

# Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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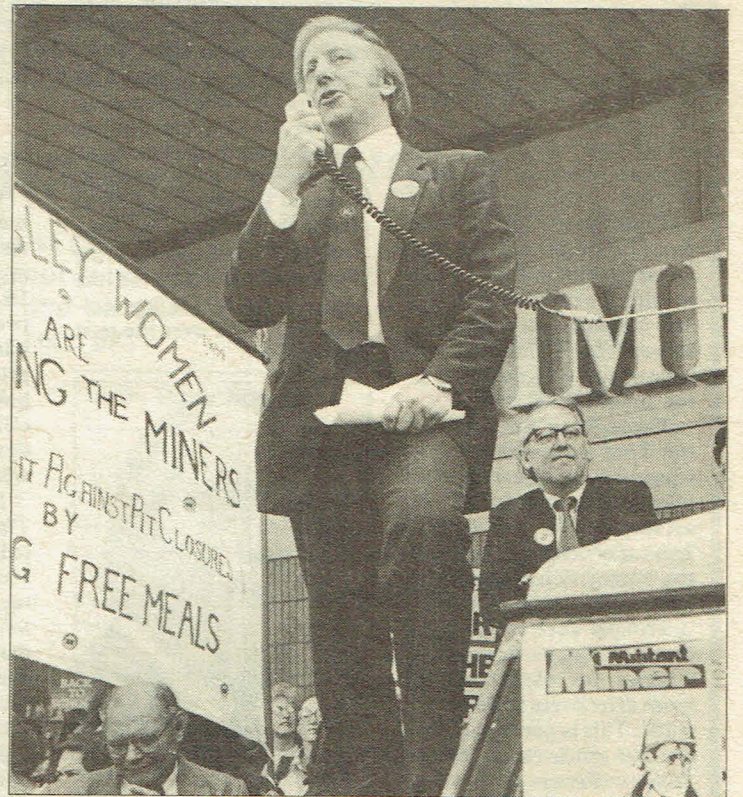
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## Liverpool, Miners ...

# Now's the time to

Photo: Jacob Sutton



Arthur Scargill addresses May Day rally in Mansfield.

# fight

### Coal, steel, rail— stand together

THE MINERS' strike is now entering its ninth week. Tory ministers and the NCB have been shaken by the ferocious determination of the miners and their will to win.

Behind the miners there has been an incredible wave of support as large amounts of money have been collected by trade union branches, Labour Parties, LPYS branches and labour movement support committees.

By Stan Pearce

(Wearmouth Lodge NUM)

This has only fired the determination of the miners even more. But at the same time, the struggle of the miners themselves has fired the enthusiasm of other workers.

There exists in Tory Britain a deep well of discontent, anger and bitterness and since the beginning of the miners' strike a whole number of other industrial battles have brought these frustrations exploding onto the surface.

Millions of workers in industry, transport, health, teaching, the civil service and in the post office are now gearing themselves up for a fight over jobs and wages. The sudden eruption of a major strike at BL is another indication of the new-found confidence affecting large layers of the working class.

But potential battles in the steel industry and on the railways have a special significance for the miners. The fortunes of all these basic industries are tied together.

(Continued on back page)

### Elections; workers say no to cuts

"I DON'T support *Militant*... but leadership at last!"

These words, from a passer-by interrupting a TV interview with Liverpool Council deputy leader Derek Hatton, summed up Labour's resounding victory in the local elections in the City.

The workers of Liverpool have reaffirmed the mandate of the Labour council to defend local jobs and services.

In Liverpool the Labour Party has increased

its total vote by 108 per cent in the last eight years and by 67 per cent in the last two alone. That is a crushing refutation of the so-called "experts" who try to play down Labour's victory.

Even the hapless Trevor Jones, leader of the Liverpool Liberals, was forced to concede on TV that "the Labour Party in Liverpool has raised the political consciousness of the people... that's why we had such a high turn-out."

Tuesday's post-election meeting of the Liverpool District Labour Party saw a mood

of celebration, tempered with a determination to carry on the fight.

The meeting unanimously confirmed the position of the council that there would be no huge rate rises, no job losses and no cuts in services. Having also decided to postpone any decision on the council budget, until Patrick Jenkin's visit in early June, the Liverpool labour movement have firmly put the onus on the Tory Environment Minister to come up with the cash.

(Continued on back page)

### NEC BACKS LIVERPOOL

THE LABOUR Party NEC, on Wednesday passed a resolution supporting Liverpool Council.

It condemned the cuts made in Liverpool over the years by the Liberals and Tories recognised that the council had "fully consulted the trade unions and have also had meetings with the public explaining the city's problems and why the councillors are acting as they are."

The NEC resolution goes on, "In the circumstances we believe that Liverpool have acted within Labour's conference policy... therefore we pledge ourselves to give all the support we can to resolve the present impasse."

Labour Party members will now be waiting for this resolution to be given effect and especially for Front Bench Parliamentary spokesmen to back it.

By Terry Harrison

(Liverpool DLP Vice-President)



Militant

Daily  
Building  
Fund

THE FIGHT to get new premises to produce a Marxist Daily is becoming more successful with every post.

The following letter was one of a large number received at our offices this week in response to the special appeal in *Militant* two weeks ago.

"Comrades,  
At LPYS Conference, in response to the emergency appeal for the Building Fund, I was only able to give £5. I was ready, in the at-

mosphere of that tremendous evening, to pledge £30.

Anyway, to date my payments to our new premises' fund come to £55. With the special appeal for cash I determined to bring my contributions up to £100. As I don't have a job, I can't pay off the £45 in one go. I'll have to pay the money into the fund gradually, obviously attempting to get as much money in by the end of May as possible.

This doesn't match the sacrifice made by many of

the comrades but hopefully will help push us towards the new premises.

Fraternally,  
Kevin Blake,  
Folkestone and Hythe  
LPYS."

It doesn't really need any comment. So far, our appeal has raised £143,892, leaving us £31,108 to reach the target. Just follow Kevin's example and a daily workers' paper will be that much closer!

# Militant

## Lies, damn lies and Tory statistics

Photo: Militant

"IN WAR the first victim is the truth." The same is the case when Tory papers report on local election defeats for their party. The Tories lost control in Birmingham, Edinburgh and Southampton to Labour. Labour now controls every city bigger than Bristol.

Even in "blue chip" Tory areas like Eastbourne many middle class voters showed their opposition to the government's policies, shifting their votes to the Liberals. In Cheltenham, revulsion at the attack on trade union rights at GCHQ lead to the Liberals taking control from the Tories.

Labour's victories in the local elections reflected the growing mood of confidence of workers in struggle. This mood was echoed in a poll commissioned by *Weekend World* which showed Labour taking a 5% lead during the miners' strike. Because that poll did not fit in with the myth that strikes and industrial struggles lose support for Labour, it was suppressed and not used in the programme.

Throughout the pages of the Tory press a deliberate campaign has been undertaken in the last week in an attempt to diminish Labour's victory, play down the Tories' defeat and build up the gains of the Alliance.

Trotsky once commented that *The Times* tells the truth 9 times out of 10, all the more effectively to lie on the tenth. This is particularly so with the article carried by the *Sunday Times* on 6 May which had the dual purpose of playing down the brilliant victory in Liverpool, and attempting to portray *Militant* as an "electoral albatross".

There can be little doubt of the purpose of this article when the editorial in the same paper commented: "If there is a lesson for Mr Kinrock from individual results, it is that he has nothing to lose among voters in pushing ahead with his hesitant purge of adherents of the Trotskyite *Militant* Tendency begun in 1982 and advanced recently in Blackburn."

### Labour gains

According to the article, "even Labour's *Militant* triumph in Liverpool is not quite as impressive as it seems". Yet Labour had seven gains added to eleven last year. 16 of these gains have been from the Liberals despite the latter's "best ever Liverpool vote". The Liberals had 165 gains in the local elections, but 6 of their 50 losses nationally were in Liverpool.

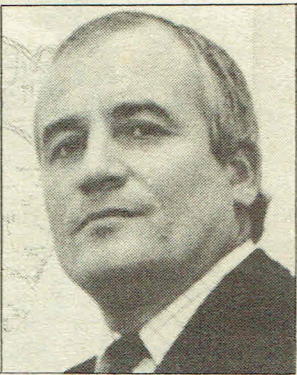
The press has produced figures to show that Labour's share of the vote declined in Liverpool since the 1983 local election. The fact of the matter is that Labour's share of the vote in the local election in 1983 was 47.0%, and this year 46.4%.

But what even this ignores is that Liverpool is the only city in the country where the Labour vote went up in the general election and where there was also a substantial swing to Labour in last year's local elections.

In Liverpool Labour has maintained and built on its remarkable victory of last year, despite a massive campaign of opposition by the Liberals, Tories and the press against the fight of the city council, and the lack of support from Labour's leadership.

The Labour vote in Liverpool has risen from 54,000 in 1982 to 77,000 in '83, and to over 90,000 in '84. The turn outs of 35%, 44% and this year a remarkable 51% reflect the heightened political consciousness of workers in Liverpool.

In the Broadgreen constituency the 54% turn out was higher than in some constituencies elsewhere in the General Election! The "best ever Liberal vote" has been entirely at the expense of the Tories whose share of the vote in Liverpool has collapsed to 19% over the past two years.



Tony Mulhearn, one of the newly elected Liverpool councillors. Photo: Militant

LIVERPOOL CITY Labour council's leaders have pushed through special permission for street collections for the miners' funds. A Liberal councillor objected saying: "Shoppers faced with a collecting tin thrust under their nose by burly miners could feel easily intimidated!"

Derek Hatton, deputy leader of the council, defended the collections saying: "Both the miners and the Labour group here are fighting to protect jobs and services. We support the miners 100% in their battle."

*The Sunday Times* article continues: "Our analysis showed that a Liberal would now defeat *Militant* Labour MP Terry Fields in Broadgreen, where Liberals won 3 out of the 5 wards."

Yet in 1983 in the local elections Labour got 38% of the vote in Broadgreen, a figure which was exactly repeated this year.

### Disillusioned

The growth in the Liberals vote in Broadgreen and also in Liverpool has been based on picking up disillusioned Tory voters who undoubtedly will desert the Liberals in the future also when they see that they are Tories in disguise.

At the same time as this has happened, Labour has eaten into areas of 'traditional' Liberal support, reflected by the gain of 6 wards. As to the Liberals 'winning 3 out of 5 wards', they actually held 3 before polling day, lost one to Labour, and won one from the Tories.

Broadgreen has never been a 'safe' Labour area,

something which makes Terry Field's victory last June all the more impressive. If the result in Broadgreen or any other area of Liverpool in 1983 or '84 local elections or 1983 General Election was repeated throughout the country Labour would gain its biggest victory since 1945.

### Brighton vote

Nationally the Liberals may have had a "good result" this year and last, but in Liverpool they have lost 16 seats to Labour in the past two years. Similarly the SDP had three MPs in Liverpool prior to 1983—now they have no MPs, no councillors, and got a devastatingly bad result wherever they stood.

In relation to Brighton, *The Sunday Times* attempted to put a 12% swing to Labour down to the fact that the local party "sacked *Militant* supporters from key party posts, told voters the party was in 'safe hands' and saw its Kempton votes shoot up". While *Militant* supporter Rod Fitch won the nomination for Brighton Kempton in 1983 by one vote, it is true that this year *Militant* supporters lost some positions in the party by three or four votes.

But the support for Labour in the local elections is not due to "a clear out" but the opposite. In 1982 Brighton had the best local authority election results in the South of England with a swing of 14% to Labour. In 1983, with a campaign led by the supporters of *Militant*, in the general election the 29% vote that Labour got was one of the best results in the south of England. Indeed Kempton was one of only three seats in the South where Labour came second.

### Revival in mood

Faced with the tidal wave of the Tory/SDP bandwagon, to come second and hold 29% of the vote in Brighton was a substantial achievement. It is on the basis of the work conducted in the past two years, the roots that have been sunk amongst local workers, the building of a solid Labour vote, and the building of the party, that this year's results have been achieved.

The message of the local elections is clear: Thatcher's honeymoon is over. The miners' strike and a whole series of other strikes has also been matched by the revival of confidence of workers and support for Labour. The Tories have been driven from most of the major cities, humiliated in Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow.

These results, gained by local Labour Parties fighting on radical policies, show the potential for the future, for the Tories to be reduced to a small party of rural England.

But the driving back of the Tories will not be an automatic process. The ex-



Liverpool Labour councillors and MPs lead the massive demonstration through the city in defence of the council's stand on March 29.

## Radical policies win votes

THE ELECTION results showed a growth in Labour's support throughout the country. Moreover when the results in different cities and areas are compared it becomes clear that Labour's results were best where Labour stood on radical policies.

*The Times* (5 May) commented: "The trends were conflicting even within regions. Labour's gains in Birmingham and Dudley were not matched anywhere else in the West Midlands. Liverpool stands out from the rest of Merseyside and Manchester and Salford from the rest of Greater Manchester." But what may be "conflicting trends" for *The Times* can be understood by analysing the policies and campaigns fought by the Labour Parties in those areas.

Where it stood firm in refusing to carry out the cuts and where it was seen as a radical alternative to the Tories, Labour support grew. Outside Liverpool, Manchester is one of the few cities in Britain where Labour scored a victory in

the local elections two years running.

Clearly the political struggle taking place within the Manchester Labour Party, between the left-dominated City Labour Party, and the old right wing majority on the council group, did not discourage Labour voters from turning out. Indeed the prospect of a left wing majority of councillors has clearly resulted in gains for Labour in Manchester.

In Glasgow the District Labour Party fought on a policy of no cuts, no rate rises, and no rent rises, and Labour reduced the Tories to a mere five seats throughout the city.

### Tories hammered

Labour gains in areas such as Birmingham, where the right wing still dominate, were in areas where Labour had not been tainted by carrying out cuts in the last year, because they were in opposition. In those areas where the right wing of the Labour Party held sway either in local councils or in the local labour movement,

Labour failed to make the same kind of gains.

In many areas of Lancashire surrounding Liverpool and Manchester little or no headway was made. This includes Blackburn where the right wing in the party have conducted a vicious witch-hunt, expelling six socialists from the Labour Party. In neighbouring Hyndburn, which is covered by the same local newspaper, Labour lost four seats to the Tories and one to the SDP!

Right wing MP Austin Mitchell, in 1982, justified expulsions of *Militant* supporters on the basis that: "Liverpool is a disaster area for the Labour Party. A city which should be dominated by Labour... is in fact a three party system". Now in his home town of Grimsby, Labour's position has plummeted disastrously. In 1982 Labour held 25 council seats in Greater Grimsby to 20 to the opposition. With right wing domination, after two years Labour now only holds 19 seats to 26 of the opposition.

Photo: Militant



Liverpool council leaders Derek Hatton and John Hamilton. Both have been re-elected leaders of the Labour group, unopposed.

### LIVERPOOL COUNCIL CONFERENCE

Saturday 23 June, 10.30am to 5pm

at Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool.  
Delegation fee £2.

For further details write to:  
Felicity Dowling, Secretary,  
Liverpool Labour Party,  
Merseyside TU & Unemployed  
centre, Hardman Street, Liverpool 1.

ample of Liverpool shows that Labour must provide a socialist alternative to win workers' support and to win sections of the middle class away from the Tories.

If the Labour Party was seen to be fighting for the interests of workers, above all adopting socialist policies as a clear alternative to the crisis in the system run by the Tories, then Labour can build on the victories of these local elections and, combining with the growing industrial struggle, sweep the Tories from office and gain a crushing victory.

Miners' dispute

# Workers must control coal movement

## RAVENSCRAIG: Community backs miners

THE TORIES are trying to whip up divisions between the steelworkers and the miners over the Ravenscraig steelworks. But even without the miners' strike the "Craig" faces possible closure as a result of the Tories' industrial butchery.

The best answer steelworkers could give to the threat to their own jobs would be to fight alongside miners in defence of basic industries: steel, coal and rail. Meanwhile miners are determined that only 'emergency' coal supplies should go into the "Craig".

### Spotter planes

Pressure has recently been brought to bear on drivers of Yuill and Dodds and WH Malcolm, haulage contractors not to cross further NUM picket lines and the supply to diesel to these firms has been stopped.

One aspect of the dispute which has horrified everyone has been the policing. At one

By Colin Fox  
(Motherwell South LPYS)

stage on Friday 1,000 police surrounded less than 60 pickets. Spotter planes have circled over Ravenscraig on at least three different occasions.

Over a dozen police horses have been used to corral the pickets into a steel-fenced enclosure. The use of the police in this way has been new to the Scottish industrial scene.

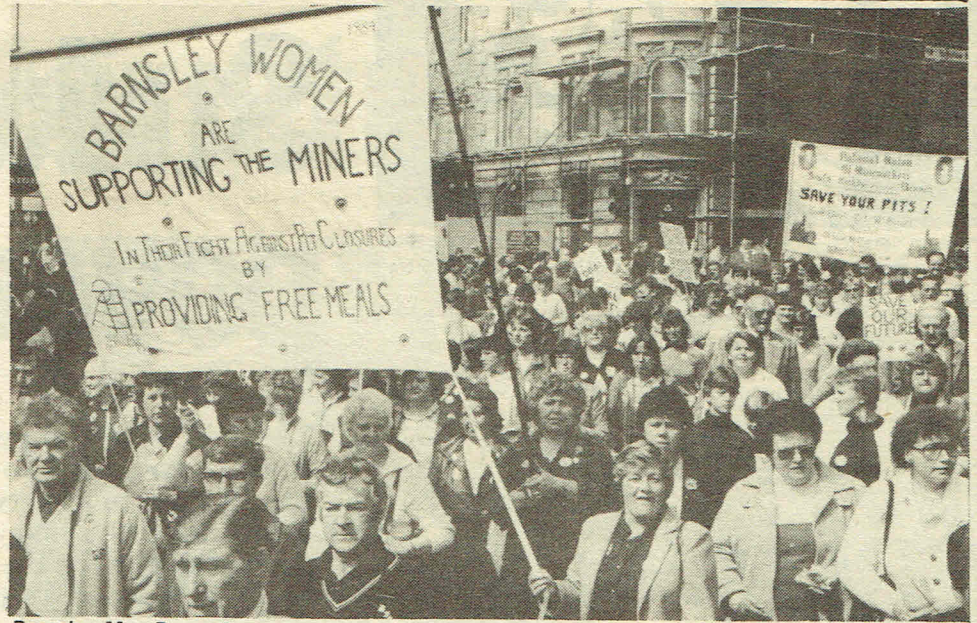
One thing that must be stressed is that a basic fundamental rule of trade unionism has been breached and many miners hold very angry feelings on it, Andy Beck of Polkemmet colliery said, "Thatcher and Mac-

Gregor are standing back laughing at this. Steelworkers and miners fighting one another while he threatens to sack the load of us".

Despite what the *Sunday Post* says, the feeling of the people in the local housing scheme, Craigneuk next to the 'Craig' and the people in Motherwell and Wishaw itself has been to support the miners' pickets. They see the police numbers and immediately know which side of the fence they're on.

### Local estates

On Thursday, of the 1,000 police present somewhere around 500 constrained the picket, whilst the same number held back the people in the local estates. Support has taken the form of food, drink, use of toilets, use of radios and even the smashing of two lorry windscreens happened long before they reached the miners' pickets.



Barnsley May Day rally.

Photo: J Smith (IFL)

## 2,500 meals a week

IN BARNSELY, heart of the South Yorkshire coalfield, an excellent initiative has been taken to make sure that all miners families receive a hot meal every day.

By Mark Bygrave

A canteen was set up in part of the Civic Hall building in the town centre. The facilities were given over by the Labour Council as a practical way of showing their support and solidarity with the miners.

Derek "Chocker" Reeves, the NUM area agent for Barnsley, got the idea off the ground about six weeks ago by inviting all pits in the Barnsley area to contribute £20 each. Since then they have relied entirely upon donations of money or food from people in the community itself.

Those people include Peter Doyle, a well known local businessman, who sup-

plying 2,500 meals to miners, their wives and kids, and everything entirely donated.

### Organised canteens

"Actually working in the canteen doing the cooking and cleaning are around eight or nine women, who usually work in canteens at the collieries in the Barnsley area, but as they are on strike with the miners they decided not to let their talents go to waste and have taken on the job totally without payment of any kind.

"They are marvellous, they are doing a much needed job. One of them is my wife; she has been working from around 9.00 am to 3.00 pm five days a week."

ports the action taken by the NUM; he donated £100 to the service for the miners and since then many small shopkeepers and local business men have helped out. Among them is local farmer, Hector Buckley who has been regularly delivering milk and dairy produce to the canteen. Much of the bread is being supplied by "Alices" a small bakery in Barnsley.

"Chocker" told me; "The response has been excellent. We are now using over £600 worth of food a week, sup-

## LLANWERN: Only enough coal to stop furnaces cracking

THE BOSSES tried to play off Llanwern against Ravenscraig and now they are trying to play off the miners against the steelworkers. They tried to scare the NUM into keeping full production going.

But at a meeting on 8 May miners and steelworkers jointly agreed that only enough coal would be delivered to Llanwern to keep it on a "care and maintenance basis". A team of miners' observers would also be allowed to check that this agreement was honoured.

The steelworks need a certain amount of coal to keep the furnaces from cracking up and collapsing; they need

a lot more to keep full production. There has been a lot of speculation over the threat to number one blast furnace which is first at risk from cooling down. But number one blast furnace is due to be relined in any case and number three blast furnace is still unused.

### United struggle

The South Wales cokemen (who are part of the NUM) have refused to allow in more coal than is necessary to prevent damage to the plant at Llanwern. South Wales miners understand that not only do they need the support of steelworkers, they need Llanwern steelworkers.

But while management are telling steel workers that they can't afford to lose custom-

ers by cutting production customers are being turned away. Sheet metal is stored at Llanwern ready to be sent out, but because Llanwern has reached its monthly 'quota' under EEC regulation customers are going to Germany to get steel which Llanwern have got to sell them. Most steelworkers support the miners. The NUM have always supported the steelworkers' struggle to keep Llanwern and Ravenscraig open. Defeat for the miners' strike will be defeat for all workers but for steel in particular. The Tories will feel they can do what they like. South Wales will be an industrial desert.

Dave Reid spoke to Gary Finch  
(ISTC, Llanwern)

## WIVENHOE: blockade

THE BOSSES are trying to undermine the strike by bringing tons of coal in from abroad. In Essex, Wivenhoe docks has seen mass pickets.

Miners throughout the country have responded in the traditional manner with coach loads from Scotland, Wales, Yorkshire, Kent, etc, but the police have already indiscriminately arrested over 100 pickets.

The local population in Wivenhoe must be wondering what has hit them. Overnight a sleepy Essex town has been transformed into a battleground. However despite having a Tory parish council, there has been a great deal of sympathy for the miners.

### Local support

They have been appalled by the actions of the police, and by 20 ton lorries that are wider than the roads and

bigger than the houses. Locals have been serving up tea to the pickets.

During the course of the week, the police by sheer weight of numbers defeated even the right to picket, but with new arrivals the right to picket was re-established. The mood of the miners is determined and it is only a matter of time before the dock is closed. As many miners have commented, what we need is another Saltley Gates.

By John McKay  
(Basildon LPYS)

## Point of Ayr

ALEC THRAVES spoke to KEITH JACKSON, a striking miner from Point-of-Ayr colliery, North Wales, who was lobbying the Welsh TUC:

"CONTRARY TO the reports you see in the media, Point-of-Ayr colliery is far from working normally. More than 50% of our members are already out on strike and for the afternoon and night shifts less than a third of the men are turning up for work.

"During normal shifts we take up around 250 tubs a shift, but during the strike only 15 tubs a shift are coming up. Yet the Coal Board



At the Cardiff rally, 28 April. say the pit is working normally.

"The men on strike are fuming at the lack of leadership from the 'Reverend McKay', our area leadership, who has even refused to attend our weekly meetings because non-strikers are not represented! We are confident that with support from the rest of the

Photo: Dave Sinclair

labour and trade union movement this strike can be won. We collected over £500 at the Wales TUC and six of us who lobbied conference are now firm supporters of *Militant* and will be urging our mates to start getting involved as well because whatever happens in this dispute the struggle for a better future will continue."

## Solidarity

THERE WAS a marvellous response from working people in Newport on Saturday 5 May to a collection by miners from Bedwas and Nantgarw together with LPYS members and *Militant* supporters. £530 was collected in the full day with some workers throwing in £10 notes. Now food collections have started on the estates in Newport and a tour of the factories has been organised.

THE MINING town of Hucknall saw a demonstration of 500 and 600 striking Notts miners last week. There were miners and banners from Linby, Hucknall, Newstead, Bolsover, Annesley, Moorgreen and Calverton.

STRIKING Durham Mechanics walking from Ellington to Nottingham have had a warm reception on the way. Sandyford Labour Party raised £32, and car drivers stopped to give money.

The response from factories has been excellent. They are due to finish the march in about two weeks. Send any donations to DEMA Durham Mechanics, 26 The Avenue, Durham City.

THE RAIL union ASLEF has instructed its members that a special levy of 50p a week for four weeks is to be raised, to help fund a joint trade union campaign with an objective to ensure the future of Britain's railways. ASLEF have already donated £15,000 to the miners' strike fund, and the union recognises the threat to rail jobs if pits close.

OVER 4,000 people marched through Stoke on Trent on Saturday 5 May. The march, organised by North Staffordshire Trades Council in conjunction with the LPYS mobilised miners and their families and a wide range of workers and the unemployed.

ONE HUNDRED and eighty people attended a meeting at Darfield Miners' Welfare. The meeting was organised by Barnsley LPYS, Houghton Main NUM and Darfield Main NUM.

CARDIFF YOUNG Socialists collecting money for the NUM were threatened by a plain clothes policeman. Asked why he ignored someone selling socks out of a case a few yards away he said: "In our eyes yours is by far the worse crime".



Please send your comments, experiences and views about the strike and the industry to:  
1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

# Strikers £37 below poverty line

**FAMILIES WHO depend on Supplementary Benefit have no hope of a normal life doomed as they are to poverty-level payments. But for workers who take strike action like the miners the Tories have special arrangements designed to starve them back to work.**

Normally a family consisting of a man, wife and two children under 11 would receive £61.80 per week by way of benefit, including £13 a week child benefit. For a strikers' family they would receive only £24.75 a week including £13 child benefit. That's only £37.05 below the poverty line.

## Benefit cut

This staggering difference is because firstly benefit is not paid to a striker, secondly a wife is classed as a non-householder and finally £15 a week strike pay is assumed to be paid.

The fact that strike pay is not being paid makes no difference. Before the Tories changed the legislation strike pay was only taken into account if it was actually paid.

Strikers are also worse off because of the way final wage is treated. Normally a week's wage is taken to meet the requirements for a week but for strikers a week's wage can in some cases be taken into account for 2 weeks or even longer.

Strikers and their families get particularly harsh treatment when it comes to heating addition. For example they are denied any addition for central heating,

normally £2.05 or £4.10 depending on how many rooms you've got.

Extreme hardship is now normal for miners on strike. Even so, some cases I've seen stand out. One miner with a wife and two children received his first giro after four weeks on strike; it was for 15p, less than it had cost to post!

## Massive hardship

Another miner with a terminally ill wife has been refused heating addition even though £5.05 would normally have been awarded. One miner with the wife and baby who has to survive on £11.60 a week including child benefit.

Delay causes massive hardship. One miner with wife and two children had to wait until the seventh week of the strike before receiving any benefit; true he then received arrears for five weeks but that did little to recompense the weeks of privation the family had to endure.

In circumstances like these it's vitally important that CPSA members at social security offices build links with strikers not just to give advice but to make it clear we are not responsible for the rotten treatment strikers are getting. The hardship strikers and their families are enduring far from starving them back to work is hardening their resolve and welding communities together. Crisis centres are being set up, food collected and parcels distributed and as one miner put it. "There's no way we are going back now, we'll eat grass first."

**By Roger Castle**  
(CPSA DHSS SEC personal capacity, Chair North Notts CPSA)

On the right are amounts for your living expenses. The top amount is for you and your wife (if you have one). Any amounts below this are for your children, starting with the youngest.

Note: If you are a boarder, the top amount is for your boarding charge. Any amounts below this are for your other living expenses.

	£	p
	21	45
For any extra amounts shown because you or your wife are 80 or over because you or your wife are blind for extra heating costs for other extra expenses	Add on	
For your water charges	Add on	1 20
For your housing costs	Add on	16 36
For the money you have coming in each week	Total so far	39 01
For being unemployed without good reason	Take away	24 00
For any other amount given for the reason overleaf	This leaves	15 01
This is what you are entitled to each week	Take away	
For any benefit not paid (as arranged with you)	Total	15 01
For any Attendance Allowance paid with this benefit	Take away	15 00
This is the amount we shall pay you each week	Add on	0 01

Above is a social security return for a miner at Littleton colliery, Cannock. £24 is deducted because his wife is working, and £15 because it is assumed that the union pays strike pay (although it is known that the NUM never has). When asked by his building society how much he could pay on his mortgage, he replied "4p a month".

## The bank that likes to say 'NO'!

BANKS AND finance companies always say that if you have trouble meeting your credit agreements just inform them of your circumstances. You'll get a sympathetic hearing and

possibly special arrangements to help you until such times as you are better positioned to resume payments.

A Wearmouth miner (Durham Area) went to his

bank to see such help only to be told that the Manager considered anyone who 'deliberately impoverished themselves by taking industrial action' could not expect any favours from 'the Bank That Likes to Say Yes.' It was, said the manager, a decision of his own making.

A sympathetic worker employed by the TSB tells us, however, that he knows

of other branches where this discrimination against miners is going on in the North-east. All TSB branches in mining areas where this disgraceful trend is occurring should not look forward to continued patronage once the dispute is settled: blacklists can operate two ways.

**By Bob Stothard**  
(TGWU)

# The truth about coal stocks

**NORMALLY about 20 trains a day of 1,000 tons per train would supply a large power stations' total needs. The overtime ban saw train deliveries here reduced by about half, so upward of 10,000 tons per day have to come from the stack kept at the power station to make up this loss.**

When the Yorkshire area of the NUM went on strike, they won the support of the coal drivers and all delivery of coal by train stopped. The size of the coal stack was now shrinking by 140,000 tons per week.

The Central Electricity Generating Board was well prepared for industrial action by the miners. Funded by the government they had encouraged the miners to produce more and more coal in order that they could stockpile it, and then ironically use it as a weapon against the miners.

Coal reserves at power stations were so big that only the gradient of the stacks deemed how much coal could be stored. At large base load stations the stack levels can be as high as two to two and a half million tons of coal.

These have now been drastically reduced; some coal stock levels in Yorkshire are down to about 1 million tons—that is just over seven

weeks' supply. The CEGB had to have a rapid change of policy. The large base load stations had to be degraded if they were coal-burning in order to try and preserve the dwindling coal stocks.

So the very expensive oil-burning stations of Pembroke, Littlebrook 'D', Fawley and Isle of Grain were run as base load whilst the coal fired Yorkshire region, heavily hit by the dispute, now only supply peak demand.

## Picket oil-burning stations

The coal from the stacks is not very manageable. It is old coal that has been buried for long time. It is mainly very wet and when conveyed into the bunkers it looks like slurry. Drag feeders and mills become clogged with this wet coal. They have to be taken out of service to be unclogged causing wide fluctuations in the boiler control.

I suppose if the CEGB carries on being able to run its Yorkshire base load stations at one quarter their capacity the coal may last for months. If the NUM effectively picket the large oil burning stations things could really swing in their favour.

I am afraid that you cannot use my name. If it is found by the CEGB I could face the sack.

**By a Yorkshire North East Region Power worker**

# 'I've rejoined Labour'

**IT COULD be a long battle and public support from other trade unionists and our communities is essential for victory.**

Our wives have been marvellous and in league with the local Labour Women's Council the question of a support group and a food unit are vital.

We also need to approach power workers not only for their financial support but also to encourage our brothers in other trade unions not to switch off electricity for striking miners with young kids merely because they can't now pay the bills. One miner last week received his assistance from the social security—43p—that shows how the Tories are determination to stick the boot in Militant workers.

If people haven't seen over the last few years what is happening, they want their heads read; steel, schools, hospitals, public transport, public services they've all been cut. If we don't fight now there'll be nothing left and if the traditionally strong NUM is beaten then Thatcher will have the green light to attack further.

But we are going to win. There is already panic in the NCB and the Tory Cabinet



On miners rally Cardiff, 28 April

Photo: Dave Sinclair

but it isn't being exposed, they're too frightened to show fear and weakness because it will give heart to the rest of the movement to fight.

I joined the Labour Party just before this dispute for the second time. The first time I got disillusioned. It wasn't the socialist party I thought I was joining.

## Creating fear

Neil Kinnock is calling for a national ballot in unison with Thatcher. The Labour Party is our Party, it should call for a mass walk out, with rallies and MP's visiting the major factories.

If there's one thing I've

learned from this dispute it's that you have to get rid of capitalism, the 10% of filth that Thatcher represents. They put people on the dole to create the fear so that their friends in the big firms make large profits unchallenged.

I am personally glad that since the last delegate conference we are officially a national strike. Although I think the leadership could have been quicker off the mark to make us 100%, even if it meant a show of strength and the leaders marching us up the motorways. For though Notts is our biggest bug-bear, we need to support the good lads, the 10,000 or so who are on strike.

# History of bitter struggle

First of a two-part review by Rob Sewell of:—

**THE MILITANCY OF THE BRITISH MINERS**  
BY VL ALLEN.

V.L. ALLEN'S history of the miners provides a very useful background to the current struggle in the British coalfields. Not only does it describe the coal industry of the past century, but how the miners have fought against all the odds to defend themselves and their communities.

Although not a miner, Vic Allen—a lecturer in industrial relations at Leeds University—has a broad knowledge of the industry and its problems. "For the last 20 years I have identified myself with the causes of the miners in an increasingly complex manner." Through Will Paynter (Secretary NUM 1959-68) he met many leading figures in the union, and participated in the semi-secret Miners Forum ('Broad Left') established in 1967.

## Importance of coal

The book explains the colossal importance of coal—and the miner—to the British economy. By the beginning of the First World War coal production amounted to 10% of the value of British exports. At its peak in 1920, 1½ million were employed in mining, about 10% of the

total male labour force.

Between the wars the coal industry went into decline resulting in the loss of more than one third of its workers and nearly half of its pits.

The defeat of the 1926 General Strike broke the power of the miners union—the Miners' Federation of Great Britain—with each of its county (area) unions isolated and divided. There was widespread use of the blacklist, resulting in tens of thousands of unemployed miners tramping the coalfield for work.

The coalowners have always pressed to reduce wages to increase their profit margins, leading to national action by the miners in 1912, 1920, 1921 and 1926. After 1926 the miners were driven down with district wage agreements imposed and scab company unions created.

The latter throw-back

"MEN DESCEND as far as 3,000 feet below the surface... They travel as far as 5 miles from the pit bottom to the face by manriding facilities and on foot... They work coal seams as narrow as 18 to 24 inches... They have to be protected continually, vigilantly against floods of water, gas explosion, falls of rock..."

"Pneumoconiosis, emphysema, bronchitis and other respiratory diseases are common. The fatality rate is high. Between 1951 and 1971 more than 17,000 miners and ex-miners dies from pneumoconiosis alone... The cost of coal can never truly be calculated."

began in Nottinghamshire with the open capitulation of the Notts miners' leader George Spencer. "Spencerism"—company unionism—spread throughout Northumberland, Durham, Scotland, and S. Wales.

## Rear-guard

For a decade, the MFGB fought a rear-guard battle against the scab union with sit-in strikes and other protests. But by 1937 under the threat of a national stoppage—with four fifths of the members voting to strike—Spencerism was dealt a crushing blow. Never-



Durham miners at the graveside of T. Hepburn, the founder of the Northern miners union.

theless, non-unionism was to persist in the coalfields until nationalisation in 1947.

In 1944 amalgamation took place transforming the 'Fed' of 36 county unions into the National Union of Mineworkers.

The miners had raised the question of nationalisation of the industry before the First World War and in 1919 voted to take strike action to secure it. The Sankey Commission was established by the government to diffuse the situation.

Not until 1947 did a Labour government nationalize the industry—but without workers' control

and management and leaving distribution and supply in the private hands. The ex-coalowners also had their pound of flesh after bankrupting and bleeding the industry dry.

They were awarded scandalous over-compensation of £164,660,000 and a fixed income of £78,457,000 from former royalties!

## Demand falls

From nationalisation until 1957 the industry experienced a period of expansion. Production rose from 184.4 million tons to 210.6 million in 1952, which was

still less than demand. But after 1957, as coal was replaced by oil and natural gas, demand fell and contraction set in. Between then and 1963 Scotland lost 39% of its pits and S. Wales around 30%.

Nationalisation had taken 980 private mines into public ownership. But by 1963 they fell to 558 and five years later to only 317. In the 10 years up to 1968 half the workforce had disappeared. The mining industry had been dealt a shattering blow.

Next week:  
The union goes left.

# Law, war and strikes

SO FAR the government has drawn back from using legal injunctions against the miners. They know that at present it would only provoke a massive outburst of solidarity action.

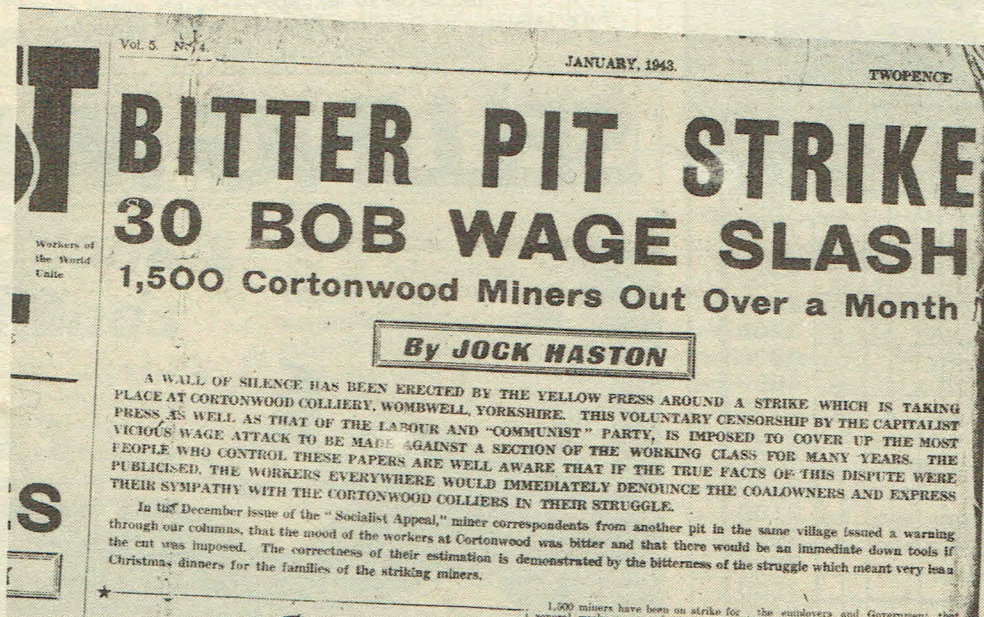
In the past the state has not been so reluctant. And they paid the price by being forced to eat 'humble pie'.

In 1941 the government attempted to use the notorious order 1305 of the wartime emergency laws to prevent strikes. The government attempted to prosecute 1,000 miners at Betteshanger pit in Kent.

## Hard labour

They arrested three NUM officials, the branch secretary being sent to prison for two months with hard labour, and an executive member sent to prison for one month with hard labour. Thirty five men were fined £3 or a month's imprisonment and nearly a thousand £1 or 14 days.

The punitive measure by Ernest Bevin (Minister of Labour) provoked a mass solidarity movement with miners organising outings to the court proceedings, wives and children attended as well as colliery bands; every miner pleaded guilty! The problem for the government was that the strike continued and as the strike was unofficial they and the National NUM had to go to jail to



A war-time socialist newspaper, Socialist Appeal, reports 1943 unofficial strike by Cortonwood miners.

negotiate with the Kent leaders.

Such was the strength of the strike, that apart from face-saving words the men won their demands but the miners would not go back to work until the leaders were released and the fines withdrawn. The Secretary for mines had to lead a delegation to the Home Secretary to get the men released.

## Fines ignored

The Clerk of the court reported that of the 1,000 men only 9 had paid the fines and the county court could only hold a few miners at a time and it would take several years for all the miners to serve their sentences. The court advised

that it would be unwise to enforce payment of mines. No more prison sentences were made under order 1305!

The miners showed tremendous combativity during the war to defend their wages and conditions. From January to March 1944 over 850,000 working days were lost in S. Wales and other coalfields against an industrial tribunal. One million days were lost in Yorkshire in March and April over a 'home coal' dispute.

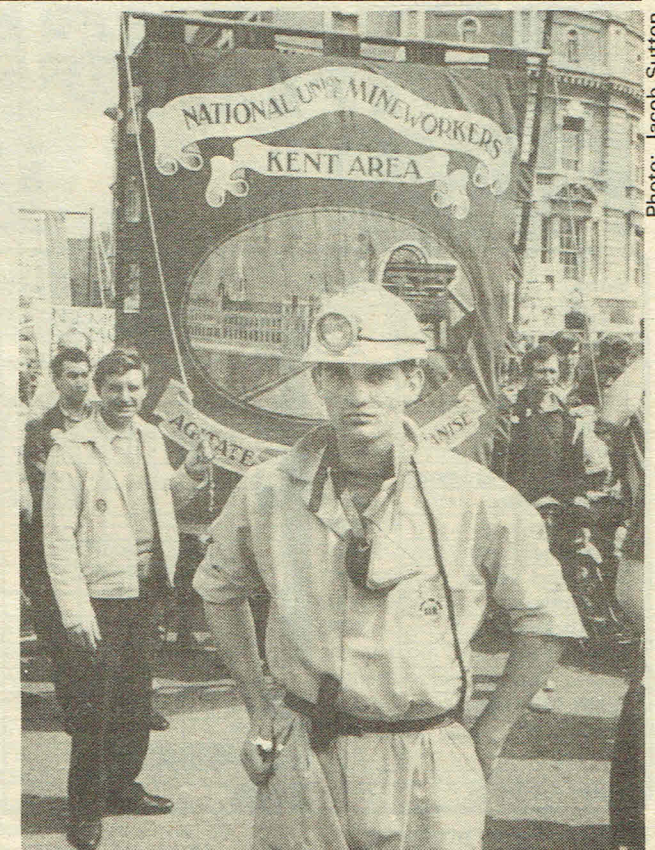
This at a time when all strikes were unofficial. Some of the official leaders complained of the activities of 'agitators' and in April 1944 Ernest Bevin pushed through his new defence law IAA which made incitement an

offence. There were angry protests from Labour Party left wingers and Aneurin Bevan moved in Parliament that the order be annulled.

## Living on volcano

Bevin replied that Britain had been living on a volcano. The number of days lost through strikers in 1944 was 3,714,000 (two thirds of which were miners) the highest since 1932, and the number of strikes 2,194 the highest ever. As usual when unions are officially restrained strikers tend to be take matters into their own hands.

By Dave Farrar  
(SOGAT '82)



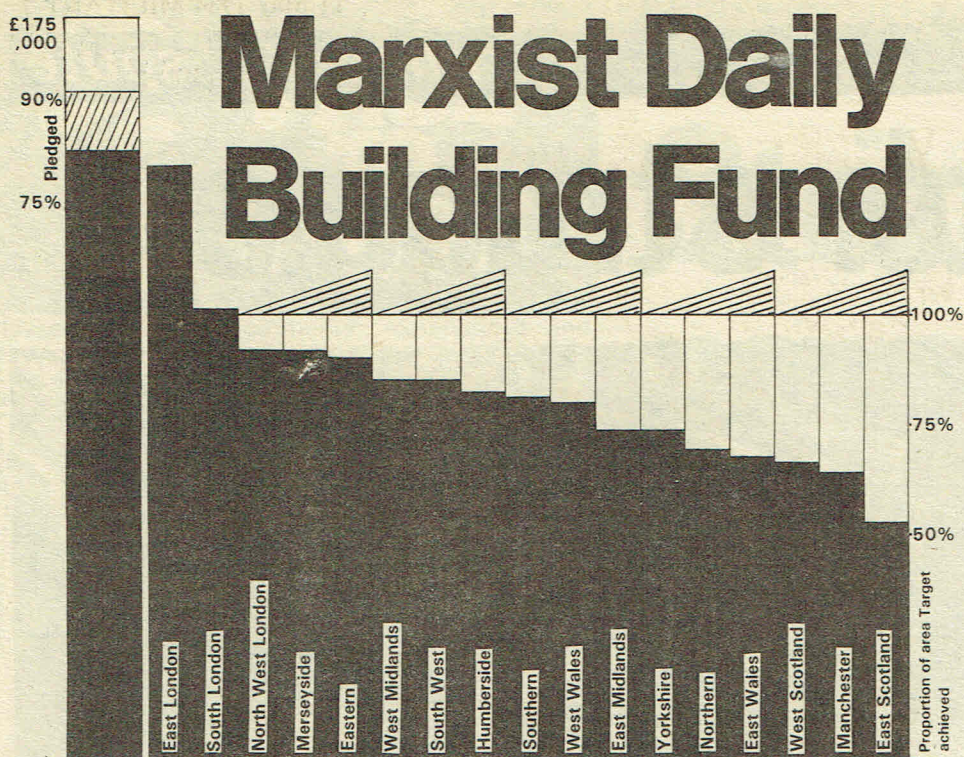
Kent miners on London May Day march last week.

# Victorian curfew

Two miners arrested outside Hobart House, the NCB headquarters, have been banned from within a half-mile radius of Victoria, London, as part of their conditions of bail while their case is adjourned.

Maurice Bryan, chairman of Snowdown NUM branch, said: "This is an

infringement of civil rights. Say my members want to go shopping in the Victoria area, or are travelling across London where you often have to use Victoria because of the major rail and coach station there. They have had a virtual curfew placed on them."



WITH US now having to raise a total of £175,000 we have revised the chart to show what each area needs to do. Even with the increased targets those areas at the top show they are quite achievable.

Although the money has not yet started to flood in we have had reports that it shouldn't be too long before it does.

Supporters in Hull, for example, have promised a further £400 as have supporters in South West London. Every area is determined to make their new targets and see a Marxist Daily become a certainty.

Our total is now £143,892 which leaves a further £31,108 still to go. With the deposit now handed over there is no pulling out. We are committed to finding the money and achieving our goal of new premises.

In every area appeals should be made to those

readers who have not yet made a donation to the fund. The special letters should be used in every trade union branch and Labour Party. There is a vast reservoir of support for a genuine Marxist daily to counteract the lies of the Tory press.

More and more workers can see through the filth churned out by Fleet Street and would welcome a paper that tells the truth and gives a clear political way forward. Even the newest reader should give something if they agree with our ideas. If the dedication and sacrifice of those who have already given, not just once but a number of times, is matched by those who have

not yet donated then we will not only reach the new target but shoot way past it.

Even at this stage of the campaign there is still a vast amount of money just waiting to be asked for. What better use is there for your money than to help to produce a fighting workers' daily.

This week's contributions include £100 E Short, East London; £100 Sam Porter, Nottingham; £100 Bob Sulatycki, West London; and £100 Michael Luff; Bradford. Derek Lewis, Peckham LPYS, gave £50. Iain Forbes, Croydon, gave £35 and A Winslade, Leyton, £30. Peter Thorley, Southend gave £20 and R and P Burleigh, Basingstoke, have sent in £5 "because of the obvious bias of the banks against *Militant*."

By Nick Wrack

# FIIGHTING FUND THIS WEEK: £1,772

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
Eastern	405		2700
East Midlands	246		3050
Humberside	77		1700
London East	170		3500
London West	163		2100
London South	76		2850
Manchester & Lancs	245		3700
Merseyside	424		4800
Northern	299		4050
Scotland East	117		2450
Scotland West	171		3300
Southern	330		4400
South West	106		2050
Wales East	76		2100
Wales West	33		1950
West Midlands	325		3800
Yorkshire	172		4500
Others	791		12000
<b>Total received</b>	<b>8224</b>		<b>65000</b>

THERE HAS probably never been a busier time for *Militant* supporters. Up and down the country activities have been organised; public meetings about the miners' strike, collecting food and money for the strikers' families as well as all the normal work.

Now, more than ever before, workers are taking a keen interest in events, looking to the miners as a means to remove Thatcher.

In this climate our ideas can find a massive response. It is essential that the opportunity to raise cash for our fighting fund is not missed.

Everywhere we go we should explain the support given by *Militant* to the miners and other workers in

struggle. Only our paper gives an accurate account of the dispute.

But more than that we put forward a political programme to defeat the Tories and change the whole system. Rob Matthews, a member of Bromsgrove LPYS, has given £20 after hearing miners putting our programme at a recent miners' meeting in Birmingham. He said that if we can win workers like these to our ideas we cannot fail.

Don't forget to take the Summer Draw tickets wherever you go. They should prove an easy fund raiser. Readers at Easington construction site near Hull have already sold 50 books!

Amidst all the activity we mustn't forget that we still

need the cash. On paper sales money can be raised with rattling tins. Collections can be organised at work explaining the role of our paper in support of the strike. If all the opportunities for raising cash are taken then our success will continue.

**THIS WEEK'S** contributors include: J Lamb, Edinburgh CPUSA £11.86; S Fairfax, Newcastle £10; C Haslam Newham £10; Mrs Thomson, Tranent £5; Mrs Arnold, Nottingham OAP £4; C Golby, Leamington Spa NGA £4; S Rous, Tunbridge Wells CLP £3.10; Tom I Hogan, CPUSA £5.05; Tracey Owen, Kent Miner's Daughter 20p; Knowsley NALGO £65; Pauline Cromer, Broadgreen LPYS £10; USDAW conference £278; APEX conference £179.

## ADS

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

CASSETTE TAPES with two issues of *Militant* (one each side). Available fortnightly. £3.50 per quarter, £13 for year.

Now available on cassette: all centre page articles from issues 668-692. Send either seven blank C-90 cassettes or £6.30 payable to 'Militant Tapes'. Also available on cassette, last two issues MIR. Send either two blank C-90 tapes or £1.80. All orders to: 'Militant Tapes', 26 Aston Terrace, Harehills, Leeds 8, or phone: (0532) 493440.

'Militant Turn Left for Workers' Unity and Socialism' T-shirts - £6.75 - white, yellow, navy, dark green. Small 32" - 34" chest Medium 34" - 36" Large 36" - 38" Extra large 40" - 42" All proceeds to *Militant* Fighting Fund. All cheques and postal orders with size and colour preference to R Harris, 2 Dukes Brow, Blackburn, Lancs.

SMASH PINOCHET BADGES Available from LPYS, 150 Walworth Road, SE 17. Cost 20p each or £1.50 for 10. All proceeds to LPYS Chile Socialist Defence Campaign.

WIMBLEDON Meal night to support the Miners. Saturday 5th May 7.30pm Price £1 waged and 75p unwaged. Near South Wimbledon tube. Telephone 543-3658 to book.

Congratulations to Derek and Bernie on their wedding from Leicester *Militant* supporters.

MILITANT PAMPHLET - 'The General Strike: 1926 and Now' by Lynn Walsh, (reprinted from *MIR* No 11, August 1976) Price 50p each or for 10 to 19 copies 40p each, and for 20 or more copies 35p each. Order your copy from Dave Backwith, 10c Anchor Close, Bear Cross, Bournemouth. BH11 9HY. Please make cheques payable to 'Militant Fighting Fund'.

'RAISE POLITICS at work! Buy a *Militant* mug.' £1.50 + 45p p&p from 56 Hartley Avenue, Leeds LS6 2LP. Cheques payable to: Chris Hill. All proceeds to FF.

Photographic dark room equipment, including envoy enlarger with Ross Redolux F4 Lens and all equipment needed for B/W developing & printing. £75 ono. All proceeds to Building Fund. Phone Keith 01 985 1442

Les and Chris Kuriata are pleased to announce the birth of their baby son Andrew, born Saturday May 5th.

WOMEN'S MINING PAMPHLET *Militant Miner* - 'Women Fight to Save the Pits' - printed and published by Aylesham Women. 70p (incl p+p) from Robbie Segal, 10 Westbourne Gardens, Folkestone.

WEST MIDLANDS MARXIST WOMEN'S WEEKEND SCHOOL Sat 19 May 11-6 Sun 20 May 11-4 at Melville Hall Westhill College, Bristol Rd. Sth., Birmingham. With discussions, debate on Positive Discrimination and workshops. Creche available. Costs £2 per day or 75p per day unwaged. Telephone 021-459-7903 for more details.

CPUSA CONFERENCE GREETING For a democratic union! Under members' control! Forward to socialism!

From: Sue Robers, Paul Cooper, John Ship, Roger Hawkes (all in personal capacity) CPUSA Ministry of Defence Central London Branch (delegate and observers)

## Meetings

For events in your area contact your local *Militant* seller.

BLACKPOOL: JOINT UCW, IRSF, SCPS CONFERENCE MEETING.

Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor, *Militant*) and union speakers. Tuesday 15, 7.45 pm at Black Central Library, Queen Street, Blackpool.

BLACKBURN Friday, 11 May at 7.30 pm, Trades Club, St Peter's Street, Blackburn. 'Support the miners'. Speakers: Lynn Walsh, (*Militant* Editorial Board), Peter Harris.

RAMSGATE: 'Save the Pits'. 7.30 pm, Monday 14 May at the Flowing Bowl pub, Newington, Ramsgate. Speakers: Dave Cable and Bob Perry (Kent NUM), Andy Gilbertson (Sevenoaks LPYS, personal capacity).

HACKNEY NORTH Support the Miners! Monday 14 May at The Old Fire Station, Corner Brooke and Leswin Roads, N16. Speakers: Kent miner, Keith Dickenson (*Militant* Editorial Board), and Susan Harrison (Chair Hackney North LPYS and CPUSA member). All Welcome!

TOWER HAMLETS 'The Miners Fight is our Fight'. Tower Hamlets LPYS Public meeting. Bethnal Green Town Hall. Tuesday May 15th 7.30pm. Speakers from NUM LPYS and Miners Wives Support Group.

CARDIFF: Tuesday 15 May, 7.30 pm at Central Hotel, Cardiff. Speakers: Ted Grant and Ian Isaacs (S Wales NUM Executive, personal capacity).

DONCASTER: Marxist Discussion Group Thursday, 24 May: 'Marxism and the trade unions'. Speaker: Jeff Bright. Discussions held at 7.30 pm, Corporation Brewery Taps, Doncaster.

SOUTHWARK: Brian Ingham plus Kent NUM speaker. On Thursday 17 May at 7.30 pm, Penrose Hall, Penrose Street, London SE17.

## SELLING *Militant*



Llanwern picket caravan.

Photo: Dave Sinclair

'THE MINERS' fight is our fight'. That was the headline of our paper in 1972 when we were only four pages.

Last week our headline was 'Back the miners'. The words may have changed but the message is still the same; all the resources of the labour movement have to be put behind the mineworkers.

Our sellers up and down the country are pulling out all the stops, whether its the

flying tea-urn in Leicester, the collection of food in East London or the DHSS advice leaflets in every coalfield. In all areas we are organising meetings and raising cash and in practically ever coalfield we have played our part in organising demonstrations in support of the miners.

Hundreds if not thousands of copies of *Militant* have been sold at these events. For instance over 100 papers were sold at a demo in Coventry which was called at three days notice. Hundreds of copies were also

sold at demos in London, Bradford and Cardiff.

We are asking all our sellers to make extra special efforts to step up sales as more and more miners are seeing our paper as a real ally in the struggle for their futures. Take the miners' message to the people! Spread the strike, spread the sales of our paper. Take out an order for your workplace (minimum five per week).

Contact: *Militant* circulation, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

# Reagan-not wanted!

**AFTER CHINA, next stop for the 'nuclear cowboy' is Britain and Ireland.**

Amongst others he will be meeting Thatcher for a tete á tete about world events, like when would it be best to invade Nicaragua, for instance?

Seriously, the whole of the labour movement in Britain has a duty to oppose Reagan's visit, to stand totally opposed to his policy of bloody intervention in Central America and continuing arms expenditure in the midst of world poverty.

All the signs are that the LPYS and CND's protest demonstration in London on 9 June is going to be massive.

Already CND in the North East have booked a train and are filling it very easily. The Northern Region LPYS are fully mobilising for Reagan's visit. On 2 June we will be holding an open-air rally in Eldon Square, Newcastle with speakers from Latin American solidarity groups, CND and the LPYS.

We will also be having bands and stalls, set up by groups opposed to Reagan's policies.

In the evening, in Newcastle Guildhall we plan to hold a debate with the Young Tories on 'Should Reagan Come to Britain'?

An appeal letter for the local labour movement has been produced along with a "Reagan-not wanted" petition for use on the streets.

Amongst the ideas for publicising the demo and protests is for the YS to hire a horse and cart and dress someone as Reagan and ride around Newcastle with a 'Cruise Missile' on the back (a cardboard one of course!)

All YS branches should now organise their own build up to the 9 June demo. The LPYS has a duty to mobilise the youth of Britain in international solidarity with the youth of Nicaragua, El Salvador and the whole of Central and Latin America.

By John Hird  
(LPYS National Chairman)

## Build support for June 9

BUILD SUPPORT for Reagan's 'welcoming committee' on 9 June in London. There will be a massive demonstration, starting off from Hyde Park at 12 noon, marching for a rally in Trafalgar Square at 2 pm. LPYS work in the build-up for this event is well under way. Already 200,000 leaflets advertising the demonstration have been distributed and another print run is being undertaken. Leaflets available free from Andy Bevan, National Youth Officer, The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

## Reagans's friends

FOR THE workers and peasants of the Yoloaiquin region of El Salvador, the name Ronald Reagan has an especially deadly ring to it. A newly formed army unit in the area,

which will no doubt continue the El Salvadorean military regime's reign of terror, executions and torture, has been named after the US president. The 70-strong 'Ronald Reagan Battalion' has good reason to choose such a name—its armoury consists mainly of US weapons (from the *Irish Times*, 30 April).

## 'We need a proper union . . .'

ON A CND demonstration in Dover recently, the LPYS collected £120 for the Kent miners, some of which came from a woman police constable. When I approached her, I suggested she put in her overtime money.

She snapped back that she wasn't getting any because the Police Federation was just an "officer's union and didn't represent the ordinary bobby".

In the discussion that followed she stated that she had two brothers and a father who were miners, and that she fully supported the strike.

We then discussed everything under the sun—CND, the Soviet Union, Liverpool Council, the attacks on Trade Union rights, and also conditions in the police force—she had a better class outlook than some people I know in the labour movement!

By Andy Gilbertson  
(Sevenoaks LPYS)

"We need proper union rights so that we can refuse to scab on strikes, and break up picket lines", she said as she bought a *Militant*. She also condemned the police presence on the Dartford Tunnel.

I asked if there were many coppers who thought like her: "There's only a few I know of, but I'm sure there are more who don't come out with it because they are afraid of victimisation."

I believe this makes it all the more vital that the movement takes up the call for full trade union and democratic rights for the forces, so we can break the rank and file from the reactionary officers, and involve them in the fight for socialism.



## LPYS raise miners' cash



LPYS members join a march through London on April 7 in support of the miners.

**LEEDS NORTH WEST** LPYS got an excellent response when they held a collection in the local shopping centre. We collected £44—but then the police moved us on. Undeterred we moved to the next shopping centre, where again the police moved us on, but not before we collected a further £60.

By Martin Dean  
(Leeds North West LPYS)

**HACKNEY NORTH** Young Socialists used the special LPYS appeal sheet and collected £19 on the doorstep. A further £18 was collected from shoppers outside the local supermarket. *Militant* supporters are now preparing for a readers' meeting on 14 May with a Kent miner, a CPSA member and Keith Dickinson, one of the *Militant* Editorial Board expelled from the Labour Party.

By Jackie Walsh  
(Hackney North LPYS)

**ERSKINE LPYS** in Renfrewshire have been holding street collections, collecting £25 in the first week and £31 in the second. As a result

many miners in the area offered to come to Erskine and canvass for the Labour candidate in the district elections.

By Rhona Smith  
(Erskine LPYS)

**KENT MINERS'** wives held an excellent meeting in Aylesham. Speakers included Terry Fields MP, speakers from the London Labour Party and CND, and Tracy Owen, a miners' daughter and Aylesham LPYS. Tracy told the meeting of the brilliant response miners received at national LPYS conference.

**IN SHEFFIELD, three members of Attecliffe LPYS held a collection outside a supermarket in Darnall. In a couple of hours they collected £48, and 11 tins of food. Pensioners and children were putting in money—even some local gypsies contributed. One woman told the LPYS: "My father was a miner, he was killed down the pit, so I know what its all about".**

**IN BRADFORD** on 29 April, Asian members of the LPYS and the Bengali Youth

Organisation gave support for the miners at the National Executive meeting of the Federation of Bengali Youth. First item on the agenda was a speaker from the Barnsley miners, Gary Ironmonger.

A collection raised £52, with an additional commitment from those present to collect money in their areas.

The day before, LPYS members along with two miners had toured the mainly Asian Leeds Road area collecting £20.

By Mushtaq Ahmed  
(Bradford North LPYS)

**IN SITTINGBOURNE** we haven't been surprised at the good response we've received from workers to our collections for the NUM. But I was astonished when I received a phone call from local Young Liberal, Michael Bulldock. He asked about the Labour Party's 50p levy, and offered to contribute 50p as well. So I'd like to thank this rather confused Young Liberal—after all, every 50p he gives will be used by the miners for the class struggle.

By Paul Ursell  
(Sittingbourne LPYS)

Photo: Paul Traynor

us?

about

what



Photo: Militant

Betteshanger Colliery, Kent, last year.

## What happened to the plan for coal?

**THE UNELECTED bureaucrats of the National Coal Board think they know all about how the NUM should be run. But their own record of planning the coal industry has been nothing to brag about!**

Between the 1950s and the 1970s, they reduced Britain's coal output from 210 million tons to 120 million and the number of miners from 700,000 to 270,000. That was when the British bosses thought they had an everlasting supply of cheap oil.

Then an oil crisis suddenly erupted. So the NCB decided the industry they'd been slaughtering must become immortal. They produced the "Plan for Coal" which promised guaranteed and safe jobs in mining until the year 2,000!

The plan forecast that by the mid '80s the CEGB would be burning at least 90 million tons of coal per year and the BSC 18 million.

Total demand could reach 150 million tons, it said.

But they reckoned without two small factors which they would have been warned of had they consulted the pages of *Militant*—a world recession, and the devastation of manufacturing industry by the British capitalists. So now the pits are only producing as much coal as in 1973—120 million tons—and they can't even sell all of that. Not quite according to "plan"!

Coal consumption by the Central Electricity Generating Board has actually dropped—to 70 million tons. MacGregor himself did his bit in reducing the BSC's consumption too. And for that he got to be chairman of the NCB. Now the Coal Board spend much of their time shouting about the 22 million tons of coal they have stockpiled.

So it's about-turn again! They plan to reduce what's left of the mining workforce by half; if they get away with that, it will be one-seventh of its size in the '50s—there's progress for you!

If they're so keen on

democracy, these butchers should stand for election! If the industry was run under workers' control and management, as *Militant* advocates, a board could be elected to run it in the interests of the miners and the whole working class. Such a board could even give away the stockpiles to pensioners and save thousands of lives in winter. That would also save the industry £200 million in interest charges.

But as the Coal Board's changing fortunes show, miners' jobs will never be safe within the chaos of a capitalist economy. Their fate is decided when private capitalists chose to leave their millions lying in the bank rather than investing them in productive industry.

The miners' interests will only be secured with the nationalisation of the big monopolies under workers' control and management—the only way to guarantee the reconstruction of industries, and the production of goods that workers need.

By Tony Cross

## Socialist strategy to save the pits

★ No pit closures; No selling jobs; No redundancies; For a fight to protect every single mining job.

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

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

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

★ For workers' control and management of the NCB with one third of the board elected by the mine workers through the unions, one third elected

through the TUC to represent the interests of the working class as a whole and one third appointed by a socialist Labour government.

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

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

★ For a democratic socialist plan of production aimed at meeting the needs of ordinary working people.

# Coal, Steel, Rail... Strike Mol trip

By Dave Evans  
(Liverpool No 5 NUR,  
personal capacity)

**THE MINERS' strike cannot be seen in isolation from the crisis affecting the whole of British industry. The Tory government—modern day Luddites—have conspired to decimate all our steel coal and rail industries, destroying hundreds of thousands of jobs and undermining the economy of the future.**

The fortunes of the miners are linked to those of all other British workers.

Decades of capitalist neglect, of failure to invest in unprofitable productive manufacturing industry reduced the competitiveness of all basic industries.

Motorcars, motorcycles, shipbuilding, machine tools, the engineering industry generally, all suffered decline. Outdated equipment was unable to produce as much as quickly as other European competitors, the US and Japan.

When the capitalist

crisis intensified in the '70s, worldwide, British industry suffered more than most. Since the vandals in the Tory government were elected in 1979, manufacturing output and jobs have been slashed even further. This lessened the "demand" for steel, which in turn reduced the demand for coal.

As a result of the cutback in steel, rail traffic in steel, iron and related goods fell from 25.1 million tonnes in 1979 to 15.9 million tonnes in 1983. This is equivalent to 9,200 trains a year (if every train is taken at 1,000 tonnes) or 177 a week. You can see how many jobs that has put on the line.

Coal traffic now accounts for 60% of all rail freight and about 80% of all coal movement is by rail. BR workers would be hard hit if MacGregor got his way.

The interconnection of the



Yorkshire miners march through Sheffield after Special conference in April.

## Steel- Stop Scholey



Miners support steel workers, 1980.

Photo: Militant



# Take back! Mobilise the Triple Alliance

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One final example is perhaps most significant at this stage. Reduction in coal and steel has meant reduced rail demand which has led BR to decimate the British Rail engineering works. Swindon would be the next on the chopping block if the Tories get their way. This in its turn would further cut the demand for steel and coal.

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Putting Steel, Rail and Coal together, the Tories are about to commit a Triple industrial mugging. Workers have their answer, in the union organisations—in joint local meetings, joint branches, joint planning and above all joint action... in the Triple Alliance.



Photo: Jacob Sutton



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## BREL — reasons for the carve-up



March against threat of closure of Swindon works.

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"This diabolical starvation of funds has led to freight traffic moving by rail collapsing to an all-time low. The percentage share of freight carried by train has declined from 42% in 1953 to 12.9% in 1979. This was by far the greatest fall in the whole continent. The total for all European railway freight rose from 433 billion kilometre tonnes in 1965 to 535 billion kilometre tonnes in 1977. It is almost as if BR occupied a different planet from the rest of Europe."

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plant look unviable they will do so in an attempt to make a closure or even a part closure.

South Yorkshire hasn't seen total closure of public firms on the lines of Shotton, Corby or Scunthorpe, just a steady erosion of its steel and engineering base. Employment in the steel industry in Sheffield and Rotherham has been more than halved in the last ten years from over 54,000 to just under 25,000.

Since the Tories came to power in 1979, 20,000 redundancies have been announced in BSC and public firms alike in South Yorkshire. Attercliffe, once one of Europe's premier steel producing areas is now just a desolate part of Sheffield with firms bulldozed down and others with "For Sale" notices hanging up outside.

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But another reason for the merger not going ahead is because of the joint union campaign around the Phoenix Two merger with leaflets and posters going round the firms explaining what

denationalisation would mean and the job losses it would entail at the end. A directive which still stands today. "No firm does another firm's work" has stopped one or two plants being closed.

But though this Phoenix plan may be shelved the BSC is still thought to be set to hive off its special steel plant into "independent free standing companies". The first local plant facing any challenge is BSC's Railway Products plant at Ickles Rotherham, recently at the centre of an abortive privatisation bid. Since the deal fell through, more than 170 redundancies have been announced.

Local steel unions are not taking these announcements lightly as they see them as a sign for the future. The emphasis of the campaign against the Phoenix Two denationalisation has been moved to a new fight against redundancies.

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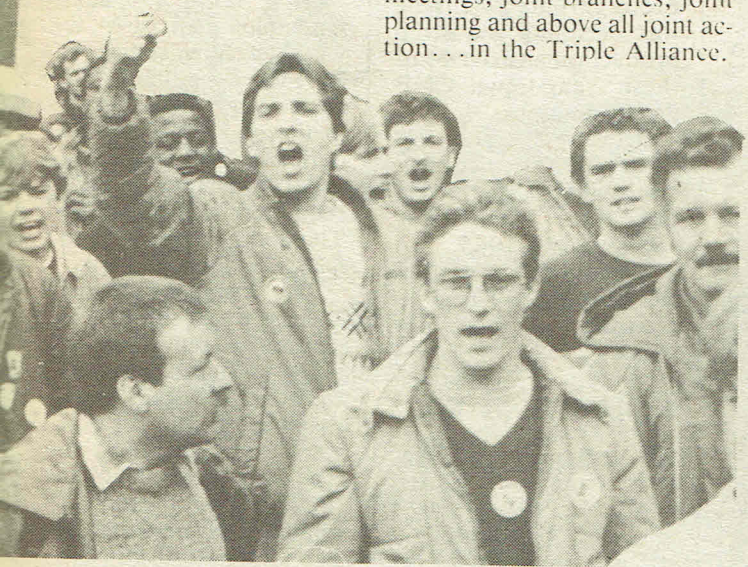


Photo: Jacob Sutton



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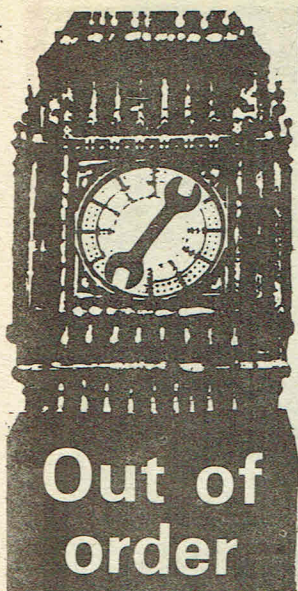
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## 96 years of struggle

96 years ago, workers struck internationally in favour of the eight-hour working day. That was the origin of May Day, which workers worldwide celebrated a couple of weeks ago with marches and rallies.

So on that day, as my contribution to May Day, I asked Tory Employment Minister what were the average hours worked each week by manual workers in British industry—in effect, how close had we got to the aim of the 8 hour day launched a century ago.

The answer came back from Alan Clark, Tory MP for Plymouth Sutton (who's a historian, and whose dad made a very good living out of studying "Civilisation"). Despite a fall from 48.5 hours a week in 1954, to 46.9 hours in 1964, to 44 hours in 1974, in October 1983 (with 4 million unemployed mind you) average hours were still 42.6 a week!

96 years after setting the target and 12 years after the TUC and the European TUC adopted the slogan of a 35 hour week, average hours worked in Britain are still well over 40. One of the single most important contributions union leaders could make to reducing unemployment would be to organise industry-wide action for the 35 hour week, as in West Germany.

If that was linked to a national minimum wage, releasing workers from having to work overtime to make ends meet, enthusiastic support could be won for such a campaign.

Then with Tory MP Alan Clark's stated interest in times past, we could dump him and his government into the "dustbin of history", and repay the debt this generation of trade unionists and socialists owe to those workers nearly a century ago who founded May Day as a "day of action" for the shorter working week.

By Dave Nellist MP

## West Germany

# Workers demand 35 hour week

I.G. Metall, with 2.6 million members is the biggest union in Western Europe. Membership in two regions, around Stuttgart and Frankfurt, have been balloting on whether to strike for a 35 hour week without loss of pay.

An 80% majority has already been achieved in Stuttgart for strike action. The union leaders' strategy is to use the union's power in these areas, where most of West Germany's motor plants are located to spearhead the battle.

This struggle is being watched by workers internationally. The policy of the European TUC is for a 35 hour week. Together with the demand in the USA for a 32 hour week, this is becoming more and more central to workers interests as unemployment rises and new technology is developed. The West European engineering unions federation has shown how they realise the international implications by deciding that any work transferred out of the country in a strike breaking attempt would be blacked.

### Towards conflict

The West German employers, backed up by the right wing Kohl government are viciously opposing the workers demands. Some of the weaker-willed union leaders are signalling that they are prepared to compromise, but employers have made no move towards them. So the leaders now find themselves propelled towards conflict.

A vote for strike action could possibly evoke a conciliatory move from the employers, whose order books are fuller than at any time for three years and with the world economy in an upswing they do not wish to lose out to their rivals in the export market.

On the hand, any reduction in the working week could not be confined to IG Metall members. The printers union has joined IG Metall in lightning strikes and also has been balloting its members for strike action. 50% of the members of the West German Union Federation—the DGB—are in unions whose policy includes the demand for the 35 hour week.

### World scale

A look at West Germany's economy shows the importance of this struggle on a world scale. The *Financial Times* went so far as to suggest that if a strike takes place and last for any length of time it could cut across the economic upswing which has begun in West Germany. This in turn, in their opinion could abort the economic upswing

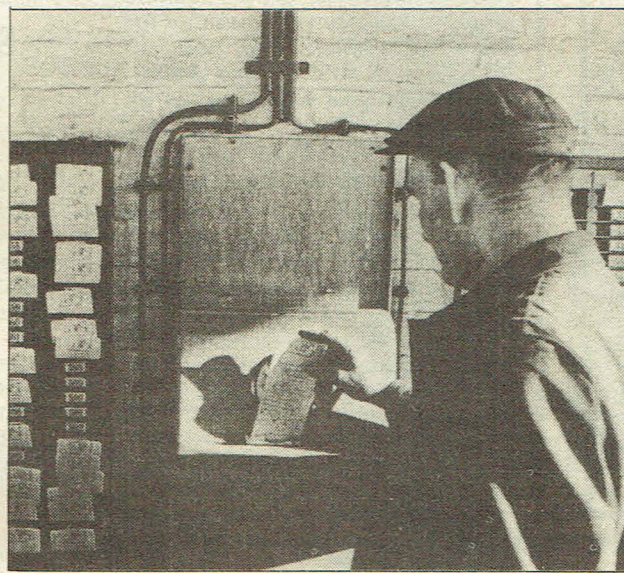
By John Throne

which is gaining in Western Europe as a whole.

West Germany is the largest economy in the world after the USA, USSR and Japan. It is the second largest exporter after the USA and the most important economy in Western Europe. It is also more closely linked culturally, socially and economically with Eastern Europe than any other capitalist country.

### Eastern Europe

The workers in East Germany who get West German TV will be following events. The peace movement took place and in fact continues in both East and West Germany; industrial battles now developing in West Germany will raise hopes and inspire workers in Eastern Europe as well as in the capitalist world. In the first decades of this century the German working class was the most developed in the world. Due to inadequate leadership they suffered defeat after defeat as their revolutions of 1918, 1919 and 1923 were de-railed.



A metal worker clocks on. Fewer hours means more jobs.

In 1933 Hitler came to power and the most serious defeat of all was inflicted, with the workers organisations atomised and the road opened up for the Second World War. The war ended in yet another defeat for the German working class as they were divided into East and West Germany. The great German proletariat of the early 1900's was severely weakened.

However, this was not a straightforward process. In East Germany capitalism and landlordism were wiped out and the economy was centrally planned, but along with this gain came the dead,



A demonstration by IG Metall members in Hamburg.

repressive weight of a Stalinist bureaucracy. In the post war years both economies East and West forged ahead and the working class was strengthened numerically and organisationally.

### Economic gains

Along with this positive development however, illusions were increased in West Germany's workers in the possibility of reforming capitalism as workers made economic gains. In the East too the economic gains of the centralised planned economy also lent a certain stability to bureaucratic rule.

peace are over because neither the Stalinist bureaucracy in the East nor West Germany's capitalist class can maintain the steady growth in living standards of the past few decades.

A look at economic developments in West Germany shows the thinking of the employers in the present dispute. In the years 1950-1960 real GNP rose on average by 7.8% per. year. 1960-73 saw this rate of growth decline to 4.4%. And 1974-83 saw it plummet even further to 1.7%. From 1979 to 1981 there was declining industrial production and in two of these years the GNP declined.

Between 1950 and 1978 the current account deficit was in the red on only three years—1950-1962 and 1965. In 1979-1980-81 it was in the red each year. The West German 'miracle' had ended.

### Investment key

Investment held the key to both the 'miracle' and its decline. In the 1960's 20% of GNP was ploughed back into capital expenditure. In the 1970's this fell to 14.5% and in 1982 it was only 10%. West Germany has now been pushed from second into 3rd place behind the US and Japan in utilisation of the new high technology.

1982 and 1983 offered some signs of hope to German capitalism. The current account went into the black again in these 2 years. 1983 saw 1.3% growth in the GNP. And the employers look to 1984 for 2.5% and 3.0% growth and a continuation of the rise in profits. They anticipate filling up their Swiss bank accounts after the leaner years just gone by and also they consider possibly using some of this increased surplus to fight back against their competitors through the introduction

### Calm is ended

The decades of relative calm and so-called social



of more advanced technology.

The working class, however have their own ideas as to what should be done with this increased surplus. During the years of crisis from 1979 to 1982 workers living standards were cut. Unit wage costs between 1979-83 increased more slowly than its 13 main competitors rising 15% as against 29% on average. Unemployment rose to where it now stands at 10% i.e. 2.4 million. The social wage was cut as a projected DM 50 billion deficit in 1983 in government borrowing was reduced to DM 40 billion. The plans are to cut it to DM 37 billion in 1984.

The struggle over the 35 hour week with no loss of pay represents the German working class fighting to regain what they have lost in the past few years. Reduction of the working week to 35 hours would create 1.1 million jobs (Institute for Economic Research in Berlin) The one hour reduction in France saved 150,000 jobs according to the CFDT.

### Full support

German workers must get the full support of the labour movement internationally for their struggle. The IG Metall leadership should cease any talk of compromise and mobilise into action its full membership in the confidence that this support is forthcoming.

Victory on the 35 hour week with no loss of pay for IG Metall members would open up the way for a 35 hour week for the West German working class as a whole and would raise the struggle for this essential step forward to new heights all round the world.

# May Day battles in Santiago

**THE FOLLOWING eye witness report of May Day in Santiago, Chile, has been sent by a correspondent on the spot:**

DESPITE attempts by the Pinochet regime to divert attention away from May Day by declaring a two-day public holiday, the May Day assembly in Santiago was the biggest event since November 1983. Over 250,000 workers and youth flooded into the O'Higgins Park to attend a rally organised by the CNT.

It was yet another display of the overwhelming opposition to the regime from the workers, youth and middle classes. Once again it erupted into a battle involving thousands of youth and police. Santiago witnessed on 1 May the biggest battle this year in which the youth displayed a heroism and determination to struggle which places them as the shock troops of the Chilean revolution.

The rally started peacefully. The underground trains and buses were packed on route to the park. On the tubes an uncanny silence was to be noticed as they passed through the stations most distant from the O'Higgins Station.

No one exactly knew who could be trusted or if those

present were to attend the rally. However, as the trains arrived at the station and entire carriages stood up to get out, the atmosphere was transformed. The platforms were filled mainly with youth, obviously heading for the park. A few more adventurous demonstrators began clapping. Then a few began to chant anti-government slogans.

Within seconds thousands were clapping and joining in as they walked from the tube stations. They began with, "It's going to fall" repeated over and over again and then for "General strike now".

For more than four hours thousands marched through the park gates carrying the main party banners and placards, overwhelmingly demanding an immediate general strike. As the rally assembled an almost festival-like atmosphere began to build up.

Different sections of workers marched in together, having assembled in the side streets, trade by trade and group by group. Transport workers, textile workers, bank clerks, com-

mercial clerks and the various professional associations marched in. This is a new development. It signals the beginning of a movement amongst the industrial workers, decisive to toppling the regime.

The festive atmosphere was further added to by the folk groups which the organisers had arranged. Significantly the one which received the most cheering was the song calling for a "Paro Nacional" (general strike).

## Police attack demonstration

However, at about 12.30 the festive atmosphere was transformed. Those in the park saw by the gates the unmistakable signs of tear gas rising over the park gates. It was clear the police had attacked some of those making their way to the demonstration. Immediately, the 'Iron-sides' of the Chilean movement left the rally.

Thousands of youth flooded from the official rally to do battle with the hated "pacos" (riot police). From the park gates the youth assembled with flags, banners, clenched fists, the majority wearing handkerchiefs around their faces to protect themselves from the tear gas which burns both throat and eyes.

The police were grouped together under a bridge in full riot dress, equipped with machine guns, riot shields, batons, tear gas and water cannon.

At first the youth appealed to the police. They began by chanting "Carabineros, listen to us for once, our fight is not with you but Pinochet". Time and again this was tried as it is on every day of protest or demonstration.

However, for the police to break from the grip of the officers and come to the side of the demonstrators it would have to be clear that the revolution was likely to be successful and that they wouldn't therefore have to face the discipline of officers having mutinied against them. This was clearly not the case on this May Day demonstration in Santiago.

The police opened fire with the tear gas canisters. At first the crowd ran back to the park. But the police failed to advance and this was taken as a sign of weakness by the demonstrators. When the police failed to break ranks, the youth decided that they must fight. They rapidly regrouped but in even greater numbers.

They began arming themselves with anything that they could get hold of. Stones, bottles and bricks



Photo: Militant

A section of the demonstration in London last September, marking the tenth anniversary of the coup in Chile.

were taken rapidly. To increase the supply, paving stones and concrete slabs were broken up and made into missiles.

## Clenched fists

Under a hail of tear gas canisters the youth began to advance pelting the police with the weapons at their disposal. The police again replied with yet more tear gas and pellets fired from their guns. The youth temporarily dispersed to the sides but quickly reassembled to the chants yet again of "it's going to fall, it's going to fall", thousands of clenched fists shaking in the direction of the police.

The police brought out the water cannon. On two occasions the crowd split in two and spread to the sides to avoid the force of the hoses. (The third attempt at this was to be different as we shall see). After the cannon had passed, the crowd yet again regrouped and advanced further, as if a disciplined army.

Those in front kept the police under a constant barrage of stones. All took up a new and significant chant, "you will see when the workers have the power". Over and over again it was repeated as the youth now ran confidently forward under the flags of the Young Socialists and Communist Party.

The police had on this occasion met with more than they had bargained for. They eventually began to retreat into a side street. It was a moral victory for the youth who, although advancing, had sacrificed many under the hail of pellets and canisters.

Over 100 were reported officially injured, the figure in reality being much higher. Those who fell after being hit by teargas canisters were helped as much as possible by the crowd. No one if at all possible was left to be collected by the "pacos".

Groups of youth, entirely unknown to each other, collected the wounded and carried them away from the battlefield. Some cars from those passers-by sympathetic to the demonstrators took the injured home. Those

who simply fell over whilst running were helped by others.

For the third time the police brought the water cannon in an attempt to beat the advance of the youth. This time it stalled in the street. One of the unelected and unappointed leaders of this battle shouted "advance" and thousands followed forcing the water cannon back into the side street. Another small but moral victory was scored.

For more than four hours the youth battled with the police. Throughout they tried to ensure that this struggle didn't take the form of vandalism. Youths who out of desperation or anger threw missiles at glass street signs or windows were immediately stopped by the rest of the crowd.

## Unrestrained heroism

At one time the crowd was battling near some small shops and banging on the steel shutters. To avoid breaking the windows they moved the battle away to another sector of the street.

The crowd began to disperse as the police withdrew. About a thousand however couldn't get through as the police then moved out onto the street again. Most were forced back into the park only to be chased across the park by bus loads of "pacos" firing more teargas as they chased them. Most however were able to escape through the gates at the back of the park.

Officially the final count of this battle was over 100 serious injuries and over 120 arrests. Of those arrested not one was over 28, the vast majority being 15-25.

It was another of the battles against the dictatorship which form part of the unfolding Chilean revolution. Within it, workers and youth are looking for a clear socialist alternative. 1 May, 1984 in Santiago must be recorded as an event where the youth above all demonstrated a willingness to struggle in a display of almost unrestrained heroism.

Photo: Dave Sinclair



A Russian ship unloads coal within sight of striking miners at Newport dock, South Wales. This week a delegation of Polish trade officials are visiting Britain hoping to take advantage of the strike to tie-up long-term contracts to sell Polish coal.

## No solidarity from Eastern Europe

WHILE THE leader of the Stalinist bureaucracy, Chernenko, sent out fraternal Mayday greetings to the workers of the world from Moscow, Stalinist riot police attacked Solidarity marchers in Poland.

On the same day South Wales miners' pickets at Teignmouth docks in South West England were angered to see their May Day marked by the arrival of a Polish ship laden with scab coal.

Dockers organised in the TGWU have blacked coal here, but stocks are being

unloaded by non-union casual labour. The miners are undeterred and continuing the picket, while also keeping a watchful eye on Exmouth, Plymouth and Bideford docks.

Workers will be disgusted at this scab coal, of very low grade incidentally, from a so called "Communist" country. If the governments of Russia and Eastern Europe were really socialist as they claim, coal would automatically have been blacked during this vital strike as an act of interna-

tional workers solidarity.

But the rulers, whether military as in Poland or civilian as in Russia are rich pampered bureaucrats whose lives are miles away from those of the working class. This bureaucratic clique are as scared of organised labour as the capitalists of the West, and with very good reason.

The Stalinist elite are nothing but a huge burden on the backs of the planned economy. The wealth is created by the workers and they are demanding the running of society.

The tremendous growth of Solidarity in Poland from 1980 until its crushing in 1981 shows the dangers facing Stalinism. Next time workers in Eastern Europe move they will mobilise to end the rule of the strike-breaking anti-working class bureaucracy.

By Sean Brogan

(Chairman Teignmouth Labour Party, personal capacity)

## Swansea '84 Labour Women's Conference

# Socialist campaigns will build mass organisation

By Margaret Creear  
(Rochdale Women's Council)

**THE LABOUR Women's Organisation conference, taking place on 11-14 May in Swansea, will be set against the background of the miners' strike.**

Undoubtedly the conference will be inundated with emergency resolutions calling for full support for the miners. *Resolutions 114 and 115*, which call for the democratisation of the nationalised industries, will take on a new urgency in the face of MacGregor's butchery of the steel industry and his attacks on the miners.

Labour women will be inspired by the role which has been played by the miners' wives. Although the women in the mining communities have always supported action by the miners, this time they have organised and played an active role in strengthening the struggle.

This underlines the enormous changes taking place within the consciousness of women. They are not only moving into action when the labour movement takes a resolute stand, but are emerging in increasing numbers from within their own ranks, taking up the initiative to fight as we have seen in countless strikes in the public sector, the many sweatshops and within industry.

The burning need therefore is to build a Women's Organisation (WO) that will act as a pole of attraction to these women through socialist ideas and class demands.

The conference agenda reflects the anger of women at the increasing attacks on their jobs and conditions by the Tories. Resolution after resolution catalogues the problems that we face in every aspect of life. But three major questions emerge from this—why are these attacks taking place? Why has the labour movement leadership responded in the way that they have? And how can the fightback be waged successfully?

### Attacks on women

Several resolutions, for example resolution 1 from USDAW and resolution 2 from GMBATU on the Tories' Employment laws and women workers, call in general terms for campaigns to publicise the particular problems faced by women. Certainly the material produced by the labour movement should include specific examples of the way Tory attacks affect women. But as a delegate to the one day WO conference in December last year pointed out; the movement is not short of information and indictments of capitalism. However, what was the point of spending vast sums of money making sure every worker knew about the dangers of the Tories' employment laws, if, as with the NGA dispute, when the crunch came the leadership of the TUC refused to take on the Tories with all the strength of the movement?

Of particular importance for women workers is the battle against low pay. Several resolutions call for the need for a campaign of unionisation amongst sweatshop, low paid and home-workers and the need for a minimum wage. Many women in small firms and in the public sector only too well recognise the need for trade union solidarity to win these demands. The WO should make it clear to the labour leadership that they have no time for the type of equivocation shown over the NGA and the miners' dispute, but instead want all the resources of the movement mobilised, not only to beat the Tory laws or to win the basic rights at work, but to ensure the defeat of the Tory government itself, as outlined in *resolution 16*.

There is obviously a desire to fight the Tories but unless the WO understands why these attacks are taking place, then it will be impossible for us to work out a strategy to fightback. The WO must recognise that the decline of the capitalist system is dictating the attack on wages, jobs and conditions and cuts in public expenditure. The reality is that demands such as that from Basildon Womens Council in resolution 45, which calls for the "government to accept its responsibility to women", will fall on deaf ears.



Women workers are coming to the fore in the fight against the Tories. Above, miners' wives join last weeks May Day rally in Barnsley.

Conference should support those resolutions which link the fight against the Tory attacks to a counter offensive against the capitalist system itself. Resolutions such as *number 12* on low pay from Liverpool West Derby, all the resolutions on YTS, *numbers 55, 57* on the NHS, and *numbers 88, 90, and 91* on Child Care do this.

Most resolutions to conference call for better facilities and more opportunities for women. For example, the resolution from the AUEW calls for more female apprentices in the engineering industry, and there are several demands calling for encouragement for women to take up training etc. But this is only one aspect of the problem. The Womens TUC has already pointed out that women who are already trained cannot get jobs, despite their skills. They give the example of the catering and cleaning industry where 1 in 25 workers have teaching qualifications, 1 in 12 nursing qualifications and 1 in 6 clerical or commercial qualifications. Of course, we support more training provisions for women, but they must have jobs to go to.

**Womens conference  
Militant Readers Meeting  
Saturday 12 May, 7.30  
At the  
St Phillips Community Centre  
(opposite the Quadrant Bus  
Station, 300 yards from  
Brangwen Hall.  
Speakers: Terry Fields MP  
and Christine Sullivan  
(COHSE nurse and miner's  
wife)**

It is ironic that this call comes from the engineering section—if any industry illustrates the incapacity of capitalism to develop society, it is engineering. This industry has been starved of investment, where the bosses prefer to accumulate interest in their bank accounts rather than invest in new equipment. A fifth of manufacturing industry has collapsed under the Tories.

There are demands for a minimum wage, to be policed by the labour movement with the nationalisation of any firms refusing to pay the rate. Yet it is the public sector, locally and nationally, who are amongst the worst paying employers. The health service and public sector depend on the situation in the manufacturing industry. If this is allowed to remain in the hands of the bosses the public sector faces a grim future.

While continuing its support for the fight against the cuts in local services, such as the fight being put up by Liverpool City Council, the WO cannot avoid addressing itself to the problem of who controls the economy

and how society can be taken forward.

It is therefore essential that the conference debates in full *resolution 28* on **unemployment**, and in particular *resolutions 112 and 113* on **economic policy**. These offer a clear way forward on the basis of ending the capitalist system by taking over the top 200 monopolies and finance houses and building a socialist society.

The discussion on organisation of the WO will again be a major feature of the conference. The National Women's Committee will attract criticism for its abandonment of last year's conference.

### Conference organisation

What's more, this year for the first time organisations have been asked to composite by post, using a model composite sent out by the Women's Committee, which is often badly drafted and include issues not directly related to one another. The organisation has not been given any possibility to communicate with one another to work out an alternative composite or discuss the model one sent out.

The conference is also to be run to a new standing orders, which has not been approved by conference, and to which there are various amendments.

However, while it is important that we voice our disagreements to the procedures which have been adopted, the conference must not be derailed by organisational wrangles. We must still be able to discuss the important issues facing working class women.

Delegates should support the resolution calling for a special conference to draw up rules for the WO. There are many anomalies, particularly in relation to the provision for women's sections and councils which need resolving, as well as the standing orders which are so vague they can be interpreted in different ways in different regions.

It is the implementation of socialist policies which will advance women and which will build the WO into a mass organisation. For that reason delegates should support *resolution 140* which calls for places on the National Women's Committee to be elected annually at the various regional conferences. This is vital if the leadership is to keep pace with events and changes in the WO. It also emphasises the need to rebuild regional and local activity, which would be one of the major tasks of the National Women's Committee members along with the regional women's committees.

We all know of course that women can be discriminated against and neglected within the labour movement itself. A campaign must be waged to change this. But this must be done through political explanation and discussion and through participation in campaigns. We cannot attempt to by-pass this

prejudice against women—based on the belief that it is insurmountable—by circumventing the need to involve men, particularly as united action will be necessary to change society and emancipate women; or by trying to enforce regulations, where voluntary agreement would not be forthcoming, through changes in the constitution and standing orders, such as through compulsory inclusion on short lists or speakers on platforms. We need for example to convince the movement of the value of women on the one hand, and on the other to develop the confidence of women to participate in the movement.

The resolutions calling for the transfer of five resolutions also fall into this category. Both the women's section and the LPYS suffer from this disadvantage that unlike affiliated organisations they don't have the right to submit a resolution or enter amendments to Labour Party conference. This should be rectified and delegates should support resolutions which demand this right.

The major debates will again be around the transfer of resolutions and the election of five women's places on the NEC. Delegates should oppose the transfer of the election of five seats from the women's conference.

Instead, we should adopt those tactics in the movement which will make sure that the WO has a direct voice on the NEC without allowing our demands to be used to initiate a major restructuring of the NEC which—given the left doesn't have a clear majority—would almost certainly be used to consolidate the grip of the right. Their policies and activities would not be in the interest of women workers.

### Parity with LPYS

Therefore, for the time being, delegates should support resolutions calling for parity for the women's organisation with the LPYS. This call would be supported by the whole movement as it rectifies this anomaly, but would simply add one seat to the NEC without implying a major reorganisation.

These resolutions will give the women's organisation a direct voice in the movement. But this voice must be used to demand socialist policies—organisational changes alone will not advance the position of working class women. If the policies put forward by *Militant* (which are well represented on this year's agenda) are adopted then the WO can turn with confidence to take up campaigns alongside working class women. It would become a mass women's organisation to which working class women, such as the miners' wives, would not only automatically turn to in their immediate struggles, but would also join in large numbers in order to fight for a permanent solution to their problems by joining the fight to build a socialist society.

# Liverpool Labour victory

"VOTERS IN Liverpool took a huge step to the left in yesterday's local elections giving Labour a clear seventeen seat majority on the city council. It is seen as a massive vote of confidence in Labour's confrontation over spending on local services." So the *Liverpool Daily Post*, no friend of the Labour Party, recorded the local election result.

It went on to say, "Opposition members were astonished at the size of the support. They had hoped that a year which saw the abolition of the Lord Mayor, a growth of the *Militant* Tendency on the city council, unpopular education reorganisation proposals and the introduction of a budget which could be £190 million outside the government target, could have helped their case. The size of the triumph was a major boost to Labour Party confidence, and an enormous 'thumbs-up' from the electorate over their fight with Thatcher and her government".

The turn-out was a record 50%. That's 10% higher than last year. It brought a further increase in Labour's vote. In 1982 Labour got 54,000 votes, in 1983 77,393. This year it soared to over

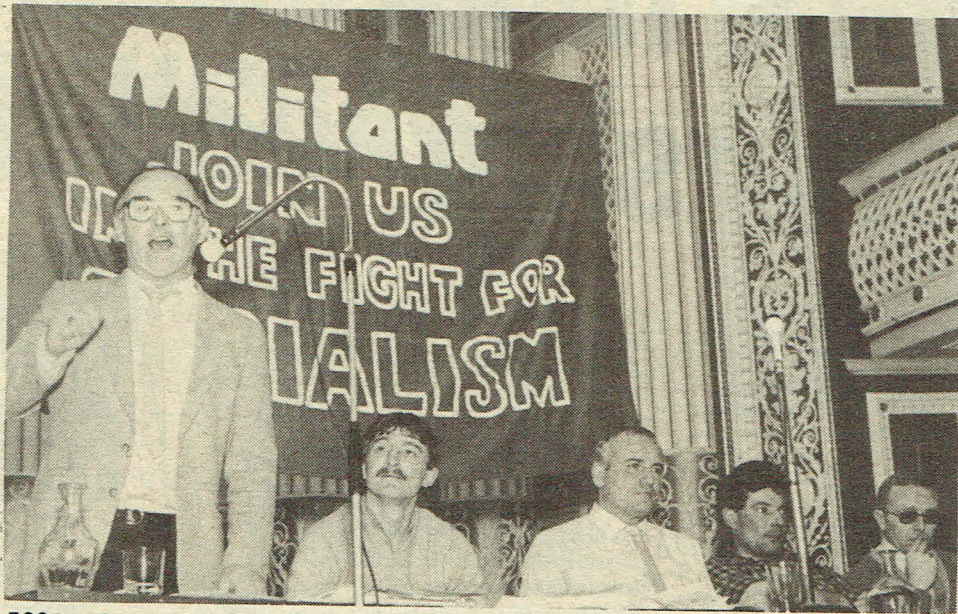


Photo: Jacob Suttton

500 people attended the Liverpool *Militant* rally on 9 April in recognition of *Militant's* role in the council's determined stand. Left to right, Peter Taaffe, *Militant* Editor; Steve Sullivan, Sutton Manor NUM; Tony Mulhearn, newly elected city councillor; Derek Hatton, Deputy Leader; Terry Fields MP.

90,000. In 33 of the 34 contested seats Labour's vote increased. Labour held all fourteen it was defending. Seven seats were won from the Liberals and Tories.

## The opposition

Five of the eight Tory seats were lost, including the deputy leader's. The *Liverpool Echo* pointed out how the Liberals were also severely embarrassed—they gained four seats from the Tories, but lost six to Labour. The SDP, fighting seven seats as the Liberal/SDP Alliance was wiped out.

Liberal votes did increase

in more affluent areas of the city—mainly at the expense of the Tories. This indicates the polarisation of the middle class under the barrage of media propaganda. In Grassendale ward there was an unheard of 52% turnout and the Liberals took the seat from the Tories.

The position on the 99-seat council is now that Labour hold 58 seats, the Liberals 28 and the Tories 13. The Tories have the lowest number of councillors on record. Twenty years ago six out of eight Liverpool MPs were Tory and they controlled the city council. They don't have one MP in the city today. Even more ir-

relevant is the Communist Party which stood candidates against well-known Labour left wingers in a deplorable show of sectarianism. Their share of the vote dwindled from 0.28% last year to 0.13% this year. In one ward they gained just thirty votes.

## Militant supporters

Despite all the press and TV hysteria another seven *Militant* supporters were elected to the council this year. They include Tony Mulhearn, president of the District Labour Party, who received the highest Labour

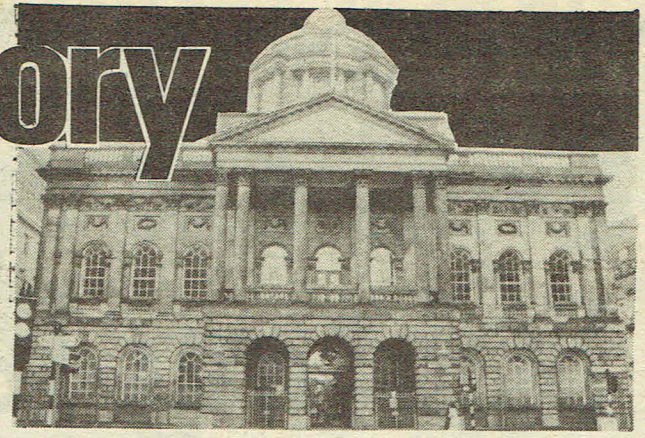


Photo: Militant

vote in the ward for many years and Felicity Dowling, secretary of the DLP, who increased Labour's vote in Speke by over a thousand.

In Gillmoss, represented by three of the Labour renegades, Tony Rimmer, standing on a platform of full support for the city council, increased Labour's vote by over a thousand.

In Anfield, *Militant* supporter Jackie Crowley won the seat from the Tory education spokesperson Myra Fitzsimmons, increasing the Labour vote by 700.

In Broadgreen constituency where Terry Fields won the parliamentary election last year the local election

results showed one of the highest swings to Labour in the whole country. Our vote increased yet again in all wards—up from 11,060 last year to 12,950—nearly two thousand votes.

## Resounding reply

These facts and figures are Liverpool's resounding reply to the Tories, the media and those in the labour movement who have argued that a bold socialist stand will not win mass support.

By Josie Aitman  
(Broadgreen Labour Party)

## CP—'Broad Alliance'—little support

IF THE election results in Liverpool marked an increase in support for the Labour Party they also marked a turning point for the Communist Party, who despite their proclaimed support for the left in the Labour Party stood candidates against Labour in this vital election.

Their main criticism of Labour has been that we have failed to discuss with "as broad an alliance as possible". In one leaflet issued some weeks before the election they argued not merely for discussions with "sections of the Tories", as previously, but also for involving the "Liberal and Tory parties" in a campaign against the government! These attacks continued right up till the very day of the election itself with a letter in the *Morning Star*.

The letter went on to praise the "excellent statements made by both the anglican and catholic bishops of the city". In other words the CP along with the two bishops argue that the way forward for Liverpool lies not in a refusal to carry out the Tories' dirty work but in a massive rates rise. The CP got their answer in the election.

In Abergromie where Labour's vote increased by over 700 the CP went down from 111 in 1983 to 92 this year. In Arundel, where



Photo: Paul Traynor

Communist Party banner on Liverpool council day of action—the full extent of their contribution to the campaign.

Labour's vote increased by 300 the CP vote stayed the same, 63. Standing in solidly working class Dingle, a Labour gain from the Liberals, the CP polled 30 votes. Similarly in Gramby, where Labour's vote increased by 350 the CP got 65, four less than in 1983. There can be no doubt that the electors of Liverpool have given short shrift to CP liberal reformism.

It might be expected that they stand against Labour in seats like Vauxhall where the District Labour Party was prevented from de-selecting one of the handful of right wing renegades by the NEC.

Even there, standing against an official Labour candidate would have been bad enough, but in fact they stood against well known Labour left wingers and in highly marginal wards. In marginal Dingle, a seat

held by the Liberals, the CP stood against long standing Labour left-winger Peter Ferguson. In Gramby they stood against the Trade Council secretary Alex Doswell. Worst of all, in Arundel, similarly a Liberal seat that Labour had to gain, CP area secretary John Blevin got 63 votes in a seat which the Liberals kept with a majority of 70. If the CP had helped in the campaign waged by Labour other votes could well have been pulled in and the seat won.

But perhaps a splitting of the vote in favour of the Liberals is what the CP mean by "involving the Liberal and Tory parties in the discussions and the campaign against the government."

By Tony Aitman

## Blackburn witch-hunt rebounds

LOCAL ELECTIONS in Blackburn followed a long-drawn out witch-hunt in the local Labour Party leading to the expulsion of six *Militant* supporters, a decision recently ratified by the National Executive Committee.

Did this determined and public stand against 'extremism' bring the voters flocking to Labour? The turnout was just under 40% compared to 50% in 'Militant' Liverpool. Labour won a seat. It also lost a seat. So enthused were the voters in Shadforth ward by the expulsion of well-known *Militant* supporter Peter Harris that there was a 27% turnout. In nearby Hyndburn which shares the same local paper and has no doubt been heartened by the determined campaign of the right wing in Blackburn, Labour lost control of the council to the Tories.

In Blackburn itself Labour's majority is in danger following the threatened defection of

Last Wednesday's Labour Party NEC voted to re-discuss the Blackburn expulsions at its next meeting. This is a major victory for the left and full support should be given for reinstatement.

leading witch-hunter, so-called "ex-Militant", Councillor Michael Gregory.

At the council meeting on 19 April Gregory and one other voted against Labour, causing its defeat on the crucial issue of reorganisation of the Direct Labour Organisation.

After the meeting the leader of the Conservative Group told the press that Gregory had presented his own paper to them ten days before and they had discussed it. The Tories made it clear that they had not moved their own motion because Gregory's was so similar. Gregory then resigned from the Labour Group.

He has since threatened to stand as an independent and days before the local elections had a press conference arranged to announce he'd joined the Liberals, but didn't show up.

Whilst Gregory, whose

"evidence" was the main basis of the expulsions, was busy stabbing Labour in the back, *Militant* supporters were busy working for Labour in the election. In Brownhill ward, Jack Straw MP, who has enthusiastically worked for the expulsions, shook hands and thanked expelled *Militant* supporter Des Mulcahey who helped to run the committee room.

*Militant* supporters take no pleasure from Labour's fate in Blackburn. We hope that measures will now be taken to reinstate the expelled six and get on with the job of building a fighting, socialist Labour Party in the area. The National Executive will be re-discussing the matter at its next meeting on 23 May. Local and nationally support should be forthcoming for immediate reinstatement.

By Ian Ilett

## ELECTION ROUND-UP

IN GLASGOW the District Labour Party fought a campaign around the policy of no rent or rate rises and no cuts. In an entirely new council Labour has 59 out of 66 seats compared to 58 out of 78 before May 3.

Five supporters of *Militant* were elected, including two in seats previously held by the Tories.

IN MANCHESTER, Labour also made gains fighting on

a platform of no rent or rate rises and for an expansion of services. The voters came out to support left candidates despite a well publicised split in the Labour group.

The left is now estimated to have a majority in the group of 41 to 38, including *Militant* supporters Margaret Ainsworth and John Byrne.

IN SOUTHAMPTON after eight years of Tory control Labour has won an overall majority of one. Of nine Labour councillors elected the majority are left wingers including three *Militant* supporters.

COVENTRY saw increased support for Labour, especially in areas with a vigorous campaign against Tory cuts. In Binley/Willenhall ward *Militant* supporter John Mutton got a thousand majority.

# CONFERENCE REPORTS

# Civil servants need fighting leadership

## CPSA

THE CPSA Annual Conference meets from the 16-20 May in Brighton against the background of the miners' momentous battle to save their industry.

Following the debacle of the NGA dispute and the withdrawal of trade union rights at GCHQ Cheltenham the miners are taking on the government in a fight to the finish. Against this background Len Murray has signalled the end of the "new realism" of the 1983 TUC Congress with the announcement of his resignation as General Secretary of the TUC.

Whilst the policy of "new realism" had the support of the CPSA leadership, in the guise of Alistair Graham and the NEC, it certainly did not have the support of the mass of the membership. That has been demonstrated in support for the NGA, the magnificent response to the GCHQ day of action and the tangible support that branches are organising for the miners in their struggle. It is also reflected in the 350 or so censure motions on the General Secretary which appear on the conference agenda.

### Dismal NEC record

These censure motions, however, have not been achieved solely through his own efforts. He has had the support of the right wing-dominated NEC throughout the year. An analysis of their record throughout the year makes dismal reading.

Pay—no special conference

held, no campaign strategy laid, no pressure on the employers, resulting in a dismal offer. The NEC seem more concerned with the right to arbitration than fighting for decent living standards. No attempt has been made to deal with the questions of increased leave or shorter working week.

They failed to campaign on the question of Labour Party affiliation, where, despite their wrecking tactics over 30,000 members voted in favour. With the continuing attacks of the Tories this item will be back on the agenda in the immediate future.

### Miners snubbed

Looking back, no one can fail to see that the undermining of the NGA dispute by the TUC leadership with Alistair Graham to the fore, paved the way for the attack on trade union rights at GCHQ. Nobody, that is, save the CPSA right wing who at the NEC meeting of 3 May voted down a motion moved by Militant supporter Kevin Roddy supporting the miners.

The mood amongst working people is changing.

The CPSA cannot afford the encumbrance of a right wing leadership. In complete contrast to the current leadership the Broad Left NEC Candidates offer experience and a commitment to advance members' interests.

The changing attitude and determination of the membership to take control of the union are reflected in the motions to main conference. Motion 1 calls for a freeze on the pay of senior full time officials until the review called for at last year's conference is completed. The General Secretary has now produced legal advice to the effect that conference

has no rights in this area since pay of officials is solely a matter for the NEC. This attempt to undermine the powers of conference must be strongly resisted. What we are now seeing is the same process which has taken place in the Labour Party in recent years where when the right wing lose the policy arguments they resort to bureaucratic manoeuvre. Any such action must be defeated.

Conference will go on to discuss the question of limiting the size of the delegation to the TUC to prevent the NEC swamping the Conference—elected delegation with full-time officials. In the constitutional amendments section a motion laying down an election procedure for the CPSA delegate to the General Council of the TUC has been tabled.

### GCHQ

There are two main composites on the GCHQ debate. One, from the NEC, correctly attacks the Tories. The second composite censures the NEC for its failure to protect trade union rights and rejects the idea of a 'no strike' agreement. Delegates must ensure this motion is heard and passed by a massive majority regardless of any attempted filibuster by the NEC.

Perhaps the most important debate of the week will be on the proposed merger with the SCPS. It is vitally important, if we are to defend members interests, that the trade union organisation in the Civil Service is strengthened. A major step forward in this area will be a merger with the SCPS. It will be impossible to devote sufficient attention to this subject in the two hours allocated to it. Therefore, together with supporting the principle of the merger, conference must ensure the passage of composite 421 for a special conference on the issue. Support must also be

forthcoming for allowing the National Girobank to vote on whether it should accompany the rest of the P&T group in its merger with the POEU.

### Red Tape

The attempts of the general secretary over the past year to take control of *Red Tape* must be deplored. The activities of the last year underline the need for an editorial board. Motions along these lines must be heard and passed. The idea of an expensive readership survey should be rejected as unnecessary.

Support must also be given to motions opposing government attacks, whether through privatisation, cuts or employment legislation.

Composite motion 1007 supporting a cut in the amount of money put in the Fighting Fund must be opposed and defeated. We are entering a period of struggle, not a period of industrial calm and any attempt to undermine the union's ability to financially support those struggle can only be seen as sabotage.

There are many other important debates which will take place at conference. However the key debates outlined above demonstrate the need for change and the need for a fighting leadership in CPSA. If the Broad Left wins the elections it must take up these issues of key concern to members, beginning with the protection of jobs in the civil and public services. The democratisation of CPSA and the merger with SCPS must also be priorities. Militant supporters will be to the fore in these struggles.

By Dawn Castle  
(North Notts DHSS, NEC candidate, personal capacity)

The NEC's £5,000 donation to the miners should be followed up with a levy from members of 50p a week, and a campaign to build support for the miners' strike amongst our members.

There is growing anger and dissatisfaction amongst civil servants, shown by the support for the day of action over GCHQ. Conference must ensure that the NEC take a firm stand against further attacks on us, and build a fighting union prepared to mobilise the full strength of the union and civil servants generally against our draconian employer.

By a SCPS conference delegate

SCPS Militant journal 20p. Available from: World Socialist Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

SCPS Broad Left Conference Sunday 10 June, 11am-5pm Dame Colet House, Ben Johnson Road, London E1.



FROM WHERE I'M STANDING THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH OUR UNION'S LEADERSHIP

## Pensions computer strike

OVER 300 shift workers in the computer section dealing with pensions and child benefit in DHSS Newcastle Central Office and Washington child benefit office are facing a cut in take-home pay.

DHSS management, pressed by the Tories to save money have decided to arbitrarily change the starting and finishing times of shifts. As the workers in Newcastle work days, evenings and nights they are entitled to 20% shift disturbance allowance (SDA) for working unsociable hours, yet the majority still earn less than £90 per week.

By manipulating the starting and finishing times management will impose a cut of 9½% on the workforce from 20% SDA to 10½% SDA. To qualify for 20% workers work over the time of half past midnight. Manage-

ment have cynically decided to finish at nine minutes past midnight—a cut of 9½% for the sake of 21 minutes.

The response of the shift workers has been magnificent. On Tuesday May 1 they held a lobby of the right-wing CPSA NEC. The NEC refused to give a firm commitment to the members.

At a meeting in Newcastle the shift workers voted overwhelmingly to reject management's offer and to strike to defend living standards. A further lobby of the NEC is planned for Tuesday 10 May to demand full support.

Messages of support to; CPSA room 61 F, DHSS Longbenton, Newcastle Upon Tyne.

By Kevin McHugh  
(CPSA DHSS Section chair) personal capacity

## IRSF

THE INLAND Revenue Staff Federation Conference agenda underlines the need for a leadership able to cope with the attacks on revenue staff. Our members have suffered some of the heaviest cutbacks in staff of any Civil Service department.

Many branches are calling for flat rate pay increases for 1984 to overcome the erosion of living standards felt especially badly by the majority grades. One in four civil servants are "low paid" by the government's own standards, and nearly 1/3rd of civil servants are on Family Income Supplement.

The frustration of members threatened with job losses when COP (compensation of PAYE) is introduced nationally is shown in 23 motions, some of which condemn the EC for the rushed and unconstitutional way the New Technology Agreement was agreed.

The London North motion has to be supported if disputes are to be fought successfully in future. The tactic of using the

courts to show members the justice of our case should only be used as part of a genuine campaign, not as a substitute for industrial action.

The right-wing leadership's answer so far has been to avoid confrontation, even where we were in a position of strength in the first computerised region, and to accept conditions which hog-ties the union whilst extracting little from the employers.

The members are angry but feel impotent; largely because the leadership tell them that they are! Little wonder that Broad Left policies have captured the imagination of more and more members. This is shown in the "TUC and wider issues" section, where resolutions on the government's stance on metropolitan councils and the Trade Union Bill have been starred for debate, as well as resolutions on YTS in the following section.

The IRSF has lost some 12,000 jobs since 1980, and faces a further loss of 7,800 by April 1988. The members look to conference to produce campaigning policies and to pressure the leadership to carry them out.

By an IRSF conference delegate

## Militant

IRSF UCW SCPS  
Annual Conference  
PUBLIC MEETING

7.45pm Tuesday  
May 15. Central  
Library, Queen St,  
Blackpool

Hear: Peter Taaffe Editor, Militant; Anne Sylvester, IRSF Executive (personal capacity); Alan Short, UCW, BT Bridgend (personal capacity); an SCPS delegate.

7.45pm Wednesday  
16 May. Imperial Hotel, First Avenue, Brighton

CPSA CONFERENCE 1984  
PUBLIC MEETING  
SPONSORED BY P&T BELFAST GMD BRANCH

NORTHERN IRELAND  
- A SOCIALIST SOLUTION

Hear: Billy Lynn, Chair DHSS, Northern Ireland Public Services Alliance, Kevin Roddy, Broad Left Presidential Candidate (personal capacity).

CPSA CONFERENCE 1984

Militant  
READERS MEETING

7.30pm Tuesday  
15 May. Wagner  
Hall, Regency Rd,  
Brighton

Hear: Dave Nellist MP, Kevin Roddy CPSA NEC (personal capacity), speaker from Aylesham Miners' Wives Support Group. Chair: Dawn Castle, NEC candidate (personal capacity).

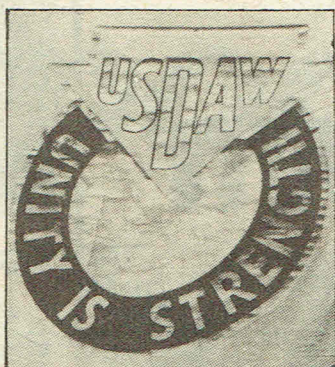
## SCPS

THIS YEAR'S Society of Civil and Public Servants conference meets after the government's ban on trade unions at GCHQ. This unprecedented attack on civil service trade unionism, combined with the derisory 3% pay offer, shows the contempt the government has for its employees.

The GCHQ dispute showed the potential for united action by the civil service trade unions. Conference again debates the merger with CPSA, which was agreed in principle last year. Any retreat from the merger now would seriously weaken our potential for united action.

Conference should support the resolution calling for a ballot on affiliation to the Labour Party. We cannot stand aside from 'political' issues—every decision about our pay and conditions is political.

# New conference mood - USDAW right in trouble



**THE IMPACT** of the miners' dispute was clearly felt at the Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers' Union conference in Eastbourne last week. The union leadership was sent reeling in shock as vote after vote went against the platform.

The mood was clear—the years of 'wait and see' are over. That mood may well bear a message for other union conferences about to take place. The conference was looking for action. Time and again the leadership was called on to act in defence of the members' interests.

A number of rule changes were pushed through despite intense opposition from the leadership. A move backed by the USDAW Broad Left to make the position of Deputy General Secretary an elected post was carried by more than the required two-thirds majority—197,088 votes to 70,873. A proposal to increase the rank and file representation on the TUC Women's delegation was vigorously opposed by the EC. The conference was so outraged at the pig-headedness of the platform's attitude that it carried the proposal by 271,861 votes

to 10,831 votes ie. the EC got less than 4% of the conference vote!

Even some of the proposals which were not carried received a far higher level of support than in previous years. The Broad Left's support averaged about 100,000 votes—some 10–15% higher than in 1983.

## Out of touch

The EC was forced to recommend support for the Broad Left's proposal of a minimum wage of £100 for a 35-hour week tied to a national low-pay campaign and opposition to incomes policy and wage restraint. The general secretary, in his summing up of the wages debate, declared that "USDAW is not a low-paid union". This was received with incredulity by the delegates, whose average take home wage is less than £75 per week. Anger was expressed too when

it emerged that the general secretary has recently been awarded a salary increase which sets his basic salary at £21,850 per annum. Many delegates felt that he was out of touch with the kind of living standards being endured by USDAW members.

The EC were defeated overwhelmingly on a show of hands over the question of working the four Sundays before Christmas. The leadership have sought to use these four Sundays in negotiations with employers to try and secure better deals on other matters. This practice is strongly opposed by the members concerned who rightly see it as a back-door method to introduce seven-day working for USDAW members all year round.

A motion which "deplores the defeatist wording of circulars" from some of the union's national officers because they "discourage the membership from taking up issues which are detrimental to them" was opposed by the EC. The deputy general secretary thought it "outrageous" that such a mo-



Woolworths workers threatened with redundancies join miners in a lobby of USDAW conference.

tion was on the agenda and denounced it as an attack on the integrity of the national officers. The platform was astounded when the motion was carried on a card vote by 108,506 to 108,142 votes.

Such was the pressure on the EC that it opted to support motions rather than be continually overturned by conference. There was some surprise when the EC recommended support for the Liverpool City Council against the advice of USDAW divisional officer Bill Snell, who is one of the five renegade councillors in the Labour Group there.

In the debate on nuclear disarmament, the right wing "Mainstream Labour Group" attempted to swing away from unilateralism to multilateralism. They were resoundingly defeated.

## Industrial action

An announcement by Woolworths that they had sold thirty-four stores came on the last day of conference. Mick Wainwright, delegate from Blackpool Woolworths (one of the stores sold), spoke for all the workers concerned when he declared that they were not interested in redundancy payments—only in what kind of a fightback the union was prepared to wage. Conference overwhelmingly carried a motion, against the EC, to "back any action of workers in Woolworths to defend jobs, including industrial action such as strike action and occupation of stores."

The ADM gave full support to the NUM in their dispute. Such was the determination to see the Tories defeated and driven from office, that a proposition which called on the TUC to "organise general

strike action" was very narrowly lost on a show of hands—and then only on the basis that the EC would be making further substantial donations to the NUM strike fund and would officially support the Scottish day of action on 9 May. Nevertheless the EC was forced to agree that USDAW branches may "become involved in various forms of action organised in support of the miners".

The last major debate of conference was on the employment laws and the NGA dispute. Speaker after speaker expressed outrage at the refusal of the TUC General Council, and in particular, the USDAW general secretary to support the NGA. A motion which upheld the special 1982 Wembley Conference decisions and which mandated the 1984 TUC USDAW delegation to support the NGA was put to the vote.

On a show of hands it appeared to be very close. The delegates requested a card vote. To the astonishment of the conference, the president, Syd Tierney, refused, and declared the motion lost.

Conference came to a standstill as uproar ensued, with demands for a card vote coming from around the hall. The president insisted that the mover of the next motion continue. Finally, after the business had been completed, the mover of the disputed motion, came to the rostrum to suspend standing orders and move a resolution of no confidence in the president.

Tierney, backed up by Pat Hunter, Chair of Standing Orders (and likely right-wing candidate for presidency) refused to put this to the vote, saying that he should have been challenged at the time of the vote (which he clearly was)

and uproar again ensued. He brazenly carried on with the closing of conference.

Delegates came away from conference with a feeling of outrage. It is clear that the leadership have no mandate from the membership for their course of action over the NGA dispute. The leadership for their part, have had their confidence shattered. Their grip on the union has been considerably weakened.

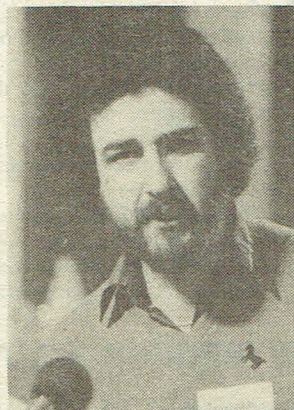
## Broad Left gains

The elections to the delegations also showed a marked increase in support for the Broad Left. In elections to the Labour Party delegation four BL nominees were elected against one last year. On the TUC delegation the BL took six compared with one last year.

At the business meeting at conference, the Broad Left adopted its candidate for general secretary, national officer, Bill Connor. There is speculation that the general secretary Bill Whatley may announce his retirement early—possibly within the next year. The Broad Left is confident that with a bold, national campaign, it can provide the membership with the fighting leadership desperately needed.

**By George Williamson**  
(Delegate, London Metropolitan Branch, & Chair, USDAW Broad Left)

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Photos: Militant

Left, Bill Connor, USDAW national officer and Broad Left candidate for general secretary who spoke in support of Liverpool City Council. Centre, Mick Wainwright, Blackpool Woolworths delegate. Right, Sid Tierney USDAW president blocked a card vote on support for the NGA.

## UCW

**UCW CONFERENCE** this year could end the old idea that Post Office workers, after the seven week strike of 1971, won't take part in a national strike.

The government pay guidelines for nationalised industry have led to deep resentment amongst UCW members at the 4% final pay offer. It included strings such as: new productivity deals; new technology at no cost; work measurement designed to reduce jobs.

The resentment of rank and file Post Office workers and the build up of pressure is being felt by the Executive Council who are now recommending some form of industrial action over the pay issue.

Industrial action such as working to rule, overtime bans, days of action, selective strikes, will do much to build up the confidence of Post Office workers but in the final analysis a national all out

strike linking up with other Post Office unions, is the only way UCW members will secure a decent living wage.

Post Office workers want an end to "cosy chats" by our leadership which have led to jobs being sold in productivity deals to compensate for low pay, piecemeal introduction of new technology, the introduction of YTS, the massive job losses in British Telecom and now the real threat of privatisation. Branches have also put amendments calling for amalgamation at all levels with the POEU.

Delegates should also press conference and standing orders to allow discussion on the sections of the general secretary's report dealing with TUC and Labour Party conferences. Many UCW members are angry at our delegates to TUC conference who, without prior discussion at UCW conference, supported YTS, opposed moves to give added strength to the fight against Tory anti-union laws and supported the TUC staying in the National Economic Development Council.

There is also widespread

anger at support at Labour Party conference for the expulsion and witch-hunt of socialists from the party.

**By Eddie Thorpe**  
(Oldham UCW)

## NUPE

**CUTS AND privatisation dominate the agenda at this year's NUPE conference.**

The lack of a national campaign and the willingness of some union officers and lay officials to sell jobs and national conditions of service have had a devastating effect on NUPE members—part-time women workers, in particular.

School meals ladies, cleaners and hospital ancillary workers have all suffered savage attacks under the Thatcher government. The need for a national campaign similar in intensity to the '70's Dirty Jobs dispute and the so-called 'Winter of Discontent' have

never been more necessary.

Although composite 11 calling for a national campaign to educate the public, strengthen links with other unions etc, should be supported, it does not go far enough.

This highlights the need for an open, democratic and campaigning Broad Left within NUPE, both to support existing policies and to extend and define them in concrete terms that will lead to the development of a real campaign.

A massive campaign of leafletting, and workplace meetings leading to a 24-hour service pay strike as a first step towards reversing the situation and service-based national delegate conferences to thrash out issues and tactics are the kind of ideas a Broad Left organisation should be fighting for.

The election of full time officers will be the most important debate at the Rules Revision Conference. The proposed rule change from Cardiff North No 3 branch to rule 141 calling for a general secretary election every two years by ballot of branches would be a tremendous step forward in

democratising NUPE's structure.

While giving critical support to the proposed rule change from Motherwell, calling for election of full time officials, the problems of method of election are not taken up in a detailed manner.

These problems need to be looked at in a detailed manner, and a clear method of election established, at the same time as eradicating or

## SOGAT '82

**THE PRINT union SOGAT '82 bi-annual delegate council is one of great importance to the largest print trade union in Western Europe.**

The NGA dispute with the Messenger group and SOGAT's continuing battle with Maxwell's BPC empire have seen print workers' rights and conditions under constant attack.

Despite recent setbacks the mood of the SOGAT membership is one of steadily increasing militancy and awareness. Nine resolutions on the agen-

minimising the problems involved.

For this reason *Militant* supporters in NUPE would argue the executive council should investigate a viable method of electing officers on a regular basis and report their findings for a full debate and decision at next year's conference.

**By Steve McKenzie**  
(NUPE Bexley General Branch)

da call for election and re-election of paid officials and calls are made for annual conferences for one union for print.

The left within SOGAT also needs to be united in campaigning for radical changes in union rules and policy, in order to make SOGAT more responsive to the needs of our members.

It is vital we build a Broad Left leadership within SOGAT around socialist policies which will defeat the bosses' offensive.

**By Dave Power**  
(Liverpool SOGAT)



# Militant

## Longbridge strike - Bosses back down

**WORKERS AT BL Longbridge plant in Birmingham seem to have won their first significant victory for some years.**

**The 700 trim shop workers whose strike started the dispute agreed to return to work on the original manning levels.**

Management are contemplating increasing Metro production and seem to accept that an increase in the workforce will be necessary.

The trim shop workers walked out for the second

time in three weeks on 30 April.

By the morning of Tuesday 8 May, the whole plant was at a standstill, either laid off or on strike in sympathy. All the models were stopped and with the transport department on strike, no engines could go to Cowley for the Montego.

After some defeats and setbacks over the last few years the tide is turning. The miners' strike and the new climate in the trade union movement revived the confidence of Longbridge workers; they now feel in a far stronger position.

Austin Rover has

achieved its highest market share for five years. The Metro is Britain's best selling car with the Maestro fourth while the new Montego has just been launched. The company is back in profit for the first time for five years.

However, all this has only been thanks to the car workers' sweat and toil. Since 1978, employment in BL has fallen from 125,000 to 50,000 but production per man had risen from 6 to 14 cars by last year. Longbridge is now one of the most productive plants in Europe.

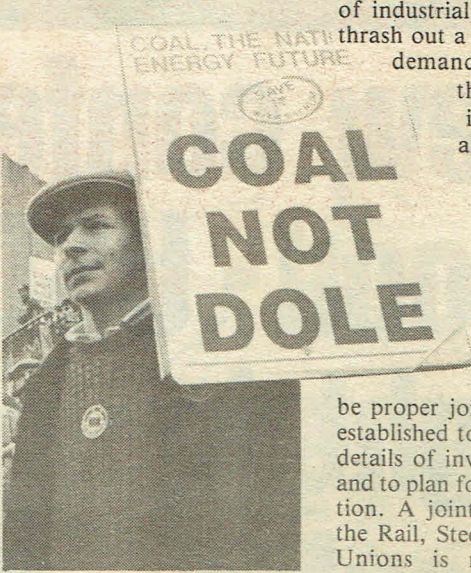
Yet still the management were not satisfied.

The company were trying to cut manning still further in the trim shop. After the first strike, a fortnight's trial was agreed with the stewards released to check how the new manning levels worked. But even during the two weeks, six workers, watched by the work study, were disciplined for lack of effort. That was the last straw.

Management were forced to come up with their olive branch because of the strength and united action of BL trade unionists.

**By a Longbridge worker**

Photo: Jacob Sutton



### Coal, steel, rail

(Continued from front page)

Steelworkers in the three major plants at Ravenscraig, Llanwern and Port Talbot have a major closure hanging over their heads. Tories are exploiting the fear that steelworkers have for their jobs, to try to divide steel workers from miners.

On the railways, ASLEF and the NUR are preparing to take action over their wages and conditions and the attempt by the BRB to impose job-slashing productivity agreements. At the same time, thousands of jobs are being axed at British Rail Engineering depots, particularly at Swindon.

In the face of the Tory government's efforts to dismantle these basic industries, it would be folly for the rail, steel and mining unions to go their own ways and fight their own separate battles. They must fight the government side by side.

The Triple Alliance of these unions was never meant to be a talking shop. It is nothing if it does not mean *unity in action* to defend these jobs and industries.

As every trade unionist understands, unity is strength. The Triple Alliance must organise a joint conference of their national executives to plan a campaign

of industrial action and to thrash out a programme of demands to put to the government, including above all, the demand for proper guarantees of investment and the maintenance of jobs. At local level, there must

be proper joint committees established to work out the details of investment needs and to plan for industrial action. A joint campaign by the Rail, Steel and Miners' Unions is now urgently necessary for the jobs of all these industrial workers and for the labour movement as a whole.

Such a joint campaign would have a shattering effect on the morale of the Tories, the NCB, the BRB and the BSC and would force the government to back down.

### Solidarity action

Alongside this, the National Union of Mineworkers should call for a special conference of all those unions which support it, to hammer out a programme of solidarity action, including workplace levies and collections, and raising especially the need for supportive industrial action, beginning with a 24 hour general strike.

The Tories have banked their whole industrial relation policy on defeating the miners, to make it easier to intimidate other trade unions. Then they could get on with the job of saving clapped-out British capitalism at the expense of workers' living standards.

The whole Tory strategy is coming unstuck against the magnificent struggle of the miners and the marvellous support we have already had. But it is now urgent that other industrial unions stand side by side with the miners, to bring the Tories' strategy crashing down around their ears.

## No welcome for Botha

**LAST FRIDAY on the same day that they expelled Afia Begum, the Tory government announced they would be welcoming the South African Prime Minister, P.M. Botha to London on 2 June.**

Despite all the protestations of moral dislike for racism, the Tories and their big business backers have always preferred to back the regime which perpetuates the apartheid system, rather than its opponents. They have worked closely with the South African police and, at the very least, turned a blind eye to the activities of their intelligence operations in Britain.

The head of the Soweto police force has visited Northern Ireland to pick up tips about how to control civilians in urban areas.

In London, South African agents have been involved in burglaries, bombing and col-

lecting information for assassinations. In 1982 the offices of the SWAPO and PAC liberation movements were burgled and those of the ANC bombed. But whilst the British people directly responsible for the burglaries were imprisoned, the South African agent who organised it, Joseph Klue, was allowed to leave quietly.

Currently the head of the South African intelligence operations in Britain, S.G. Botha, is allowed to operate from the South African Embassy. Perhaps he will be joining the two Prime Ministers on 2 June for a cosy chat.

**By Jim Chrystie**

**Demo against visit Saturday 2 June. Assemble 11.45 am Speaker's Corner. March to Downing Street and Whitehall to finish in Jubilee Gardens.**

## Elections

(Continued from front page)

But Liverpool's stand has won had an echo in the council elections nationally. Other local Labour Parties fought the election on the lines of 'no rent or rate rises' and no cuts. These Labour Parties have registered successes comparable to Liverpool.

The Tory Press have bent over backwards to belittle Labour's successes in the elections and especially to mask what is an unmistakable trend—that where the Labour Party has put forward bold policies and has come out firmly against cuts then local workers respond with their support.

There must now be some action by these other Labour authorities in support of Liverpool. Liverpool's fight is a fight for *all* local jobs and services.

If even a handful of big councils, such as Manchester and Glasgow, were to follow the lead of Liverpool, the Tories would be forced to back down from their policy of slashing local services.

Labour Groups, District

Labour Parties and local authority trade union organisations should now support, as a matter of urgency, the conference on 23 June being sponsored by the Liverpool District Labour Party in support of the City council.

The fight being waged by this City Council has been an inspiration to workers everywhere. The elections have demonstrated that there is a clear basis for such a fight to become a nationwide one. Labour councils have to pick up the gauntlet.

## Len Murray announces retirement



(Len Murray, quoted in the Financial Times.)



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