

Liverpool takes on the Tories

Defend our jobs Save our services

IN THE May local council elections, Labour won a great victory on Liverpool City Council.

Under previous Liberal/Tory administrations, 4,400 jobs had been destroyed, council rents had risen by 120% to an average level of £17.55 (£5.70 higher than in Manchester), and £120 million in grants from the government had been withheld.

From being 40% of the council's income in 1975, the rate support grant had fallen to only 29% in 1982. This meant higher rates as well as rents and fewer more expensive services.

Labour won on a pledge to reverse these policies. They have kept their word. A thousand new workers have been taken on. A £2 a week refund is to be paid to all council tenants before Christmas. Nursery School provision is being expanded. 100 more council houses are being build.

The extra cost of these measures is £22 million, plus £6 million which was chopped from the budget by the old administration, and has been restored to prevent further cuts in services.

But on top of that, there are penalty payments which the government is forcing the council to pay, by withholding still more rate support grant. For every pound spent over the Tories target, the rate support grant will be reduced by an increasing rate up to a maximum of £1.26 for every pound spent. The total extra charge to the council this year will be £30 million.

For next year, the target has been set at £216 million, to achieve which, the council would have to sack up to 5,500 workers, run down all its services and abandon all its election pledges. The penalties for not reaching this target will be raised to a maximum of £2.22 for every £1 spent up in

CONTINUED ON
BACK PAGE

JOIN THE MARCH

Saturday 19 November.
Assemble Shaw St., near Liverpool
city centre 10.30am.
Rally at Pier Head 12.30.

Will Tories pounce in January?

SPECULATION is rife on Merseyside that the Tory government are proposing to appoint commissioners to take over the running of Liverpool City Council.

Last month, Malcolm Thornton Tory MP for Crosby, and Parliamentary private secretary to Environment Secretary, Patrick Jenkin, warned that commissioners might have to be considered. *The Financial Times* reported that Jenkin himself was considering this. No denial has been made.

Now the *Liverpool Echo* (November 15) has reported that the government is planning to ask Parliament to pass new laws to enable it to send in a commissioner—"if the City Council got away with it, not only defying government cuts, but actually spending more, then other local authorities might follow suit".

At Westminster, there is even speculation that the date has been decided. 6 January, 1984. Deputy leader of the council, Derek Hatton, commented, "if they try to bring in commissioners, they will receive the greatest outcry from people in Liverpool that has ever been seen. There is no way that the people of Liverpool would allow commissioners to walk all over their democratically elected council."

By Pat Craven



Protests after the riots in Liverpool in 1981. Liverpool Council are trying to lower unemployment, one of the major causes of the riots.

'I'll be there on Saturday'

WHY ARE Liverpool workers supporting their council? Because the council is fighting alongside local people for jobs and a decent life. One worker, formerly

unemployed, who now works for Liverpool council explains.

"I've been unemployed for three years after being made redundant from Danish Bacon. I went looking for work down the Dock Road and around the in-

dustrial estates, but there was nothing going.

"I wrote numerous letters and I just got fed up. I hoped that with a Labour council I might get a job. I was lucky, I started on Monday.

"If the Tories close the council I speak for hundreds

if not thousands in saying there is no future for us here. I would probably never work again.

"It would mean an increase in crime and other social problems. I know where I live things are so bad a lot of kids are turning to crime. The Tories' answer is to build jails instead of jobs.

"I'll be demonstrating on Saturday. I'll get my father, my mother, all my mates down, even my gran, even though she is half blind."

Militant**Defend union rights
-Defy Tory laws**

LAST WEEK the POEU conference voted to comply with the ruling of the Court of Appeal and stop the union blacking of work on Mercury.

This decision was greeted with an audible sigh of relief which echoed through the management of Mercury, throughout the boardrooms of big business, and round the tables of the Tory cabinet.

If the POEU conference had decided to ignore this court ruling, then the Tories and big business would have been on the horns of a dilemma.

The more serious representatives of big business know full well that the real balance of forces in society rests decisively in favour of the trade unions. They do not believe their own fairy stories about the "weakness" of the unions and the supposed new mood of "realism" on the shop floor.

They fear an all-out trial of strength with the unions and have stepped back whenever such a battle seemed imminent. The Tories and big business are fearful that the use of their own anti-union laws could well provoke—as under the Heath government—the very industrial movement they dread.

If the POEU executive had boldly called upon their members to stand firm, then all the indications were that the conference would have supported them overwhelmingly. Any move by the courts to take POEU funds, or jail POEU leaders for contempt would have resulted in POEU members walking out on strike nationally, immediately followed by millions of other trade unionists.

The Tories would have been stamped into an ignominious retreat. Under the Industrial Relations Act of the Heath government the Tories discovered an "official solicitor" to get them off the hook. No doubt some suitable historic relic would have been discovered on this occasion to save the faces of Thatcher and the Tories.

The anti-union laws have only succeeded so far where right wing trade union leaders have refused to pick up the gauntlet.

In his efforts to persuade the union to comply with the court ruling, Brian Stanley, POEU general secretary, even wrote to the TUC asking Len Murray, "whether the POEU would be contravening TUC policy if they decided to obey an injunction which might arise from an appeal to be made by Mercury next Monday".

The reply from Len Murray, undoubtedly affecting the decisions of both the NEC and the conference, contained not even a hint that the TUC would back up the POEU should it decide to disobey the court ruling. On the contrary, the reply to the POEU gave the distinct impression that the TUC opposed any such stand.

"There is no question," Len Murray wrote, "of the TUC setting out to break or

encourage members to break the law".

But what union sets out to break the law? The POEU and other unions set out to defend the interests of their members. Throughout history, laws have been introduced aimed at undermining the effectiveness of the unions.

To reject completely the possibility of breaking the law in these circumstances means in effect to abandon the interests of trade union members.

The 1982 TUC Congress carried a motion, not countermanded by any decision in 1983, on the first anti-union legislation. It contained the comment that, "outright opposition and resistance to defeat the intentions of the legislation and defend the interests of all working people must primarily be carried out industrially and not in the courts... Militant resistance to the application of anti-trade union laws including the use of industrial action, is imperative."

In addition, a 1983 congress motion spoke of: "the need for the General Council to co-ordinate support from affiliated unions with industrial action where appropriate to defend unions if employers use the Acts."

It is a disgrace, therefore, that the right wing TUC leadership appear to be accepting the Tories' anti-union legislation without even a token fight.

The rank and file of the trade union movement must now campaign through branches, districts and up to national conference level for a bold and unequivocal lead from the TUC on this fundamental issue. The executives of those unions which are prepared to take a stand against these laws should come together to discuss mutual aid in the event of any attack on their democratic rights.

The *Times*, that august apologist for the Thatcher government declared that "a precedent has been created, and will be influential." But that is more in the nature of a wish, than a scientific prediction. This issue is not dead, even for the POEU.

Trade unionists are challenging these Tory laws almost daily through so-called secondary action and mass pickets. On most occasions the employers have decided that discretion is the better part of valour, but following the Mercury case other employers may feel emboldened.

At present, the threat of legal action is already being wielded against Shell workers over their dispute and against the NGA, because of its refusal to backtrack on its campaign for recognition in the *Stockport Messenger's* group. Either case could develop into a more general struggle if the judges decide against the unions.

Even without a lead from the union tops, an all-out trial of strength over the Tories' trade union legislation is inevitable, at some stage. The ranks of the trade unions will not sit back and allow rights won in generations of struggle simply to be removed by the stroke of a lawyer's pen.



Labour MP Roland Boyes voices his protest to soldiers at Greenham Common. It was after his question in Parliament that the Tories admitted peace protestors could be shot.

Photo: Militant.

**ANGER ERUPTS AT CRUISE
DEPLOYMENT**

AN EXPLOSION of anger has greeted the sudden arrival of Cruise missiles in Britain. On Tuesday as the missiles were airlifted into Greenham mass arrests followed after impromptu, peaceful demonstrations.

Nearly 500 people have been arrested at Greenham Common, Faslane, Colchester and the Houses of Parliament. A furious mass picket greeted Tory defence minister Heseltine when he arrived at Manchester University for a Tory student meeting.

The growing opposition to Cruise can be judged by the increasing hysteria of the Tories and their lackeys in Fleet Street. They have stepped up their smears of CND and its supporters.

The Tories squeal that

Cruise is necessary to 'defend Britain'. They mean the defence of their own privileges, profits and interests which have inflicted mass unemployment and growing poverty on the rest of the population.

They claim CND leader Bruce Kent was 'naive' to address the Communist Party conference. Yet they are the ones who are naive if they expect people to believe that they or Ronald Reagan have any real concern for the interests of the majority of the British population. Reagan sees Britain as an 800 mile, static aircraft carrier on which to base military hardware whose only purpose is to protect the world interests

of US capitalism.

The campaign against the nuclear arms build-up and the Tories' massive arms bill must be stepped up. While 'direct-action' protests and mass demonstrations are vital in building support for nuclear disarmament, the fact that Cruise is now being installed shows that on their own, these are not enough.

A turn must be made to the labour and trade union movement. A small incident at Greenham Common this week shows the power of the trade unions. A British Telecom worker installing equipment was arrested at gunpoint by suspicious US troops. He was immediately released after his shop

steward threatened strike action.

This power must be tapped. A serious campaign must begin within the trade unions to get the movement to use its industrial muscle against these weapons of mass destruction. Such a campaign must stress viable alternatives to the arms industry if workers in that field are to be won over to the side of nuclear disarmament.

Socialists must hammer home that such alternatives can be achievable and peace made permanent if, and only if, society is transformed and socialism is triumphant. Then the resources and wealth of the nation can be put at the disposal of the mass of the population—and society rid of the parasitic millionaire class and with them their guardian militarists, whose hair-brained schemes threaten the future of mankind.

BLACKBURN...**'Well women' campaign**

Militant supporters in Blackburn have played a leading role in the fight for a Well-Women Centre. ROSINA HARRIS (one of ten under threat of expulsion) is secretary of the campaign. She writes here about the work of the campaign.

Blackburn is one of the twenty five most deprived local authority areas in England and Wales. In our campaign we stressed the special problems that affect women.

According to the 1981 census, Blackburn is the most over-crowded housing area in the country. This inevitably produces extra pressure on women, particularly one-parent families. When a battered women's refuge existed in Blackburn between 1975 and 1979, two hundred mothers and four hundred children stayed there.

Women discriminated against

The vast majority of part-time workers are women for whom the provisions of the Employment Protection Act 1975 do not apply if they work less than sixteen hours.

The discriminatory nature of national insurance and supplementary benefit schemes

reinforces the second-class status of women.

Blackburn has a high proportion of Asian women. Many find it difficult to communicate effectively about their personal problems in English, have restricted social mobility and are less likely to seek out assistance from Citizens Advice Bureaux or solicitors.

The Well-Women Centre aims to give advice and counselling even if a woman is not 'ill'. She can go there for help filling in a form, for legal advice or just a friendly chat to alleviate depression.

Medical advice and basic health checks are offered in a relaxed atmosphere. There will be a crèche, coffee bar and library, printing facilities and other equipment to extend information and activities.

We have already discussed launching a campaign against low pay. On 2 December we are hoping to hold a public meeting on the NHS cuts, drawing in all the contacts we have made through the Well-Women campaign.

**MPs oppose
expulsion threat**

THE CAMPAIGN to stop the threatened expulsion of ten members of Blackburn Labour Party is building support.

The ten members were named in the so-called 'Gregory Report', which is being used to attack the growing support for *Militant* in Blackburn.

While the right-wing executive of the party is set to meet on December 4 to discuss the proposed expulsions, opposition is growing. Twenty Labour MPs have signed the following petition condemning the threatened expulsions;

We the undersigned unite to express our deep concern over reports that ten members of the Blackburn Labour Party are to be asked to answer allegations about the so-

called "unconstitutional action".

We believe this action could take the party down the road of a witch-hunt and bring civil war to the party at a time when the labour movement is clearly demanding unity, around conference policy, to defeat the Tories. We urge that you abandon these moves. Signed:

Terry Fields, Dave Nellist, Ernie Roberts, D Skinner, D Canavan, J Corbyn, B Sedgemore, H Cohen, G Birmingham, Kevin Barron, Tony Banks, Joe Richardson, Rob Clay, Joan Maynard, Martin Flannery, Bob Wareing, Max Madden, Eddie Loyden, Alan Roberts, Chris Smith.

By a Militant reporter

Communist Congress

- crisis grows

By Bob Wade

THE SPLITS within the Communist Party of Great Britain surfaced at their national Congress last weekend. Areas of contention were Poland and content and control of the CP journals, the *Morning Star* and *Marxism Today*.

The split—between supporters of the openly reformist Euro-Communist leadership and the more hardline Stalinists based mainly around older industrial workers—was roughly divided three to two, in a Con-

gress of 250 delegates.

While both sides support the general CP strategy of "broad alliances", they do so to varying degrees with the Euro's even further removed from the ideas of Marxism. The hardliners fear that the influx and policies of middle class elements attracted into the Party by the Euro-Communists are alienating their diminishing industrial base.

The debate on Poland expressed the political bankruptcy of the CP: the

position of both factions would repel ordinary workers. The hardliners simply give *carte blanche* support to the totalitarian methods of the ruling bureaucracies in the Eastern European states. For their part, the Euro's wring their hands over the "excesses" of the bureaucracies, dismissing them as "mistakes". East Germany 1953, Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia 1968, Poland 1970 and today—all are "mistakes".

In the debate on *Marxism Today* socialists may have had some sympathy for the hardliners in their battle to rescue the CP's 'theoretical' journal, which is in the hands of the Euro-Communists. In an attempt to find a short-cut to a mass readership, they have made the journal an academic talking shop.

Academic

One resolution pointed out that in the past 18 months, the monthly journal has had 47 articles written by academics, only 16 articles (out of 91) on industrial and economic issues, and only three articles on national liberation struggles.

The West Hampstead branch said the journal was often "no more than a mouthpiece of bourgeois liberalism".

However, after a heated and often uncomradely debate, the Euro's maintained control. Similarly they won the battle over the *Morning Star*, the party's daily



Photo: Morning Star
Mick Costello of the *Morning Star* sits alongside Martin Jacques, editor of *Marxism Today* at the CP Congress.

paper.

The hard-liners control the People's Press Printing Society, the 'non-aligned' body of shareholders that controls the *Star*.

Broad Alliance

At Congress, the Euro's argued that the *Star* was ignoring CP policy—i.e. the leadership's—and was giving too much prominence to the class struggle. One Euro delegate made the hair-raising statement that "not all strikes are in the political dimension". As far as the Euro's are concerned, the working class are finished so they must look to even wider and broader alliances, and the *Morning Star* should follow this line.

The Euro's won the day, by 155 votes to 92, and seven hardliners were knocked off the CP executive including the *Star's* editors. Yet the Euro's accept that the *Star* should still be controlled by the PPPS and not by the CP directly, so the hardliners effectively still retain control.

It would take two to three years for the Euros to get control, if they can at all. The situation has not been resolved but has polarised, and could be the basis for a formal split in the CP in the future.

While the Euro-Communists consolidated their control at Congress, neither faction are capable of arresting the collapse of the CP.

Their membership has plummeted to 15,000, with only 51% paying subs to the Party. Their youth section is dead—the Young Communist League claims a mere 600 members, which is an exaggeration. The Congress itself had a tired atmosphere. Youth delegates were a rarity, with most delegates being around 40–50 years old.

The CP cannot attract workers to its ranks. Their Stalinist methods are alien to the movement. At the Congress, a minority faction bulletin called *Congress Truth* was banned—stewards were even given permission to search delegates' bags for this

dangerous item! Compare that to the fraternal and democratic exchange of ideas at LPYS conferences.

CP rejected

More importantly, it is the CP's policies that make them incapable of building amongst the working class. Their policies of 'alliances' with pro-capitalist elements on one issue campaigns will get no echo amongst workers looking for a socialist fightback against the Tories and big business. The CP does not understand that watering down socialism makes it weaker, not stronger.

The further the CP moves away from the basic ideals of Marxism, so their decline worsens. Workers who move into struggle will increasingly look to the leftward moving Labour Party and the Marxists within it for a lead, and will reject the insipid 'broad alliance' policies of the CP.

CPSA Ballot

ALTHOUGH THE Civil and Public Services Association voted against affiliation to the Labour party, the result for Labour supporters was far better than many people expected.

Whereas last year NALGO rejected affiliation by seven to one, in the CPSA ballot the margin was only two to one, in a high turnout. In the ballot, 65,922 voted against, yet a massive 31,479 voted for.

There was no national campaign by the union

leadership but nonetheless in a number of offices there was an outright majority for affiliation.

Militant supporters have been to the fore in this campaign, while on the other hand the leadership has not only refused to campaign but they have been hinting at moves to separate the trade unions from the Labour Party.

Who fights to build the Labour Party—Militant or the right wing?

1,000 march in Dublin

ONE THOUSAND young people marched through Dublin on 12 November in a Labour Youth demonstration against unemployment.

Called by Labour Youth, the youth section of the Irish Labour Party, banners from all over the South, from Protestant and Catholic areas in the North, and from many of the major unions and trades councils, reflected the spread in the support for the march.

The march was led by a group of workers from the Clondalkin Paper Mills, where a prolonged struggle is being fought to save jobs. Now, two of these workers are into their second week of hunger strike and the Dublin

Council of the Trade Unions has called a 24-hour general strike to back them.

Labour Youth pledged its full support to these workers and the brother of one of the hunger strikers addressed the rally, calling on the Labour leadership to honour its pre-election pledge to re-open the mills.

Mick Barry for Labour Youth told the marchers that in the last two years, unemployment in the South had risen by 50% to over 200,000.

The march was joined by 200 young workers from Northern Ireland, from both Catholic and Protestant areas, united behind the banner of socialism.

Housing battle

ALMOST 1,500 houses in Leicester are to be demolished. The re-inforced metal in the structure has corroded in 972 houses on the Saffron Lane Estate and 500 at South Braunstone.

If the council rebuilds on existing foundations (as is likely), the cost will be £29 million. This would end Leicester's new building programme for ten years.

The Tory government only allocated Leicester £17 million for 1983–84 when £43.5 million was requested. The 1984–85 application was for £37m, which itself would only have been sufficient to rebuild 200 houses a year.

Yet Stewart Hill, a former Tory housing chairman, claims that Labour's application as "fascinating for its audacity, gall and cheek", (*Leicester Mercury*, 1 July).

The Labour council must ensure that the Tory government comes up with every

penny that is necessary. With 11,367 applicants for housing on the council list last September and growing by 200 people a month; with nearly 2,000 houses lost by the "right-to-buy" laws, the money must be made available now. We cannot allow anything new to be built for ten years.

When the council previously wrote to the Department of Environment, all they received was a five sentence letter of acknowledgement.

The Labour councillors and the Labour Party which won 40 out of 56 seats in the May elections, with a manifesto of spending more on jobs and leisure, must now organise a campaign involving tenants associations, and the trade unions, particularly in the building industry, to force the money out of the Tories.

By Gary Freeman



Angry youth outside the Old Bailey on Monday.

Photo: Militant

Newham 8 trial begins

THE START of the Newham 8 trial at the Old Bailey was marked by a noisy protest staged outside the courts on Monday.

Several hundred people, mostly Asian youth from Newham on "school-strike" for a day, along with labour movement bodies joined the protest. Although the trial was delayed for a day, the demonstrators stayed to make their point. They then went on to picket Fleet Street for not reporting cases of racist attacks.

Racial attacks and police harassment still continue in Newham. Last Friday, at the Langdon

School in East Ham, six more youths were arrested, on minor charges, for defending school students from racist attacks which had been going on over the preceding week.

The trial is expected to last for about two weeks, and Labour Party and LPYS members, especially those in London, are urged to attend. For details of the picket and other activities from the Newham 8 Defence Campaign, phone 01-555 8151 (afternoons), or Mark Avis, 01-552 3204.

By Mark Avis
(Newham North West LPYS)

EIGHT WEEKS TO RAISE £50,000

ads

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

CLASSIFIED

IT'S A hard life for those at the top. Just think of the worry deciding how to spend all that money. Should we go to the Bahamas or the South of France this weekend?

When you are earning more than a million pounds in a year it must be almost impossible to know what to do with it all. Yet, despite these heavy cares there are some prepared to accept the responsibility.

Sir Clive Sinclair, for example, has recently awarded himself a £1m bonus to top up a paltry salary of £12,767. This new sum comfortably exceeds the £399,661 which was the total paid to his 26 employees in the same year.

Unfortunately, our problem is not how to spend the massive sums of money we receive but to ensure that our paper continues to grow in prestige and influence among working class people. It is precisely because our readers do not have disposable riches that they see the need to support Militant.

We depend upon the donations of ordinary workers who want to put an end to the system which produces these millionaire parasites. This week's total of £2,629 shows the determination of our readers to eradicate capitalist inequality.

Our thanks go to Ms Armstrong (East London) Mr Daveport (an OAP in Mansfield), Vivienne Hall (Tooting) who each gave £20, Dave Gee £19, Ian Etherington (Chingford CLP) £15.10 and Frank Coleman (Hackney, TGWU) £15. Ian Smith (East Kilbride) and Avtar Kaur (Stafford) both gave £10, B Green (Selly Oak, TGWU) and Jimmy Gray (GMBATU Leith No 2 branch) both gave £5 and Lawrence Price (shop steward, Cardiff ISTC) gave £4.10.

Also included in the donations this week are: M Huges (Chester CLP) £3, J Davis (TGWU, Coventry) £2.70, R Mayhew (Southampton) £2.55 Arthur Dodd (AUEW, Coventry) £2, Saeed Mallik (Cardiff YS) £1.30, Alf McDermott (unemployed, Middleton) £1 and Betty Haworth (OAP, Middleton) £1.

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Total 7 January
Eastern	2312		5150
East Midlands	2186		5050
Humberside	1273		2700
London East	2949		6350
London West	1642		3650
London South	2669		5650
Manchester & Lancs	2796		6350
Merseyside	2963		6500
Northern	2520		6400
Scotland East	1929		4200
Scotland West	2229		4900
Southern	3753		7600
South West	1169		3550
Wales East	1142		3450
Wales West	2062		4200
West Midlands	2497		5700
Yorkshire	3052		6600
Others	10692		12000
Total received	49845		100000

THIS WEEK £2,629

We have had some excellent collections at *Militant Readers' Meetings* including £80 from Hull. £40 of this was collected from workers at Laings Construction site at Easington. £19.50 was collected from Brixton DHSS workers. On top of this we receive money from such diverse activities as the sale of home-brew, video evenings, parties and sponsored events.

Make sure that you send in a donation this week or ask other readers if they are prepared to help us. Start organising now for Christmas or New Year Party. With the raffle tickets and Christmas cards now out there are plenty of ways to raise funds and ensure that our target is met.

With eight weeks left we still have £50,000 to raise. That means £6,250 every week. If all our readers set about raising the money then meeting the target will be easy and the idea of a daily *Militant* will be brought closer to reality.

By Nick Wrack

TURN THE PLEDGES INTO CASH

THE BOSSES have enormous resources at their disposal. In their fight to 'piratise' public assets, they are backed by the millionaire-owned Fleet Street presses, the radio, TV and judges.

As BT management revealed, they will not even stop at using aircraft to try and break the Post Office engineers' industrial action. One Glaxo executive is personally lined for for a £250,000 handshake.

With that kind of

money, a building big enough to house a Marxist daily paper could be acquired! But no big businessmen is going to help *Militant* go from a weekly to a daily.

Workers and members of the labour movement will fight tooth and nail to defend and extend public ownership. And they will also get us the building we need. We are confident, now that the fund is open that we can do it.

Just look at the latest examples of sacrifices be-

ing made to ensure we do:—

S Bullows is a school student and has pledged £50 for the Building Fund. Paul Brady is unemployed and has put his promise up from £10 to £50! A shop worker has promised £50, a Glasgow dustman on £57 a week take home increased his pledge from £50 to £250 and a nurse, Margaret Caron of Urmoston, Manchester, has promised £200.

At the other end of the

scale, one *Militant* reader increased a pledge of £500 to £1,000, another from £500 to £750. Others have gone from £100 to £250 and new promises in the region of £300 and £200 are still coming in.

Keep up the the flood of promises, but, begin to turn the pledges into the real thing! Make cheques and POs payable to "Marxist Daily Building Fund", c/o 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

£16 for 4 papers

A few weeks ago Louise, the girl-friend of one of our supporters, said she might be able to sell *Militant* at her work. Here's what she has achieved so far.

One customer asked her how much the paper cost. Louise told him 20p, but explained we needed money for the fighting fund. He gave £1.

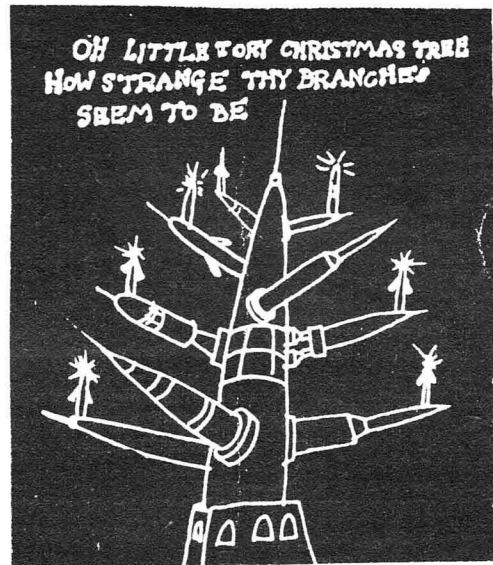
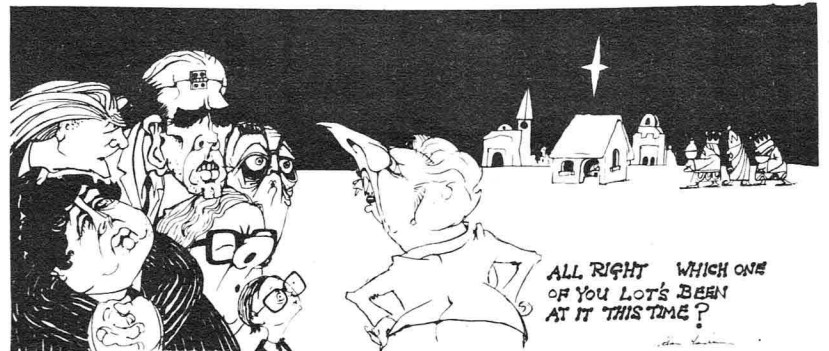
With him were five mates who worked part-time at Nottingham Race Course. When he put the paper on the table they started taking notice, and agreeing with the articles. They each gave Louise a £1.

A few days later another guy said he wanted a copy. Once again Louise asked for fighting fund. He asked her what the most she had ever been given for one paper.

When Louise said £6, he gave £7. In all Louise has sold four papers and raised £16.

If that can be done by someone who hasn't sold a paper before, then what cannot be achieved by supporters active in the labour movement. There's a ready market in the workplaces, on the streets and at meetings, if we sell our paper in a confident manner with belief in our ideas.

By A Jones (Gedling CLP, Nottingham)



CHRISTMAS CARDS NOW AVAILABLE from 'Revolution Graphics'

Set of five different cards (plus envelopes) for only £1.20, post paid. Bulk orders 10 sets or more are available 65p per set (incl p&p)

All cheques/POs to be made payable to Revolution Graphics.

Order from: Eddie MacParland, Revolution Graphics, 81 Troughton Road, London SE7.

I/WE PLEDGE/ENCLOSE A DONATION OF £ . . . TO THE BUILDING FUND FOR A MARXIST DAILY.

I/We wish to see as soon as possible the appearance of a daily labour movement newspaper based on Marxism to combat the lies and distortions of the bosses' press and to end, once and for all, their vicious system.

Name
Organisation
Address

Cheques and P.O.s payable to 'Marxist Daily Building Fund'.
Send to: BUILDING FUND, c/o *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Life at the sharp end



What future for youth in Britain? (Above) Bradford, 1982.

Photo: Militant

YOUNG WORKERS on low wages, trainees on YTS, youth at college or on the dole—all are at the sharp end of Tory Britain.

Below, Young Socialists from two LPYS branches, Idle and Bradford Moor, describe the conditions they face in Bradford which has made them determined to be at the Young Workers Assembly:

"I went to work for two weeks while I was at school—'work experience' they called it. It cost me £20 with bus fares, food and all. They didn't pay me—it was me that paid out—it cost me to work!

"If that's work experience, I can guess what YTS is like."

—Mark Hudson
Warehouseman.

★ ★ ★

"Myself and Mark got a flat on Thorpe Edge. I get £22 on the dole. Half the rent is £9.50; £5 for bills, £5 for food for a week. That leaves me £2.50 to keep myself, go out and buy clothes."

—Ian Collins, unemployed.

★ ★ ★

"I get £15.80 social security—and I'm living away from home. I'm meant to pay food, help with bills, and all out of that.

"What do school leavers do—go out occasionally—go for a drink or two. What do they do? They have a party 'season'. They go out every night to posh parties. There is one group at Oxford that smashed up a restaurant, injured a waiter and so on. The judge gave them a ticking off, fined them, told

them not to be naughty again.

"Look, Ian gets £5 a fortnight to spend. This bloke—Lord Sainsbury—reckons he can't get a decent meal for under £2.00. That's why we've got to build the LPYS."

—Richard Murgatroyd, unemployed.

★ ★ ★

"Being unemployed has still got a stigma you can't get a decent home, many jobs are out also. But we mustn't accept that we are worthless, nor must we accept cheap labour. If they offer us a job for £30 of £40 a week, we must say no! We are worth more than that."

—Helen, Tech student, unemployed.



A *WORLD in Action Special* on the fate of 100 Manchester youth unemployed at the time of the 1981 riots will be shown on ITV at 10.30 pm on Monday 21 November. Of these 100, four have since become LPYS members and *Militant* supporters, and in the programme, they explain why they have been won to the ideas of socialism.

The 100 were previously featured in a TV programme called *Devils Advocate*. After two years little has improved for them. 53 are still unemployed, five are in jail, one on a murder charge.

The crime conviction rate has been three times the average. Similarly with pregnancies. When asked about the high rate of pregnancies, one youth explained that there was nothing else to do.

Faced with this catalogue of horrors, it is not surprising that the Tory councillor in the programme is almost literally hammered into the ground! At the end of the meeting Channel 4 interviewer and presenter, Gus MacDonald, asked the Tory councillor if he would like to go out of the back door for his own safety!

During the programme Robbie McGregor (UCATT) explained why he became a *Militant* supporter. The programme even dealt with the Russian Revolution, and the consequences for Britain.

By Phil Frampton



Student grants demo.

Education cuts harmful—official

HER MAJESTY'S Inspector of Schools published an independent annual report detailing what is happening in the schools. Their 1983 report makes grim reading. On primary schools the Inspectors conclude: "In many cases the 1982 returns show that what can be achieved is limited by the lowered baseline of provision consequent upon successive years of trimming back."

Their conclusions on secondary schools are equally grim: "In most secondary schools, existing resources could not now be stretched to meet the demands legitimately placed upon them by the community at large, nor could they in all cases maintain the existing basic provision."

And their overall conclusion? Couched in careful "officialese", it is nevertheless a straight condemnation of Tory education cuts. It states: "The cumulative effects of financial constraint noted in previous reports still put at risk and in some cases undermine attempts to maintain standards."

Joseph picketed

OVER SIX hundred students demonstrated at Warwick University when Education Minister Sir Keith Joseph turned up for a visit on 21 October. Joseph had thought that he was going to have a nice cosy chat with the authorities, whose close liaison with local industry has earned the college the title "Warwick University Ltd".

Militant supporters at the Labour Club were successful in getting through a resolution at the Student Union

meeting to picket Joseph when he arrived; and students certainly did that. All the entrances to the campus were picketed and although Joseph got in he must certainly have been left in no doubt about student feeling: "no ifs no buts, no more education cuts!" greeted him wherever he went.

By Tim Kaye
(Warwick University Labour Club)

STUDENTS WORSE OFF THAN YTS

THE RESULTS of a grants survey by the National Union of Students show that up to 800,000 students on University, Polytechnic or College courses receive less than the £25 a week paid to 16 year olds on Youth Training Schemes.

According to the survey only 13% of those students entitled to a mandatory grant actually received the full grant of £1,660 a year from their Local Education Authority—the rest had to rely on their parents to make a contribution to the grant. But nearly 50% of parents were unable to make-up the full amount. In 12% of these cases the shortfall was over £200.

What other justification could be needed for the NUS 1983/84 grants claim: for a 10% increase in the basic level of the grant (around £200 a year) and a substantial raising of the income threshold at which parents are expected to contribute. However the Tories have never been moved by the plight of students.

Last year NUS put forward a similar grants claim—and were totally ignored. This shows the need for a serious campaign to be launched now to take our case to the labour movement, especially those workers in the public sector, facing a similar onslaught from the Tories.

This reason alone makes the two-day Student Rally organised by *Militant* supporters in the National

Organisation of Labour Students an important event. It will give an opportunity to discuss the issues facing students, how our conditions can be defended and improved and how we can build support for socialist ideas in our colleges.

The opening session of the rally will have a speaker from Liverpool City Council explaining how the Liver-

pool labour movement is preparing to meet the Tories' attacks on local public services. There will also be a speaker from the ASTMS Broad Left to show how students can take practical steps to link with the labour movement including workers actually organised in the colleges.

By Julian Sharpe
(Treasurer, Welsh Labour Students)

SUPPORT GROWS FOR ASSEMBLY

IT ALREADY looks as if the Young Workers' Assembly on 10 December in Manchester will be the best event ever organised by the Youth Trades Union Rights Campaign.

Reports at the recent LPYS National Committee showed the support it is arousing up and down the country.

Over thirty young people, including a number of young shipyard workers attended Wallsend LPYS meeting last week on "Crisis in Shipbuilding." They heard Steve Waters, a young electrician who works in the yards.

Steve stressed the need to build support at a shopfloor level against management proposals. He said, "The management proposals are laughable. Their intentions are solely to smash the trade unions and prepare the yards for privatisation."

The local LPYS have become well known amongst shipyard workers. Over 1,500 bulletins written by



END LOW PAY AND UNEMPLOYMENT!

YOUNG WORKERS ASSEMBLY

DECEMBER 10th
FREE TRADE HALL
MANCHESTER

YOUTH TRADE UNION RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

young shipyard workers and LPYS members have been distributed and have been well received by workers. Wallsend LPYS is confident that its growing support amongst local workers will be reflected by a good turnout at the assembly.

Other parts of the country give a similar encouraging tale. In South Yorkshire, seven pits are sending delegates to a local Young Workers' Assembly and in Humberside, LPYS members have been visiting factories to carry out a survey of low pay and the wages of young workers.

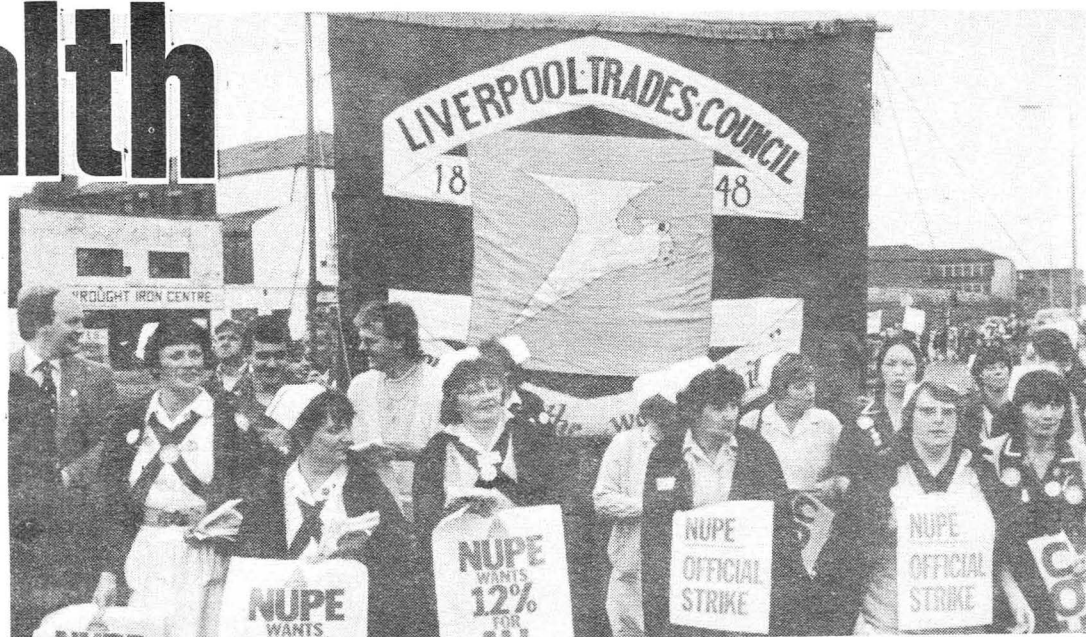
Nationally 200,000 leaflets have been distributed by the LPYS advertising the Young Workers' Assembly and posters and stickers will be available from next week. At the Assembly a draft Charter for Young Workers will be presented.

The LPYS National Committee also discussed the CND and LPYS conference. They will be publishing a new leaflet and poster titled *End Nuclear Terror*, to be available (free) to branches with a space to advertise local meetings.

Every branch is urged to hire a video/film called *The Bomb* and organise a meeting on this issue. The Labour Party Young Socialists branches should take this issue up outlining a class analysis of the causes of war.

Finally branches should be preparing now for next year's LPYS annual conference. The conference will be in Bridlington from 20–23 April and documents to the Conference will be on the Youth Training Programme, a Charter for Young Workers and Latin America.

Mersey health cuts - MPs speak out



TUC/ NHS Day of Action in Liverpool, October 1982.

Photo: John Smith (IFL)

Despite the opposition of local district health authorities, doctors, health workers and the community as a whole, the Tories are determined to go ahead with big cuts in the funding of Liverpool area health authority. The significance of these cutbacks to the service provided to working people can be gauged by some of the comments, reproduced here, of Merseyside Labour MPs speaking in a special Parliamentary debate on the issue last week.

The key element, however, in the fight to retain the standards of service and NHS jobs—in Liverpool and nationally—will be the struggles of the wider trade union and labour movement, and especially of the workers in the NHS trade unions themselves.

"Workers prepared to fight"



Terry Fields MP (Liverpool, Broadgreen):

The government must be warned. The fight back has already started in Liverpool. Although people are on their

knees, they are prepared to struggle and to take on the government and those acting on their behalf in their attacks on the health service.

Liverpool has suffered a cutback of 422 hospital beds, including 20 per cent of medical and geriatric beds. There has been a cut of 25 per cent in surgical beds and 22 per cent in children's beds. Also, 273 psychiatric long-stay beds for the elderly and mentally ill is a long way short of the recommended level. The Liverpool health area will suffer staff cuts of about 769. Having spoken to those involved, I believe that the figure will be closer to 1,000...

I have spoken not to the consultants but to the workers, to NUPE and to COHSE. They are prepared to fight and struggle for their

jobs, irrespective of whether the Government or the regional health authority are trying to take them away. They care about the people in their hospital beds and the people of Liverpool who will lose the services. They are prepared to take on the Government.

... We are on record as saying that, although we have to fight the Government's legislative proposals in the House, Liverpool Members will be back on the picket lines with those workers defending their jobs and services in our area.

We are prepared to fight for the workers. We warn the Government now that their policies will lead to confrontation in areas such as Liverpool. We shall be four square behind those workers.



Robert Wareing MP (Liverpool, West Derby):

In Gillmoss in my constituency there is little by way of primary care. Since 1979, infant mortality there has risen from 10 per 1,000 live births to 13 per 1,000 live births. That is the reality. Elderly people who are discharged from the hospital too soon, simply because beds are in short supply, fall back on primary care...



Eric Heffer MP (Liverpool, Walton):... The Labour Party build the NHS in 1948—that is when it came into operation—because it was necessary for our people to have for the first time a decent health service throughout Great Britain. In case there should be any misunderstanding about what the Conservative party did then, I should add that it opposed the introduction of the NHS. It is all very well for Conservative Members to say that the NHS will be safe in their hands. If they had been committed to it from the word go, we might have believed them.

Robert Parry MP (Liverpool, Riverside):

The cuts being imposed on Merseyside and in Liverpool are causing much controversy. Merseyside regional hospital authority recently instructed the area health authority to make a package of cuts, imposing cuts of £5.5 million over five years, and that obviously represents a cut of over £1 million a year. Despite protests from consultants, doctors, nurses and trade unions, the package was accepted by the area health authority on 25 October. The cuts are opposed by the

community health councils in Liverpool, and Liverpool city council is strongly opposed to them. The cuts affect the sick right across the board.



Eddie Loyden MP (Liverpool, Garston):

At the St Paul's eye hospital... the patients are having to wait for six to seven hours for treatment as some of the clinics have been closed because of staff shortages. About 75 per cent of those awaiting treatment are in their sixties, seventies or even eighties. Eye afflictions are more predominant in that age group than among the younger generation. It is a disgrace that a hospital of international renown should be placed in a position in which it is virtually incapable of dealing with patients without causing them a great deal of distress...

Robert Kilroy-Silk MP (Knowsley North):

It is a scandal that at a time when 37,000 people are on the waiting lists, thousands of whom are awaiting urgent surgery, we should as a deliberate act of policy put nurses and doctors on the dole. What kind of society is that?

Liverpool school - Labour picks up the pieces.

LABOUR'S reorganisation plan for Liverpool City Council Secondary Schools was absolutely necessary.

Liverpool's schools are a mixture of grammar and so-called comprehensive. They have suffered from cuts and enormous problems arising from the drop in pupil numbers.

Liverpool had 17,000 pupils per year in the 1970s. It now has 7,000, at the maximum. As numbers have dropped there has been no attempt to plan for the impact on staff, leaving some schools without specialist staff in key subjects.

Some schools have stayed full, but others are half empty, with the enormous drop coming over the next three years threatening even the most popular schools.

The Labour Party drew up its fundamental principles of re-organisation many years ago. When Labour won control in Liverpool in

May of this year, the educational campaign played a major role in that victory.

However, lessons had to be learnt from other re-organisations including the Roman Catholic re-organisation in Liverpool of last year. The principles adopted were:

1. The re-organisation would not be an excuse for cuts.
2. A minimum number of schools would be closed.
3. There will be no redundancies.
4. That all schools will be treated equally.
5. That a minimum movement of pupils in any transfer and that transfers that were necessary would be gradual, and would protect the interests of existing pupils.

The plan produced by amalgamation, cut the total number of schools from 26 to 17. This was done by ensuring that a school was in every area of the city, and to do so, single sex schools were merged, either boys with girls, or a single sex school with a co-education school.

Every school will be an 11 to 18 community comprehensive school, reaching eventually, over the transitional period, six forms of entry, that is 180 pupils a year. Staffing in these schools will reflect the need for a curriculum as well as pupil numbers, and will be planned over a number of years.

Existing pupils will continue in their present buildings, and the new school starts from the first year, and by combined six forms. Each school will build up close associations with feeder primary schools, who provide the bulk of the pupils for the school's future.

The problems of under-achievement by girls (who fare no better in Liverpool despite the predominately single sex education), will be tackled by the appointment of a senior member of staff with responsibility for overcoming discrimination. However, pupils in the single sex schools will not be forced to mix, thanks to the tran-

sitional period.

Liverpool's plan has received overwhelming support from the teachers' unions, the manual and ancillary workers' unions, and from educationalists. The response from parents was mixed. There was vociferous opposition from certain parents led by Liberal and Tory councillors, who had mercilessly closed schools in working class districts, while they were in control of the city.

Any change is bound to provoke opposition, and the alternative proposed by the Tories would maintain selection and would close schools in working class districts. The Labour party is determined that this re-organisation—done with the maximum consultation—will be the first step to raising educational achievements in Liverpool, to a much higher standard than accepted in the past.

By Felicity Dowling (Liverpool NUT, personal capacity)

Tory plans are "just not on"

"WE'LL JUST have to show them on the 19th that they're just not on". This was the reaction of a Liverpool housewife to the government's talk of sending commissioners to run the city of Liverpool.

During canvassing in the city, there has been a lot of support for the policies about to be implemented by the ruling Labour Group. The old Liberal/Tory alliance continually pushed up council rents, now a £2 reduction is to be carried out.

Up to 5000 council jobs have been lost in the last few years, Labour have created 1,000 new jobs, and refused to implement Liberal plans

for more redundancies.

It's the best thing that's happened to the city in years, "Even those of us who aren't lucky will know that at least we had a chance," said an unemployed man, who had applied for a job with the council.

We should fight tooth and nail to keep those jobs. It is clear that Thatcher's hatred of her Party, has been returned 10, 20 or 100 fold.

The people of Liverpool are fully behind the council's rally against cuts and redundancies, but so are the rest of the workers, and unemployed in this country.

By Brian Hayes (Liverpool Broadgreen LPYS)



Photo: Militant

The importance of municipal housing was one of the main planks in Labour's election triumph. Local authority building workers have plenty of work to do, if the Tory government will let them.

"IF WE get your support, if we get the support of other local authorities and other trade unions, we can take on Thatcher and we can beat her. Liverpool could be a beacon to the movement if we can get the initial impetus on 19 November."

Labour councillor Paul Astbury was stressing the importance of Saturday's demonstration to a meeting of council building workers on Tuesday.

"It isn't a question any more of just another demonstration. We really are faced with a crisis in Liverpool, not just the councillors, but the direct labour workforce as well—your jobs are on the line.

"If we lose the battle to get the £30 million back, and the commissioners are sent in, we are guaranteed 5,500 redundancies on top of the 90,000 who are currently unemployed in Liverpool, on top of the 33,000 which have gone since 1979.

"I've been unemployed for two years. I'm a plasterer by trade and I have no need to tell anybody that once you are out of the gate, then that's it. There is no work about. The only work that is actually being provided is by the corporation.

"We would like the

authority workforce to turn out on 19 November with as many people as they possibly can. It will be a real shot across the bows of Thatcher, it will frighten them, and make them think, and the battle for the £30 million to provide a service may in fact be won.

"But we can only take on the battle with the help of the trade unions—and not just in Liverpool. We've got to go to the wider movement, to other local authorities, and the private sector in Merseyside, which has suffered massive losses. We've got to bring them into the movement.

"It isn't just a question of local authority jobs, it's a question of saving jobs throughout Merseyside, stopping Liverpool from being an employment desert.

"It's a question of saying to Thatcher enough is enough! We are going to have a go, we are going to take you on!"

Report by Pat Craven

November 10 mass rally

NINE HUNDRED people attended a mass rally at Liverpool University Students' Union. Mick Hogan, from the Labour Party Young Socialists in opening the rally, appealed to the meeting to support YTS trainees on cheap labour schemes, and urged the meeting to join with the ranks of the LPYS.

Ray Murray from the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign explained how the cuts in education were a political issue, and the importance of linking such an issue to the struggle of the working class as a whole. The success of the Day of Action was due mainly to the presence of the labour and trade union movement on the picket lines.

Harry Smith brought the fraternal greetings of the Labour Group and the City Council, and urged those at the rally to support the mass demonstration to be held in Liverpool on November 19th.

Cheryl Varley, the sabbatical for the FE sector in Liverpool, outlined the attacks on the working class with a massive fall in the liv-

ing standards, and highlighted the attacks on education, with 90% of FE students without any financial support and inadequate facilities in the colleges.

The successive job losses and cuts in education were linked by the support of unions like the G&MBATU the T&GWU, NALGO, NATFHE, and even the milkfloat drivers, as well as post office workers who refused to cross the picket line at one particular college.

Every contribution from the floor gave enthusiastic support to the students day of action, both in the FE sector, and students at the university and polytechnic.

By the end of the day of action, 240 names were collected for the LPYS and numerous requests to join the Labour Club at all the colleges were received. The 24 hour strike in Liverpool is part of the fight back against the Tory government's attacks on the city of Liverpool, in every sector, not just in FE education.

By Sheila Kearney

'THOUSANDS OF COUNCIL JOBS ON THE LINE'



Photo: Militant

Croxteth Community School banner on a recent student demonstration. The fight to save Croxteth School played a key part in the defeat of the previous Liverpool Liberal/Tory council administration.

Student protest success

LAST THURSDAY, over a thousand students from Liverpool tech. colleges staged a one-day strike on the National Union of Students day of action.

It was the Labour Party Young Socialists from the Further Education sector on Merseyside who ensured that a real campaign had been launched.

Throughout Liverpool, picket lines were manned by students, cleaners, teachers, caretakers, and members of the local LPYS. Out of the 150 students who manned the picket lines at Mabel Fletcher college of Further Education, the large majority had never been on a picket line before.

The pickets had success after success at turning cars away. So much so, that one young student picket walked up to a police car, and flabbergasted a heavily decorated police officer by saying "excuse me officer, but would you mind getting out of the car and doing your business on foot in the college as we're not letting cars across the picket line?"

at which point the officer exploded and said, he had come to tell them what to do, not the other way round.

Some of the students gave examples of the difficulties of their grants. £13 a week was the highest anyone got. Some were as low as £5-7 a week, while others received lump sums of £89 and even £29 to last the year.

One young girl on the picket line said "I'll stand all day if that's what it takes". At Central College there were around 100 pickets covering four entrances. The attitude of trade unionists was summed up by a milkman, there to make a delivery, who after seeing the picket line said "there's no way that I'll cross that".

On the picket line at North East Tech, as well as students and members of West Derby LPYS, there were also young workers on day release courses. Three apprentices, members of the Union of Communication Workers, refused to cross the picket line, even though they'd lose £6.50 each.

They even phoned their union convenor for advice, who, when he came to the picket line, and discussed with him, said "you don't

have to convince me love, we're on your side".

Another young electrician on the picket line said "I'll lose a days pay, but I'm not bothered about that".

Sympathy for the strike was shown from one trade unionist when an art teacher at one college let his classes make placards for the day of action. One student previously unassociated with the Labour Party Young Socialists used a design from the 'school to the dole' cartoon to make a poster.

Cannot afford books

The picket line at Milbank, which was 70 strong, consisted not only of students, but trade unionists and local YS members, but also of disabled people who attended the college.

One 17 year old girl explained that she was on the picket line because although she lived alone in a flat, she only got £17 a week grant. She believed she would probably not pass her exams because she could not afford the books.

Previously books were available from the college

library, but the Tories cuts had changed that. The library itself had a capacity of 60, yet the average number of students in it on a dinner time was 160.

At one point at Childwall FE College, every teacher was out on the picket line, which was 100 strong. Childwall suffers from massive overcrowding and appalling facilities, lessons have had to be cancelled there because there were not the classrooms available to have them in.

The NUS day of action in Liverpool was the biggest and most active, and best organised the city has ever seen. The fightback against the Tory cuts in education was led by the Students Union from the FE sectors throughout Liverpool, with hardly any resources, in some cases, not even an office or a telephone.

Yet by meeting with the labour and trade union movement we were able to achieve tremendous results. College gate meetings were held at every college by local YS members.

By Militant reporters

As the Tories press for a harsh new Police Bill

The Police and Criminal Evidence Bill was debated in the House of Commons on 7 November at its second reading.

The Bill proposes drastic new laws covering the searching, arrest and detention of suspects. It removes many safeguards and tries to "solve" the enormous social problems in Britain by a greatly strengthened police force.

We print below the speech by Terry Fields, Labour MP for Liverpool Broadgreen which shows clearly why workers and socialists argue for accountability of the police to the community.

The speech infuriated certain members of the Conservative Party front and back benches. One Tory MP Tony Baldry, the MP for Banbury said he was tempted to invite Terry Fields to his constituency and pay his expenses so that the public could hear the real voice of the Labour Party!

Mr. Baldry, for once, is correct. This is the voice of the organised working class. The Labour Party should ensure that the arguments used by Terry Fields are given wide publicity in the campaign for the defeat of the Police Bill and for full accountability of the police.

Who control the Police

THE discussion about accountability and lack of accountability is not new.

It has been going on throughout the history of the police force and the various vested interests which have been pulling law and order about during that period.

The police have not always been unaccountable to local pressures and local democracy. When the Metropolitan Police and the police forces up and down the country were created in 1829 they were under the control of watch committees made up of local councillors who fixed pay and conditions and looked after the everyday running of the police forces.

When the county councils were formed in 1880, they had standing joint committees—50 per cent county councillors and 50 per cent local magistrates—with powers similar to watch committees and absolute control over the running of those police forces.

Chief constables made weekly reports to the county councils as a duty, but continuous pressure from government to establish greater central control, as today was resisted by local interests.

During the 19th century the Home Secretary's main role was the maintenance of adequate police forces and establishments. Perhaps that is what certain Home Secretaries should be confining themselves to in modern times.

The relationship at that time was not only a matter of convenience but a reflection of the balance of class forces in society and the political relations that flowed from them. At that time borough councils were dominated by industrialists and commercial capitalists who paid the police out of the rates and therefore legitimately insisted on democratic control over the police.

The industrial middle class was suspicious of government which it associated with extravagance and unnecessary expenditure—a crime it would not accuse the present govern-

ment of—and which it feared would interfere in its affairs on behalf of the aristocratic oligarchy which dominated government at the time.

The demand again was for local democracy and accountability. This was before the working class became an independent political force in society.

When the majority of the working class obtained the vote in 1918—women obtained it in 1928—there was a complete change of tune on the part of the ruling class of this country. It arose not out of a fear of the aristocrats, who had served their purpose and no longer posed a threat, but out of a fear of the growing strength of the labour movement.

The myth of neutrality

At the end of the first world war Labour councillors were elected, and in some areas there were Labour-controlled local authorities. The attempt by the state to take control out of local hands and to centralise it was made even more urgent after the police strikes of 1918 and 1919, which were a reflection of what was taking place in society.

After the strikes, the Desborough report made recommendations for the overhaul of the structure of the police force. It made recommendations on appointments, promotions and discipline within police forces.

There was an attempt to take those responsibilities out of the hands of the local watch committees and to give them to chief constables to interpret, which was resisted in the House until 1964.

During that period, the powers of chief constables were strengthened and the element of democratic control through watch committees was strangled. The demand for democracy brought about a Royal Commission in 1960 which identified the main problem as the control of chief constables.

The Royal Commission's idea for resolving the problem was to make chief constables more accountable to central government and not to the watch committees made up of local people with an interest in their localities. Despite all that, the local authorities still had to pay 50 per cent of the cost.

At that time, we saw the establishment by chief con-

stables of the principle that operational matters were outside the scope of police committees. The new police committees that were set up were not even made up of local councils and councillors but were independent statutory bodies divorced from local councils and local affairs.

Chief constables have consistently resisted attempts at democratic control by local authorities and councillors. In so doing, they have suggested that such accountability would make them subject to political pressure and control.

In effect, they are perpetuating the myth—which is important for them to gain public acceptance of their role in the past—that the police are an arm of a neutral state, above politics and removed from the everyday events in society.

Let us look at the reality of that so-called neutrality, in the stormy events of the 1970s and since. We saw a new decade of crisis which brought real and significant changes in planning and the training of our police.

If we look at the events of 1971, with the government of the right hon member for Old Bexley and Sidcup (Mr Heath) and his Industrial Relations Act, we see that the police came into sharp conflict with the trade union movement.

That was brought to a sharp point in 1972 with the miners' strike and the battles at Saltley Gate where the police were defeated and forced to retreat by miners with the support of the trade union

movement.

It is with no great pleasure that we talk about the defeat of a group of workers. We identify the police as workers, subject to the same economic pressures as any of us, our families and others in society. Such a defeat of workers gives us no pleasure.

More important, the defeat of the police and the Heath government was a crushing blow to the Tories. It demonstrated the weakness of the capitalist state when faced with an organised and mobilised labour movement.

It brought about an immediate review of security policies. We had the police on the streets to deal with insurrection, a national security committee was set up and in 1977 we saw riot shields on our streets for the first time.

To protect the working class? Certainly not. It was to protect fascists in Lewisham. Anti-fascist demonstrators were subjected to oppression by the police and there were deaths on the streets.

Also during that period, we saw the army supporting the police and their repressive attitudes towards the working class and the general public. Of course, not only the outlook of hard line police chiefs is involved.

The events of the 1970s opened a new perspective to the ruling class. They saw that the social peace and the post-war boom were over, and they saw the ebbing of that boom and the onset of crisis in our society, which is endemic in the system.

They foresaw a catastrophic decline in our economic base, the inevitable erosion of living standards of ordinary people, and a headlong clash with organised workers and the labour movement.

The fears of the ruling class

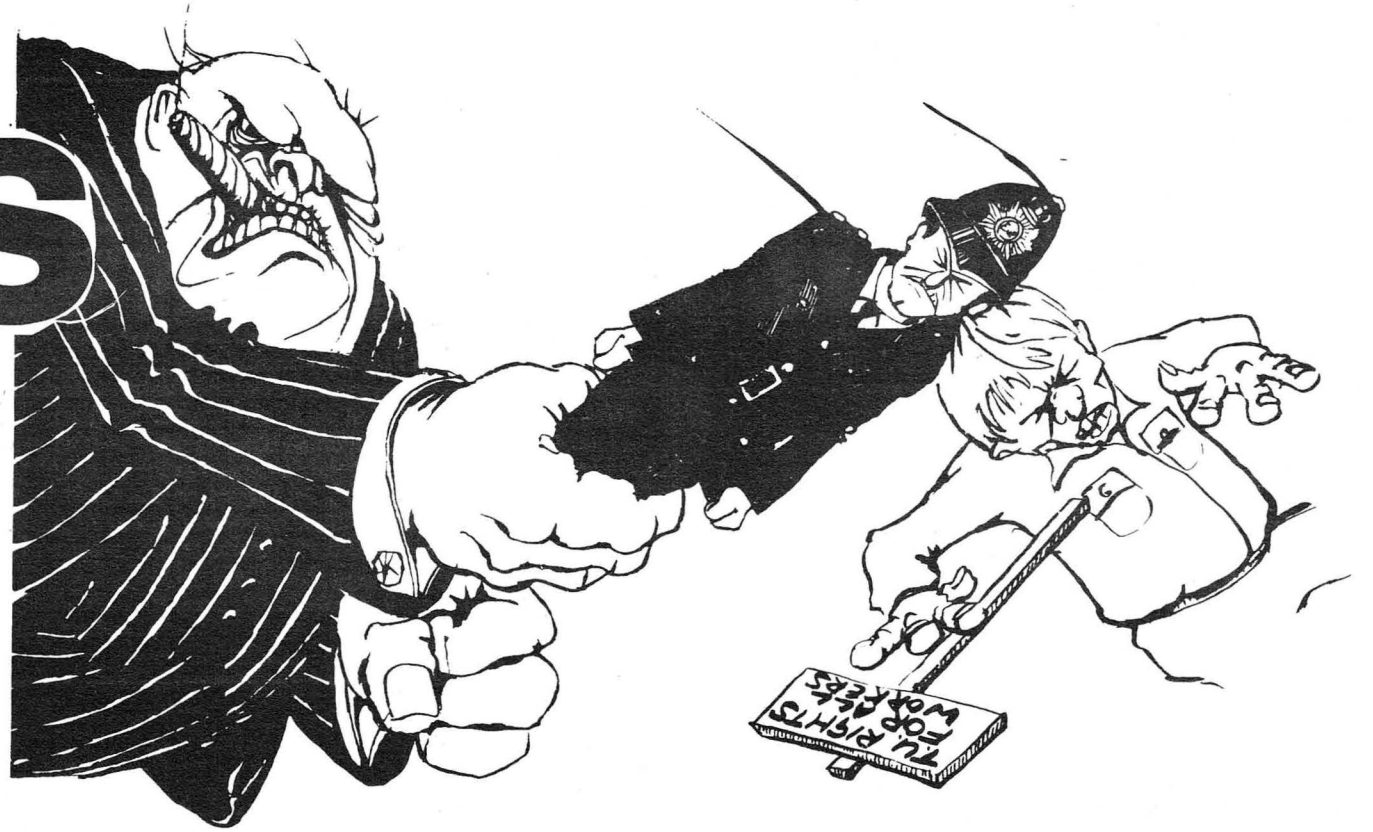
In August this year the *Liverpool Echo* carried an exclusive article revealing the ruling class—people like Basil de Ferranti, Sir Hector Laing and the Duke of Kent—have regular meetings with the Duke of Edinburgh in Buckingham Palace.

They are worried about what is happening in the inner city areas such as Liverpool and they fear what will come about because of unemployment and social unrest. Those statements were made not by me but by the



Bill, Terry Fields MP poses the question...

Controls Police?



Liverpool Echo.

The article added that the police and the armed forces were prepared to go on to the streets when industrial or civil unrest took place. No attempt has been made to hide their views.

We must look at the myths and realities of the present situation. On one side we have the law and order lobby, the so-called supporters of peace and democracy, and on the other we have us scallywags on the Labour benches.

Any criticism of the excesses of police constables is attacked as an attempt to undermine the fight against crime. The previous Home Secretary told the Tory Party conference in 1977 that it was a left wing mythology that there was something despicable, almost immoral, in discussing the prevention of crime at all.

We are not opposed to the police taking action to catch criminals and to protect people's safety and property. Working people are naturally worried about crime and increasing violence, but the Conservative benches and Tory Party spokesmen elevate moral issues and abstractions of law and legality and seek to turn attention away from the social roots of crime.

We are not just do-gooders. We live the experience of people in inner cities. We do not pass through in our cars occa-

sionally and get lifted by the bobbies.

In an article, not written by a left-wing lunatic or a Marxist, the Boston police commissioner, Robert Di Grazia said:

"We are not letting the public in on our era's dirty little secret, that those who commit the crime that worries citizens most—violent street crime—are, for the most part, the products of poverty, unemployment, broken homes, rotten education, drug addiction and alcoholism, and other social ills about which the police can do little, if anything."

The same applies in Britain. After the Brixton disturbances, the Prime Minister talked about the breakdown of respect for the law, and the erosion of moral values. She and her government cannot accept their economic policies have had a shattering effect especially on youths and have helped to create the conditions for conflict on the streets.

If there has been a breakdown of previously accepted social norms of behaviour and of traditional

morality, the government have failed to see that the terrible alienation of young people, created by the profit system, has been a powerful contributory factor.

We will not solve such problems by arming the police, or by providing them with riot

sedition designed to destroy our parliamentary system and the democratic government in this country."

Chief Constable Anderton of the Greater Manchester police force said that. That is the real role and perspective of some chief police officers. In reality,

material distinction." That is routine policy in some sections of the police.

Some time ago, while travelling from Preston to London, I overheard a conversation that perhaps I should not have heard between a cadet at Hendon police academy and one of his friends.

He informed his friend that during one of their lectures a police sergeant had told them that since the Americans had intervened in Afghanistan, the working class of Britain would be out demonstrating on the streets.

He said the cadets were the protectors of law and order, that there would be battles on the streets, and that the police should prepare themselves for it. That is an example of the education in our police establishments, which is preparing the democratic police for events that will unfurl as time goes by.

Accountability and control will lead to the strengthening not the diminution of democracy in Britain.

The nature of society and the motives of the Tories and the ruling class are clearly characterised and put to the front in this Bill. **The Bill contains Draconian measures to stop, search and arrest; it provides for detention for four days without charge; it provides powers to search and fingerprint; and it provides for access to personal files.**

The labour movement does not condone violence, but it condemns the appalling counter violence fostered by business interests through films, television and the media.

Nor does the movement, while understanding the causes for crime, support robbery as an individual way out of the problems that face workers. We have no sympathy with the vicious criminals who are as much a menace to the workers as are the big property owners, and whose activities provide the state with excuses for strengthening repressive powers.

However, the need to counter criminal activity does not give the guardians of the law the right to act as though they were above the law. Fighting crime does not justify the harassment and ill-treatments of suspects, nor the denial of legal defence nor the fabrication of evidence against them.

To overcome crime we must eradicate the social conditions that produce crime. The democratic accountability of the police, far from undermining the fight against crime would remove the obstacles created by an undemocratic, unaccountable and increasingly repressive police force.

gear, better water cannon, more CS gas and plastic bullets. I am supported in that proposition by ex-Chief Constable Alderson of Devon and Cornwall, who is perhaps *persona non grata* with some other chief constables. He said: *"One thing is certain, it is no answer to resort to brute force to control people."*

The emphasis should be on crime prevention, and unless the police have the confidence and support of the people whom they protect, there is no hope of fighting crime.

Recent events do not show that the public support the police massively. Some chief constables are coming to grips with the fact that society cannot put the emphasis on social welfare, and are preoccupied with the task of defending the *status quo* and of upholding authority, which they define as law and order.

They are not concerned with the protection of ordinary people from violent assault, burglaries and so on.

On the BBC *Question Time* programme on 16 October 1979 the following statement was made: *"I think that from the police point of view that my task in the future... that basic crime as such— theft, burglary, even violent crime—will not be the predominant police feature."*

"What will be the matter of greatest concern to me will be the covert and ultimately overt attempt to overthrow democracy, to subvert the authority of the state, in fact, to involve themselves in acts of

to the police, sedition and subversion mean attempts by working people to use their democratic and trade union rights to defend themselves, their interests and the interests of those whom they represent.

Recently, chief constables have resorted to the blanket use under the Public Order Act 1936 of bans on demonstrations and general street activity by trade unionists and the labour movement. They have done that on the pretext of attacking and banning fascist organisations that have come on to the streets.

But there are similar bans against democratic organisations of the labour movement which have a far more serious effect on democracy. However, on several occasions we have seen enormous numbers of police officers being used to escort those fascists, marching in small numbers through the streets. Again, that is done in the name of so-called democracy.

While chief constables and other pretend that everything is hunky dory and that we have no problems the police are being tooled up and geared up to take on the working class in later events.

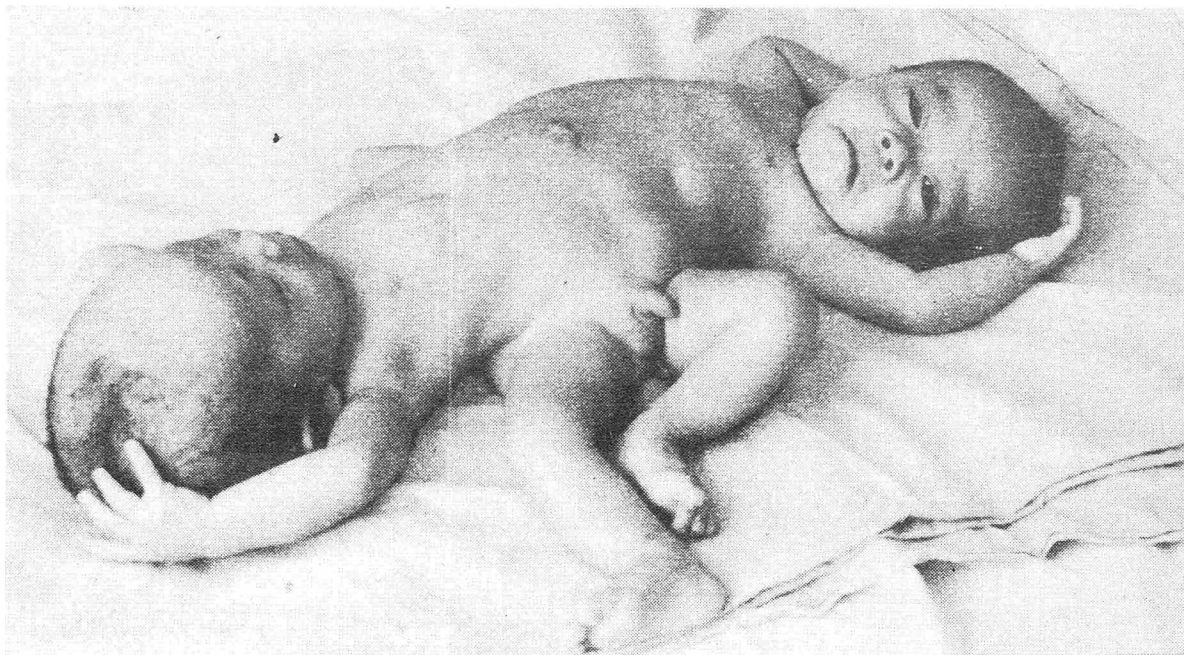
Recruits are advised to: *"Watch out for people who, although not dishonest in the ordinary sense, may, owing to extreme political views, intend to harm the community you have sworn to protect."*

The manual also states: *"While there are subtle differences between these type of extremists and thieves, it is difficult to put one's finger on the*



PHOTO: Militant

VIETNAM-



Legacy of war

TEN YEARS after the end of the war in Vietnam the stark reality of US intervention can clearly be seen.

The photograph and the information for this article were taken from the magazine *She*, and I thought *Militant* readers should see the horrors created by war in the interests of capitalism.

These children lived only a matter of months, their profound deformities made survival impossible, but this is only one of the many cases the staff at the Viet Duc hospital in Hanoi have to care for, all children are from villages in the South.

According to dean of the biology department at the Hanoi University, in one small highland settlement, 30 of the 200 population are paralysed,

By A Jones
(Gedling CLP Nottingham)

15 deaf, 12 deformed, 8 blind and 6 dumb, all are children. The countryside around this settlement is scarred with useless earth where American troops sprayed defoliant "Agent Orange" a mixture of herbicides 2.4.5-T and 2.4-D.

The same horrific story is true for dozens of villages, but no link has ever been officially established between the birth defects and the 2.4.5-T which is contaminated in the manufacturing process by the fiercely toxic by-product dioxin.

Professor Ton Duc Lang of the Viet Duc has no doubts though, he states in the article. "We think dioxin has done this to our children, but it is not easy to prove it. We are work-

ing to prove it, if we cannot the next generation will."

The concern is not only in Vietnam. The US pressure group Agent Orange Victims International says around 40,000 children of American soldiers exposed to dioxin have severe birth defects. A lawsuit on behalf of war veterans against five chemical companies carries the names of 17,000 litigants.

Many countries have already banned 2.4.5-T including Italy, Sweden, Holland and Norway. But 150 tons of 2.4.5-T arrives in Britain every year, used by foresters and farmers, and can be in fact bought over the counter in gardening shops as an ingredient of some weed killers.

The manufacturers claim these weed killers contain such tiny quantities that they present no health risk.

The lessons of Vietnam are quite clear, if capitalism is not eradicated the world over the same could happen again. After the Grenada invasion and with the build up of US intervention in Latin America with similar terrain to Vietnam, the use of 2.4.5-T could be repeated in the interest of capital and the subjugation of the masses.

The Tories man in Colombo

SINCE THE racist pogroms in July, the labour movement in Europe has responded with support for the plight of the Tamils and the repressed parties of Sri Lanka.

A steady stream of donations has been coming in to the NSSP. The Sri Lanka government, clearly embarrassed by the scale of the atrocities they whipped up, have come under an enormous wave of protest. According to Amirthalingam, leader of the TULF Tamil party, "one of the biggest blows that President Jayawardene ever sustained" was the cancellation of his visit to Britain.

It was planned originally for June, but put off because of the election, then planned for October but cancelled because of a petition initiated by Dave Nellist MP.

Mr Amirthalingam told Dave

Nellist when he met him on a visit to London a few weeks ago that Jayawardene had been "looking forward to it with enormous enthusiasm".

"In Sri Lanka", he added, "it was well known that the trip was called off because of eighty MPs signing a petition". This is a very significant recognition, by a capitalist politician of the impact made by a Marxist MP.

The UNP government is now preparing for its budget, due this month. A crucial part of this budget is aid from Western nations. The Tory government has been trying to keep very quiet about the extent of its links with this regime.

However, Dave Nellist put down some written questions in the Commons at the beginning of the new session of Parliament to get information on what the Tories were up to.

The replies really expose the Tories as collaborators with Jayawardene despite their crocodile tears about the racist pogroms.

The Tories admitted that Mr de Mel (the Sri Lankan Minister of Finance) "called on" the Foreign Secretary and the Minister for Overseas Development to discuss the situation in Sri Lanka and "other topics of mutual interest, including our decision announced on 7 October to provide an additional £10 million of grant aid for the Victoria Dam."

The Tories also revealed that between June and September, a total of £11.8 million was handed over in aid to Sri Lanka.

So there we have it, straight from the horses mouth, the Tories have not changed their attitude one iota towards the UNP regime.

This information must redouble the efforts of the labour movement internationally to force the ending of all aid and links with the Sri Lankan regime. Keep the donations rolling in to build the NSSP's campaign for the restoration of democratic rights and a socialist Sri Lanka.

Grenadian workers speak out

THE DEATH toll in the US invasion of Grenada is becoming higher with every news release.

The official Pentagon figure for American deaths a fortnight after the invasion was 18 but a senior member of the Caribbean Security Forces thought that already the deaths totalled 42.

The US Army claimed 160 Grenadians and 71 Cubans died but this seems to have excluded the mental hospital "accidentally" bombed. What is the true death toll? CECILIA McEWAN a Grenadian living in Britain and working for British Rail spoke to MARTIN ELVIN.

"We've got families out there, and up to now we can't get any direct contact. The Americans are suppressing everything, they've cut the telephone links.

"Relatives in Britain still don't know. We've had no news from home. They don't tell us who is alive, who's dead, nothing. The

Americans have never given any statement of any Grenadian who was killed from the start.

"That's why Alex Pascall, a reporter from BBC Radio London's programme *Black Londoners* has been sent out there. The people have asked him to go out and get the truth. He's reported that it's terrible out there, that the hospitals can't cope.

"There are people with their hands and feet blown off. Grenada is asking for doctors, they need the help now, they can't cope."

As to the invasion and the alleged popularity of it Cecelia had this to say, "They've only shown interviews with a few people and the interviewers were accompanied by American soldiers, so the people are frightened to say how they feel. "The Americans didn't go in to help out the Grenadians.

"They went in to rescue their students and to get the Cubans out. As long as they get the Cubans out, they don't mind killing all Grenada."

ERROL JOSEPH, a Grenadian living in Huddersfield, who was in Grenada at the time Maurice Bishop came to power, spoke to *Militant*.

"ON 13 March, 1979, I was awoken in my bed by sounds of celebration. Bishop had overthrown the old Gairy regime.

"I went up the road and there were kids jumping about, women dancing in the streets, such was the enthusiasm for Maurice Bishop and the hatred of Gairy. I jumped on a bus and went down to the police station, where I saw members of the New Jewel movement, soldiers who were coming out from hiding into the streets.

"People were gathering around them everywhere, congratulating them. Gairy was not in the country at the time. But the people were still fearing a resistance, so they prepared to defend themselves in case Gairy came back with people behind him.

"New Jewel mobilised the women, who for many years had had no say in the country. The women played a leading role, they were active and militant, often more than the men.

"The people were behind Bishop because the Gairy regime had put them under hard pressure to find a job, to eat, to house themselves, and it was especially difficult to speak out against the dictator Gairy.

"Speaking out then meant having to hide, having your home burnt down. Once people were able to speak openly they spoke their minds. The people don't want to compete with America, or Europe, or Russia. They want a simple life, they want to eat, to be clothed, they want decent homes. They want justice, they want liberty.

"The main exports of Grenada—nutmeg, cocoa, green bananas, for years have led to our exploitation by Britain and by other countries. They take the bananas out of the Caribbean. It is

exploitation all over the Caribbean.

"Young people are dying now in Grenada because Maurice Bishop gave them something to believe in, they can be recognised in the world. That is why they were still fighting days after the invasion. To us, fighting the marines might have been a lost cause, but they were fighting for ideas; that is more powerful than any armed force in the world, at the end of the day.

"The Cubans have been raised many times as an excuse for going in, but let us be clear, the reason the Cubans were in Grenada was because they were invited there to help with construction. Bishop went to Britain, and America, to ask for economic help, but he got the answer NO, so he had to go elsewhere to develop the country, to build the airport.

"If you've got a family to feed, and everyone refuses you a loaf of bread, and then someone down the road offers you a loaf, you don't ask is he Cuban, is he a Communist, or for that matter if he is American.

"The Caribbean could be a wealthy place, with the food, spices and so on, all the oil from the South passes, close by Grenada, but they never give the people a chance to actually get paid the benefits of life. We have been exploited by imperialism, by colonialism, by the big companies.

"It was that people were fighting against, and the confidence that Maurice Bishop gave the people.

"Finally, I must say this, the meeting organised by the Young Socialists was overwhelming. Just to see other people saying what I was thinking, we are not alone.

"Seeing other people, showing the same hatred for imperialism, and oppression, showing the same desire for socialism, not only in one country, but around the world. That is what gives me hope.

"We must continue the struggle against the backers of Gairy and the backers of the American invasion. We must begin the fight by opposing Reagan and Thatcher."

The Huddersfield LPYS meeting called at four days notice, was attended by 35 people.

Luther and the break-up of feudalism

THE IDEAS of Martin Luther, first sparked off the Protestant Reformation. Today hundreds of millions of people throughout the world belong to one or other of the Protestant churches. This month, on the 500th anniversary of Luther's birth, JIM CHRYSTIE looks at the background to Luther's ideas.

MARTIN LUTHER never intended to cause a revolution.

His political ideas were reactionary. Yet the impact of his religious teaching resulted in redrawing the political and social map of Europe.

By the time of his death in 1546 this former monk from a remote part of Germany had helped destroy the Catholic church's religious monopoly in Western Europe.

In one sense the Protestant Reformation represents part of the revolt against feudalism. Yet the paradox is that Luther's aims were always religious.

Protestantism only became a mass force because it coincided with substantial class interests. Previous religious reformers had declared the need to return to the communism of the early Christian church. In 1476, seven years before Luther was born, Hans the Piper led such a revivalist peasant revolt; he was burnt at the stake in a town near Luther's birthplace.

Luther refused to adopt radical social ideas. His declared aim was not to change the world, but to teach Christians how to endure it.

Attack on corruption

He wanted to take the church back to the ideas of the Bible. One of his major achievements was to bring the Scriptures closer to ordinary people by translating the Bible into German for the first time.

His attack upon the wealth and corruption of the Catholic Church attracted widespread support, especially amongst the peasantry. But he had no truck with trying to create 'heaven on earth'.

So for a number of feudal princes, Luther's ideas offered a middle way between on the one hand, the revolutionary demands of peasant leaders such as Münzer, and on the other, the fossilised reaction of the church. Princes embraced Luther because he called for total obedience to authority.

"Disobedience (to any authority) is a greater sin than murder", Luther proclaimed. Secular authorities had been established by God and must be obeyed.

When in 1524-5 there were widespread peasant revolts against the feudal tyrants, Luther violently denounced the peasants. He called on princes to act:



The above woodcuttings by Dürer, Luther's contemporary, show the turbulence of the age. (Above) The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. (Below) The Knight, Death and the Devil.

"Let anyone who can, strike, kill or stab, secretly or openly, recalling that nothing can be more venomous, damaging or demonic than a rebel". Peasants should be treated like mad dogs.

The princes did not need much encouragement. Even today the scars of their murders remain. Just outside Colmar you can see the mound where thousands of slaughtered peasants were heaped up to rot.

Luther's support for authority was total. He even said that Christian prisoners of the Turkish Muslim Empire, who had been made slaves, should not revolt, because they were now "his master's property".

A closer examination of Luther's sincerely expressed

religious ideas shows how they coincided with material interests. His first major attack upon the Catholic authority was over the sale of 'indulgences'.

In order to pay for the modern St Peters, the Pope promised that, in return for a substantial donation, he would grant an indulgence saying that one of their dead relatives had been freed from purgatory and could now enter heaven.

Luther's hatred for this doctrine was religious. He denounced it for having no basis in Scripture.

Within a few months this criticism, from a previously obscure monk, was widely-known throughout Germany. It aroused mass approval because indulgences



Luther (foreground, left) set among his contemporary religious reformers.

Stalinist hero?

AN EXTRAORDINARY ceremony took place this month in East Berlin. With guest of honour Archbishop of Canterbury by his side the East German President hosted a commemorative meeting in honour of Martin Luther.

Ten years ago the East German regime denounced Luther as someone who "sold out" the peasants. Now Luther's actions are dismissed as an aberration. The new official line is that Luther was a "trail-blazer for the German Communist Party". East German President Honecker has declared that Luther's name "will always be linked with Germany's first revolution".

This sleight of hand conveniently ignores Luther's attitude to that revolution. He was against it. He denounced

the practice of lending money at interest. He was violently against peasants who rose up against feudalism (see article this page).

But the Stalinist bureaucracy have decided to rewrite history because they are worried about the Lutheran Church who nominally have eight million members in East Germany. They have seen the power of the Catholic Church in neighbouring Poland and want to try and accommodate Lutheran leaders to their rule.

But will they now reinterpret Luther's vitriolic attacks upon the Jews? Hitler even used them to try and claim that Luther supported concentration camps.

Luther wrote that because the Jews had killed the Son of God, they loved murder: they were

the most blood-thirsty people who have ever lived and must be treated accordingly.

Luther said that if Jews did not convert to Christianity their synagogues and houses should be burnt, rabbis killed, Jews made into gypsies (but given no safe-conduct on the highways—so they could be killed without punishment), herded into camps to work or driven out of the country.

Although not unique for its age, Luther's violent anti-Semitism was not shared by all his contemporaries. But it does show that far from being any kind of "Communist before his time", Luther was not even a liberal.

His social ideas were reaction of the highest order. So what exactly are the Stalinist leaders honouring this month?

were seen by German princes and merchants as an 'export tax' to Italy.

As Luther's religious disagreement with the Catholic Church deepened, some princes saw how it could break to their advantage. Having declared the Pope to be the Anti-Christ, the Devil in disguise, Luther supported the take-over of the Church's assets.

His *Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* must have been music to their ears. He told them there was no religious obstacle to prevent them seizing Church lands.

It was a welcome message. The Catholic Church was Europe's biggest landowner. It owned over a third of all agricultural land and paid no taxes on it.

Rulers outside Germany were also quite prepared to take the money and run. The rise of Sweden as a major power in the seventeenth century can be traced to the decision by the monarch in 1546 to declare the country Lutheran and seize the monasteries.

In England Henry VIII had first denounced Luther, an attack which earned him the title from the Pope of "Defender of the Faith" (which still appears on British coins today). But later when he was refused a divorce, Henry was quite

prepared to utilise the breakthrough Luther had made, declare religious UDI and establish his own state church.

The destruction of the Catholic Church's theocratic stranglehold was obviously not just the work of one man. The church had been undermined and facing revolts in Central Europe for decades. The rise of merchant schools ended its monopoly on education; the re-introduction of Roman Law, more suited to individual capitalists, further eroded its hold on daily life.

But its overall control was shattered by Luther and the Protestant Reformation.

Social turmoil

Luther's ideas sprang from and into a society in turmoil. The old feudal order was breaking down. The growth of a money economy was revolutionising society.

The purchase and sale of land was undermining traditional relationships and duties between peasant and lord. The new merchant class were more powerful than many feudal lords, who languished in their debt.

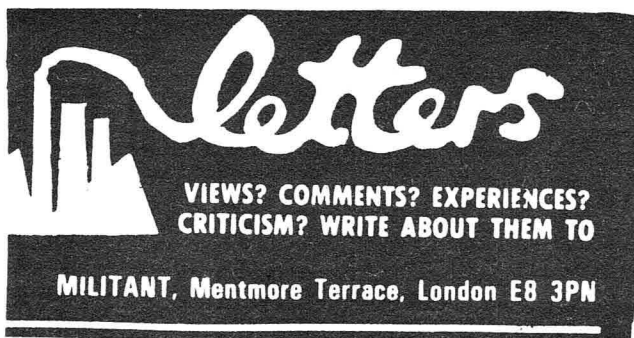
In Germany, the princes who ruled over the myriad of small states felt threatened by change. From below they

feared revolt by the peasants. From outside they suffered from the rapacious nature of the Renaissance Italian Papacy. From above they feared that Charles V, the new German Emperor, was trying to invest his, previously nominal, position with real power.

Luther's ideas seemed to offer them a basis for stability. But once the monopoly of the Catholic Church was broken, the floodgates opened. Whilst Luther was authoritarian and denied any form of 'social Christianity', others did not.

Reflecting the social revolution taking place, a whole variety of sects, religious leaders and Protestant Churches sprang forth. They poured through the gap created. The Protestant Reformation marked a decisive break with old authority.

The story of Martin Luther illustrates one of the basic ideas of Marxism. Ideas only become a mass force when they coincide with substantial class interests. And they do not remain the property of their originator but become that of the class itself, and can be changed in the process of struggle. Unintentionally Luther, a political reactionary, helped burst open the door to social change.



Westminster way of life...and death

Dear Comrades,

Two items in the press on 1 November caught my eye.

The first in the *Daily Express* reported the death, because of lack of funds, of six-year old Anne Marie. Professor John Hobbs had mentioned Anne Marie when he had launched a fund to get a 10 bed bone marrow unit at WESTMINSTER Childrens Hospital. Cash was so short that every Tuesday he explained, he had to face the same agonising decision—which child will be denied the right to live.

A sister at the hospital said: "Anne Marie was a great little fighter. It was hard watching her get worse".

The cost of the operation? Just £7,000.

The second item was on the TV pages, inviting us to watch a programme about one of the richest men in Britain—the Duke of WESTMINSTER. He had to have a fast car, because the driveway to his house was over a mile and a quarter long.

Just 31 years old, this man owns a 100 acres of Mayfair and 200 acres of Belgravia.

CND and pacificism

Comrades,

With the focus of the media on the arrival of the American owned Cruise Missiles, it is sad to see CND pursuing a noble objective while ignoring any serious socialist perspective that could bring their campaign to fruition.

CND is a single issue campaign, based largely on a combination of moralism and pacifism in an attempt to diffuse the atomic cloud over our heads. No-one supports the arms race, apart from the bourgeoisie and its agents of repression, and nobody who loves life wants Cruise missiles.

But the working class is not noted for its pacifist tendencies, and a concerted

Archaic strikes

Dear Comrades,

I have often heard people express how glad they are to live in a country like Britain because it is a democracy. It is true that the working class have certain basic rights—the right to vote, the right to strike, freedom of speech. But we must remember that these were only won after a hard struggle. Now the capitalist system is in decline

Limmo dimmo

Dear Comrades,

I was surprised to hear one of the commanders of the US marines in Grenada comment on how he and his marines would be able to tell the communist 'dictators' apart from the ordinary Grenadian citizens. Someone had told him to just look for the big brand new cars. If that is a true statement from

Famine—no freak crisis

Dear Comrades,

Nobody can have failed to miss the mass of publicity about the "freak" weather conditions blighting every corner of the world, from Africa to Australia. Whereas we can't deny that freak weather has occurred it would be wrong to use this as an excuse for the millions of peasants and working people who will die of starvation and disease this year.

Instead of calling it an act of "god" we should put the blame firmly and squarely where it belongs—in the hands of the capitalists. How else can it be explained that anybody can be starving, when the entire world's population could be fed from the land of Central America alone. The only reason the world's potential isn't properly utilised is because it remains open to "Free Market Forces" and in the hands of a few capitalists and multinationals.

If we had a world system of socialism then all the resources of the world could be used to organise the economy to make contingency plans for any natural disasters.

Money given at present to disaster funds is given for all the best reasons, but in the long run has only a negligible effect in alleviating the misery of a tiny proportion of the world's destitute. In the long run the only way out of this hell is to fight for socialism internationally, that is the best contribution we can make.

Yours fraternally,
Alan Needham
Sheffield Hallam LPYS

CBI conference

Dear Militant,

On Tuesday 9 November, whilst I was sitting down to work out what bills to pay, I switched on the television to watch the CBI Conference. It made the articles in *Militant* by workers in all industries, come alive to me.

Only one factory owner spoke in favour of cutting the working week. And her view was that her women workers worked best for the first twenty hours. Therefore it was best to cut the hours and get two shifts to get the most profit. Part-time workers are of course cheaper to employ and have limited employment rights. Others spoke how the TUC and Euro-Commission were talking rubbish. Unemployment and the misery it causes has no real meaning for them. The CBI delegates wanted more cuts in wages, more privatisation and cuts in living standards. My life, mine and my children's living standards and their future suffer from these well fed, well dressed, well-spoken industrialists.

I have daily headaches and heartaches to work out how to pay the bills, while they get cheap electricity and gas, rates concessions and cheap youth labour, slimmer more productive workforce!

Reading the *Militant* has put the struggle of everyday life in perspective for me. And after watching Conferences like the CBI I know why and where my family's struggle comes from.

Yours
R. Segal
Folkestone



Thatcher and Reagan have given entirely hypocritical "support" to the mass movement of Polish workers.

Polish puzzle?

Dear Comrades,

I was very interested in the comments of Ruth Hargreaves, the supporter of Polish Solidarity. Maybe Ruth would be kind enough to answer some points that puzzle me about Solidarity.

Brittan—most wanted man in Britain?

Dear Comrades,

Viewers of BBC's early evening news (Mon 31 October) will have been concerned to hear that "Britain's most dangerous man" was still at large. You might have thought that the man in question was Arthur Hutchinson, wanted in connection with recent murders. But perhaps not! The picture on the screen behind the newscaster was none other than Mrs T's right hand lackey, Leon Brittan, Home Secretary.

The Beeb's confusion is understandable considering Brittan's rantings about tougher police measures and sterner sentences. No doubt you will all have your own opinions as to who is Britain's most dangerous man or woman. But the sooner this particularly nasty creature is removed from office the sooner we'll all sleep in our beds.

Fraternally
Gary Doman
Sheffield Heeley LPYS

Communities split apart

Dear Comrade,

I read with concern of the strike at Queensland Pleaters (28 October). It appears that strikes over fundamental trade union issues are becoming much more frequent but are never reported in our incredibly impartial national press!

A similar dispute is now taking place at Lefray Toys in Aberbeeg near Newport. The most disheartening aspect of these disputes is the

Let them eat Victorian values

Dear Comrades,

I recently popped into a fairly trendy household gift shop for a browse around. Among the books on display I found one with a very plain cover (very like books from Victorian times). The text was written in Victorian English and carried Victorian adverts. The title was 'A Plain Cookery Book for the Working Classes'. Unfortunately at £1.45 it carried

Why do the Pope, Mrs Thatcher and Mr Reagan give support to Solidarity? Remember their slogan 'Let Poland be Poland'. Why is it that after attending Mass, the Polish workers become disruptive to the extreme. Let's for a moment take a hypothetical point. Imagine

Wishy washy reactionaries

I recently saw the 'Briefing Papers' for the European Parliament in Strasbourg for 10-14 of October. Typical of the amorphous resolutions put forward was the following from a Danish Liberal MEP:

"(The EEC) has been intensively considering the problems of migrant workers since 1973...problems raised

Three cheers for Liverpool

Dear Comrades,

Recently I was listening to the mid-day news. An announcement was made concerning Liverpool. The news reader said that the Liverpool Council had adopted a system that was not acceptable to the Tory government and said that *Militant* controlled Liverpool would face a backlash from Thatcher.

People speak so vehemently about preserving democracy. I wonder when Thatcher and her hench men carry out their threat to abolish Liverpool Council whether people will stand

at that time, considered to require urgent solutions, have not been solved, and are now a threat to the social structure of the host countries."

The resolution calls on "responsible authorities in the EEC to tackle this problem once and for all."

A perfect example it seems to me, of wishy-washy Liberal rhetoric hiding hard-faced reactionary policies.

Best Wishes
Ginny Armstrong
London E5

Lech Walesa was called Robinson. Would he get the same support by the same people if he led the car workers to the same extent that has happened in Poland, in say England? It's all a puzzle or is it!

Yours fraternally
E.M. Portbeck

firm on their beliefs and support a council that was democratically elected by the people of Liverpool.

It is the responsibility of the constituencies to defend and protect Liverpool, and follow their lead. Although I feel that half the membership of the Labour party will not even know what is happening. It certainly has not been discussed in my ward.

Three cheers for Liverpool. Keep up the fight, look after your people!

Yours faithfully
Wendie Brown
Rotherham

Santa Clause

Dear Comrades,

Christmas is fast approaching—the time of cheer when every 'good' boss gives his workers a bonus. Last year at my workplace the staff got a turkey, a chicken, a bottle of whisky and a fiver each—not bad.

So what did the warehousemen and drivers who actually get the goods receive?—four party cans of beer, two cans of shandy and 25 cigs, between all 15 of them.

But the night shift didn't even get that. The day shift had supped all the beer and had the fags. This year we've been offered a £7.50 meal, ten miles away, or nothing.

Ah well, Christmas is the time of cheer when workers and bosses forget their differences. Like hell it is.

Yours fraternally
A Bradford TGWU member

POEU CONFERENCE...

Photos: top, Dennis Doran (Militant)
bottom two, John Smith (IFL)

1983 HAS BEEN the most momentous year in the entire history of the Post Office Engineering Union.

Last week saw the union's third conference in twelve months. The first conference in June adjourned amidst anger and controversy and with a new left wing executive.

At a special conference in September the union endorsed by 2-1 the NEC's proposals for industrial action against government plans to privatise British Telecom.

This reconvened conference met under entirely different circumstances to those in June. The preceding few weeks had seen thousands of members locked out after management staged military-style raids on several BT buildings. The threat of sackings hung over 49 engineers. Members were being bussed into London from as far as Bristol to break the union's campaign, and pickets were dotted around London.

The conference also awaited a decision from the Court of Appeal, which if successful would have major implications for the trade union movement's ability to mount effective industrial action.

A week is a long time...

The atmosphere was charged. By the end of the week conference had moved from tense anticipation to dejection and disappointment at Mercury's successful appeal and the NEC's compliance with the court verdict: to elation and renewed commitment to fight on against privatisation.

That session of conference culminated in eight standing ovations, the general secretary in tears, a rendition of *We Shall Not Be Moved* with the whole conference on its feet, and a collection of £61,817 from the branches to finance the campaign!

This followed an earlier decision to reject John Golding's witch-hunting activities: the throwing out of the YTS scheme; the expulsion, for the first time ever, of BT management observers; a big step towards amalgamation with the Union of Communication Workers. There was unanimous agreement to continue the campaign of industrial action against privatisation—with the warning of massive retaliation against BT if they attempt to sack any POEU members.

The POEU NEC's decision to bow down to Tebbit's law was a definite setback for the whole working class. The opportunity to rally millions of workers around the POEU and inflict a major defeat on the Thatcher government has been temporarily lost.

This set-back was particularly galling as the NEC had a nominal left majority. Nevertheless the genuine left should not be disheartened by the outcome of the conference as a whole. On the contrary, every other decision underpinned the solid and growing support for policies advocated by the left in the union.

The rank and file overturned the recommendations of the

By Wayne Jones

(Militant Industrial correspondent)

top table on YTS, maintaining the historical link of pay parity with minority grades in the Post Office side of the industry and on the expulsion of BT officials.

These decisions were a vindication of the Broad Left's methods over a period of years, and particularly the policies and influence of *Militant* supporters within the Broad Left.

The BL has not been built as another election machine to advance the careers of individuals on the BL slate. It is an open, campaigning and critically aware grouping. It promotes policies and individuals on their merits. Broad Left supporters act in the interests of the POEU members they serve as conference delegates, with mandates from the branches.

Unfortunately the Broad Left was not able to convince conference to take on the Tories and Tebbit's law once the NEC had recommended compliance with the Court's ruling.

Conference delegates, and indeed the membership, needed confident assurances from the leadership that a decision to break the law and fight on against Mercury would be backed up by their most experienced and leading officers on the NEC and amongst the full time staff of the union.

These assurances were not given. The left received 38,596 votes—one third of the union's 130,000 votes. It would have been entirely different had the NEC been willing to fight. The 3-1 vote does not reflect the mood at the conference, which was overwhelmingly to fight on.

Four members of the NEC who were elected on a Broad Left ticket decided on Wednesday night/Thursday morning after a six-hour NEC meeting, to vote with the right wing. Yet every single one of the branches from which those individuals came voted to fight on.

Rank and file willing to go on

The same night two mass meetings were held, one by the Broad Left and one by the right wing group Mainstream. Both groups hold regular nightly meetings at the Conference.

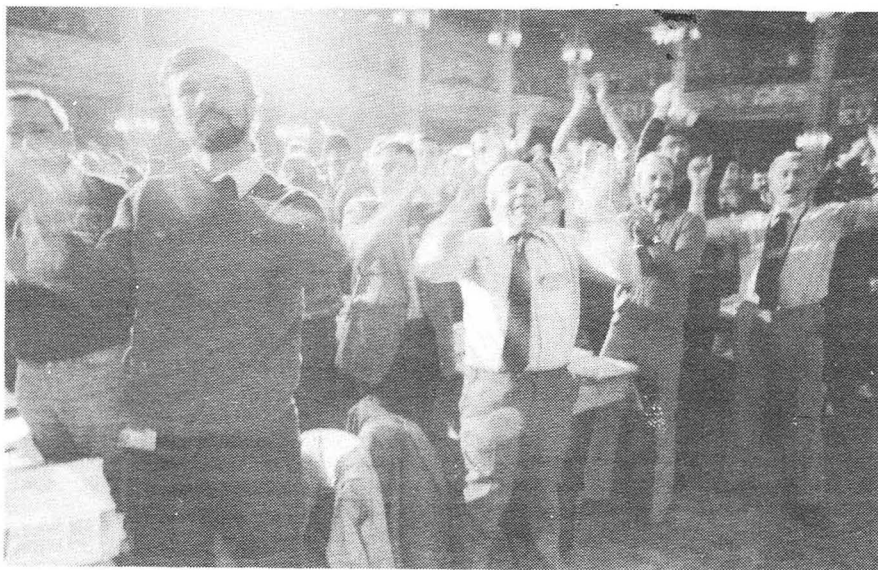
Both meetings were packed. From both meetings the message was the same. We cannot back down against such legal threats because to do so would jeopardise the existence and effectiveness of the union and our very right to strike.

Such a response from the rank and file delegates on the left and right indicates the degree of politicisation which has taken place in the POEU. "Anyone on the NEC who does not fight this decision is a traitor to this union and to the working class." These words, calmly spoken by an experienced activist of many years standing, summed up the attitude of the left.

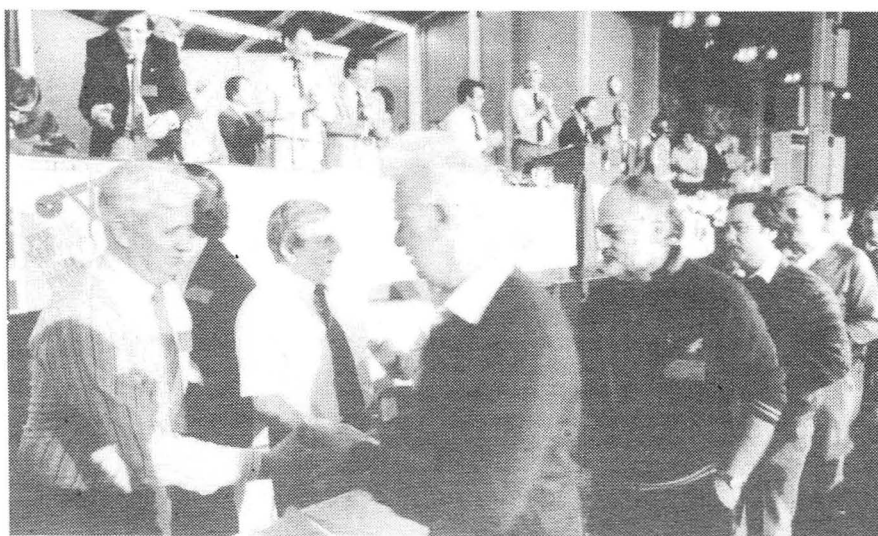
The result hinged on one vital factor—leadership. As Bill Cox, NEC member, Broad Left supporter and one of the most experienced left campaigners in the union put it at the Broad Left meeting



The fight



...goes on



Photos top to bottom: MPs Terry Fields and Dave Nellist (right of picture) visit London POEU picket line. Standing ovation for UCW general secretary Alan Tuffin as he hands over cheque to support POEU action. Delegates queuing to hand over branch donations.

next day: on a fundamental class question such as this the basic rule of thumb is to stick with your class.

He said it was a class issue in a clear class conflict and so he voted for his class. This was the instinct of the majority of the conference but it needed to be bolstered up by the authority of the leaders. Instead, that authority was used negatively, to argue for submission to the bosses' law, to the class enemy.

Tony Young, vice president, and on the Broad Left slate last year, moved acceptance of the court decision for the NEC, in what the *Financial*

Times described as a highly regarded speech.

He frightened conference with visions of the union in ruins, split, bankrupt and powerless. The lessons of working class history were lost

Solidarity

on the POEU leadership, blinded by lawyers' advice and legal structures, instead of being guided by the labour movement's traditions of loyalty and solidarity against the bosses' attacks.

The theme of the right wing's argument was the

same. To comply is to save the union from being destroyed through bankruptcy—that it was not a retreat, but survival.

Harry Jagoe, from Liverpool Power Branch, at his last conference before retirement agreed. "It was not a retreat" he said—but a "complete surrender"!

The sighs of relief from Tory ministers and the boardrooms of industry were only equalled by the disappointment of workers looking to the POEU to defy the government. There is no doubt that had the POEU opted to fight, then support and solidarity from the rank and file of the

movement would have been massive.

The *Guardian* editorial the next day spelt out the relief of the ruling class at the disappearing prospect of "a re-run of the Pentonville five". In 1972 mass working class direct action released the five jailed Pentonville dockers and signalled the end of the 'Tebbit laws' of the early 1970's.

Down but by no means out, was the defiant response by the conference next day. Colin Walsh, secretary of the biggest of the two branches with members locked out by BT management, spoke powerfully. "We have fought bloody hard for the POEU, now fight for us. With your support we can win". He received thunderous applause and a standing ovation.

This fighting speech set the mood for the debate on privatisation. Alan Tuffin, handing over a cheque for £1/2m from the UCW, pointed to the 'dream' of one union in BT and the Post Office. The tumultuous response to this gesture of solidarity has virtually guaranteed the future linking of the two unions.

Conference passed without dissent the NEC's report for continuation of the three pronged attack against the Tories' plans to dismember the industry—parliamentary, publicity and industrial action. "The three points of Poseidon's famous trident to pierce the heart of Thatcher" was how Dave Ward put it, calling for acceptance of the NEC's campaign strategy.

Witch-hunt rejected

Three years ago, John Golding, from his prominent position as member of the Labour Party NEC, and with the financial and legal support of the union was serving *Militant* with a libel writ in an attempt to bankrupt us.

At this Conference a resolution was passed calling on "all members of the Parliamentary Panel to conduct themselves in such a manner as to bring about the maximum Labour Party unity, by refraining from calling for the expulsion of socialists."

The motion was moved by a prominent *Militant* supporter Phil Lloyd, who castigated the right wing stewardship of the Party over many years which had led to so much disillusionment amongst people, allowing the Tories to return.

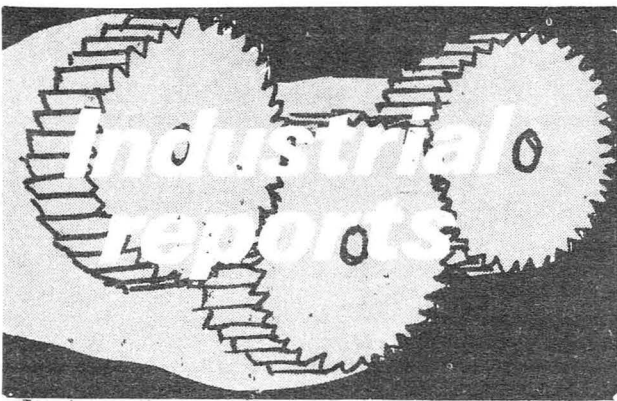
Despite the accusation of a "witch-hunt" of John Golding by *Militant* from John Price of Chester, and a hysterical leaflet published by Mainstream on the morning of the debate the resolution was carried 74,515 to 58,410.

The leaflet's attempt to associate *Militant* with fascism and totalitarianism was rejected by conference but it illustrates graphically the spleen of the right-wing, desperate to re-assert its rapidly declining grip on the union.

The POEU, under the inevitable hammer blows of events, is being transformed into a fighting trade union, creating new traditions in the course of these contemporary battles.

The struggles of the last few months show that the members are fiercely loyal to the union and resolute in action. If the leadership match the strength and determination of the members then privatisation can be beaten. But future legal threats or injunctions must be decisively rejected.

The POEU must continue its just fight to defend members' jobs and living standards. In doing so it can become the standard bearer of all workers fighting Tory cuts and exploitation.



Kent hospital strike

THE FIRST ever strike against privatisation in the NHS started at All Saints hospital, Chatham, Kent on Wednesday 9 November.

The day before, two hundred and fifty trade unionists had turned up to lobby the Medway Health Authority meeting which was to discuss a recommendation to privatise its cleaning service. At immediate risk were the jobs of 300 domestics in six hospitals and seventeen clinics.

A panel of three members from the Medway HA had examined tenders and recommended to the November 8 meeting that a management in-house tender (which workers had refused to prepare) should be awarded to Medway and St Barts hospitals and that the rest, including All Saints, should be awarded to Exclusive Health Care.

The meeting decided to defer any decision until December 13 because councillors felt they did not have enough information. This proposal was carried by one vote.

At All Saints hospital the domestics were furious. Hanging over their heads was the prospect of redundancy—in an area of the country with 18% unemployment. There was no guarantee of re-employment by Exclusive, which would employ less staff. Conditions of service were much worse than the NHS. In addition as continuity of employment would be broken there would be no legal protection against unfair dismissal in the first twelve months.

Hardly any work was done on 9 November. Angry domestics spent the day arguing with management. The next day a joint union meeting (NUPE & COHSE) was called.

In a heated discussion three proposals came from the floor: lightning strikes, striking one-day a week, and an all-out indefinite strike. In the end no one voted for lightning strikes. One person voted for one day-a-week strikes. Everyone voted for all-out action.

Sixty women marched out of

the hospital and established their first ever picket line. Many dropped out of the union last year out of disillusionment with the pay dispute. They rapidly rejoined. A strike committee was immediately elected from the picket line.

Since then our feet haven't touched the ground. On Friday afternoon we met three health authority members. Our strike committee—new as they may be to such trade union activity—soon made their feelings known. As one said "we're not pound notes you know, we are people". And that sums up how everyone feels about how they have been treated.

About thirty of the strikers attended a Labour Party meeting called to launch a local campaign in defence of the NHS. Some of the strikers signed up to join the Labour Party there and then.

About £90 a day has been collected from the public using the hospital. However we desperately need more money. Cheques should be made payable to NUPE/COHSE Domestics Hardship Fund, 32a New Road, Rochester Kent. Telephone Medway 401401.

The last word must go to Tory Councillor Taylor, Vice Chairman of the Health Authority. "Chatham dockyard has just closed and the workers made redundant. They didn't go on strike—so why are you?"

Nick Bradley
(NUPE Area Officer)

Thornton View hospital occupation

BRADFORD THORNTON View geriatric hospital is in its 14th week of occupation by the workers and staff—a magnificent testament to the willingness of the working class to defend services and jobs.

The people involved in this occupation are realising that the action they are taking is not purely a health dispute but part of a wider struggle by workers against the bosses' offensive.

HR Daryaer

Picket Stockport Messenger

SUPPORT FOR the 20-week long dispute at the *Stockport Messenger* has escalated with a mass picket of 600-800 at the Warrington factory a week last Wednesday.

Coaches came from as far away as Bristol, Newcastle, Brighton and Liverpool. The employers have taken out an injunction against the union over secondary picketing.

When Mr Shah, chairman of Messenger group newspapers first set up in Stockport he signed closed shop agreements with the NGA. He and his fellow directors even joined the union. They then decided to open up a typesetting house in Bury.

While he was negotiating closed shop agreements at Bury with the NGA, it came to light he was installing equipment and employing young girls and anti-

unionists to work it. He'd also installed a press at a factory near Warrington.

Shah has admitted that employees at Bury and Warrington were engaged only after rigorous interviews to establish their anti-union credentials.

On 4 July, after months of attempted negotiations with the NGA, whilst work was going ahead at the non-union press, the NGA members were instructed to withdraw their labour. Six did so. They were sacked for breaking a contract with the employer.

A few weeks later NUJ members refused to cross the NGA picket. The court granted an injunction against the NUJ.

Councils must work with unions

IN MAY 1983 the Labour Party swept to power on Liverpool city council. One of the factors in this remarkable victory was the support given by many of the local authority trade unions, who were active and campaigning during the election.

Recognising that the policies Labour were elected on need the support of local authority trade unions the Party im-

mediately set about cementing these links.

The day after the municipal elections, a meeting was held between the council workers joint shop stewards committee, the executive committee of the Liverpool District Labour Party and the officers of the Labour Group, to discuss the way forward. Immediately, all the Liberal/Tory privatisation plans were thrown out, and a

'no redundancies' guarantee was given.

At the next meeting of the personnel committee, the joint shop stewards committee was recognised and its executive co-opted onto the personnel committee. Time off with pay was given for the joint stewards executive to meet in works time.

A new disputes procedure was also drawn up. Previous-

ly a committee known as the 'Joint Four'; two Liberals one Tory, one Labour, to rule on disputes. Decisions were predictably a 3-1 majority!

The new disputes procedure means that if discussions and negotiations with local management fail, the unions then have the right to put their case to the chair of the council committee.

If they still fail to reach agreement, they can put their case to the new disputes committee: three Labour councillors, no opposition members, and three trade union representatives, (not in the same unions as those putting the case). Trade union reps can ask questions and given their opinions, though they have no vote.

A new vacancies procedure means that trade unions meet with Labour councillors every week. The trade unions have 50% nomination rights to fill jobs, and are entitled to sit in on interview decisions. Discussions are currently being held on time-off facilities for trade union representatives.

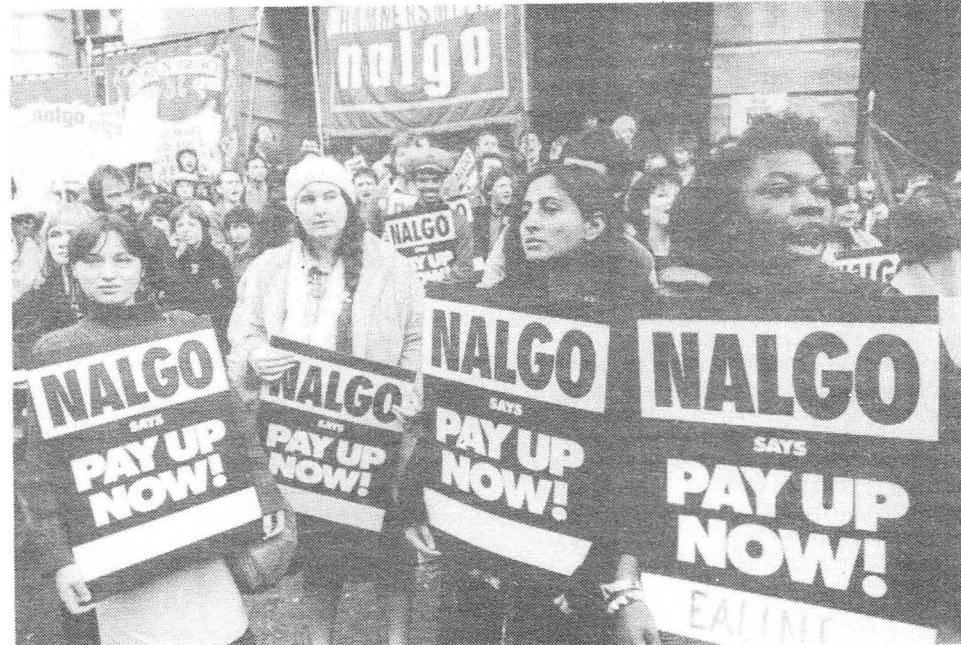


Photo: Andrew Wliard (Report)

Residential social workers lobby national pay talks last Thursday (10 Nov).

Newham

DAVE DRAYCOTT a NALGO shop steward in Newham talked to Dave Cartwright about the residential social workers' strike.

RESIDENTIAL social workers are claiming payment for shift and irregular working hours, weekend working, general holidays and public holidays. This would establish parity with other local government workers who have shift allowances of between 12½ and 20% basic pay. Residential social workers have no such allowances.

They are also demanding a reduction in the working week from 39 hours to 35 hours. The pay is very low, grade two salary, £4,500 per year giving a

take-home pay of less than £60 per week.

On Thursday 10 November we had a strike in Newham and a mass meeting which was well attended by residential social workers from the children's homes.

Some members from Newham were on the lobby at Camden Town Hall where the Whitley Council were considering a London settlement. 200 of the 700 on the lobby stormed into the council chamber. Their chant was "National claim, national settlement, parity now!"

Patrick Kodikara, a councillor from Hackney, was catcalled when he said how good Labour councils were.

Supporters of a London settlement all know it would put pressure on other areas to settle. However, that would only be

moral pressure—what effect would that have on Tory-controlled councils?

If London settles, children will return to the homes from the voluntary sector. Taking pressure off the voluntary sector would make it easier for the Tory boroughs to cope with the strike action. Also a militant section of the trade union would be removed from the action.

We need a ballot on national strike action. If we are going to win nationally we need national action. It's up to the membership whether or not they are prepared to strike. But already members have shown they are prepared to take action.

700-750 are already on indefinite strike and action is being taken in a lot of areas over suspension.

Southwark

ON WEDNESDAY 9 November nearly 2,000 members of Southwark NALGO held a one-day strike in protest at Southwark Council's use of police in forcibly removing children from the Hollies, a complex of residential homes in Sidcup.

The deadlock in national negotiations on the residential social workers dispute with the Tory-dominated negotiating body led Southwark NALGO to attempt local negotiations based on the national claim.

In a ballot residential social

workers agreed to work to rule. Southwark council responded by suspending 32 residential workers. That provoked an immediate NALGO walk-out in all council departments on 24 October and a mass lobby of the town hall later that day. The council then agreed to reinstate the suspended residential workers and start local negotiations.

However, the dispute escalated, resulting in no evening cover at the Hollies. NALGO members worked rotas drawn up by their union. Management attempted to move the children but found some unwilling to go. Police were then

called in, and seven van loads arrived on the scene, including an Instant Response Unit (SPG), with riot gear.

Children were bundled into vans and taken to Bexley Police station where two girls, 12 and 14 years old, were allegedly strip searched. Thirteen children had absconded, some were missing for two days.

The homes were stripped allegedly to stop the kids going back. There is also speculation that it gives Southwark council the opportunity to consider shutting down the Hollies earlier with redundancy implications for NALGO members.

The use of the police provoked an angry response from Southwark NALGO. As John Mulrennan, assistant branch secretary said: "Today's strike is an expression of our members' anger against Southwark Council, for their hypocritical behaviour in withdrawing from local negotiations and their use of the SPG to break the strike. What is particularly disturbing, are reports that the Industrial Relations Emergency Committee have said that they are prepared to use the police in the same fashion if similar occasions arise."

Labour councils everywhere must show their full support for NALGO's claim, and join with other trade unions in attempting to challenge the Tory majority on the national employers side and this government's disregard for both residential workers and the children who have become victims in these homes.

Bournemouth buses

NATIONAL EXPRESS coach drivers based at the Bournemouth depot staged a 24-hour strike on Friday 11 November.

Bert Worsfold, chairman, NUR No 3 branch, Bournemouth, explained that a new agreement being offered by the management meant the return to a 10-hour working day which went out years ago. There would be no overtime rates for Sundays or bank holiday work. The effect was a wages cut.

Some of the coaches they were

operating were so old that they did not have power steering and with the introduction of a 10-hour working day drivers would be very tired towards the end of their shift which would endanger the safety of the passengers.

At a mass meeting at the end of the day it was agreed that further lightning strikes would be held.

By Maria Ware
(Poole LPYS)

Shah has used NGA members to establish a profitable company while at the same time plotting to replace them with non-unionists. Action is being stepped up.

with mass pickets at Warrington, Bury and Stockport every day. For further details or messages of support write to Graphic House, 27a Greek Street, Stockport.

Residential social workers

THE LINKS we have built with the trade unions have helped in the current NALGO national dispute over the residential workers claim.

We have gone further than any local authority in the country in their support. The claim had our support from the beginning. We passed a resolution of support through the social services committee.

★ At the September annual conference of directors of social services, the chair of Liverpool's social services committee Heather Adams successfully moved a resolution in the Labour group urging the national employers to negotiate. This was carried at the conference by a narrow majority.

★ At the North-West provincial council meeting on 28 October Liverpool was the only authority (out of 18) to offer support for the claim.

★ Liverpool refused to issue the national employers' leaflets instructing residential workers not to strike.

★ We have taken on 26 relief workers.

★ We are currently discussing with NALGO a joint statement to the national employers as a basis for re-opening negotiations.

★ Irrespective of the dispute and in line with our own policy document, we are examining the whole area of residential work with a view to improving the quality of the service. As part of the 1,000 jobs we are creating, we have already recruited an extra 61 care assistants.

Although there will be occasions when the local authority trade unions and the Labour Group disagree, we feel Liverpool city council is leading the way in building links with trade unions. These will be vital in the forthcoming battle with the government.

By Cllr. Pauline Dunlop



Photo: John Smith (IFL)

THE 2,800 Rolls Royce workers are continuing their strike at the car factory in Crewe.

Little national publicity has been given to the dispute but it has now been made official by the AUEW, TGWU, GMBATU, NSMM and the Sheet Metal Workers Union. Management had

refused to negotiate. At the time of going to press, however, the workers' committee has been summoned to London for discussions. GEORGE ELLIS, the convenor, talked to Dave Campbell. **Why are you on strike?** Dissatisfaction with the way we have been treated over the last two years and because of the final insult of a 4% offer. This

rise will cost the company £1 million, which means £4 a week for the shop floor i.e. half a million pounds between 2,800 workers, the other £½ m will go to the 1,200 staff and management. Management consider that a fair offer.

Has the factory a tradition of militancy?

None at all. The last strike people can

remember was in 1939 the shop floor co-operated fully with everything management have wanted hoping that at the end of the day they would be treated fairly.

What is the mood now? Feelings are now very strong, I have never seen this work force as incensed as they are now.

GEC-victory at Openshaw

At GEC Openshaw a unified workforce have beat off redundancies with a short sharp occupation and strike.

Management had to back down. But now 650 redundancies are threatened in GEC's turbine section at Trafford Park, Larne and Rugby.

Openshaw showed even the giant GEC can be beaten. Now we need a national combine to beat them again!

"It's been going on for the last three or four years, management pushing us around, and it's going to stop".

That's how workers at the Switchgear plant at Higher Openshaw, Manchester, sum up the anger and determination that ensured their victory.

A wage claim was put in last April. Six months later when it still wasn't paid, shop floor and

By John Byrne
(AUEW GEC Switchgear
Higher Openshaw)

staff imposed an overtime ban and the shop floor banned sub-contracting of work.

Management responded with 150 redundancies and refused to accept early retirement instead. "They're so concerned about unemployment", one worker said with heavy irony, "they're worried men over sixty won't get another job!"

A mass meeting of the whole workforce pledged opposition to sackings. Individual letters from management threatening compulsory redundancies and disciplinary action if the blacking was not lifted, provoked the

threat of an all-out strike.

But management didn't get the message. They suspended workers who refused to handle sub-contract work. At a mass meeting the same day staff and shop floor voted to strike and occupy the plant.

"We are not breaking the law and if you want us out you'll have to get an injunction" a senior steward angrily told management. The police officer accompanying them was forced to agree.

The speed and determination of this response left management reeling. One was heard shouting at his colleagues: "I told you the unions were serious but you wouldn't listen!"

There was a picket on the main gate and the gatehouse and managing director's office were occupied.

Management agreed to meet union officials and the plant convenor. After a mammoth talks session they finally agreed:

all suspensions would be lifted, no enforced redundancies, a review of redundancy payments and immediate discussions on the 1983 wage claim. Holidays and start and finish times are to remain unaltered unless mutually agreed.

Management had wanted the convenor and senior steward disciplined, and termination of apprentice conditions for some young workers. This was rejected out of hand.

The mass meeting accepted the package and returned to work, but remain wary that the company will try something else. We will have another mass meeting in a month to review progress.

GEC's plant-by-plant attacks underline the need for a national GEC Combine covering staff and shopfloor, to effectively fight for the defence and advance of all GEC workers.

Openshaw have proved it can be done.

CPSA Broad Left conference

THIS YEAR'S Civil and Public Services Association National Broad Left Conference was held in London on 5 and 6 of November. There was a record attendance of over 340.

Conference Chairman, Kevin Roddy, a *Militant* supporter, opened conference with an emphasis on the need to unite around the policies of the Broad Left and defeat the right wing in 1984.

Many constructive motions were passed giving the next left National Executive Committee its priorities for 1984.

Motions from *Militant* supporters calling for the setting up of an editorial board for the Union Journal, Red Tape, were carried with large majorities.

Motions demanding the implementation by the next Broad Left CPSA National Executive Committee of the existing policy for regular election of Assistant Secretaries, were passed by massive majorities.

Although the 1984 pay claim will not be decided until the beginning of the year conference agreed that the call for flat rate

increases would be necessary.

Conference also adopted a composite motion which laid down "Total opposition to the introduction of the Youth Training Scheme" unless demands for trade union rates of pay, a guaranteed job at the end of the scheme and a halt to job cuts in the civil service were also met.

Organisational manoeuvres to change the method of voting on nominations of candidates for the NEC were heavily defeated after opposition by *Militant* supporters.

This move was an attempt by the Communist Party, aided by the so-called Labour Left and 'Socialist Caucus' to concentrate decision-making on nominations in the hands of fewer people. It is almost certain that the total number of votes cast under this system would not match the attendance of the 1983 Broad Left conference and would certainly undermine active participation in decision making.

The conference voted by an overwhelming majority to support the Southern African Labour Education Project following a debate in which ex-SWP member, now 'Labour Left' leader, Mike Duggan, joined the Communist Party in a sectarian attack on SALEP.

The new 'Labour Left' grouping, led by Jonathan Baume

SHELL

THE STRIKE at Shell is beginning to bite. Petrol stations in and around Ellesmere Port are drying up, six are shut.

The tanker drivers are likely to be out from Monday 21 November unless they get an improvement on their 4½% offer. That would enormously escalate the strike.

There is all out-strike of TGWU craft unions at Skelhaven. At Ardrossan there is an overtime ban by TGWU and ASTMS, with tanker ships being turned away unloaded.

At Teesport, production was raised by the company from 7,000 to 10,000 tonnes to beat

and Mike Duggan did not have the impact on the conference they had expected. Mike Duggan stood down as chairman of the Department of Health and Social Security Broad Left Section, in anticipation of defeating Kevin Roddy for the national Broad Left chairman. In the event he was soundly beaten. On all the major questions the 'Labour Left' group took an effectively right-wing stance.

Jonathan Baume in his secretary's report to conference

the strike but it has now come down to 7,000 again. Teesport workers are overwhelmingly sympathetic to taking action if the crunch comes there.

'Flying picketing' has been increased, e.g. to Barton near Manchester. Shell Explo could also become involved; strikers hope to stop the flow of oil to refineries from the North Sea.

Tanker drivers taken off the pay roll at Stanlow and Haydock for refusing to cross picket lines have been reinstated and are still not crossing the lines. Only emergency supplies are allowed out. Lists of destinations are given by drivers to protect workers pickets to vet!

By an AUEW member
(Stanlow)

and Mike Duggan in his election address were pessimistic about the possibility of implementing many of the resolutions on the agenda. It was left to *Militant* supporters to point out not just what was desirable and necessary, but how to go about it. The Broad Left is now better prepared for the campaigns which will be necessary to defeat the right wing in 1984.

By Bill Boyle

Land Rover - privatisation?

Land Rover, a subsidiary of British Leyland, have announced their intention to close thirteen satellite plants (twelve in Birmingham one in Cardiff) and centralise production in Solihull, in the mothballed, SDI car factory. In the process, they will sack 1560 workers.

This latest Edwardes-style axe was announced to a meeting of the Land Rover joint negotiating committee on Friday 11 November. The meeting was ostensibly for the unions to present the 1984 wage claim plan. (£12 across the board and consolidation of £7.50 of the bonus).

Whilst they were going through the motions of informing the trade unions, management were handing out letters to all 8,000 Land Rover workers, saying the same thing. We were told that the decision to centralise production came after BL's main Board had decided to produce the new double X model in the Cowley Oxford Plant, rather than in the MT SDI factory. But undoubtedly the real reason was to have Land Rover as a nice tidy package to sell off to private investors.

The Tories' plundering of state assets is absolute madness. The whole of the world car industry is being concentrated in the hands of fewer multina-

tionals. The economies of scale mean there is no future for small companies, even specialist ones like Land Rover.

The chances are that one of Land Rover's four wheel drive overseas competitors will buy us up and gradually (or quickly) close us down. There can be no attitude in the Solihull plant of 'it doesn't affect us'. Like the British Telecoms workers, we have to fight back against privatisation.

There have been huge cut-backs in Land Rover production in the past. From a peak in 1980 of 870 Land Rovers, and 253 Range Rovers per week, we fell to 310 Land Rovers and 200 Range Rovers earlier this year. Since then, we have slowly crept back up to about 500 Land Rovers per week.

We have not yet had a formal report back to the Solihull joint stewards committee. But we will be proposing that we fight these plans. There must be a meeting of all shop stewards from all the plants where we can thrash out our campaign to fight closures and redundancies.

This will give a feeling of confidence to those workers from the threatened plants.

By IAN SCHOFIELD, Deputy Senior Steward, Range Rover, Solihull, and PETER CAROLAN, shop steward, Land Rover, Solihull.

Cardiff

CONTRARY to previous management assurances, British Leyland announced on the 11 November that the Land Rover plant in Cardiff is to close down, with the loss of 600 jobs.

The Cardiff plant, which manufactures engines and transmissions, was set up in 1960 with the aid of a substantial local authority grant, and its closure over a period of 18 months is a devastating blow to the local community.

Shop stewards generally feel that management is blatantly

taking advantage of the depression and present slack orders to prepare the company for privatisation. The stewards are angry at the company acting as if they already have an agreement to close the plant. "This is not so and we will fight", was the response of one steward.

A mass meeting voted overwhelmingly to accept a campaign strategy recommended by the shop stewards. Messages of support and financial donations to be sent to, Geoff Stockham, (convenor), 7 Gelligaer Gardens, Cathays, Cardiff.

By Chris Peace
(Cardiff North Labour Party)

Derry bridge blocked

"IF WE don't finish this bridge this bridge won't be finished." One worker summed up the mood of about a hundred building workers on a picket outside the new Foyle Bridge in Derry.

The dispute has now gone on for five weeks. It was provoked initially by management refusal to pay bonus payments. Two weeks later the men were sacked. The picket, by members of the TGWU and UCATT, has remained 100% solid.

Even in an area like Derry, with 30% unemployment, scabs cannot be recruited to break the strike. Last week some unemployed workers received application forms to work on the site but when they went to the gates and met the pickets they sympathised with them and then went home.

But on Friday 4 November at 10 minutes to 7 in the morning an attempt was made to use scabs bussed in from 50 or 60 miles away. A transit van and car of scabs accompanied by 15 police Land Rovers, with policemen in riot gear arrived hoping to break the strike.

There was probably one policeman for every striker. But after what one shop steward called, "a slight confrontation", the attempt was called off. A management spokesman claimed that both the van and car were damaged in this incident. Management have refused to

discuss with what they now term, former employees. Yet despite the stalemate workers are confident that they can win.

By Manus Maguire

Metal Box

ON MONDAY 7 November workers at the Metal Box plant in Sutton were informed by stewards that present pay negotiations had been suspended by management. The offer stands at 4.5% and is already six weeks past anniversary date.

AUEW members decided to enter a non-co-operation situation, and gave shop stewards a mandate for any action they felt necessary.

The present round of closures and redundancies in Metal Box is arousing signs of anger and resistance—even on the the Sutton site, not directly involved by these actions.

An emergency meeting of Metal Box combine is being held at County Hall, London on Saturday 19 November. Hopefully this will be the start of the fight back, and the launching pad for a really effective and and campaigning combine.

By Steve Hoare
(AUEW shop steward, Sutton Metal Box, personal capacity)

'We want a union'

Workers battle for union recognition



Above: Pickets at Lefray Toys brave intimidation and assault. Below: Twelve workers are on strike at Beauty Care, eight of them on the government Young Workers' Scheme.



Photo: John Smith (IFL)

WHILE THE government and the employers are trying to destroy the power of the trade unions, many workers are striking to build them, against management resistance.

The struggle for union recognition at **Lefray Toys** in Aberbeeg, Gwent has entered its fourteenth week.

Workers have been subject to abuse, police intimidation, and now assault. But they are united and determined to win.

"We feel we are now getting at the scabs inside" Tal Howells TGWU shop steward told Linda Reid, "even though cars have been driven straight into us."

On one occasion two scabs came out in a break and stubbed out a cigarette in a picket's face. The police are on hand at any time for the bosses but they are much more difficult to find at these times.

One policeman told the worker who had a cigarette in his face to "think about it tomorrow before taking action." Policemen have witnessed cars driving into pickets but not had "the equipment" to take statements.

Police harassment

At one mass picket, the police went crazy on the picket line. They laid into pickets, punching one fifteen year old girl to the ground. She needed hospital treatment. One woman was knocked down the street before being arrested.

An LPYS member was viciously attacked and arrested by the police, for taking photographs. Altogether 9 pickets were arrested, seven of them YS members. A miner was later charged, for attempting to protect his daughter.

Despite this attempt to scare the mainly women workers off picket lines, the strikers are more determined than ever. Picketing has been stepped up.

The rest of the labour movement in South Wales have been just waiting for the word to move into action. Steel workers, miners and workers from ICI have been down to the picket line already, and over £300 was collected at the Chartist Rally in Blackwood.

Unfortunately this has not been matched by the full time TGWU officers. "We

aren't getting any weaker, just the people at the top. A lot more should have been done in the last 13 weeks. The district officials were told to go back to their membership for support but this has not been done by some of them," said a picket.

The full time officer leading the strike has unfortunately suggested that the strikers set up a co-operative to compete with Lefrays'. The boss at Lefrays' thought it was an excellent idea but the strikers are not too impressed.

Young workers take the lead

"Co-ops have nothing to do with it. Our jobs are in that factory and that's what we're fighting for. We have not been out here for 13 weeks for nothing."

The workers appeal to the movement to boycott all Lefray goods. sold at Fine Fare, Woolworths, British Home Stores and Boots.

Messages of support and donations to Carol Howell, 152 Mount Pleasant Estate, Abertillery, Gwent.

Young workers at **Carous-el Wafers** have been fighting for recognition since July. A public meeting of 100 and a demonstration of 300-400 showed the local support but again union officials seem to be dragging their feet. Support and donations to Carol Rogers, 1050 Shettleston Road, Glasgow.

Young workers are also to the fore in a double glazing firm in Buntingford where workers struck for a proper union, even after management tried to stall them with a promise of a so-called "works council". Donations and support to Geoff Dilley, 102, Gonville Crescent, Stevenage, Herts.

In Derbyshire, workers at **Nuttall Lighting** in Ripley won recognition of the GMBATU despite bosses sacking striking workers. The notorious *Nottingham Evening Post* had an article saying the strikers couldn't win but such distortion failed in its intent this time.

But now in the factory next door, **Flotex**, workers went on strike after TGWU steward Bill John was sacked. He had just negotiated a new disciplinary procedure.

Meanwhile in the Manchester area twelve workers came out for union recognition at **Beauty Care Warehouse** in Eccles. Some of the workers joining the TGWU received 60p an hour. Support and donations please to F Johnson 30 Buckley Street, Salford 7.

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DEFEND JOBS

FROM PAGE ONE

excess.

The Labour group have stood firm. They are carrying out their programme, and now Tory Junior Minister, Malcolm Thornton is making threats to sack the elected council, and appoint commissioners to run the city.

That would mean catastrophe for the working people. Expenditure would be brought down to the target level. Jobs and services would be savaged. The policies of the old Liberal/Tory administrations would be reimposed, and there would be no democratic control over those taking the decisions.

Any such action will provoke an immediate and massive response from the labour and trade union movement, on Merseyside. Already in the build up to the November 19th demonstration, links have been forged between the Labour Group of the council, the Labour Party, the local authority trade unions, and just as importantly trade unions in the private sector.

November 19 will be a springboard for further action in defence of council promises and jobs, and to force the government to withdraw its threat.

The fact that Jenkin and the Tories are contemplating such a desperate move is the clearest possible indica-

tion of their paranoid fear of the developments of Merseyside, which threaten to spill over to other areas.

The stern resistance of the Labour Liverpool City Council has dovetailed with the new mood of militancy which is just emerging not just in Merseyside, but elsewhere.

The strategists of big business are aware that the council's stand could well become a spark that ignites a national fightback against the Tory government.

Such a movement must be built now. The support of other Labour controlled authorities, particularly in major industrial areas and those metropolitan counties which face abolition, will be a key factor in ensuring victory to Liverpool's fight.

The last Tory government was shaken by the resistance of tiny Clay Cross, in Derbyshire. That fight failed because it was never taken up nationally by the Labour and trade union leaders. This time there must be no hesitation.

Liverpool is fighting the same battle as the GLC, Sheffield, and all the other Labour authorities at present under attack. Together they can win, force Thatcher to make a humiliating retreat, and save the jobs and services which are so vitally needed in the present economic crisis.

By Pat Craven

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