misplaced illusions in Thatcher would have been shattered however, if she had been beaten in a major all-out trial of industrial strength. Her sham, carefully cultivated image of steadfastness would then have been in ruins, and such a victory would have also brought a renewed confidence to every level of the Labour Party.

But so far Thatcher has managed to escape this fate, and it is possible—though by no means certain—that she may be able to survive to the forthcoming election without facing the same kind of treatment that miners, dockers, engineers and railway workers meted out to Edward Heath.

The sudden ferocity of the recession in the course of the last few years, and the fact that the working class was left completely unprepared for these developments by its leaders, has for the moment undermined confidence in industrial action, among many workers.

It is not that the working class now has no wish to struggle against falling living standards, redundancy or the worsening conditions on the shop floor. It is simply a matter that at this stage most workers are not confident of victory. They are therefore gritting their teeth and waiting for a more favourable moment to strike back against all the tyrannies and indignities which have been heaped upon them in the last few years.

Some groups of workers have felt that they had no alternative but to take to the path of struggle. But often when they have taken this step, workers have then found a new barrier in their path in the form of their own right wing leaders.

The new situation facing the working class needed a new approach from the leaders of the labour movement, a new audacity. Trotsky had explained in the 1930s that when capitalism is in crisis there is no longer any room for "reforming" trade unions. Concessions can be wrested from the capitalists if the pressure and solidarity are sufficient. But the capitalists will re-organise in order to try and take back tomorrow what they have been forced to concede today.

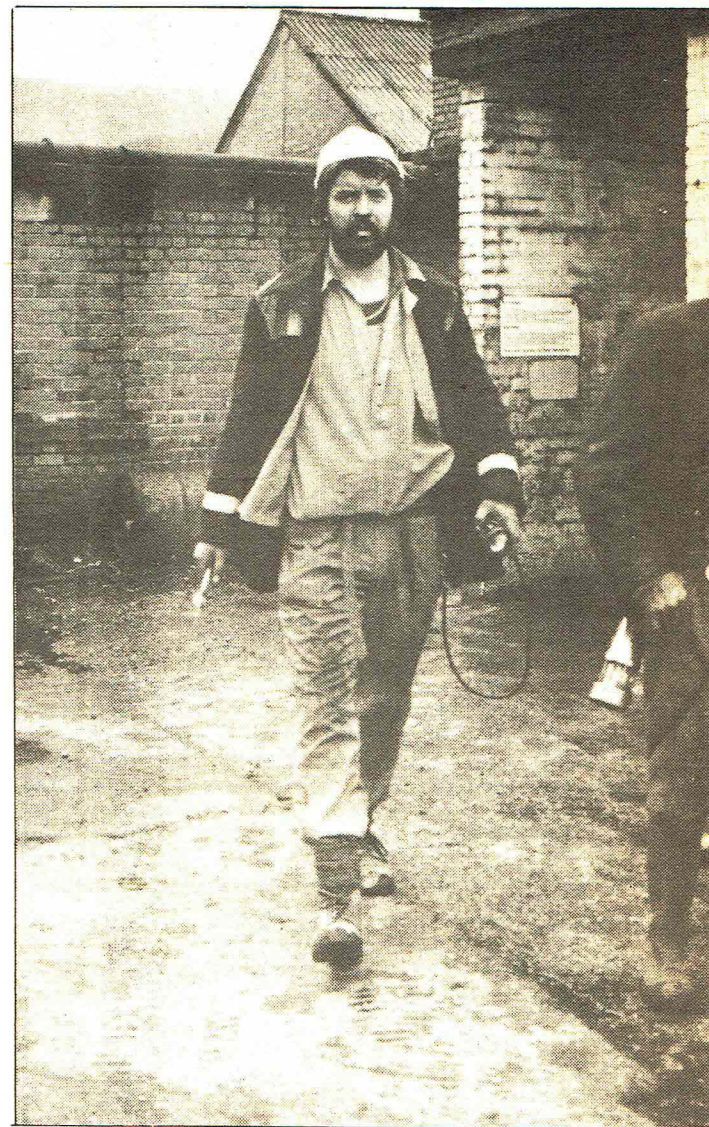
The day to day struggle for reforms must therefore be linked with the need for the socialist transformation of society. Those right wing union leaders who limit their horizons to what is possible within the dying framework of capitalism, inevitably end up acting as a brake on the movement of the working class.

Certain key incidents stand out during the last few years, where, with a different approach from the trade union leaders, the whole industrial and political situation would have been transformed.

The sacking of Derek Robinson was among the most important of these developments. It was the signal for all the foremen and managers skulking in storerooms and out of the way offices to attempt to re-assert their untrammelled control on the shop floor. A wave of attacks on long-established working practices and victimisations followed.

Managers in most cases would never have dared implement these measures if the AUEW leaders had placed themselves boldly at the head of the spontaneous struggle which developed throughout Leyland in defence of Derek Robinson.

The ASLEF strike against flexible rostering reinforced still further the apprehension in the minds of workers over possi-



Miners at Tower Colliery, South Wales. Despite the ballot result retain their enormous industrial power.

ble industrial action. The failure of the TUC to support ASLEF was taken as a warning by many workers that even with official support and energetic leadership they could still be left isolated, denied by the general staff of the labour movement of the necessary solidarity.

Those faint-hearts in the labour movement who began writing off the working class were confounded within weeks when the marvellous and unprecedented solidarity began to develop in support of the health workers. As a result of this pressure, the same right wing TUC leaders who had in August refused to support the train drivers, were by September placing themselves at the head of a mighty day of action. More workers were mobilised on September 22 than on any single day since the general strike of 1926!

The only way to win the health dispute was to go further and build on September 22 by more wide-spread and longer lasting demonstrations of solidarity, offering a political challenge to the government.

But the leaders of the movement, particularly after September 22, tried to deny the political character of the dispute, and instead of taking the battle further forward to victory allowed it to peter out in a series of limited local protests.

Such developments are bound to have an impact on other workers. Each new setback, each new defeat inevitably weighed heavily on the minds of all workers considering whether to take action. But this is only one side of the picture.

While the mood of the working class can seem downcast, under the surface, at each turn of the screw, the anger, resentment and bitterness gather force. Sudden new volatile developments are absolutely inevitable in this situation. We have seen huge swings of opinions in the by-elections, and we have seen this also with the industrial movements, where seemingly defeated workers—such as at Leyland—suddenly come forward again with a renewed confidence. Sometimes all that is needed is one provocation, or one inspiring movement by another group of workers, for confidence in general to lift.

After the health workers defeat, many activists began to look for this inspiration from the miners. But so far the mine workers have not been involved in national industrial action, not because they are now suddenly feeble, but because Thatcher has been paying particular attention to their strength, to avoid a head on clash. In the pay round miners were offered more than that being accepted by most other workers and the earnings in many areas were topped up by the area incentive bonus scheme. Because of these factors and the prevailing general mood, miners were reluctant to fight on pay. There is a widespread belief however that if at that time the miners had been asked to give the union a mandate for action on jobs then they would have done so overwhelmingly.

That ballot result led to further events in the coalfields. South Wales miners still facing the imminent butchery of



# Miners' Ballot

**BRIAN INGHAM** assesses the reasons for the result of the NUM strike ballot, in the context of the present industrial climate.



the Tories and Big Business realise that the miners still  
Photo: Militant.



Health workers on the September 22 demonstration.  
Photo: Militant

their coalfield, felt compelled to act. They set January 17 as the date at which an all-out strike would begin over the investment and jobs. But before this strike took place Kinneil miners moved into action, provoked by management into an action to defend jobs just before the unfavourable Christmas period.

If the call for wider solidarity in Scotland had been delayed till January 17, then almost certainly a joint movement would have occurred in both threatened coalfields and that would then have pulled behind it miners nationally. In desperation, however, Kinneil workers went for immediate support, feeling that this was certain given the past record of Scottish miners.

But the national ballot result was too fresh. Scottish miners were afraid of being isolated and would not come to the aid of the Kinneil workers. After this, miners in South Wales called off their action and in Kent miners felt compelled to accept the NCB's deal over the future of Snowdown colliery.

Like some on the fringes of the labour movement, and the right wing labour leaders, the blind leaders of the Tory party also began to imagine that the trade unions were a spent force. But again within weeks, the water workers were teaching them some respect.

The public humiliation of Thatcher and her government by the water workers gave new impetus to the struggle to save jobs in South Wales and—once the delegations of miners from South Wales began to go out asking for support—to miners in every other coal field.

The present volatility within the British working class was vividly demonstrated by the violent swings of opinion among miners over the week after the strike began in Wales. Immediately a massive momentum developed in favour of industrial action, fuelled in part by the announcement of the possible appointment of MacGregor as the NCB head. Normally quiet pits in Staffordshire, Derbyshire and other areas became overnight centres of militancy. Some pits immediately began to walk out. Mine workers were voting with their feet. Many mineworkers now consider that this momentum towards industrial action would have become unstoppable, but for the calling of the ballot and the sending back to work of those outside Wales who were already on strike.

In a period such as this opinions can swing violently not just in favour of action, but also against. Once the ballot was called, then under a merciless barrage from the millionaire press, doubts and uncertainties began to take over. Miners wanted to support South Wales pits, but as with other groups of workers they were asking: "can we win?" 50 million tons of coal were stock-piled, much of it inside the power stations. An almighty battle would have been necessary in which the maximum support of the power workers and others would have been crucial. But the power workers settled their wage claim on March 3, and, moreover, they were organised in the EETPU, the union led by right-wing TUC chairman Frank Chapple!

In this ballot even the right wing leaders of the NUM cam-

paigned vigorously for strike action. But they were campaigning to overcome obstacles for which they in part were responsible. Real leadership is not just given on the eve of a battle. It involves day by day, hour by hour explanation of the processes at work in society and of the programme necessary to secure the future.

The area incentive scheme in the mining industry has now become a major impediment to national unity. It has to some extent produced a kind of "island" mentality with the attention of NUM activists often narrowed down to the bonus in their own individual pit. But this incentive scheme would never have been foisted upon miners but for the work of Joe Gormley and the other right wing leaders of the NUM.

Redundancy payments will also have played a part in the ballot. It is understandable that some miners who have work-

ed a lifetime in the bowels of the earth should be tempted by such bribes to sell their jobs. But this was not an overriding factor. In South Wales, the area most immediately affected, the miners were ready to forgo such bribes and fight.

In the end when it came to the ballot, miners were not sure they would win. They therefore stepped back from action.

The Labour editor of the *Financial Times* commented that an audible sigh of relief passed round the headquarters of the NCB, the leaders of big business and the Tory cabinet. They were all throwing down the gauntlet to the miners, daring them to take strike action.

Even now they will be apprehensive as to how fast they can proceed with their plans for pit closures. They know that the miners retain their strength. So far, they have simply refrained from exercising that strength. Any attempt to close pits which miners think are profitable could trigger off a movement once again.

It is even possible that action in South Wales could inspire again a national movement, especially if there has been a general change of mood nationally. And one thing is absolutely certain: if Thatcher ever dared to de-nationalise any profitable mine then an all-out miners strike would be unstoppable.

A large section of activists within the labour movement will now swing back largely to the electoral plain, hoping to inflict defeat on the Tories in the forthcoming general election, but at this stage the outcome of the election is uncertain.

Labour could undoubtedly romp home if the leaders of the trade unions and the Labour Party ended their witch-hunt against socialists and instead turned out to workers with fighting socialist policies. It is still possible for Labour to win, such is the bitterness against the Tories.

But even a Tory victory would be no solution for the ruling class. It is only a matter of time before all the accumulated anger bursts out in an explosion of industrial discontent. The longer it is delayed the more devastating it will be for the Tories and for big business.

Once there is even a weak economic upturn and order books and sales begin to rise, then an offensive will begin in industry to recoup what has been lost in the course of the last few years. The strikes in Leyland at the moment, where the workers have a model which they believe is profitable, is an indication of the renewed confidence which will generally sweep through the labour movement.

The *Financial Times* tried to warn the Tories earlier in the year, not to imagine that the trade unions are emasculated "It is fear of the dole rather than respect for the law which restrains unions. When the economy picks up, or when the fear is replaced with active resentment, the law may be exposed to a challenge more fierce than any it has seen in this country since the war—including the events of 1972 and 1974... The union's collective strength, though latent, is still the greatest in civil society."

The more serious advisors to the Tory leadership, therefore, understand that the power of the working class remains absolutely intact.

Trade union numbers may have fallen due to the recession. Shop stewards facilities may have gone in many industries and some key stewards may have faced victimisation. But there has not been the atomisation of the stewards organisations that occurred in the 1920s, nor has there been the mass exodus from the trade unions.

The real relationship of class forces still rests decisively in favour of the working class. Thatcher and her advisors know this. That is why, though they have tested the combativity of the working class, sometimes to the limit, they have rapidly retreated whenever they have been faced by the prospect of a generalised movement.

Nevertheless, despite their fear of the unions, the whole position of British capitalism will compel the Tories and big business at a certain stage to attempt to crush the organisations of the working class. What they are afraid of is that such action could well provoke the very thing they dread: a crushing defeat for big business.

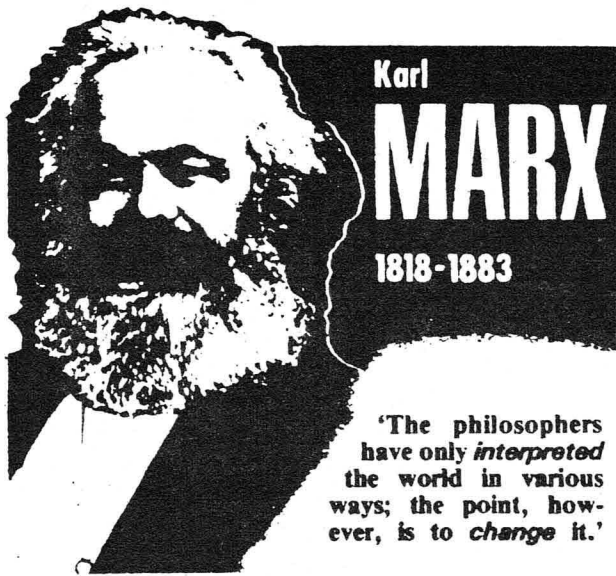
Despite the ebbs and flows the general shifts in the labour movement still point to the left, towards greater militancy. The reversals being suffered by the labour movement at the moment will prove to be only temporary pauses. Trade union militants need to build support for their ideas at shop floor and union branch level, especially in the key unions like those in the Triple Alliance. Campaigns at rank and file level should be prepared now, in advance of any future movements. Many workers have gained enormous experience even from recent setbacks.

After the defeats they suffered under Weighell, NUR branches for instance have nominated and it seems are voting for Jimmy Knapp the candidate for general secretary most identified with change. The movement for democracy in the trade unions will continue apace.

In 1921 the entire labour movement was gearing for action in support of the miners. Then came the betrayal of Black Friday in 1921 when the miners were left high and dry to fight alone. Years of bitter defeats took place. Yet by 1926 the working class was able to marshal its forces as never before in the general strike, the greatest movement in the history of the British working class.

The labour movement is far stronger today than ever it was in the 1920s, and has not experienced set-backs on the scale of those years. Activists within the labour movement should have every confidence in the future. Above all, though, they should prepare politically, arming themselves through a correct understanding of socialist ideas for the inevitable storms that lie ahead.





Continued from page 7

the idea of realising a long-cherished wish: the foundation of a Workers' Association embracing the most advanced countries of Europe and America, which would demonstrate bodily, so to speak, the international character of the socialist movement both to the workers themselves and to the bourgeois and the governments...A mass meeting in favour of Poland...on September 28, 1864 provided the occasion...

### First International founded

"The International Working Men's Association was founded; a provisional General Council with its seat in London, was elected at the meeting, and Marx was the soul of this as of all subsequent General Councils up to the Hague Congress. He drafted almost every one of the documents issued by the General Council of the International, from the *Inaugural Address* of 1864, to the *Address on the Civil War in France*".

"For 10 years", wrote Engels, "the International dominated one side of European history—the side on which the future lies". The International gathered under its banner all the various conflicting tendencies within the Labour Movement of Europe and America, including French, Swiss and Belgium followers of the anarchist Bakunin, the utopian Proudhon, German followers of Lassalle and British trade unionists.

London was the home of the General Council. Marx considered Britain to be the key country in the struggle for socialism, given the more advanced stage that both capitalism and the organisations of the working class had achieved.

Marx therefore insisted upon direct representation on the General Council for all trade unions and other working class organisations affiliated from Britain, and it was only towards the end of the life of the International that there was a separate British Federation.

### Democratic Movement

Marx strove to develop the International as a truly mass movement. Affiliation was open to all individuals and organisations which accepted the need to struggle for an end to the yoke of capitalist exploitation. But Marx never attempted to bureaucratically force his own theoretical views or tactic on any section; he believed that it was only through joint action and discussion that genuine agreement and genuine unity emerge.

In drawing up the *Inaugural Address*, Marx was conscious of the different stages of theoretical development reached by the labour movement in each country. Therefore, while repeating the fundamental ideas expressed in the *Communist Manifesto*, the tone was different. "Time is necessary", he wrote to Engels; "before the movement can allow the old boldness of speech. The need of the moment is bold in matter, but mild in manner".

The practical achievements of the international included mobilising solidarity during numerous industrial struggles, among them the 1871 Tyneside Engineers' strike and the London basket makers dispute of 1867. Such was the authority of the International among British trade unionists that at one point the Annual Congress of Trades Unions in 1869 urgently called all working class organisations in the United Kingdom to affiliate to the International.

The authority of the International in Britain was also built up by its work in the Reform League, the body created to fight for the old chartist demand: "Universal Manhood Suffrage". Half the executive of the Reform League were members of the General Council.

Marx personally worked tirelessly behind the scenes to help establish the Reform League, which then rapidly developed as a mass campaigning force, dreaded by the capitalist class which saw within it the spectre of revolution. Continual mass pressure from the League bore down upon the ruling class until the government brought in new electoral reform legislation.

It was a limited reform, extending the vote only to the middle class and to skilled workers, but it was sufficient to mollify the main trade union leaders and split the movement. After this, most of the union leaders who had been active in the International began more and more to accommodate themselves to the Liberals, some hoping in this way to find their own personal passage into Parliament.

### Commune "stormed the gates of heaven"

The final cleavage with these opportunist leaders came after the Paris Commune, the finest hour for the working class during the lifetime of the International.

In 1871, after the fall of France in the war with Prussia, Parisian workers seized control of Paris, for-

## MARX the REVOLUTIONARY



ming the first ever workers' state in history. From afar—and through intermediaries—Marx made every effort to steer the Commune along the path to victory.

The Commune was to prove, however, to be only a brief if glorious episode. Tragically, the Commune was drowned in blood.

"The Commune gave the mischievous abortion Thiers (The leader of the French government—Ed.) time to centralise hostile forces", wrote Marx... "They should immediately have advanced on Versailles", in other words spread the revolution by taking over the Bank of France, the government buildings and advancing to the other cities.

After the crushing of the Commune, the International

distance themselves from the heroic French workers.

Even though he had not advocated the formation of the Commune, such a stand would have never entered Marx's head. Within days of the fall of the Commune he issued his defiant defence of the Commune, *The Civil War in France*, which to this day remains an inspiration and as an invaluable source of guidance for the labour movement.

Marx and Engels immediately understood the tremendous historic significance of the Commune. They studied carefully to see how the experience of the Commune could enrich further the working class movement and help it to be better prepared for the future.

International Marx and Engels had to contend with political opponents who fought political battles not with ideas but with manoeuvre and intrigue. After the defeat of the Commune these intrigues intensified, especially on the part of the followers of the anarchist, Bakunin.

With the International facing crippling blows from state authorities throughout Europe, the danger existed that Bakunin's followers might wrest control. Marx and Engels acted decisively to prevent this and to preserve intact the historical prestige of the International in the eyes of the world working class.

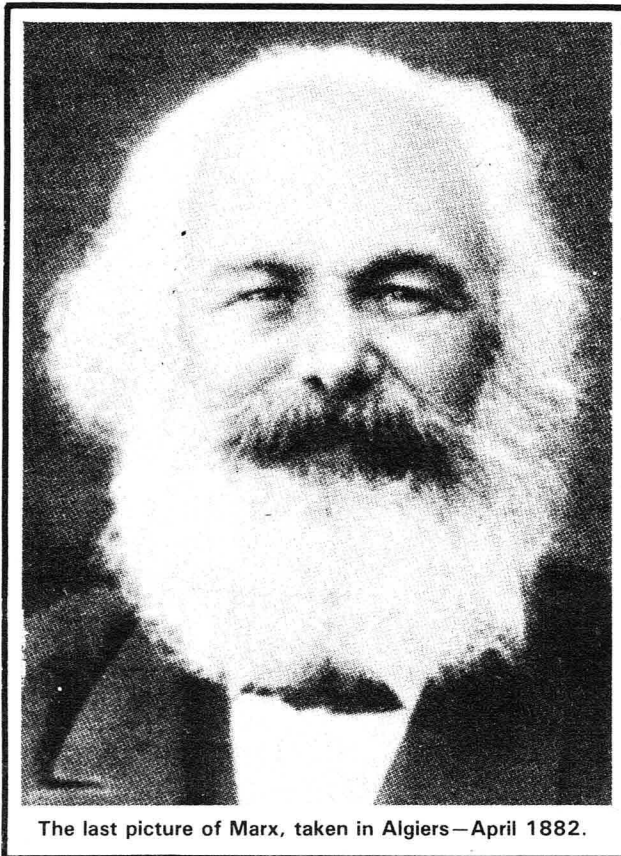
At the 1872 Hague Congress they secured the transfer of the General Council to New York, thus effectively bringing to an end this momentous chapter of working class history.

### End of First International

Engels, later explaining the action of himself and Marx at this time wrote: "There are circumstances in which one must have the courage to sacrifice momentary success for more important things. Especially for a party like ours, whose ultimate success is so absolutely certain..."

"...We knew very well that the bubble (of the International) must burst. All the riff-raff attached themselves to it. The sectarians within it became arrogant and misused the International in the hope that the meanest and most stupid actions would be permitted them. We did not allow that. Knowing well that the bubble must burst at some time our concern was not to delay the catastrophe but to take care that the International emerged from it pure and unadulterated".

With the end of the International Marx once again began to give priority to his theoretical work. Though always, as long as he lived, he remained actively involved in the life of the labour movement, attempting to steer it forward along the most constructive path.



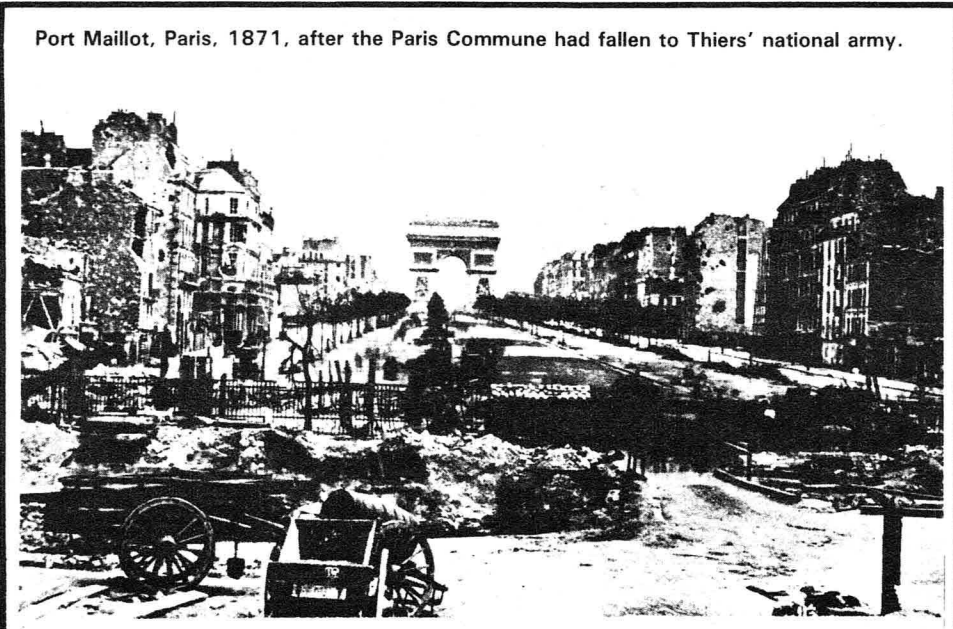
The last picture of Marx, taken in Algiers—April 1882.

came under a savage assault from all the European governments who saw the International's and Marx's guiding hand, in the Commune.

The response of many faint hearts in the International—including some of those trade union leaders associated with the International—was to denounce the Commune and

With this in mind, they wrote into the Preface of the 1872 German edition of the *Communist Manifesto*, the following central lesson: "One thing especially was proved by the Commune, viz, that 'the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes'".

Throughout the life of the



Port Maillot, Paris. 1871, after the Paris Commune had fallen to Thiers' national army.

In 1881 Engels commented: "By his theoretical and practical achievements Marx has gained for himself such a position that the best people in all the working class movements throughout the world have full confidence in him. At critical junctures they turn to him for advice and then usually find that his counsel is the best.

In 1883, he finally fell victim to his chronic ill health. Throughout his adult life he had been plagued by recurring illness. He also had to endure desperate poverty and terrible personal tragedies. But because of his unshakeable confidence in the socialist future of mankind he always was able to summon the will for the struggle against capitalism.

### Marxism today

His ideas and the example of his personal revolutionary activity live on.

In 1917 when the Russian working class threw out Czarist autocracy and took their destinies into their own hands, they were led by conscious followers of Marx.

The Stalinist totalitarian bureaucracy which usurped the Russian Revolution nowadays print the works of Marx, and no doubt they will also perform elaborate "celebrations" this year, supposedly in his honour. If only Marx had been alive to answer them himself! Their totalitarian police regime is a monstrous affront to the socialist cause to which he dedicated his entire life.

In Britain and other capitalist countries, there are many who boast some allegiance to Marx, only to deny his heritage by working continually to reconcile the separate and irreconcilable interests of the working class with those of the capitalist class. Fortunately, throughout his works, Marx has already answered these so-called "Marxists" in advance!

If he were active today Marx would be more confident than ever of the future. The working class throughout the world possesses an absolutely unrivalled strength, way beyond that built up during Marx's lifetime. All the social diseases of the capitalist world which he fought are returning again with a vengeance. But never has there been greater objective possibilities for socialism.

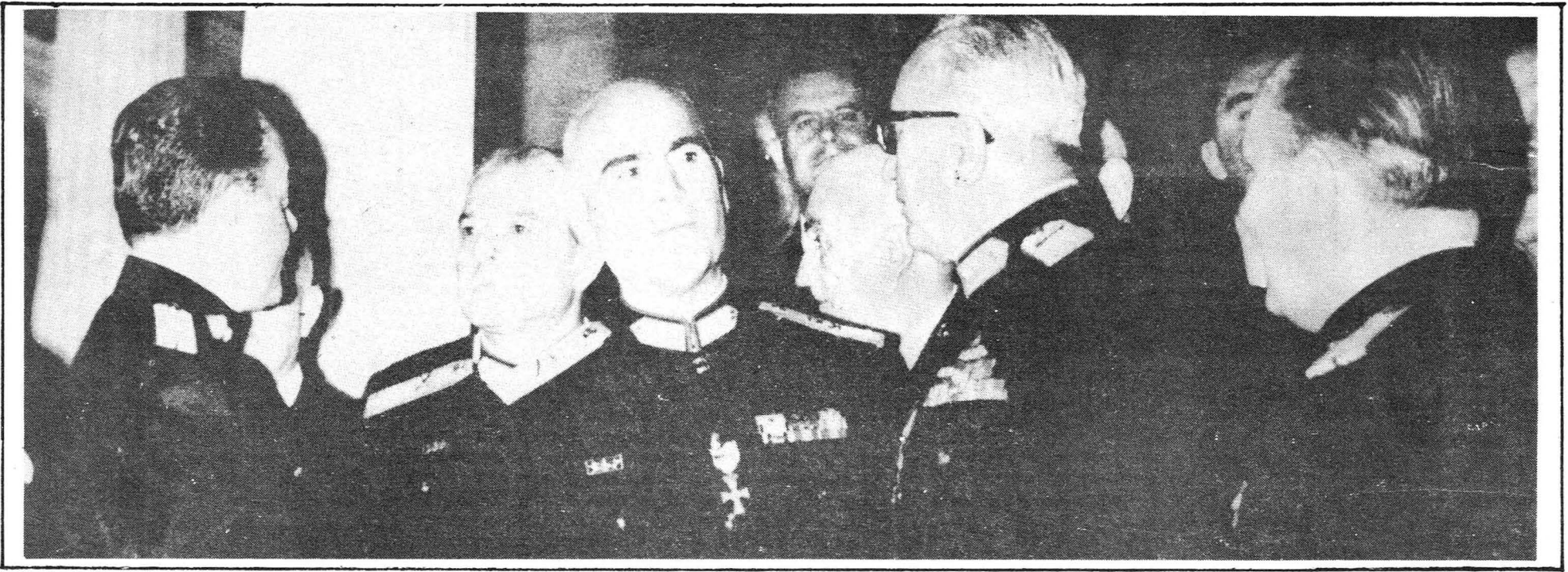
Let our generation end forever the nightmare of capitalism and Stalinism. Let us build the kind of society about which Marx wrote and to which he dedicated his life.

At Marx's graveside in 1883, Engels finished his address with these words: "Marx was the best-hated and most slandered man of his age. Governments, both absolutist and republican, expelled him from their territories, whilst the bourgeois, both conservative and extreme democratic, vied with each other in a campaign of vilification against him.

"He brushed it all to one side like cobwebs, ignored them and answered them only when compelled to do so. And he died honoured, loved and mourned by millions of revolutionary workers from the Siberian mines over Europe and America to the coast of California, and I make bold to say that though he had many opponents he had hardly a personal enemy.

"His name will live on through the centuries and so also will his work".





Greek colonels who organised the coup in 1967. The working class will fight to prevent the return of a military dictatorship.

# GREECE - No repeat of 1967

## Sweep out the Junta men!

**The events of 27 February have underlined the urgent need for Greece's PASOK government to implement decisive socialist measures.**

Although the exact reasons for the government's day of panic have not been revealed, it is certain that either there was some attempt at organising a military coup or else an ultimatum of some kind was issued to the government by the military.

Receiving information from the Greek Embassy in London that "something" was going to happen, the Papandreu government became terrified. Notifying ministers and MPs, they mobilised the army and police and put the district and branch officials of the three main left-wing parties on alert.

### Workers prepared for battle

When rumours began to spread, rank and file members of PASOK and the two communist parties demanded to know what was going on. But the officials had been told nothing, only to be on the alert and not to mobilise the rank and file unless specifically asked to do so. Evidently the government was more afraid of the consequences of a mass mobilisation of the working class than the possible tanks of the military.

Despite this, the ranks of the movement took the initiative in preparing for battle. In Salonica, northern Greece, the students' union managed to stage a demonstration of 5,000 by Sunday evening.

When it was obvious that the 'coup' had fizzled out the workers organisations were told to come off the alert, that everything was alright—but no explanation was offered to them.

Later the government began to deny that anything had happened at all, that they had merely staged a

joint exercise of police and troops.

The events did not come as a complete surprise. A number of arms thefts had taken place from barracks up and down the country.

The Greek bourgeoisie and their representatives have every reason to be worried about the forces. The ranks of the services greeted PASOK's resounding election victory in October 1981 with enormous enthusiasm. Officers had to tread very carefully in their dealings with the ranks to avoid provoking mutiny. But most importantly has been the development of secret committees in every branch of the forces.

These committees are demanding full trade union and political rights for servicemen and changes in the military regulations that remain unchanged since the days of the Colonels dictatorship. In other words they are demanding the implementation of PASOK's 1977 programme.

With civilian aid they have held press conferences, issued leaflets at barracks and to the public, have joined in demonstrations and given moral support to strikes.

### The ruling class have cautiously tested out the government and found it to be lacking in nerve

In November 1982 servicemen joined in the one million strong demonstration that commemorated the 9th anniversary of the Colonels' murder of Athens polytechnic students—marching in uniform! After the march two soldiers were followed by police, beaten up and later imprisoned.

Initially ambiguous in their attitude towards these committees of servicemen the government have recently buckled beneath the pressure of Karamanlis and the officers and have begun to denounce them. The under-minister of defence called the members of the

committees anarchists, accusing them of undermining the morale and discipline of the armed forces, of undermining the spirit of national unity.

This attack by a 'socialist' minister reflects the fears of the capitalist class. They realise that although these committees are small, having to work secretly in difficult conditions, they could become a focal point for the seething discontent in the ranks of the services. In the first two months of this year there have been more suicide attempts by servicemen than in the whole of 1982.

Under the impact of social and political events in Greece the army could disintegrate as a weapon of the capitalist state and be transformed into a force for the socialist revolution.

The events of February 27 did not represent a serious attempt by the ruling class to stage a military coup. They are far too weak at present and realise the consequences of such a premature act. But the events are reminiscent of attempts at destabilisation before the 1967 coup.

The ruling class have cautiously tested out the government and found it to be lacking in nerve.

The Wednesday following the 'events' was the day of the annual promotions and dismissals of the officers. The government were expected to remove at least some of those elements who had junta connections but on the contrary, the democratic officers were removed and the far-right promoted! Most damning of all, Panagopoulos, head of the military police under the Colonels' regime, remains as chief of the army!

The daily paper *Ethnos* called this a "surprise of the first degree", and suggested it was the demand of the President, Karamanlis.

The bosses have observed the cowardly attempts of the government to placate and buy off the officers, but they have also noted the swift initiative of the workers.

Instead of utilising the workers' bold, fighting spirit, the government have

tried insulting their intelligence with fairy tales. They tell the workers not to worry, to sleep easily, everything is under control. But how can the Greek people sleep easily? With the painful memories of the Colonels regime of 1967-74, knowing that most of the top officers were connected with the junta, they now see the government favouring the extreme right with promotions.

The workers have had to face daily attacks on their living standards by both the bosses and also the government they considered to be theirs. The introduction of statutory wage controls (see Militant 633), the new boost to inflation given by the recent devaluation of the drachma, have shown that the government has diverged far from the road of its election promises and of the needs and desires of the people who elected them to office.

### Unions break Incomes Policy

Recent successful struggles by workers at factory level have broken the incomes policy. The bosses are panic-stricken. They're demanding that the government must enforce the law.

Particularly incensed by the legal clause that says employers guilty of breaking the law on wages are liable to be fined, the bosses issued a public advertisement in the newspapers, demanding that the government penalise the workers and not the bosses.

Two days after the appearance of this advertisement, Yiannopoulos, Minister of Labour, told a meeting of foreign pressmen that strikes against the pay law were illegal and strikers could be fired for breaking the law.

Immediately the bosses began taking strikers to court. This forced the GSEE (Greek TUC) to denounce Yiannopoulos. Leaders of PASKE, PASOK's trade union wing, faced the verbal wrath of the rank and file over the minister's statements and Yian-

nopoulos was forced to eat his words. The government meanwhile told the courts to postpone their verdicts for a few weeks, hoping that the strikes would be over by then. They fear that judgments against the strikers could cause a massive strike wave.

### No change in constitution

Meanwhile the Greek bosses are preparing. Shattered by their election defeat in 1981 they are still seriously divided. They are trying to patch together some form of credible political alternative to the left. They hope that through economic sabotage, continual pressure on the government, using the liberal elements in PASOK's parliamentary groups, to undermine the government.

Despite the Left having the required three-fifths majority to do so, there has been no attempt to change the constitution. President, Karamanlis still has the right of veto and will use it to provoke a crisis when needed.

There is still time for the working class to take power peacefully. Though the workers clearly see the similarities with today's situation and that of the events before the 1967 military coup, it appears that Papandreu does not.

### Papandreu has learnt nothing

In a speech delivered on June 19 1966, published under the title "The victory is certain" Papandreu said: "There was discussion about the possibility of a coup—these rumours have now subsided because a people like ours, mature people who know exactly what they want, are ready for every battle and cannot be frightened by rumours of a coup. We should not forget that the Greek army and the police are children of the Greek people and will never break the constitution or

their loyalty to the people. They will never rise against the people and try to impose dictatorship."

Less than a year later the Colonels coup took place. Papandreu has learned nothing from history.

At this critical moment the rank and file must demand the following from the government and the GSEE.

★ The whole truth about Sunday 27 February must be told. Thoroughly cleanse the army of pro-junta elements. Open up the so-called 'Cyprus File', to find out who were responsible for the military adventure in Cyprus in 1974. Give the ranks of the armed forces full political and trade union rights, including the legal right to refuse to obey undemocratic orders.

★ Withdraw Greece from NATO and expel the US bases—now! PASOK's election promises must be fulfilled.

★ The GSEE must organise a national, co-ordinated struggle to secure the demands of the workers.

★ The PASOK government must break the economic power of the monopolies, taking over the firms that control the economy and placing them firmly into the hands of the workers.

★ To forestall any further attempts at a coup defence committees should be organised through the organisations of the labour movement.

A serious warning has been given as to the plans of the ruling class. Only the adoption of such a programme can guarantee the peaceful socialist transformation of Greek society.

**From our correspondent in Athens**

**ΕΚΙΝΗΜΑ**

Greek Marxist Paper Available from World Socialist Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London, E8 3PN.



# Letters

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

## Norwood, Knight and Militant

Dear Comrade,

The Norwood Labour Party regardless of major differences with *Militant* on such issues as the Falklands war, Ireland, Palestine and women's rights, has firmly opposed the witch-hunt of Labour Party members associated with that paper.

Yet at the Greater London Labour Party Regional Conference we experienced an insidious smear campaign of lies and distortion directed against our CLP, and particularly against our chairperson, Ted Knight. This reached the gutter level of delegates being told in behind the scenes discussions that Ted has 'moved the expulsions of *Militant* members from the Labour Party', and that

Norwood was backing the witch-hunt.

The position of Norwood Labour Party GMC meeting on 1st March, in noting your letter of 24th February recorded its total opposition to the expulsions of comrades Doyle and Walsh, and also to that of comrades Dickinson, Grant and Taaffe. It calls on the NEC to reverse this decision, and to end the witch-hunt against members of the Labour Party associated with the *Militant* paper.

It is the view of the Norwood Labour Party that the 1982 Annual Conference did not give the authority to expel such members and notes that the letter from the General Secretary does not indicate under which rule the ac-

tion has been taken. We therefore insist on an answer to this question.

The Norwood Labour Party has had bitter experiences of similar witch-hunts in the 1950s and 1960s, and know that such actions are politically damaging and electorally counter-productive.

The Norwood Labour Party is committed to campaigning within the Labour Party and the trades unions to reinstate the expelled members. Likewise, we will campaign to reverse the decision on the 'Register' and any attempt to reintroduce 'bans and proscriptions.'

A meeting between the officers of Islington Central, Hammersmith North and Norwood

has already been arranged to plan a joint campaign for the reinstatement of the expelled members, and the support of other CLPs and trade union branches will be sought.

The enthusiasm with which the Tory press greeted Ted Knight's removal from the Regional Executive Committee is a tribute to both him and the Norwood Labour Party, but regrettably is a boost to the right-wing majority on the NEC.

We suggest that all our energies should now be directed to stopping the witch-hunt, and to reinstating those expelled.

Yours fraternally,  
 Ken Phipp  
 Party Secretary,  
 Norwood Labour Party.



The "expelled five" leaving the Labour Party Headquarters after the NEC had voted to expel them. They are confident that the rank and file will campaign for their reinstatement.

## .....expelled members reply

Dear Comrade,

Following our expulsion from the party by the NEC on 23 February, Norwood Labour Party's GMC (on 1 March) reversed its policy on opposing expulsions and decided, by 29 to 21, merely to "note" our expulsion. In reality, this is a shame-faced way of accepting our ejection from the Party.

This capitulation, at the first whiff of grape-shot, contrasts glaringly with the fighting statements made earlier by prominent members of Norwood's EC.

The sudden reversal has brought angry protests from many CLP members, particularly at the way the "noting" formula, so forcefully urged by the Executive, was pushed through before discussion in the branches or affiliated unions (and also, incidentally, without any EC consultation with the two comrades facing expulsion).

Since the GMC, two Branches have called on it to reconsider and refuse to accept our expulsions.

At the Greater London Regional Labour Party conference on 5/6 March, Ted

Knight, Norwood CLP's Chairperson, lost his seat on the Regional Executive. Following this, Norwood EC members claimed (Ken Phipp's letter) there had been "an insidious smear campaign of lies and distortion" against Ted and the CLP. We want to answer the allegations, which, by implication, could be taken to be aimed at *Militant* supporters.

We did not hear any allegations that Norwood EC or Ted Knight personally "moved expulsions of *Militant* members from the Labour Party", and we have never suggested anything of the kind. Why doesn't Ken Phipp deal with the arguments we have actually put forward?

In our view, "notes" means "accepts", which completely defeats the declaration that Norwood CLP will continue campaigning to reverse the expulsions. The EC tried to frighten GMC delegates with the prospect of the CLP's immediate disbandment, arguing that refusal to accept the expulsions would "smash the party". We have

never favoured deliberately provoking the the disbandment of CLPs, and dissociated ourselves from those who, from the beginning, talked of disbandment as if they were courting such an outcome. But we were not saying that expulsions should be accepted without a fight.

The right-dominated NEC's response to a rejection of the expulsions—and whether or not the NEC can get away with closing down Norwood, Islington Central and Hammersmith North CLPs—will depend on the strength of the campaign of CLPs and trade unions against expulsions and the witch-hunt.

If and when the CLP faces the threat of disbandment, Norwood can decide how to face it. But the witch-hunt can be defeated by a determined fight. Today is not the 1950s and 1960s, when the Gaitskellite right completely dominated the party. The majority of CLPs and active trade unionists are totally opposed to the right trampling on CLPs' democratic rights.

How does a determined

fight "play into the hands of the right"? Capitulation without a fight will strengthen the right, and could encourage the NEC to intervene more boldly against left-wing parties.

Ken Phipp says Ted Knight's removal from the Regional Executive is "a boost to the right wing on the NEC". Yet the conference remained firmly committed to left-wing policies; re-elected an overwhelmingly left-wing executive; and passed a resolution condemning the five expulsions by 469,000 to 254,000.

A resolution calling for the CLPs to refuse to accept expulsions was fairly narrowly defeated, by 400,500 votes to 338,500. The Regional Executive recommended support, and the great majority of constituency delegates voted for this resolution. It was defeated on the strength of the trade union block votes.

We can only conclude that the glaring contrast between Ted's earlier bold opposition to the witch-hunt and his present refusal to advocate decisive action was one fac-

### Up the Militant

Dear Comrades,

Can I through your paper suggest that all readers bombard the NEC with letters after the disgraceful decision to expel the five socialists from the Labour Party.

In this year of need, need for the growth and development of *Militant* there must be more papers sold, there must be more money contributed to the fighting fund, and everyone must appreciate that *Militant* is the way forward.

I have seen for myself in recent months the enormous growth of support for *Militant* ideas. As an unemployed, married man with three children, this week give my family and me some hope and play your part in building our hope for the future:—*Militant*.

Yours fraternally,  
 Michael Ingram,  
 Southampton CLP.

### State Snoop

Dear Comrades,

Someone called on a friend of mine who is on Supplementary Benefit saying they were doing a survey for a new brand of washing powder.

The discussion moved on to the type of washing machine that she was using and the caller came in to see it.

He then started to remark on what nice furniture she had—and finally revealed that he was from the DHSS.

He said he had already had discussions with her neighbours who had remarked on how well she was living on Supplementary Benefit and asked her searching questions on her sources of income.

The Tory government is trying to intimidate people from claiming their proper state benefits.

The labour movement must make sure that social security remains a social service rather than resembling a section of the police force.

Yours fraternally,  
 David Michael,  
 Huddersfield.

### Permission granted!

Dear Comrades,

I've been reading *Militant* over the last couple of issues, and am now prepared to sell *Militant* in the Swanley area (if I can).

But first I would like to know more about what we stand for. I know roughly but would like to know more. Also if I need some sort of permission from anybody to sell. But I don't really care if I don't!

After seeing my mates lose their jobs and seeing the country falling to pieces. I'm willing to fight for what we stand for.

Yours fraternally,  
 Michael Cheeseman.  
 (age 18).

### Roll of shame

Dear *Militant*,

I was pleased to see the list of those NEC members who opposed the expulsions.

Would you please print a list of those in favour of the expulsions? I do not know the names of all members of the Labour Party Executive. Though in touch with the Bishop's Castle LP, I am not actually a member. I told them I would wait to see which way the Party moved.

I was relieved to see that the LP traitor in Bermondsey lost his deposit.

Yours in the fight,  
 Kathleen Jones,  
 Shewsbury.

### CBI advise Grimsby Labour

Dear *Militant*,

The CBI held a conference on privatisation at a London hotel, for a mere £350 a day.

Greater Grimsby Council, a Labour controlled council, having slashed the council house budget by £800,000 and taken £1,000 away from the Trades Council Unemployment Centre saw fit to send a councillor to this conference.

For that £350 the Trades Council could have produced thousands of leaflets, posters, etc to campaign against privatisation.

Olwen Davies,  
 Grimsby LPYS.

tor which led many delegates not to support him.

Ken's letter refers to Norwood's firm opposition to the witch-hunt against *Militant* "regardless of major differences with *Militant* on such issues as the Falklands, Ireland, Palestine and women's rights." While the GMC has passed resolutions on these questions, there are many differences within Norwood CLP and there is not a hard-and-fast, unified line on all these questions.

While raising these differences, Ken does not mention *Militant*'s opposition to Lambeth Labour Group's decision to sell council houses, to raise rents, and to attempt to avoid cuts through imposing massive rate increases on working-class rate-payers. These have contributed significantly to the party's poor showing in recent elections and the alarming rate in resignations among Norwood CLP's working-class membership on the estates.

*Militant* supporters have consistently argued for a strategy based on mobilisation of a mass movement of

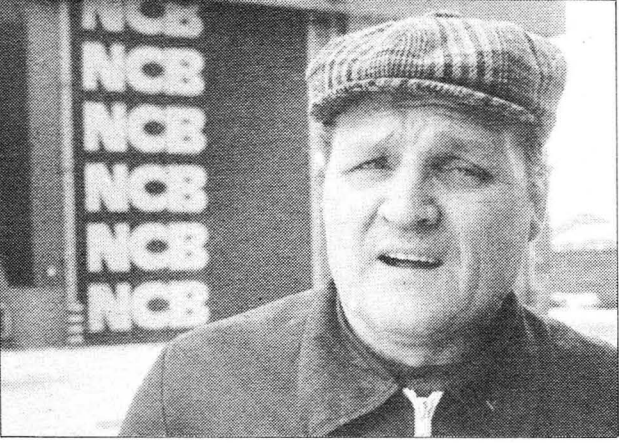
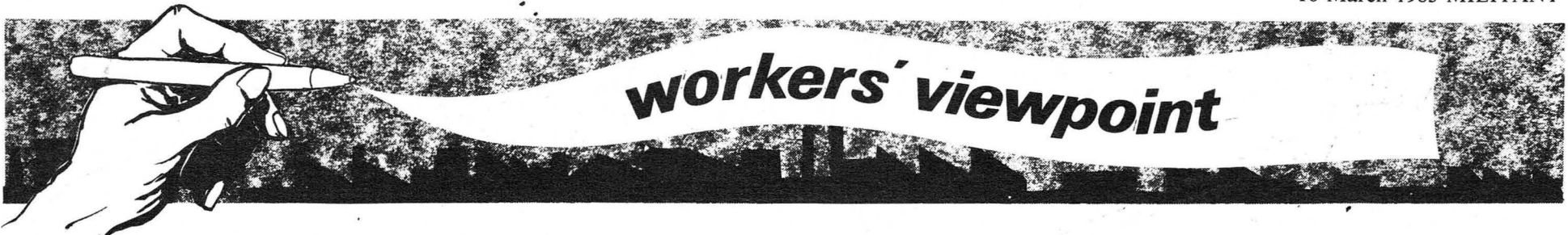
opposition to the Tory government, on the basis of no cuts, no rent increases, and no massive rate rises to compensate for cuts in the central government grants. After beginning such a fight in 1979, Lambeth Council Labour Group then retreated prematurely.

These are all issues on which there will inevitably be argument and debate. On the issue of our expulsions, moreover, we believe we should be able, now the crunch has come, to rely on Norwood CLP's firm backing.

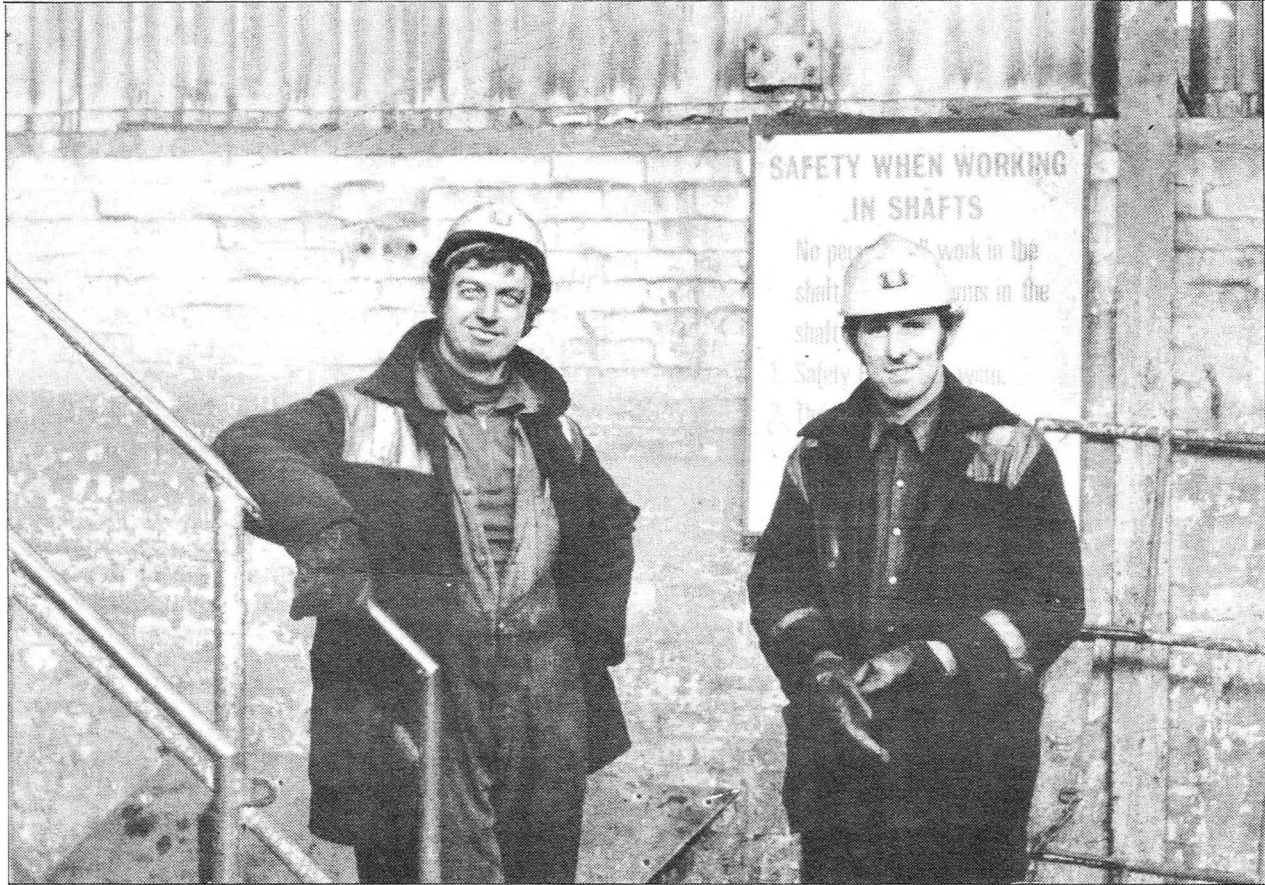
When the working class is faced with the most reactionary Tory government since the 1930s, our overriding task should be to unite the party membership around a fight for socialist policies, the defeat of the Tory, SDP/Liberal enemy, and the return of a majority Labour government committed to the implementation of a socialist programme.

Yours fraternally,  
 Clare Doyle,  
 Lynn Walsh.





Stan Pearce, 35 a years a collier, Wearmouth Lodge Committee and NUM activist. Here he talks to *Militant* about conditions in the pits and problems of union organisation.



"Management never tell you to break the rules."

## Taking the money

ONE of the lads mooted a few weeks ago that we stop getting *Coal News* into the pit. Its put in your locker.

Since Scargill took over, the *Coal News* has really become a political paper. It attacks the union and they probably have professional writers. They put out how much redundancy money you'll get and this is a hard thing to fight.

When you've got men that have done about 40 year in the pit and you want them to get a bit of money before they die. Its hard to turn men away. You've got to try and get them redundancy and they know that. The union's in a cleft stick with redundancy.

They are contracting the industry. There's hell on in Easington. They are on the verge of refusing to accept men from other pits because they've got young 'uns down there and Easington's not alone. Seaham and places like that—there's no other factories. There's

no escape for the young ones.

The only thing you can do is fight for earlier retirement and a living wage. Earlier retirement has been a union plaque for long enough. A man retires at 63, he only gets a few pounds. He might get about £10,000 if he takes redundancy at an earlier age. This is wrong. He's done more years and he gets less money. They want a proper pension..

The Coal Board offered jobs at Kinneil and that took away a lot of the argument. Another carrot they're dangling is the disturbance money. About £18,000. They've never seen that much money in their lives.

Young fellas with young families will say we've got to stop and fight. The older ones over 55 say they've had enough and they want to get out. They say to the young ones, if you'd had as much of this pit as we've had you'd want to be out.

## Lodge politics renewed

I NEVER SEE the closed shop being broken. We won't give anybody the right to scab.

I'll give the Tories one thing, they're starting to bring politics back into lodge meetings. Politics used to be very unusual. But not now. You get things like CND debated now. The only thing we are running out of now is the political fund money.

That was only used before for the councillors or the YS conference, now its taken up with delegates going to different conferences. Like the Broad Left in London and Marxist Day School in Washington.

Our lodge supported the resolutions against the witch-hunt. We sent delegates to the September 11 conference. We're demanding that delegates come from the lodges for the regional Labour Party instead of what's been happening where the Executive Committee turn up at the conference and then go off for the day.

They took no part in the debate or anything. I saw it because I was a delegate from the Labour Party. Last year we organised a minibus to NUM conference at Inverness. We asked for visitors' tickets and we were told there was none but when we got there the place was practically empty. There'll be more going this year.

## HEALTH and SAFETY 'Always in your own time'

Miners have always had their own safety inspectors who are elected in every pit.

Every committee man is really an inspector. We have four inspectors.

One for the surface and one for each seam and an overall inspector.

By Stan Pearce  
(Wearmouth NUM)

They inspect when there is a complaint. The management inspector and our inspector go in. They have to be given 24 hours notice. That's a bone of contention. Its the same with a government inspector, they spruce up the job, the stone dust gets thrown about all over the place. The stone dust is needed because the coal dust on its own would cause an explosion. The stone dust goes on top of it and mixes with it so its not so volatile. There's so much stone dust it just looks like snow. Its not like that normally. Even the floor's white.

They have dust barriers in places. When there's an explosion, these barriers tip over with all the stone dust. It'll not save the men but it'll save the pit and stop the fire spreading. Men are constantly employed on them moving them up to the required distance from the face.

There's an idea, on management's side mostly, that if you stick strictly to the Coal Mines Acts that the pits would be paralysed and they actually wouldn't run. People cut corners. But the management always keep themselves right. The Coal Mines Act is shown down the pit and on the surface and its signed at the bottom by the colliery general

manager and that lets him off the hook. They never tell you to break the rules. So if you do, you carry the can. One time, if there was a fatal or serious accident, the management would have a common law action taken against them. But under the new legislation, the workers that worked with the casualty, can be made responsible and taken to court.

By Stan Pearce  
(Wearmouth NUM)

men. Lads have got to walk in front of the tubs. Before, we used to have the ponies. You could tell a pony to stop or you could stop it. But with these you've got to run looking for a bell. By the time you reach it or pull the trip wire it could be too late. They take no prisoners in haulage accidents. You've got no chance.

Some good things have come out of the Health and Safety at Work Act, for instance industrial deafness is recognised. Under the coal mines act there was no industrial deafness but it still needs an act of parliament to get it through for the mines.

Industrial deafness is such a hard thing to fight. They ask you ridiculous questions. We had a case recently, where a man had to remember how many hours a day he'd worked with certain tools. Compressed air drillers and that type of thing—percussion tools. Up to now nobody's got any pension. And especially in a town like Sunderland where the lads are getting it in the shipyards and not in the pits, its become an issue amongst the men.

The new machines down the pit make the job much noisier and there's a lot more dust. There is a constant fight with the dust and a lot of advances have been made. But you'll always get the dust. You get the dust that way where its cutting a lot of stone. But the noise, well its a hellish noise because down the pit the noise can't go anywhere. You get reverberations all the time. They are doing tests on the percussion tools. But we haven't got anything. No one is getting a pension or anything like

that. The onus is on the workman to prove where he's worked on these tools for years. Well you cannot prove where you've worked. Recently we went to see a widow. Her husband was in excess of 40% pneumoconiosis and he'd been getting his pensions. It's a progressive disease. His last assessment was 40% and he died. We saw the widow to see if there was anything we could do. At the inquest the coroner brought it in as natural causes.

This has happened many times. They've said pneumoconiosis wasn't a contributory factor. Amongst the older men as soon as they hear of a death, they say 'ah they'll bring it as bronchitis'. So we want bronchitis, emphysema etc all brought in as industrial diseases so that they cannot dodge around it. If they say bronchitis they've still got to pay it.

If it hadn't been for the unions people still wouldn't be aware of pneumoconiosis. It was 1947 when pneumoconiosis became a prescribed disease and I believe at that time it cost the union £10,000 and his widow only got £7,000 but they made the breakthrough. The union has insisted that every five year they get an X-ray at the pit. 98% of the men use the facility which is voluntary. When you consider that men sometimes have to travel long distances and have to get off the bus and practically run into the pit. So they've had the X-ray at the end of the shift. That's the trouble with anything to do with the pit. Its always in your own time.



# Industrial Reports

## Womens TUC - CAMPAIGN TO END LOW PAY

By Margaret Crear

**THE SPECIAL document *Women in the Labour Market*, produced for this year's Womens' TUC conference brings out clearly the tremendous decline in the position of working women.**

Until 1979, the number of women in the workforce was increasing, by 120,000 a year. In 1980 when unemployment in general started to climb, this growth stopped completely, until by June 1982 there had been a decline of no less than 800,000.

Segregation in jobs is increasing, and low pay is still the lot of most working women. Of the 4.4 million part-time workers approximately half earn less than £2.20 an hour—the TUC's definition of low pay.

The figures produced by the TUC demonstrate that part-time work is forced on women by a lack of childcare facilities. When the child reaches the age of 5, the number of working women doubles. And similarly there's an increase in full-time work when children transfer from primary to secondary school.

The lack of childcare for under 5s undoubtedly prevents many women from working or undertaking education and training. There are only 134,000 full

day care places, in other words, 41 places for every thousand children under the age of five years.

The effects on working women are underlined by the urgent tone of many of the composites, particularly in the demand for the TUC Women's Advisory Committee to play a much stronger campaigning role in defence of women.

Perhaps the most significant resolution is composite 3, which expresses the accumulated experience of women in struggle, in particular in the public sector. It recognises that both formal and informal incomes policies have reduced the living standards of women workers, and opposes any form of wage restraint or incomes policy.

It calls for joint trade union campaigns on low pay, while amendments from the Civil Service Union demand a national minimum wage, linked to the cost of living and a 35 hour week. It stresses the importance of class action and demands increased attention to the trade union organisation of women and improved organisation of low paid workers.

A campaign around such demands would inevitably draw many women into active participation in the labour movement. What is really missing from the agenda is any idea how radical

changes in women's position can be won and maintained.

Composite 3 calls for the General Council to ensure that the TUC's Alternative Economic Programme meets the real economic and social needs of women. Yet several times the weakness of this programme emerges.

### New technology: threat or promise?

One of the demands is for positive action programmes to enhance the position of women at work, through training to end segregation. Yet the Women's TUC itself reports that segregation has been increasing—and not for lack of legislation. The Sex Discrimination Act, section 48, calls for just such positive action programmes.

But as the Women's TUC points out: "Unfortunately, little use has been made of this section." Not only that, they describe how the bosses use their control of industry to undermine the Equal Pay Act, by for instance, loading job evaluation exercises against them.

Similar problems arise in relation to new technology. As they say, even though British capitalism is so bankrupt that "the use of new technology hasn't materialised to the extent envisaged" due to "a

general lack of investment in the current recession within British industry", yet they catalogue the decline, or potential decline in clerical jobs, mail order, and banking.

For example 50% of women's jobs in telegram and telephone equipment manufacturing, and 24,000 jobs in television manufacture have been lost in the last six years, whereas they point out that in nursing, social services and what they call the caring services, where it could be used to ease the physical stress of jobs and to increase job satisfaction new technology has not made an appearance. It isn't profitable there.

The use of new technology sums up the crisis facing the labour movement and in particular women. Either we will see the continued rise of unemployment amongst working women, whilst others continue to work long hours, and bosses reap higher profits—or new technology could be harnessed for the needs of the working class.

The AES, in spite of many welcome reforms and proposals cannot serve the real economic and social needs of women, because it envisages the continuation of capitalism, with the consequent double exploitation of women, and the production for profit rather than need.

In a socialist plan of pro-

On the civil servants' picket line 1981.



duction, with nationalisation under workers' control and management, of major firms, banks and insurance companies, it would be possible, using new technology, to reduce working hours to what is now considered part-time work-

ing. The resources produced could be planned to provide resources, in particular childcare, education and training, in order to end the double-exploitation of women, and their segregation into low-paid, low status jobs.

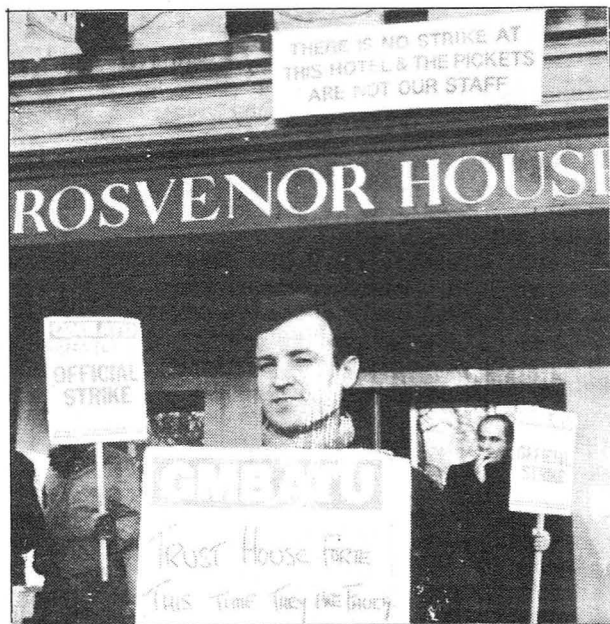
## UNION RIGHTS AT 'FORTE TOWERS'

"Unionisation is the issue" Tom Pearman, one of the sacked Grosvenor House Hotel wine-waiters, explained, "Charles Forte doesn't like unions of any kind. He tries to run his entire empire on junior managers who don't know anything about catering. He doesn't even give any encouragement to the staff; they're dissatisfied with the general conditions."

Management were approached last November for a contract of employment because under the Wages Council Act the wine-waiters believed they were entitled to one. They work an average of 45 hours a week, 40 weeks a year. Their P45s were, and still are, at the hotel. They pay tax and receive holiday pay, yet still they were considered casual.

Martin Roach, another sacked worker, explained there were a number of people who'd worked for at least 22 years at this hotel. Having failed to gain a contract they decided to appeal to an industrial tribunal, but were sacked before they could go to court.

No notice was given. The letter they each received stated that they had the right



to discuss their dismissals with management. However, when they tried to do this they weren't even allowed past the time-keeper's office.

The response to the strike from workers at other hotels in London has been tremendous because they know that if the workers at the Grosvenor House Hotel are defeated their jobs will become less secure. Chief

shop steward Harry O'Kelly summed it up. "You see I reckon there's maybe 70,000 people all over the country affected by this dispute because that is probably the number of people entitled to contracts. So we've got to win!"

Harry O'Kelly, Chief shop steward, Tom Pearman and Martin Roach, spoke to Denis Doran

## Letter from a water-worker

ONCE AGAIN a strike has been brought to an end by the so-called impartial inquiry held at ACAS.

The water workers had a just cause for the 15% and comparability, and the national negotiators had the best support in years. But they wasted time with the inquiry instead of leading the rank and file in the strike for the full claim.

On the Tuesday night Ron Keating came out of ACAS shouting that it was a great victory for the water workers. That they were getting 12% and that they should go back to work on Thursday morning.

He knew that the shop stewards had no chance to call branch meetings so the rank and file could not have their vote on the findings of the inquiry, until they were already back at work.

The offer of so-called 12% means that actually most workers will end up with 8% over the sixteen month period due to the fact that most parts of the offer are not acceptable to the men.

Talking to the men in my depot at Coppermills in East London, they are concerned that the national officers cannot be voted out of office when they have failed to do the job which they should have done.

The time has come for a change in the rule book and it can only be done by continuous pressure from the rank and file membership within the union.

The best thing to come out of the strike is that we broke this government's derogatory 4% pay guide and have paved the way for other unions to achieve the same thing.

The shop stewards com-

mittee would like to thank everybody who helped in so many ways during the strike and boosted morale on the picket lines.

To all trade unions the message is, keep up the good fight until we win through to fairer pay for all.

Yours fraternally,  
Chris Taylor  
GMBATU Shop Steward  
Thames Water Authority.

## Colmans, Norwich

"In the last few days management have destroyed 150 years of good industrial relations. Never in all that time have workers at Colmans been forced to take this action", Dave Royal, Convenor Technical Services, Colmans, Norwich.

Workers at the factory have had storm clouds over their heads for 12 months since the notorious industrial management consultants "Metro Proudfoot" were called in to analyse the company's failure to make bigger profits from bigger sales.

On 25 February the storm clouds broke. 350 redundancies were announced out of 1,000 workers. Plans included closure of sections of the machine shop, paint shop and carpentry section and the use of private contractors instead. "We want workers we can turn on and off like

a tap" one management representative said. The bosses even told the press of plans before the unions.

The portrait of the firm's Quaker founder Jeremiah Colman was recently removed from the foyer. The management probably feared a ghost from the past. With the painting went the last trace of paternalistic concern for workers' well being which included the first ever works canteen, medical schemes, care and schools for workers' families and even houses.

The unions do not accept management proposals and on 2 March there was a successful 24 hour strike, the first ever found necessary at this family firm.

By John Sillett  
(Norwich Labour Party)



# Industrial Reports

## BREL SHILDON Keep the wagons rolling

Last Saturday, 12 March saw a mass demonstration against the scheduled closure of Shildon wagon works.

The 3,000 plus strong march stopped traffic through the centre of Darlington, 10 minutes from Shildon down the first ever passenger railway line in the world.

Earlier in the week, union reps met with management in London, where they were told that the works must close, but as an insulting sop to the skilled workforce, British Rail wanted to mothball the plant, keep on 264 workers and give a whole £¼ million to set up new work in the area.

The unions rejected this, saying the fight must go on. It is vital for the whole area that the wagon works does not close, even for a week. The knock-on effects in an area of already high unemployment would be drastic, as several local industries are linked to the works, and most of Shildon depends on the money earned by the wagon works.

The rail links from Darlington to Bishop Auckland would be in great danger, the idea of closing the line having been under discussion for some time. In the light of Serpell the whole issue takes

on a big significance. If Shildon goes, and Horwich, what next for the Tory axe?

The reasons given for closing Shildon are flimsy at best. One young worker, a Young Socialist member, was furious when a Tory councillor claimed on the local television that Shildon was outdated and could not cope with modern air-brake wagons.

As the YS member said: "He is talking off the top of his head. I work on the type of wagon he is talking about, and to say Shildon can't deal with them is a damn great lie. He wants to check his facts." It makes you wonder how much the Tories actually know about all the things they are destroying.

Shildon must not become another Consett, and the labour movement must actively oppose this scandalous closure.

Messages of support to the Joint Action Committee, BREL, Shildon Works, Shildon, County Durham.

**By Ben Hardacre**

(Political Education Officer, Bishop Auckland Labour Party, personal capacity)



Shildon demonstrators 12 March.

Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)



Photo: John Sturrock (Report) III

Working on the line at Halewood. Workers in the car industry are bitter at management. At Longbridge, BL workers struck over police raids on storemen's houses, while at Cowley, there was a strike over manning. As a TGWU official at Cowley said, "there is a limit to how far management can push their employees".

## FORDS HALEWOOD: BOSSES LOOKING FOR TROUBLE

On the morning of 11 March, thousands of workers at Ford's Halewood received some obscene mail.

A letter from Ford's management arrived saying, "It is vital that you know the full facts behind this dispute and the possible destructive consequences of...misguided action by employees." It certainly is vital!

The current strike over the sacking of a production worker dates back to the foremen's strike at Halewood when frustration among workers at being laid off and losing money resulted in damage to several cars.

While the anger that led to this damage can be understood, it cannot be condoned, especially as it allowed the bosses to paint Halewood workers as a shower of hooligans. Since these events some weeks ago, workers had been expecting that an "example" would be made.

"Three weeks ago a man was sacked for what

management called 'gross misconduct'. They said he had wilfully bent a bracket so that he wouldn't be able to fit the centre console.

"The foreman said he had checked the car and the bracket had been okay. He saw the lad get into work. Then later he found the bracket was bent in a way that could only have been done on purpose and the lad was taken to the office and sacked.

"Whilst in the office, one of Ford's more intelligent managers let slip that they had received an anonymous call accusing four men of the previous damage. Needless to say our man was on the list. The bosses' case holds water like a leaky sieve!

"The foreman says he followed the car in question along the line, so he knows exactly what happened to it. Now, anyone who knows anything about an assembly line knows how stupid that claim is, especially given the half-hour gap between the foreman's checking the car and 'noticing' the damage.

"How he could keep his

eyes on one particular car and deal with all the other things he should have been doing is a mystery. Unless of course you take into account the fact that he says he took the car's number when he followed it.

"Why should he do that? Why that particular car? It doesn't make sense until you remember the anonymous phone call. Then it all starts to stink of fish.

"To push even more holes through management's case, a witness they called in pointed out that for 20 minutes of the 30 minutes gap between the foreman seeing the man climb into the car and finding the damage, the fellow was on his tea break!"

Management's off-the-cuff sacking pre-empted their own disciplinary and appeals procedure, which, having already sacked him, they kindly then agreed to follow. On three separate occasions during this procedure, the union asked for a thorough enquiry to be made. If they were able to prove their case then they

could press charges.

On each of these three occasions, management were so confident of their case that they refused to listen to the idea.

"We don't like to be taking strike action at this time, and we don't like the look of this set-up at all. This lad's been fitted up to provoke a dispute that the management think they can win to nail the union.

"But even if this is a set-up, we can't let it go. Not just because of this lad's job, but because if we let this one pass we might as well jack in. We can't back down on this one. We might as well tear up our cards and lie down while the bosses stamp all over us.

"They are not going to get away with this one. We are going to nail those bastards to the wall."

**Jim Hollinshead (GMBATU No 5) spoke to workers at Ford Halewood**

## TILBURY DOCKS STRIKE

THERE HAS been a 100% turn out of dockers in this week's strike in Tilbury. One worker said: "Over the past years we have been told there is no money available, so we've settled. But this time we're putting our foot down".

Tilbury dockers are demanding parity with staff and those who work in the Port of London Authority (PLA). There are five grades of staff, but dockers are classed as a second grade citizen, being ungraded.

"We don't begrudge the pay of the staff, we just want to be treated properly. We

work in the coals, in the dirt, but still should be paid for doing a first-class job".

Another worker explained. "Our pay has been whittled away over the past few years: that means less pensions which are earnings related. We're going to face a not too good future once we retire. We are falling into the poverty trap. Some workers are entitled to Family Income Supplement. Many dockers also travel long distances to work, having been transferred from other closed down docks.

One worker describes it as "like Custer's last stand, except this time we're going to win". A mass meeting is being held this Thursday to decide on future action. The wharf workers are going to be the key factor. Although better paid, wharf workers jobs too are under threat and are liable for transfer to the

docks on less pay.

There are suspicions that the government may consider privatising the profitable sections of dockland: "We won't stand for that".

Workers pointed to the decline of the docks, which one man describes as a ship-graveyard, with unused old ships lying idle. But sitting next to it is a yard, which scraps ships for steel.

Ironically because of the falling demand for steel, prices are declining so fast it is now too expensive even to scrap the ships.

The strike is not only over pay but the whole future of the docks. The gloves are off.

**By John MacKay (Basildon LPYS)**

## SAVE COED EILY!

WHEN 260 men at Coed Eily coking works were told their plant was to close, they immediately occupied the NSF area offices at Nant Garw.

Tony Cooke, NUM secretary Coed Eily NSF— "This works uses 3000 tons of South Wales coal a week from a number of pits including Cwm/Coed Eily, Lady Windsor and Bedwas. The coke ovens at Coed Eily are 32 years old.

"When the closure was announced, the ovens were

run down to safety levels and safety cover was organised on a three shift system of 21 men."

During a general meeting of 200 workers in Thomastown a message was received informing them that Bedwas NSF were filling Coed Eily orders. 20 flying pickets were dispatched. Cwm coking works had already shut their carbon plant and were on rundown. Appeals were sent out to Abercwmboi, Bedwas and Nant Garw NSF plants.

During the meeting, men speaking from the floor insisted "that the struggle was not just for Coed Eily cokemen but for the whole community."

A "Strike fighting fund" was set up and the following message read from the platform:— "Rhondda LPYS would like official permission to carry out a

doorstep bucket collection in the Rhondda for the Coed Eily Strike Fighting Fund. Your future is our future tomorrow."

The request was granted with applause from the coke workers. The strike was called off when the NUM ballot result came out but the mood to fight has certainly not died in this area. There has been £720,000 investment in the plant in the last six years and the works still makes a profit. The pit next to the plant has 80 years of reserves and the workers are afraid this too would close if they succeeded with the plant.

**By Brychan Davies**

(Rhondda LPYS)



# Militant

Continued from front page

receive towards their housing costs.

This represents the first direct cut in dole money since the 1930's!

The Tories are attacking not only unemployed youth but every section of working class youth. The latest example being Norman Tebbit instructing the wages council to cut the pay award for 650,000 shopworkers from £5 a week to £3.75 a week affecting hundreds of thousands of young shopworkers.

Youth won't sit back and watch the clock being turned back to the 1930's. Youth will fight back but to fight back effectively they must be organised.

The Labour Party Young Socialists' conference in

Bridlington from 1-4 April will be an opportunity for all youth to get organised to fight back against the Tories.

Over 2,000 Young Socialists will meet, representing miners, health workers, YOP trainees, FE students, unemployed youth...in fact all walks of life from all around the country will be represented.

The conference will have the job of outlining the conditions facing working class youth in Britain in 1983 and hammering out a fighting socialist programme for youth.

### Stop press:

The shop stewards' committee of the Swan Hunters shipyard in Wallsend have donated £100 to Wallsend LPYS for National Conference.

### GREATER LONDON LABOUR PARTY

Debate on nationalisation

Speakers:

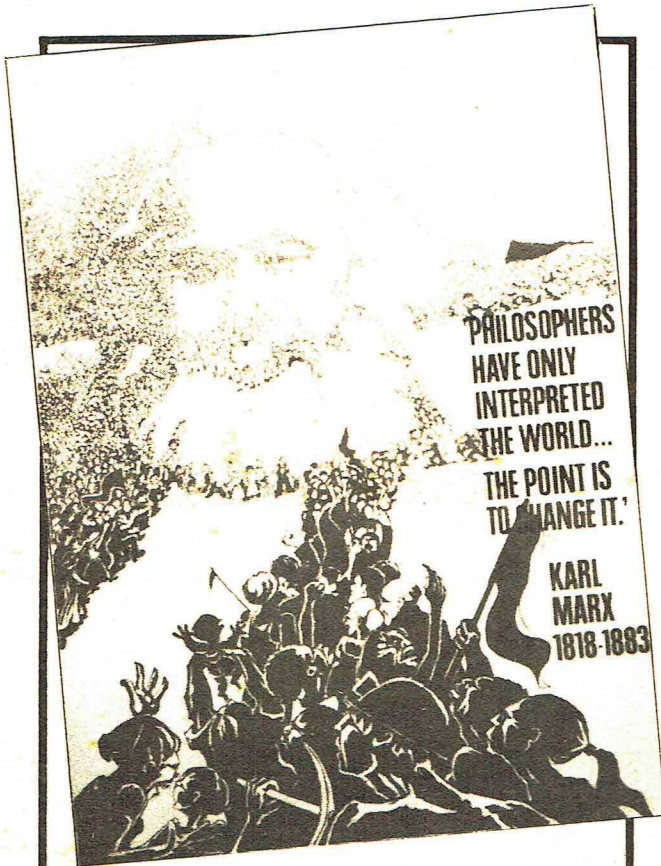
James Curran (Editor, *New Socialist*)

Donald Ross (Editor, *Labour Weekly*)

Peter Taaffe (Editor, *Militant*)

8 pm, Friday 25 March

County Hall, London.



Karl Marx Centenary posters (red and ochre). Single copies 80p (£1.20 post free). Bulk orders (10 or over) 50p per poster, post free. Cash with order please to: Militant Posters, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

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# Biggest and best Militant meetings'

# PROTEST AT THE EXPULSIONS

With the 'reinstate the five' tour coming to a close, it is clear the ranks of the labour movement are intransigently opposed to the witch-hunt.

The meetings have been addressed by the five members of the *Militant* Editorial Board who have been expelled from the Labour Party.

Whenever they have been held in no matter what part of the country, they have been the biggest and best *Militant* readers' meetings ever held.

And paper sales are booming too, especially in the pit areas of South Wales, despite the set backs of the recent miners ballot.

At the Coed Ely coke works which is threatened with closure, over half of one shift of 80 workers bought the paper! Forty-four papers were sold and given the swapping of reading material that takes place in workers' breaktimes it is likely that the entire shift read *Militant*. At the neighbouring Coed Ely pit 21 papers were sold—more than when the actual strike was taking place. On the streets of nearby Thomastown another 30 papers were sold! (See report p.15)

The expulsions, alongside the 100th anniversary of the death of Karl Marx has produced massive interest in *Militant's* Marx Memorial rallies (see page 4). The two meetings held so far have been record-breakers—220 came to the rally in Glasgow and 250 in Swansea!

This thirst for the ideas of Marxism has been represented at the readers meetings too. At the Portsmouth meeting, Peter Taaffe, the editor of *Militant* told an audience of 150 that "We do not accept that socialism is dead just because five people have been expelled from the Labour Party", a statement that was certainly backed up by contributions from the audience.

In Plymouth, right wing Labour councillors recently threatened to wander the ci-

ty's subways late at night ripping down *Militant* posters! However, their attempts to silence *Militant* backfired. 75 attended the meeting in Plymouth with another 65 attending the Polytechnic Labour Club meeting addressed by Peter Taaffe.

At the meeting in Chesterfield, the constituency of Labour's national treasurer Eric Varley, Ted Grant, political editor of *Militant*,

addressed a meeting of 90. AUEW shop steward Steve Horne made an appeal for a collection saying he wished Eric Varley could see where *Militant* really gets its money from—not sinister backers but individual donations from ordinary workers. An excellent £185 was raised for the fighting fund, with a further collection raising £25 for the nearby Daleside Hadden dispute.

Birkenhead held one of its best meetings in recent months with 150 listening to Clare Doyle, one of the expelled, and Alan Quinn, an executive member of TGWU. During the meeting, Peter Henry of the National Union of Seamen told how through expelling socialists

the right wing were divorcing themselves from the rank and file of the party.

The largest readers meeting ever held in Dundee attracted 50 people and at the Scottish Labour Party Conference, in Perth, 90 attended the fringe meeting addressed by Ted Grant. One speaker, a member of the NUR told the meeting, "The future is with you—you have the youth, you have the ideas."

Other meetings held within the last week also attracted many workers new to the ideas of Marxism; 100 attended the meeting in Lambeth, South London, 75 at Rotherham and 65 at Bristol.

At the North West

Peter Taaffe

Clare Doyle



## 'Reinstate the Five' Campaign Tour—

remaining dates

**MEDWAY:** Chatham Town Hall, 7.45 pm, Thursday 17 March. Speaker: Keith Dickinson.

**BRIGHTON:** Stanford Arms, Preston Circus, 7.30 pm, Friday 18 March. Speaker: Clare Doyle.

**DURHAM:** Bridge Hotel, North Road, 7.30 pm, Tuesday 29 March. Speaker: Clare Doyle.

**SOUTHWICK:** Southwick Centre (Community College), Thompson Road, 7.30 pm, Wednesday 30 March.

Regional Labour Party conference, 100 delegates and visitors came to the fringe meeting there, where Les Huckfield MP speaking from the platform in a fraternal address, said the witch-hunt had nothing to do with the party constitution but was "a return to the era of opposition to left socialist ideas by bans, proscriptions and expulsions."

Keith Dickinson, one of the expelled, closed the meeting with a call that has been echoed throughout the country—he said he may be temporarily out of the party but organisational measures could not defeat ideas and he would be back, and fighting for the ideas of socialism in the movement.

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