

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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700th issue

Tory class war

Photo: Jacob Sutton



The Mansfield NUM demonstration on 14 May. (See articles page 3 and 16).

Miners in the front line

THE TORY government declared war on the working class when they took office five years ago. This frontal assault by Thatcher and MacGregor on our jobs is just the latest and most important battle in the Tories' class war.

Jobs have been destroyed, services like the NHS and education have been slashed to the bone, while unions like the NGA have been punished by the courts for standing up for workers' interests.

The mineworkers have of course been crucified by the media for daring to

By John Cunningham
(Ellington NUM Strike Committee, Northumberland, personal capacity)

fightback. But we are determined to win—for our own jobs and for the entire working class.

Arthur Scargill was taken

to task by the Tory newspapers for saying the miners' strike could pave the way for a general election and a socialist Labour victory. He was "making the strike political" they wailed.

It is hypocrisy for the Tories who are making a highly political attack on our jobs and our union to accuse the NUM of playing politics. But we would agree one hundred per cent with Arthur Scargill. This is a political dispute, a fight against every attack by the Tories. More than that, we can see that our strike reflects a wide

feeling of discontent in all sections of the working class. Railworkers and teachers are already taking industrial action while Post Office workers, waterworkers and nurses are on the verge of disputes.

Bosses' crisis

Workers everywhere are having to fight to keep their jobs and to stop their wages and conditions being eroded because the capitalist system the Tories uphold is in crisis. We get the sack and low wages so they can get bigger profits.

Miners have had to fight for years now to stop the decimation of our industry because the capitalist class want to cut costs and destroy the strength of our union. Are we to be faced with endless fights for our jobs, wages and conditions? There can be no genuine lasting guarantees of jobs while private profit sets the priorities. Even after this strike is over, miners must be prepared to fight for their future in the political arena. Miners and their wives should join the Labour Party, the mass political voice of

the British working class and fight for socialist policies.

Socialist alternative

Militant supporters have consistently fought within the unions and the Labour Party for bold socialist measures to eliminate the terrible problems facing the working class. We have argued for a fight to save all jobs, for a 35 hour week with no loss of pay as a first step to ending unemployment; for a £100 na-

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PAGE TWO

Cash for a workers' daily!

THIS 700th issue of the *Militant* is yet another historic landmark in the development of Marxism in Britain.

Ever since the first issue in 1964 we have given consistent coverage of events in Britain and internationally.

Our growth in size and circulation over the last 700 issues reflects the correctness of our ideas. We can look proudly at the way our articles have stood the test of time.

Only our paper, with support in every section of the working class could give such a wide-ranging coverage as we do at the moment.

But we need to spread our ideas and influence further still. We need to produce a more frequent and ultimately a daily *Militant*.

We need your support for the Marxist Daily Building Fund so that such a development can take place.

If you have not yet donated to our fund then follow the example of those who have already made huge sacrifices and rush a donation to us immediately.

In this way we will be well into daily production by issue 800!

(See *Building Fund Report*, page 6)



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THE MINERS CAN WIN

AMID THE press speculation about the possibility of the strike lasting into the autumn, or even next winter, many active miners will see their ten-week old strike at a crossroads, and will be weighing up how long it will last and how they are to win.

The sheer tenacity of the miners has been one of the outstanding features of the struggle so far. In no other strike in the recent period, perhaps since the war, has there been such a dogged determination and will to win as that shown particularly by the younger miners.

The key question around which all others have revolved has been how to bring out those miners still at work, especially in the Nottinghamshire coalfield. The fortunes of the struggle have seemed to ebb and flow in recent weeks as it seemed less or more likely that the Notts miners would come out.

This central issue is one that must be resolved by the NUM national leadership. It will in the end determine the level of solidarity extended to the miners and, through that, it will determine the duration of the strike.

Notts leaders

The divisions between the working miners and those on strike stem from the right wing traditions of the Notts area leadership. But these divisions were entrenched by the way the 'Rolling strike' began in March.

The fact remains that Notts have yet to be thoroughly convinced of the need for a national strike over jobs. As *Militant* explained at the beginning of the strike, picketing in and of itself is not enough. An extensive campaign of explanation and argument is still necessary.

Fifteen hundred jobs are to be axed by the NCB in the Notts area. Miners in that county have a future no more secure than their fellow workers elsewhere. With the precise facts and arguments, the striking miners must take their case to the Notts miners to convince them.

Even at this stage there has been no official mass leafletting in the Notts area to explain the implied threat in the NCB strategy to their jobs. Hundreds of thousands of official national and area NUM leaflets could be produced and could have an effect upon working miners, if accompanied with a fraternal appeal for support.

In the same way that the Labour Party might draft in workers to help in a by-election, the miners should approach the Notts area with a view to meeting, discussing with and convincing the thousands still at work.

It is easily within the capabilities of the NUM nationally to organise 'flying squads' of canvassers, properly organised and marshalled, armed with leaflets, posters, pamphlets, facts and figures. Ways can be found around the massive police cordons by ap-

proaching Notts miners in a comradely manner, by door to door canvassing if necessary, by meetings and discussions in miners' welfare, in pubs and clubs.

Because the strike is now official, it should be possible for national officials of the union to convene canteen meetings in pits where miners are at work—to go to the lions den and explain how their jobs are on the line.

The national leadership of the union have shown in many rallies and speeches that they have an unanswerable justification for their fight for jobs. But they now have to take up the initiative for a campaign in the Notts area: they have to make up the ground lost by the tradition of right wing area leadership over the past years.

There is no reason why the marvellous energy, enthusiasm and élan shown by the striking miners could not even at this stage be channelled into a massive campaign of convincing and persuading working miners to support their fellow miners on strike, to fight for their industry.

Even the annual conference of the NUM could be put to good effect. It is understandable that the NUM leadership, in cancelling the conference, would want to put aside any secondary issues at this crucial moment. But how much more fruitful would it be for the annual conference to be replaced by a special rank and file delegate conference, of, say, two or three miners from each colliery, to hammer out any differences, and clarify the miners' demands?

Clear demands must be posed in front of the miners and presented to the Coal Board. There must be demands for specific guarantees relating to the financing of the industry, including future investments, and the preservation of jobs.

The miners' have already gained from the huge wave of solidarity from other workers.

Solidarity

If the Notts miners could be won over and brought out, a total British coalfield strike would get ten or a hundred times more support even than has already been shown. The extension of picketing docks, coal depots, oil terminals and power stations would have an immediate echo among other groups of workers and the perspective of a miners' victory could be brought forward by months.

As Arthur Scargill pointed out at the rally in Mansfield last Monday, a miners' victory would be a victory for all workers and a blow against the Tory government. But nothing can be taken for granted. Before the victory can be celebrated, there has to be a sober and a serious assessment of each stage of the battle and a careful mapping out of the steps that are necessary to get the victory.



Printers halt press propaganda

THE LABOUR movement will applaud the actions of the print workers, who over the past few days have taken up the Tory press.

The *Express* episode last week clearly exposed the barefaced arrogance of the Fleet Street bosses. The *Express* front and centre pages carried an imaginary speech by Arthur Scargill. Headlined: "The truth that Scargill dare not tell—I am leading my men to disaster," it dropped any pretext of disguising its usual rabid propaganda as 'news'. Instead it 'reported' the "speech the *Daily Express* believes Arthur Scargill would make..." Fortunately the print union SOGAT'82 took the *Express* down a peg or two in securing the NUM's right of reply. Even then the *Express* bosses would not allow it on the front page and took out references that compared them to Goebbels.

On Tuesday, all the production union chapels at the *Sun* blacked the front page picture and headline. The picture caught Mr Scargill in an unlikely pose at the Mansfield rally. According to the *Sun*, he was giving a "Hitler style salute". Their headline was to be "Mine Fuehrer."

Gutter press

But there has been plenty of press propaganda against the miners that has got through. It is not only confined to the gutter rags of the Fleet Street tabloids.

The *Sunday Times* (13 May) gave a fearful front



Solidarity! Four members of the 'Stockport Six' deliver food parcels collected by Stockport NGA members to Jack Taylor of the Yorkshire NUM on May 8.

page story of a Nottinghamshire miner who has allegedly faced intimidation and had a brick thrown through his window.

Yet towards the end of the article it pointed out that the man, Les Carter, was in fact one of the five anti-strike Notts miners who occupied a mine shaft in opposition to the NUM and the alleged incidents happened way back at the beginning of the dispute. How was it the *Sunday Times* took a month or more to get this 'news' item on the front page?

Class war

(Continued from front page)

tional minimum wage to end the scandal of low pay and a huge programme of useful public works like new housing, schools, hospitals, roads etc to use the untapped skills of working class people for the benefit of all.

But if these demands are to be met and maintained, the rotting hulk of British

capitalism must be pushed out of the way. Britain's capitalist economy has been ruined by the profiteers who have abandoned manufacturing industry, cutting the demand for coal, steel and rail as well as throwing millions on the dole.

Militant has always demanded the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy, the top 200 monopolies which control 85% of production, under democratic workers' control and management

and with compensation only for those in real need.

We also say no more control of the public sector by the MacGregors of the world. If the nationalised industries were run by boards made up of one-third from the unions in the industry concerned; one-third from the TUC representing the rest of the working class and a third from the government it would be a majority of workers who would decide what policies were carried out.

Blackburn 6 battle on

DESPITE THE many activities based around the miners' strike and the recent local elections, there has been no let up in the fight in Blackburn to reinstate the six comrades expelled from the Labour Party.

Last week on a Friday night over 60 people attended a meeting to hear the case against the expulsions and the need to fight the Tories with socialist policies.

The first speaker Richard Clarkson, Prince of Wales NUM, described the tremendous solidarity that had developed around the strike.

Peter Harris, one of the expelled, described the hard working record of the six members purged from the Labour Party who had been active in many campaigns and had built the party membership.

It is now apparent to most people in Blackburn that the expelled six are victims of a political stooge and his uncorroborated allegations—

Gregory

Cllr Michael Gregory and his so-called 'report'. It was his 'evidence' upon which the expulsions were based. Yet now Cllr Gregory could be seen in his true colours. He has resigned the Labour whip leaving a 'hung' council in Blackburn.

The final speaker, Lynn Walsh, drew the political conclusions from the miners' dispute alongside the local authority election results.

The mood of the meeting was one of enthusiasm and optimism. A collection for the *Militant* fighting fund raised £80.

While support for Marxism grows in Blackburn so the campaign for reinstatement goes on. There is an urgent need for resolutions protesting not only at the expulsions themselves but the manner in which the Labour Party Appeals Committee and the National Executive Committee upheld these decisions, to flood into the NEC of the Labour Party and Blackburn CLP, c/o the Secretary, Union House, Freckleton Street, Blackburn, Lancs.

By Rossina Harris



Peter Harris, one of the expelled 'Blackburn Six'.

On this basis a socialist plan could be democratically worked out to regenerate industry to provide for the real needs of ordinary people not the profits of a small minority. Until the workers control society our jobs can never be safe.

Miners and their families should not only join the Labour Party, they should join with *Militant* supporters in the party—sell our paper and fight for a lasting socialist solution to the problems we face.

Photo: John Smith (FL)

Photo: Militant

Miners' dispute

Staying out to win through

"I AM just waiting to read in the *Daily Express* that of the 176 pits in this country, 182 of them are working normally. They're saying Notts is working normally but I've got the NCB's own figures here which states that in North Notts they have lost 60% of production and in South Notts they have lost 50% of production."

This is just a part of the speech Arthur Scargill made to 40,000 striking miners from every coalfield in the country in Mansfield on Monday. The NUM National Demonstration was a massive success and took over an hour from the head of the march starting off to the tail of the march leaving the assembly point—over two miles long.

Bitter determination

The most striking features were the mood of bitter determination and the

By John Fahey
(East Notts LPYS)

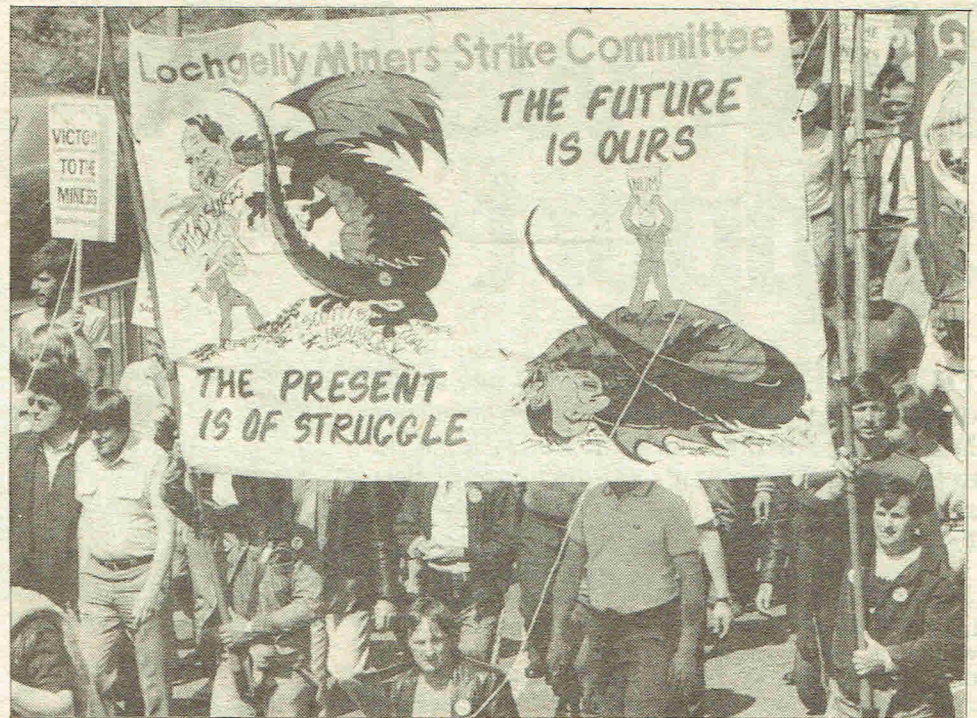
discipline of the striking miners and its overwhelmingly young composition. Indeed the biggest cheer for Arthur Scargill was when he said: "The young miners in struggle at this time are the finest example anyone could give in the history of the NUM in the way they've stood firm in this battle. We are winning lads, if we could stop Notts supplying power stations the CEBG would be in desperate trouble in eight or nine weeks, the stocks have definitely deter-

iorated."

Again there was a huge roar of approval from the massive crowd when Arthur Scargill said: "If we have to stay out until November or December we will beat the Coal Board and this government." The demonstration showed the enormous support and sympathy the miners have amongst the working class. There were banners from the NUR, T&G, NALGO, COHSE, NUT, seamen, London dockers and trades councils from up and down the country.

Community backing

Even more than that however, what this demo and strike shows is the whole communities have pulled behind the miners. There were literally



Mansfield demo, 14 May.

Photo: Jacob Sutton

thousands of women on the march with their teenage sons and daughters, most of them on the dole. Two of the banners they made sum it all up: "We are 16 year old sons and daughters of miners. We are unemployed, don't let our dads' join us on the dole". "We are 16 year olds and on the dole, so come on Notts miners give us a chance to mine coal".

Police Riot

IT WAS like a modern Peterloo, but with sticks instead of swords. Mounted police, swinging their batons, wildly charged into miners and their families after the peaceful rally. I saw several people lying bleeding and unconscious on the ground after being knocked down by police horses and truncheons.

The police waited until the majority of the demonstrators had left for home and then they moved in and attacked stragglers as they made their way back to the buses.

By John Cunningham
(steward on march)
NUM Ellington Lodge
Committee

Ravenscraig agreement broken

THE AGREEMENT reached by unions in the Triple Alliance on coal supplies to Ravenscraig was put under threat last weekend as a result of the actions of ISTC management at the Hunterston ore terminal.

There is now a possibility of a Scottish wide port strike starting this Monday. Last week's agreement was in two parts. Firstly to supply Ravenscraig with 11 train loads of coal per week. Miners asked that only 8 trainloads be admitted, but the ISTC wanted 14. The compromise of 11 was agreed on.

Port strike

It is the second part of the agreement, that all foreign imports of coal be blacked at Hunterston, which has caused the problem. The dockers union, the TGWU, agreed to it. But at the time of the deal being reached a Norwegian bulk carrier called Obo King was being unloaded by casual labour, the dockers having previously refused to unload it.

Threatened with an all-out dock strike the Clyde port authority, who actually employ the dockers, and BSC management backed down and agreed to withdraw that labour. They then approached a local

ISTC steward to do the job and they reached a deal with the men unloading the 68,000 tonnes of coal themselves.

That was against the explicit instructions from the union not to do so. The men effectively acted as black legs. Clive Lewis (Divisional Organiser of the ISTC) has now deposed the local branch secretary and begun union disciplinary action against those involved.

The Obo King however sailed from the Clyde on Sunday night half-full but the prospect of a Scottish dock strike looms in its wake as a result.

On 15 May Scottish dockers agreed to seek assurances from the port authorities, the steel corporation and ISTC that: (i) no scabbing by non-registered workers takes place again (ii) tug and boat workers who lost pay because of the dispute are compensated. If these guarantees are not agreed by next Monday, there will be a Scottish-wide port strike.

By Colin Fox
(Motherwell LPYS)

Depot closed

OVER 500 people, including Kent miners and trade unionists from all over West London closed down the West Drayton coal depot on 15 May for the first time. Mass picketing is to continue for a week.



Mansfield demo, 14 May.

Photo: Dave Sinclair

Rally for our future

AYLESHAM LPYS branch has actively supported the strike from the start. Our village would be destroyed if they close Snowdown pit, and the whole community is united behind the strike.

Our branch has organised a march, rally and picket of NCB Head Office at Hobart House in London for the 29 May. A delegation of young people from Aylesham will present a petition to the NCB and we are calling on all supporters to turn up and march with us (details below).

Don Hughes, a striking miner told us: "I'm confident that the miners will come out winners. If I didn't think that I'd be wasting my time". Another miner, Mr House, said: "I'd stop out for two years. I don't give a monkeys. I'd like to see them go one winter without coal."

That determination is typical of Kent miners. We'll do all we can to back them up.

By Tracey Owen, Alison Gough and Colin Carr
(Aylesham LPYS)

LONDON MARCH, RALLY AND PICKET

Tuesday 29 May, Assemble 12 noon at Hyde Park, Rally at Jubilee Gardens.

Aylesham Youth petition to be handed in to the NCB at Hobart House at 1pm. Give your support by coming to the march and rally.

Thrown under horses' hooves

POLICE BRUTALITY against the miners reached new levels of intensity last week at the Hunterston ore terminal in Ayrshire.

This dramatic account is given by Bob Devlin, from Bilston Glen colliery, who was with miners from Mid and East Lothian:-

"When we arrived there was about 600-700 pickets; we made it up to roughly 1,000. At that time there were about 500-600 policemen, then, all of a sudden there were hordes and hordes of policemen arriving, at least 3,000, spreading for 200-300 yards along either side of the road, completely ringing the pickets.

"After ten minutes along comes a troop of about a dozen mounted police.

"I'll never forget to my dying day those horses pounding down on us—16-stone miners getting flung about like bits of feather, bits of straw. They weren't caring if a man was dead or not; once he was on the ground he was getting trampled on and pounded into the ground.

Unconscious for ten minutes

"They lifted young Davy Rowe, SCEBTA Youth Delegate at Monktonhall, and a sergeant kicked his face with all his might; it was unbelievable; his head went spinning back and he was unconscious for at least ten minutes, maybe longer. That caused anger, because the police wouldn't even let the rest of the comrades near him; the horses were pounding all about him.

"We were trying to get him out. I was smashed aside by a horse myself; luckily I was thrown away from the horses rather than into them. "One young chap, James O'Connor, about 13-14 stone, went right under a horse, getting trampled on; the horses, hoofs went right through his thick woollen jersey, through his shirt, burst his braces and his back is covered with massive hoof prints. That just sickened him; he's a big chap and he was terrified; he couldn't believe that police would do a thing like that.

Strangled till he fainted

"The leaders—Davy Hamilton, David Costello and Johnny Russell—were grabbed immediately, before the charge of the horses. They had a grip of Davy Hamilton so tight round his neck that he just passed out; they just cut the air off to his head and lungs. He was taken to the side of a van, and people on the other side of the road were telling me they gave him a duffing-up.

"They hand-cuffed every single person and they were taken away to Largs police station, where they were kept 13 a cell, each handcuffed to another. In the cells they were just treated like common criminals. One chap overhead a policeman say: 'If I could have my way I'd gas you guys.'

"From there they were taken to Kilmarnock to a holding cell and kept until 10 o'clock at night, after 8-9 hours, and they were due to appear in court on Friday charged with breach of the peace."

By Pat Craven

Miners' dispute

How we built support

THREE WEEKS ago there wasn't one single organised group of miners' wives in either Durham or Northumberland. Today it's hard to keep track—women's support committees are mushrooming all over North-East England.

It all began when a group of women from Gateshead Labour Women's Council, wanting to help miners and their families during the strike, collected over £100 worth of food in just a couple of days, from friends, neighbours and family. They adopted the nearest pit—Westoe in South Shields—and contacted the lodge asking to be put in touch with miners' wives.

Groceries

Four members of the women's council weighed down with bags and boxes of groceries, met four miners' wives. After an hour 'Westoe miners women's

By Margaret Reavey
(Gateshead Labour
Womens Council)

support committee' was in existence. Press releases were issued and posters placed in shops, clubs and miner's hall.

A week later the committee held another meeting. This time over 180 women and children were there!

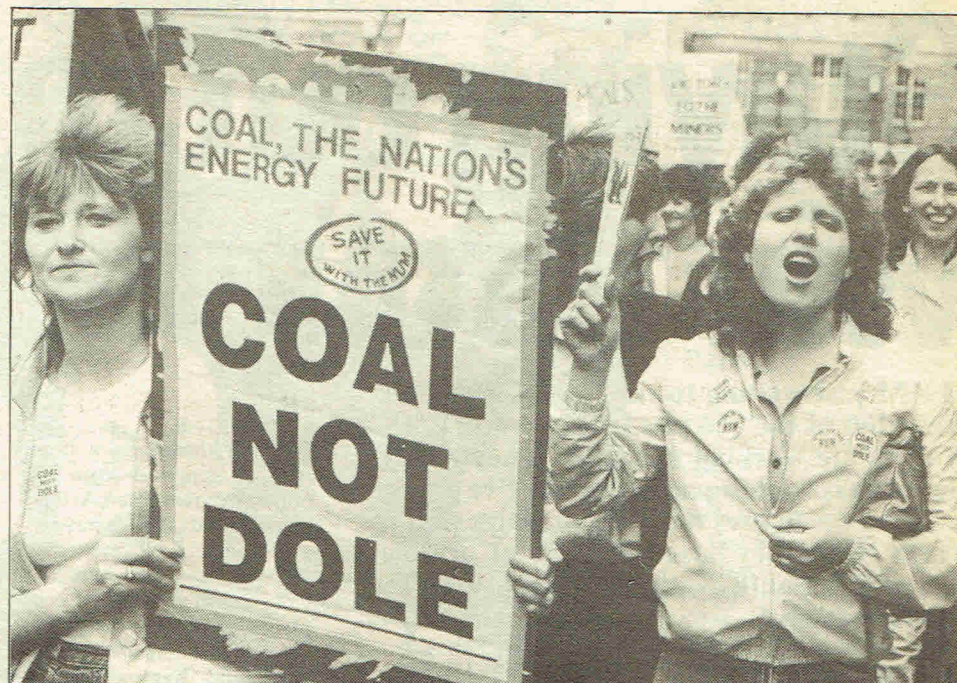
In Northumberland a member of the women's section organised a meeting in Ashington Labour Rooms. She made a few phone calls, did a door to door canvass and an early morning cycle ride round the town tying placards to lamposts. Within just 24 hours a dozen wives met with the 4 Westoe

women and 'Ashington Area Miners Women's Support Committee' was formed. 48 hours later the committee of 12 had grown to 30.

Now support committees are sprouting all over the place—Whitburn, Gateshead, Blyth—and the enthusiasm, determination is absolutely fantastic.

Lives transformed

Within just one week women who in their own words "supported the men but just used to close the front door thinking there's nought I can do", have come to the fore. Women, many of whom have never been active in any organisation, have quite literally had their lives transformed. "If you had told me a fortnight ago I'd be demonstrating, speaking at meetings, visiting factories, shops and offices, leafletting the streets, collecting money in buckets,



Demonstration in Barnsley, 12 May, of Miners' Wives Support Committee. Photo: J Smith (IFL)

picketing houses and planning trips to Nottingham—I'd have said you were crazy; and here I am doing the lot!"

The women have organised food collections and a system of distribution to those in need—families and single miners. They have arranged meetings about welfare rights and benefits and the Westoe women have decided to follow their husband's example—any attempt to disconnect gas or electricity from miners homes will be prevented by

a picket line of women and children!

The fundraising events are numerous—benefit socials, raffles (one woman sold 200 tickets going door to door in 2 hours!), collections, blind cards, jumble sales, coffee mornings, tombolas, sale of 'support the miners' pens etc etc.

The seamen's union in South Shields has given the women's committee the use of a whole floor of their building right in the centre of town which includes a meeting hall, kitchen, room

for a creche and a committee room.

Out to win

"We're prepared to back our men for as long as it takes. If Thatcher thought she could use the wives to force the men back to work we'll prove her wrong. In fact she's made a serious mistake. Now we're getting organised we're going to ensure our men stay out until this strike is won."

Lancashire rally success

SATURDAY 12 May was gala day for the Lancashire miners and the town of St. Helens as 10,000 marched through the town.

NUM banners flew over the procession. There were miners' contingents from Kent, Northumberland, Durham, Derbyshire and South Wales plus Labour Party, LPYS and trade union branches. The support of the local movement from St. Helens was fantastic and showed that the miners were not fighting alone.

The previous week the Lancashire area was brought out officially. This was evident in the presence of banners and strikers from pits that had been working only a few weeks before. Amongst the speakers were Roy Jackson, branch secretary for Sutton Manor NUM, Mally Gregory branch secretary of Bold



On the Mansfield march, 14 May. Photo: Jacob Sutton

NUM, Brian Green leader of St. Helens Council, Tony Mulhearn President Liverpool District Labour Party, Beverley Potter from the miners' wives, Dennis Skinner MP, Ellen Coady of the North-West Regional Committee of the LPYS and Peter Heathfield General Secretary of the NUM.

During the speeches a striking miner from Agecroft, the only pit that was working in Lancashire, ran up onto the platform and told how he had been on strike for the whole of the

dispute and appealed to the rest of the Lancashire strikers to get Agecroft out. This unplanned contribution to the rally received tremendous support.

The demo and gala, launched at an LPYS meeting a few weeks previously, was organised together with St. Helens supporters of local pits which had been out since the beginning and members of the local labour movement.

By Gerry Lerner

Notts not working normally

WELBECK HASN'T worked three shifts since the second week of the strike. Since it was made official in Notts, 800-1000 men have been out here.

Police have used truncheons on the picket line and won't even let us stand on the Welfare Playing Fields even though we are the ones paying for those fields.

The day after the truncheons were used Joe Ashton MP came down and was stopped 11 times between Sheffield and Welbeck but he was recognised at the first checkpoint. They radioed through to each check so he was expected and got little bother.

Newport correction

A SERIOUS mistake appeared in last week's issue of *Militant* due to a misunderstanding on the part of the editorial staff. The Russian ship pictured on page 11 was in fact unloading industrial 'coils', not coal. While in general this does not detract from

On the Friday there must have been 2 minutes devoted to Welbeck on the TV news, showing a pile of coal which they said represented a day's production. But that coal would have been turned out by one panel in half an hour. Normally my panel does 20-25 runs a week. My deputy told me they'd done two runs in the past week. That's "working normally"!

Some of the men going in must be really ashamed. One machine driver went in the boot of his father in law's car.

By Bill Davies
(Welbeck NUM)

the fact that coal is still being imported from the Eastern Bloc, our picture caption implied that the ship was being unloaded by dockers at Newport docks.

In fact the Newport dockers, members of the TGWU, in a splendid act of solidarity have not moved any coal since the beginning of the miners strike. We apologise unreservedly to the Newport dockers for our mistake.

Thanks to Militant and LPYS

FROM THE very first day of the 1984 miners strike for jobs and their industry the paper *Militant* and their supporters, have played a good part in the miners' struggle, also the Labour Party Young Socialists. I personally on behalf of the Kent miners would like to thank them all. I would also like to thank the public and friends in the Dagenham area for their support and the marvellous food parcels and donations, also for the accommodation which was very much appreciated.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Dagenham *Militant* supporters at their Young Socialists National Conference for the donation of £42.50 which will help the Kent miners in their latest struggle. On behalf of all the Kent miners thank you, for without this help it would be very difficult for the miners to win this latest struggle.

By P. Holden
(Kent NUM)

Around the country

WAKEFIELD LPYS have been active in helping out several support groups in the Wakefield area, and are trying to set one up in Wakefield itself. They are desperate for donations. Please send any to Wakefield LPYS 16 Vicarage Street, Wakefield. (Report from Richard Clarkson Wakefield LPYS and Prince of Wales NUM).

MILITANT supporters in STOCKTON-ON-TEES are getting a good response in collecting money. John Malcolm reports a regular reader giving a fiver which he had collected from his friends in his local.

FOUR WELSH miners from Maesteg have had a successful time in PLYMOUTH following their invitation from the LPYS they've collected well over £1,000. £60 came from the COHSE South West Regional Council, £100 from the convenors in the Naval dockyards who are now organising collections from their 10,000 strong workforce. Over £100 came from a LPYS public meeting which attracted 60 people.

Food and money is pouring in for the miners' funds in the South West. A street collection on the BRISTOL May Day march raised £269 and a lun-

chtime meeting at Rolls Royce with 300 workers present raised £814. Fortnightly collections are being taken at the factory. Support groups are now working throughout the South West including Swindon, Bath and Plymouth. A rally in support of the NUM is organised for Wednesday 6 June at Transport House, Victoria Street, Bristol, with Peter Heathfield, NUM General Secretary speaking.

Canvassers for the recent local elections in LIVERPOOL report widespread support for the miners. On the doorstep many people donated food and money, mostly those who are hard up themselves. One woman bought a copy of *Militant* and gave £1 for the miners saying with a laugh: "Sod the children's break-

fast"! We hope she didn't mean it.

70 people attended a support meeting organised by the SE London BROAD LEFT Organising Committee, in Woolwich Town Hall. Maurice Bryant (Kent NUM) gave a rousing speech. Colin Talbot (POEU Broad Left) reported that members of the POEU Westminster branch are refusing to repair NCB telephones, and are proposing to black computer links used by the NCB. (Donald MacDonald, GMBATU, reports.)

Hundreds of miners and supporters marched through RAMSGATE to attend a rally at the Miners' Hall on 5 May. Even local police handed out 'Coal not Dole' stickers! Speakers from Notts and Der-

byshire got a rousing reception. International support came from a representative of the French union the CGT, who promised support from across the Channel and said: "To stand up and fight is the only way."

Even on the ISLE OF WIGHT the miners' strike is on everyone's lips, reports Vic Dale T&GWU. "We opened our shop in Ryde last week and put up an appeal for money and food for the miners and their families, alongside the slogan 'Their fight is our fight. Smash the Tories'. The response was amazing."

We were canvassing for money and food for striking NOTTS miners from Gedling colliery and approached a woman whose opening line

was: "I'm a staunch Liberal". After a discussion her closing shot was: "I support the strikers. They should all come out. Drop back tomorrow for a bag of groceries." (Report Robin Clapp T&GWU)

IN THE last two months 1,908 miners have been arrested in England and Wales. Official Home Office figures, given in reply to a Parliamentary question from Dave Nellist MP, state that from 14 March to 10 May the numbers arrested were as follows: Notts-889; S. Yorkshire 185; Derbyshire-180; Staffs-177; Essex-157; Warwickshire-78; Durham-70; S. Wales-58; Northumbria-33; Merseyside-21; Manchester-16; Kent-15; N. Wales-14; Leicestershire-12; Lancashire-2; Humberside-1.

Miners' dispute

Strikes moved union left

AFTER nationalisation in 1947 close collaboration took place between the Government (even the Tories after 1951), the NCB, and the NUM leadership.

This policy of subversive collaboration was supported not only by right-wingers like Lawther and Ford, but also leading Communist Party leaders such as Horner and Paynter.

As Allen explained: "On the question of contraction, it (NUM leadership) insisted that the decisions to close which pits, when and where, were the prerogative of the management. The Union intervened only to facilitate the closures by assisting to alleviate the hardships which might result from them."

The strikes against pit closures in the late 1950's and early 1960's were opposed by government, NCB and...NUM! As a result young miners left the industry in search of a more secure future and youth recruitment dried up.

Since the formation of the NUM the right wing dominated its policy and ac-

tions. Up until 1967 little unity existed amongst the left areas. On the National Executive they mustered only 5 out of 26 votes. That year marked the biggest closure programme with 12,900 made redundant. Twelve months later Lawrence Daly, the left candidate, won the national secretary's position.

Unofficial strikes

Yet it was the unofficial strikes of 1969 and 1970 that really changed the mood amongst the miners. In 1970 55% voted to strike over wages, but a two-thirds majority was required by the rules for national action. They were changed the following Conference to a 55% figure and laid the basis for the famous 1972 strike—the first since 1926.

As the *Daily Mail* stated (just like today): "...A fight to the bitter finish would not

Rob Sewell concludes his two-part review of VL Allen's "The Militancy of the British Miners."

only end in a defeat for the miners as abject as their last official strike in 1926. It would also cripple morale...!"

The militancy of the miners in 1972—epitomised by the battle at Saltley Gate—defeated Heath's incomes policy and won substantial increases, an example to all workers. It was in this dispute that Arthur Scargill came into national prominence and within twelve months the left had won a majority in the previously right-wing Yorkshire Area—the largest Area of the union. The left made giant strides too on the NEC.

On 12 November 1973 the miners once again entered into a wages battle with the Heath government. Immediately—on the day the overtime ban was introduced—the Tories declared a state of



From Gormley to Scargill. (Above) Yorkshire mines march in support of Grunwicks dispute, 1977.

emergency and in panic shortly after introduced the 3 day week!

By mid January 1984 one million workers had been laid off. The NUM ballot for action resulted in over 80% for a strike!

Gormley retires

Heath ran desperately to the country in a 'Who rules Britain' election. He had the cheek to write to the NUM asking them to suspend their action until after the election—a measure supported by Joe Gormley—but totally rejected by the union. In the election, the Tories were defeated leaving the way open for a successful conclusion to the strike.

However from 1974 on-

wards, with the conniving leadership of Gormley and the right wing—supported now by the ex-left Daly—the NUM was pulled behind support for the 'Social Contract' wages policy, despite the opposition of its national conference. Again in 1978 Gormley, in defiance of the wishes of the rank and file, successfully manoeuvred the introduction of the devious incentive bonus scheme. His retirement and the election of Scargill was a real step forward for the union.

As far back as 1972 the NUM adopted the policy of no pit closures except in cases of proven exhaustion. The attempts of the Thatcher government to cut the financing of the mining industry and accelerate pit closures

was a means of breaking the power of the NUM to gain revenge for the defeats of 1972 and 1974.

Tories retreat

This programme offered by the Tories and their puppets in the NCB was not a case of individual pits, but the annihilation of the whole coalfield. It was this attempt to introduce draconian measures that provoked the spontaneous strike action—beginning in S.Wales—in February 1981. And it was this industrial action that forced the Tories to retreat temporarily and was in reality the beginning of the fight that sees its continuation in the present battle with McGregor.

Scabbing's bitter legacy

"I'll have a paper lad. It's terrible what they're doing to these miners isn't it."

I remember the 1926 General Strike. I was only a lad mind you but I'll never forget what they did to us then. I worked at Shireoaks. They starved us back; it was terrible.

There was men in Notts who scabbed then, worked through the whole damn strike. Blokes have never forgotten the bitterness that caused. There was no way any Notts men, even if they weren't miners, could set foot in Yorkshire, even to go on holiday at Scarborough.

I remember right near the start of the war. They'd clos-

ed pits in the 30's but reopened them at the start of the war because they needed the coal.

Crucial interrogation

I went over to Manton pit because I was sick of working at Shireoaks. I was interviewed by the pit manager

and he interrogated men about working at Shireoaks. I thought he must have thought I was a German spy or something. Anyway he kept on so I said "look there's a telephone ring up Shireoaks and ask them."

So he said, it was alright he believed me and gave me the job.

Anyway years later this manager had worked his way up to Area Director and I went up and asked him if he remembered setting me on at Maton all those years ago. He said he'd set loads of

blokes on and he couldn't remember. I reminded him about his interrogating me and I asked him why he'd done it. I could never work it out.

14 years later

He replied that he had 1,300 men at his pit and the nation needed the coal. He had to be very careful. If one man from Harworth (which had scabbed throughout the General Strike) had got a job at his pit he would have had

1,300 men walk out on strike. Just one scab and they couldn't take the risk 14 years later.

I tell you son, I reckon it'll be the same after this strike is over. I don't know what these Notts blokes are messing about at; they all want to be out. Anyway best of luck son, see you."

Conversation with examiner in Worsop on day of NUM demo by John Fahey, Nottingham East LPYS.

Miners' phones tapped

POEU evidence

DAVID NORMAN, Treasurer of the Post Office Engineering Union, told BBC's *Sixty Minutes* programme (30 April) that the POEU had definite evidence of miners' telephones being tapped.

He also explained that he could not reveal how he knew because like all other telephone engineers he has signed the Official Secrets Act. Sarah Tisdale and *The Guardian* found out that the Tories do not like their plots and plans made public!

The reasons laid down by the State for intercepting telephones were unchanged from 1957 until 1982 when after a secret report by Lord Diplock, the Tories widened the scope of the guidelines to include: "or for a lesser offence where large number of people are involved or the police expect violence."

Lord Diplock was 74 at the time of the report and had been the Chairman of

the Security Council for 10 years. He based his report on cases of official tapping in England, Scotland and Wales only. No investigations have been carried out into cases in Ireland or cases of unofficial tapping.

Panorama interview

One ex-security officer who was interviewed on *Panorama* in March 1981 admitted doing 'dozens of black bag jobs'. In 1982 two men were found bugging a public telephone box in South Wales; they were in a car, the registration details of which the local police did not have access to on Home Office orders. Will the Home Secretary, Leon Brittan, allow the POEU to present its evidence with immunity from prosecution or must miners and other workers draw their own conclusions from his continued denial of any interception of strikers phones?

By MS England
(Assistant Secretary
Leeds Internal POEU
personal capacity)

TV report

THIS SATURDAY'S "Union World" TV programme will deal with police phone tapping and secret surveillance of miners. On the programme Nigel West, author of books on MI5 and MI6, explains that the miners picketing operation is a target for MI5.

Department F2

The F2 department of MI5 is responsible for surveillance of unions, and according to West, F2 claim they have "total penetration" of the trade union movement up to General Council level. Also on the programme are members of the POEU, who explain how phones are tapped and reports from the miners' Barnsley headquarters.

"Union World" Channel Four. Saturday 19 May, 7.30 pm.

Thatcher's political police

POLICE questioning of pickets is increasingly political and often displays the thought processes and prejudices of many policemen.

Two miners from Bevercotes in Notts, Paul Cross and Tony Whitlam, spoke to Bob Faulkes:

"Two of us went down the embankment with "Official Picket" signs waiting for the coal train to come out, to talk to the drivers and see if they would stop. We saw the police coming from about a mile away over the fields. We didn't leave, we couldn't see any reason to.

"The PC said 'Would you move' and before we could answer he said 'you're arrested for trespass on BR property'. They put us into vans, not even allowing one picket to stay. They took us to Bevercotes where they photographed us and then on to Mansfield police station cells.

"The CID man asked our names which we gave, then asked 'do you know of any blacks and Liverpool dockers with pick axe



It's trouble for anyone who reveals what tricks the secret police get up to. (Above) Audrey, Berry and Campbell on trial in 1978.

handles coming into the area'. We repeated our names and addresses. Then he asked if any left-wing organisations had approached us. We gave our names and addresses yet again.

CID's interest

"We asked why he was not asking questions about the issues surrounding the arrest. 'I'm not here for that reason'. Then he asked if there had been any fighting with working miners, how much money we had left and how long we could stay out. We told him to mind his own f...ing business.

"He then asked about Arthur Scargill and if we were trying to bring the government down. Again we told him 'mind your own...'. He next gave a lecture on the benefits of Maggie Thatcher's policies and asked who we voted for. We were then released, charged with trespass etc.

"Since then on the picket line the police have drawn up a list of words and signs we can't use or we'll be arrested. Yet the scabs can say anything and some wave their pay slips in our faces without any opposition from the police."



The letter (right) shows the determination of our readers to see our Fund meet its target, bringing a daily Marxist paper nearer to becoming a reality. Every reader who had not yet contributed to the Fund should follow the example of Graham and the thousands of others who have made enormous sacrifices to help us on our way.

So far we have raised a total of £146,432 but we still need £28,568 more to see us home and dry. If the commitment of those who have already donated is emulated by the rest then we should be able to shoot past the £175,000 we need.

Those who have sent us money this week include: M Horridge, Blackpool, who has sent a £50 tax rebate; Paul Barrat, Essex, £50; Gill Harris, Battersea, £100. Supporters in Bristol have pledged a further £707; South West London, £282 on top of £158 paid in. Stevenage supporters have sent an extra £178 with £350 still to come. £10 has been sent by Marden Ward and striking Whitwell miners.

Like Kevin Blake (see last week's *Militant*) I was only able to give £1 to the Building Fund Appeal during the Militant Rally at LPYS Conference. However, if an unemployed comrade can sacrifice £100 then I should be able to do as well. So at a meeting last night on 'The Workers' Press' I wrote an IOU to register my fifth contribution to date. The enclosed £50 represents virtually a week's wages as I am a first year student nurse.

Make sure you raise the Building Fund with all the workers you meet, pointing

Together with my previous contributions (£25 pledged at Wembley last September, £13 raised from selling old records and £20 on each of two special appeals) this takes me well and truly past the £100 barrier.

I have been inspired by the sacrifice of other comrades and it seems that giving money towards a new premises is infectious—the more they give the more I am encouraged to!

Graham Cooper
Watford.

out how a daily Marxist paper will help them in their struggles. Use the special labour movement appeal letters to obtain donations from Trade Union branches and Shop Stewards' Committees. With an extra drive we can meet our target.

By Nick Wrack

FIIGHTING FUND

This Week £2002.07

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
Eastern	505		2700
East Midlands	305		3050
Humberside	142		1700
London East	223		3500
London West	213		2100
London South	144		2850
Manchester & Lancs	354		3700
Merseyside	424		4800
Northern	334		4050
Scotland East	199		2450
Scotland West	190		3300
Southern	529		4400
South West	312		2050
Wales East	188		2100
Wales West	193		1950
West Midlands	583		3800
Yorkshire	453		4500
Others	4936		12000
Total received	10,226		65000

THIS WEEK £2,002 was raised—still a long way short of the target.

A lot of sacrifice is going to be necessary now to get us back on target. We should look back to some of the great revolutionary teachers to understand what sacrifice really mean. In correspondence to Engels in February 1852 Karl Marx wrote: "A week ago I reached the pleasant point where I am unable to go out for want of the coats I have in pawn, and can no longer eat meals for want of credit."

"The only good news comes from my ministerial sister-in-law, namely the news that my wife's indestructible uncle is ill. If the cur dies now I shall be out of this pickle."

One thing made these

sacrifices not only bearable but necessary; Marx's legacy to the working class—his teachings made the first workers aware that they could unfasten their chains.

Now we must maintain that legacy by fighting for the future of all workers in struggle—but every step forward costs money, whether it's for posters, leaflets, public meetings etc, or for providing the resources necessary now for a future daily—a vital weapon in any workers' struggle.

We are not asking you to pawn your coat, just make a regular donation, £20, £10, £5 or 50p to ensure every workers' struggle is a success.

By Kim Waddington

DONATIONS RECEIVED this week include:

Wales TUC *Militant* Appeal collected £215; Cardiff sponsored bike ride is expected to raise £120; *Militant* mugs have raised £114 for Leeds supporters; Christine Elliot (NALGO NW London) £25; Perth supporters have raised £22 from Pontoon tickets; Cannock NUM Littleton Colliery £13; A Lester (Erdington) £10; M Singleton (Battersea) £10; Members Easington Lodge NUM £5; M Colk (POEU Norwich) £5; L Peden (Selly Oak) £5; G Finlayson (Billingham unemployed) £5; N Lovell (Liverpool COHSE) £4; J Stett (NOLS Nottingham) £2.75; Bart (Cliftonville) £1.25; Sherry Goring (Vauxhall LP) £1; Anne Gharapatias (Manchester) £1; Linda Stirling (Vauxhall) £1; Arthur Dodd (Coventry AUEW) 60p; Joan Birkett (Bradford) 50p and T Dunk (Brentwood USDAW) 50p.

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 Ashton 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.

'RAISE POLITICS at work! Buy a *Militant* mug.' £1.50 + 45p p&P from 50 Hartley Avenue, Leeds LS6 2LP. Cheques payable to: Chris Hill. All proceeds to FF.

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.

FOLKSTONE LPYS Public meeting: 'Support the miners'. 8.00 pm Friday 25 May, Harvey Hotel, Dover Road, Folkstone. Speakers: Terry French (Kent NUM) + LPYS speaker.

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

TONBRIDGE AND Malling Trades Council Public Meeting: 'Support the miners' fight for jobs.' Speakers: Harold Davies (Vice President: Kent NUM) Caroline Sweeny (Chairwoman: Tilmanstone Womens Group) at Six-In-One Club, Northwood Road, (off Trench Road), Tonbridge Wells, at 7.30 pm Wednesday 23 May.

HACKNEY South LPYS Miners Benefit Disco, Saturday May 11, 8pm - 11.45pm. Wally Foster Centre, Homerton Rd, E9 (near Kingsmead Estate). Bus 236 (22, 22a, 6, 30, S2 pass nearby). Entrance £1, 50p unwaged, or bring a couple of tins of food.

EDDIE NOLAN would like to thank all the comrades in Glasgow Pollock for fighting a successful district election campaign.

Meetings

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

HULL: "Liverpool and the miners - Kick out the Tories - Socialism in our Time". Speakers: Terry Fields (MP Liverpool Broadgreen), Stuart Borthwick (Youth Delegate Yorkshire Main (NUM)). On Friday June 1, 7.30 pm at Trades and Labour Club, Beverley Road.

AYLESHAM: 'A socialist strategy to save the pits'. Speakers include: Peter Taaffe (editor, *Militant*) Friday 18 May 7.30 pm at Aylesham Welfare club (new club).

WALLSEND Marxist Discussion Group, every Sunday morning 11.30am. 1 Vindolanda, Ryton Gardens, Howden Wallsend. Phone Newcastle 341254.

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.

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.

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'.

Northern Regional Labour Party Conference

Joint Meeting of Militant and Campaign Group of MPs
Speakers Terry Fields MP., Martin Flannery MP,
Chair: Peter Doyle (NUPE).
Saturday 19 May, 7.30pm. at YMCA, Ellison Place Newcastle.

SELLING Militant



Up for the Cup and socialism. Everton supporters back Liverpool City Council.

"THE EDITOR often appealed to readers for help, complaining that (distribution of) the paper got stuck on the Russian frontier and could not be forwarded because of the lack of fifty roubles; that manuscripts for a new issue had piled up on his desk and he could not send them to the printers; or that Pravda was compelled to stop correspondence with the readers in Russia because it could not afford postage. Trotsky's journalistic fees, earned from other papers, went to finance the little sheet; he sold his books, and his wife trudged to the

pawnshop so that of Pravda should at last get across the frontier."

Sacrifice

The above passage clearly shows Trotsky's recognition of the vital role played by the workers press in building support for Marxism. The importance of this remains unchanged as does the fact that only the effort and sacrifice of our supporters will build our paper.

There is another way of building our support—go out and sell the paper. Our sellers have been doing this with outstanding

success all over the country.

Star sellers this week have been in Bristol, where one comrade sold 72, to be just beaten by a comrade who sold 74 at USDAW conference. A sale outside a Dundee shipyard achieved 38 sales and supporters in Barnsley sold 219 between Friday evening and Saturday morning. Sellers all over the country could match these achievements in building our paper if they tried. Remember how important Trotsky thought the workers press was.

By Dave Fryatt

Photo: Militant

Young Socialists support the NUM

LPYS on the line

Photo: Peter Wharton



Why I've joined the LPYS

THIS WEEK, Kilmhurst miner Graham Hague tells why he joined Swinton and Rawmarsh LPYS:

I have been employed by the NCB now for 6 years. Great! A job with such a bright future. But not if Thatcher and her acolytes get their sick desires. They're not only destroying jobs but destroying communities and their families, turning them into ghost towns.

Before the strike I wasn't at all politically motivated, but like many colleagues who are fighting for their jobs and livelihoods, I was unfortunate enough to be arrested. It was at Creswell colliery where this paramilitary police force were present.

I was charged and imprisoned at Chesterfield police station and later released on bail after a day in the magistrates court. Then came the bail conditions that were imposed on me to keep away from all NCB property for the purpose of picketing.

All this changed my attitudes and after speaking to the LPYS I went along to a meeting and promptly joined. Why? In the attempt to overthrow the Tory government and to bring into power a Labour government with socialist policies.

Not only for a British socialist society but a socialist united states of Europe. Also to fight for our future generations, supporting unilateral disarmament. Only a socialist society internationally can keep us free from a nuclear holocaust.

Instead of destroying the coal industry let's expand it, invest tax payers money into industry instead of spending it building a paramilitary police state, investing abroad and on a nuclear arms race.

On a final note, being a privileged member of the NUM who is fully behind Arthur Scargill, to hear him say that he has seen the finest example of trade unionism from the young miners of today was most encouraging. The miners united (even better the workers united) will never be defeated. Help fight for a future worth looking forward to. Remember solidarity wins.

AFTER RAISING over £60 last Saturday for the miners' strike fund, LPYS members were invited to join the picket line at Ravenscraig in Motherwell.

Three of us made our way to the strike centre at 5.30am, bleary-eyed and tired. But there was a great mood of enthusiasm in the strike centre and cups of tea were brewed up. The miners kitted us out with NUM and *Militant Miner* stickers and we made our way to Ravenscraig.

Pickets cheered

On arrival our bus was cheered by the 500 pickets already there. Other bus loads of pickets were arriving by the minute.

It was the first time any of

By Wallace Ross and Derek Ross
(Glenrothes LPYS)

us had been on a mass picket, and I was worried about the massive police presence; eventually there was about 2,500 police and 1,000-1,400 pickets.

There was to begin with a fairly relaxed atmosphere.

As we lay in the sun more and more police marched up in military like style. It began to get very tense and scuffles broke out.

There were smirks from the police when news came that coal lorries had avoided the pickets and went through

ough a back entrance. The attitude of the miners was a mixture of anger and renewed determination. The plan for the next day was to picket Hunterston, the port where the coal was coming from. Only one of us from the YS could manage to go to Hunterston in the packed miners' bus.

The first incident to occur was when a group of pickets playing football had their ball taken off them by the police. A confrontation almost occurred and clashes were avoided when the ball was given back!

After this minor and rather humorous incident the police numbers swelled to about 3,000 compared with around 1,400 pickets.

When the coal trucks with their scab drivers arrived the pickets moved to confront

the lorries in an attempt to persuade the drivers to turn back. However angry clashes prevailed as police and mounted police came face to face with the pickets.

One young miner told me: "I was kicked and punched as a mounted policeman held me by the hair. It was only fellow miners who saved me by pulling me free." Judging by his swollen face and ripped jacket I don't think he was exaggerating.

Bus stopped

Because of the sheer number of police the lorries got through and there was 62 arrests.

The comrades from Fife ran to the bus and headed for Ravenscraig in order to confront the lorries again. On the journey back many

miners needed to go to the toilet and they stopped at a road-side cafe. As they walked back to the bus the scab lorries drove past and the miners shouted abuse.

A CID patrol van which also passed reported the incident and the bus was stopped and everybody arrested. When asked of the charge they were told: "We'll think of one!"

The bus was then escorted out of Strathclyde area. By this time the pickets were tired, hungry and wanting to go home. Derek Ross, the YS comrade who went through this ordeal, was totally shattered, he was almost sleep-walking. He said: "My only regret is that I missed Rob Sewell speaking at the *Militant* readers' meeting in Glenrothes. I can't wait to get back on the picket line".

Selling papers at the miners' executive meeting in Sheffield recently. The LPYS have been harassed by police while carrying out support work. Photo: Jacob Sutton



It's a woman's fight too

LAST WEEK five YS members from Nottingham went down to an early morning picket line at Pye Mill No 2 pit to offer support.

While on the picket line a chief inspector arrived. He approached the pickets and demanded to know who were really miners. He cleverly realised that the two female YS members were not miners. The miners told him we were from the canteen and that we had every right to be on the line.

The inspector's reply was that he "wouldn't have wench on his picket line." According to him the strike was nothing to do with women. The pickets were amazed at this and angrily told him the



Photo: John Harris (IFU)

Women are in the forefront of the miners' fight.

strike had everything to do with women, the wives girlfriends and daughters.

However, the inspector did not agree and spitefully told the two girls that unless they moved across the road he would arrest them.

'Move now'

His exact words were: "Move now or I'll arrest you. It would make a very pleasing start to my day to begin by arresting two young

women and throwing them in the back of the van for a while"

How this inspector could be so ignorant as to say the strike has no effect on women is unbelievable—the pickets were especially annoyed at his remarks. We were welcomed onto the picket and told to come back anytime, this strike meaning just as much for women as men.

By Louise Watts
(Nottingham East LPYS)

Arrested—for insulting MacGregor

I'VE SEEN the two sides of the police in this dispute. After the local election count in Basildon, although we were a bit cheeky to this policeman, we got a favourable response.

He said he had been to Nottingham, was fed up with it all and sympathised with the miners. We sold him a *Militant* which he proudly displayed, sticking out of his back pocket.

The other face of the police was more bizarre. The LPYS was out in force on a Kent NUM march in Grays. We were singing: "We love to go a wandering, along the

cliffs of Dover, and if we see MacGregor there, we'll kick the bastard over."

As I was the unfortunate person brandishing the megaphone I was warned by police not to use bad language. So MacGregor became a 'rascal'.

Too much

However, I don't know what came over me and I later reverted back to the original version. For one young policeman of a sensitive persuasion this was all too much. Gripping my arm and putting on a deep voice he said: "I'm arresting you under section 5."

Everyone was amazed, including other policemen.

To cut a long story short I was released after an hour. By this time some miners and YS members had come to the police station to see what was going on.

In the reception, one old lady enquired what had happened. When it was explained to her that Mr MacGregor had been insulted, she asked: "What was MacGregor doing in Grays anyway?" That just about summed up a confusing day. Who said politics was boring?

By John McKay
(Basildon LPYS)

Reports • Reports • Reports

Raising cash

Meetings have been held by Midlothian LPYS, raising £65 for the miners. In the build up to one of the meetings, 200 papers were sold, including 50 *Militants* and 30 *Socialist Youths* in one evening alone.

By Pauline Dick
(Midlothian LPYS)

Links have been forged between the miners and LPYS in Grimsby and Doncaster area. Miners have regularly visited Grimsby from Hatfield Hain pit, our 'adopted' colliery. The culmination of our local campaign was a public meeting attended by 65 people, raising over £60. Speakers included Sheena Hermant, a young miner's wife, and Brian Croucher. Brian also addressed Grimsby Labour Party general committee which raised £56, topped up by right wing MP Austin Mitchell to £80.

By Nick Walker
(Grimsby LPYS)

"MacGregor calls us miners 'his people'—who the bloody hell does he think he is? He's butchered the steel industry, he's trying with the coal, and if he wins it'll be the railways." These were the feelings of three Kent miners, Paul Dobson, Colin James, and Bernard Hodges, when they spoke at an LPYS meeting in Brixton attended by 30 people. The local YS has collected £100 on street and estate collections.

At Gedling pit in Nottinghamshire—where scabs have to be called "bounders" because police allow no 'abuse'—nearly 200 miners are on strike but with very little pay. To help out Gedling LPYS canvassed a local pit estate. We were warned that we'd get a hostile response because the miners there were working. However, in an evening and afternoon we collected just under £24 and two and a half carrier bags of food. Working miners contributed as well as pensioners who said they would never have crossed a picket line.

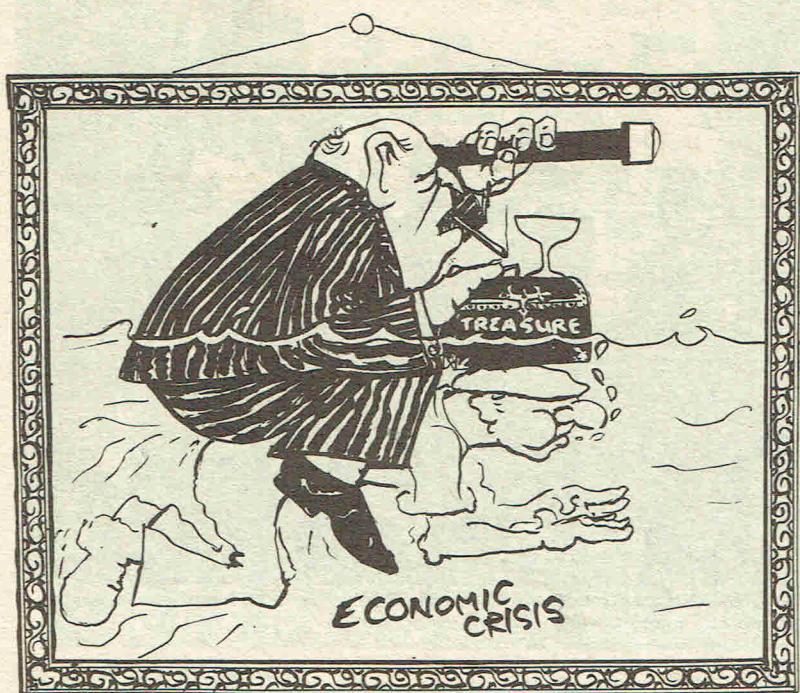
By Lindsay Common
(Gedling LPYS)

LPYS branches in Newham (North West, North East and South), East London, have been raising cash. A day of action with three Kent miners at Upton Park and later in East Ham raised £83. A box of food was collected outside a supermarket, until the LPYS were moved on by police for 'begging'. The LPYS have been heavily involved with the local miners' solidarity committee, visiting local factories. Newham North West LPYS raised over £50 at a collection, at Statford station, while Newham North East LPYS raised £16 and two bags of food in a door to door collection, and £21 on a street collection.

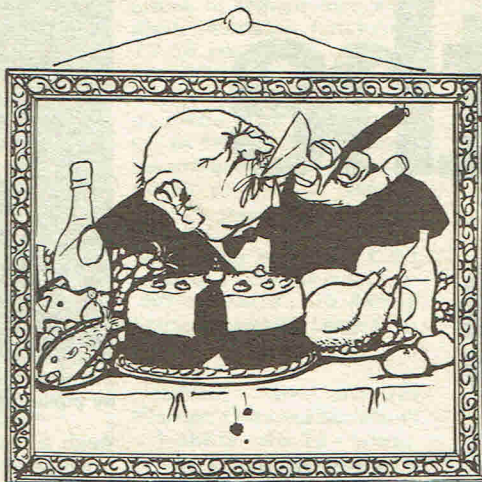
By Maureen Wade
(Newham North East LPYS)

NEW REALISM

An exhibition of painting and sculpture by leading members of the TUC



The Ancient Mariner or Don't rock the boat by Terence Duffy



Still life with crumbs for workers by Frank Chapple



The dream by Lionel Murray



When did I la... by W

TUC right-wing under pressure

THE RESIGNATION of Len Murray as the General Secretary of the TUC is a landmark in the post war development of the trade union movement. It heralds a period of unparalleled turmoil in the trade unions which will shake to its foundations the grip exercised by the right wing leadership in some major unions.

By Peter Taaffe

long he could be joined by some other right wing luminaries of the General Council in a kind of league of abandoned careers.

Thus Alistair Graham, leader of the CPSA who played an equally shameful role in the NGA dispute also face calls for his resignation at the Brighton conference of the Civil and Public Servants Association. More than one-third of the resolutions criticised him or his right-wing dominated executive committee.

At the recent USDAW conference the right-wing dominated executive committee was defeated 11 times! Resolutions in support of Liverpool City Council were passed.

At the APEX conference, resolutions in support of CND were passed while the motion criticising Roy Grantham, general secretary, for his failure to support the NGA was only defeated because he demagogically criticised the NGA leadership for not calling an all-out Fleet Street strike which he maintains would have won the day for the NGA.

The significance of Murray's departure, therefore, lies not in his personal fate but in the complete shattering of the so-called "new realism" philosophy which underpinned the right wing majority on the General Council of the TUC.

The Tories' victory prompted the right wing to abandon "Trafalgar Square" (i.e. mass opposition and demonstrations against the government) in favour of negotiations and accommodation with the Tory government.

The so called "experts", ascribe Murray's departure to ill-health. He explained it in terms of wanting more time to "study life" read books and smell flowers. Striking mineworkers can be forgiven for thinking that Murray had already taken to the nature trail, given his deafening silence during their dispute.

Perhaps inadvertently the real reason for his departure was given by Murray himself at a "democracy day" rally in London when he reacted to hecklers protesting at his disgraceful role during the NGA dispute. He declared: "If the movement doesn't like me it can kick me out."

Murray has packed his bags

In the wake of the recent strike wave there has been a gathering storm of opposition to the right-wing dominated General Council and to the role of Murray since the election of the Tory government last year. *The Financial Times* quite realistically commented, "instead of being kicked, he's packing his bags" (2 May, 1984).

The departure of Murray is as significant as the forced resignation of Sid Weighell from the leadership of the National Union of Railwaymen. Moreover, before

Murray drew sustenance from those like Hobsbawm who, although a member of the alleged "Communist" Party, is the new guru of both the right wing, and those former "lefts" who are the main supporters of Neil Kinnock.

According to these worthies the general election confirmed Hobsbawm's thesis that "militancy" was dead. The working class have become reconciled to capitalism, the trade unions are impotent and Labour is on a downward curve of declining influence and power.

Above all, argued these ingrained sceptics, the trade unions were so enfeebled that they were unable to resist the resurgent Thatcherite capitalism. The Marxists argued against these ideas and showed how shallow was the analysis of Hobsbawm.

Thus, although TU membership had declined by 1,800,000 since 1979, this was mainly due to unemployment and not to any "unpopularity" of the trade unions. Compare this decline to the drop of almost 50% in union membership between 1920 and the general strike of 1926.

Moreover, there is absolutely no basis for the argument that the labour movement needs to water down its programme to win the so-called "yuppies"—the "Young Upwardly Mobile". These layers, far from moving upwards, are being plunged downwards into poverty with other workers. Hence, the threat of a teachers' strike, of a civil service strike, etc.

The social reserves upon which capitalism rested in the past—the white collar workers—like the industrial workers are compelled to move against the system.

Leon Trotsky once commented that there are times when Marxists would have to wait for decades to see their prognosis confirmed. But there are other times—like the present—when the tempo of developments increases and perspectives

are falsified or confirmed within months.

Barely ten months after the general election and just six months after the TUC Congress which installed the "new realism", those ideas are lying in ruins.

The NGA dispute demonstrated that far from attempting to conciliate the trade union leaders and meet them "half way" the new Tory government was hell-bent on breaking one of the most powerful unions in Britain. Calls for solidarity with the NGA were greeted with sneers by right wing spokesmen like Alistair Graham.

'No-strike' deal

And yet a matter of months later his union members at GCHQ were facing the complete withdrawal of democratic and trade union rights!

From his natural prostrate position—crawling on his belly before the government—when faced with an attack on his own union Graham could declare, "when it comes to the defence of basic trade union rights we are all extremists now" (*The Financial Times*, 1 March 1984).

However, this "extremist" was initially not prepared to call for effective strike action in defence of even his own members' basic democratic rights. On the contrary, he offered, together with other civil service trade union leaders, a scandalous "no-strike" agreement with the government.

Despite the grumblings of Murray and Co nothing effective was done to back the civil servants by the General Council. And yet as the industrial editor of *The Financial Times* commented at the time, "many of these (workers in general) might respond to a carefully planned 24-hour strike: indeed, such a move might well succeed".

The shameful role of the right and particularly Murray himself at the time of the NGA dispute prompted widespread demands for his resignation or removal. The echoes of that dispute are still being felt within the trade union movement. Thus, the NGA national leadership, to their credit, have written to all union executives who failed to support them during the *Stockport Messenger* dispute asking for the right to address their executive committees.

The Scottish TUC a few weeks ago passed a motion which, in effect, criticised the role of Murray and the right on the General Council. A head of steam is building up

which could result in a mighty collision between right and left at the forthcoming TUC. Murray's position would have been an issue.

Such is the distrust of the right on the General Council that when the miners began their titanic struggle with the NCB there was no thought of approaching the TUC for assistance.

Instead, the NUM have correctly sought to organise support from the left unions within the TUC.

Since the election the trade union tops have moved to the right precisely at a time when the majority of the working class and particularly of the new layer of the youth have shifted towards the left. The arguments of Hobsbawm have been given a crushing answer by the movement of the young miners in the present dispute.

These young miners had allegedly been "bought off" by capitalism with Volvo cars and home ownership. According to the philosophers of woe it was the older miners who were it seems, the last repositories of the "dying militancy" of the miners and other workers.

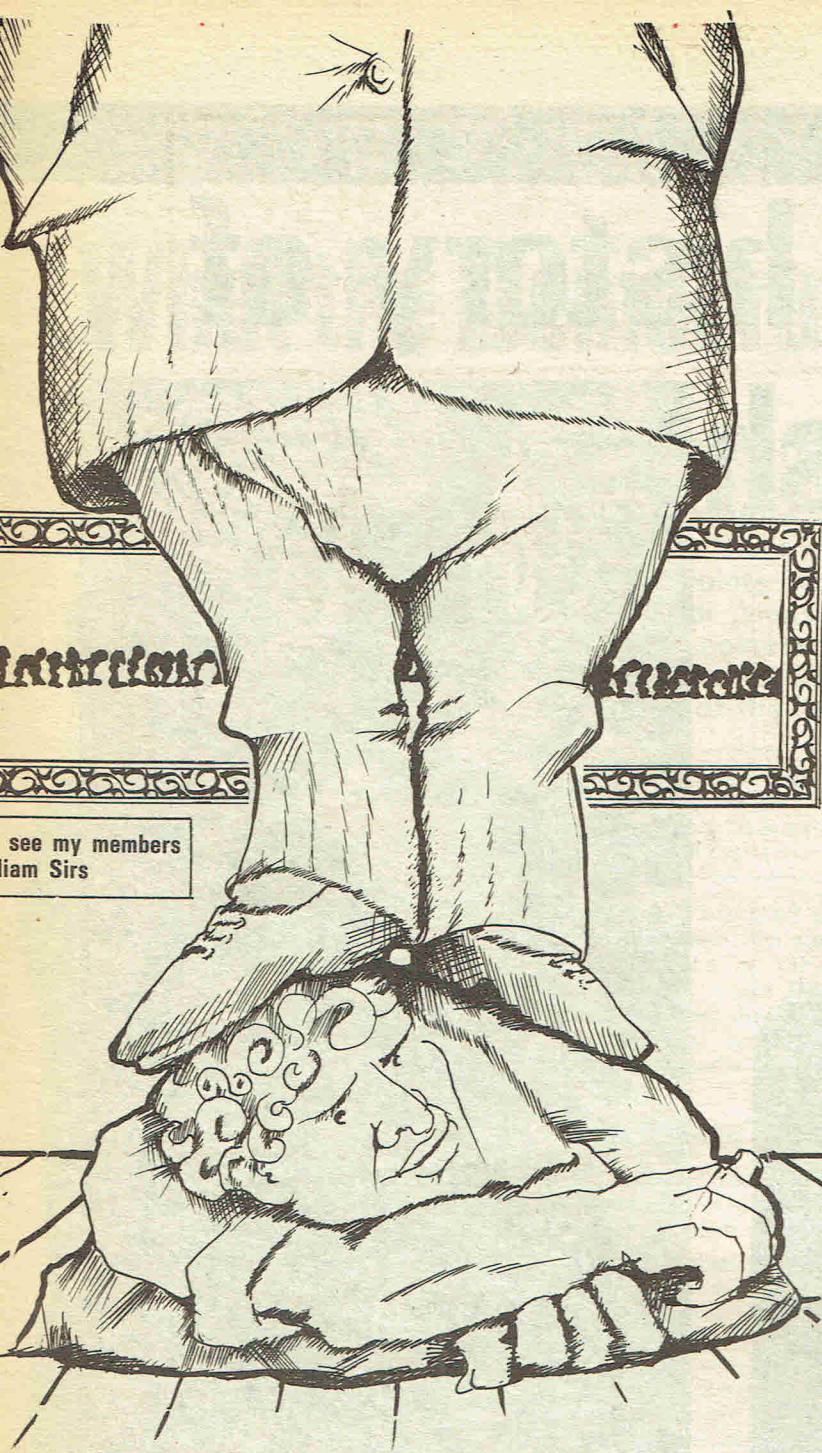
Militant young miners

And yet it has been precisely the young miners of Yorkshire, South Wales, Scotland, Kent and other coalfields who have spearheaded the struggle to defeat the policies of Thatcher and MacGregor. In fact the miners' struggle is the most significant pointer for the future developments of all unions in Britain.

It was the Marxists who in the period of seeming retreat and quiescence showed that there was a powerful molecular process of change which had been wrought in the British working class. This process had been taking place below the surface but is now bursting into the open.

We pointed to the fact that while the older layer of shop stewards had become tired and worn out a new younger, hardier breed of shop stewards had been pushed to the fore. Perhaps less politically aware and mature than the older generation to begin with, but nevertheless more hardened and steered by the recession, this layer have now come to the fore during the miners' strike.

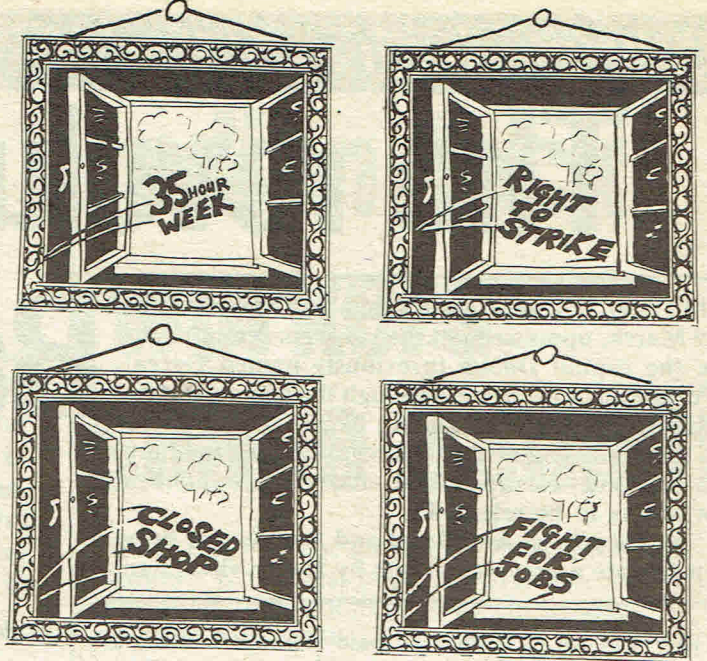
They have learnt more in ten weeks of struggle about the realities of capitalism, about what it will take to ensure victory on the trade union field, about the role of the



see my members
iam Sirs



Self portrait
by
Frank Chapple



Out of the window
(variations on a theme)
by Alistair Graham

police, the state and the government and of the role of the right wing of the labour and trade union movement, than was learnt in the previous ten or twenty years.

Although the strike may not yet be complete as '72 and '74 in many important respects it is on a much higher level.

In '72 and '74 the miners' struggles were conducted against the background of a general cohesion and confidence of the labour and trade union movement. The power of union organisation had been demonstrated again and again. It had taken less to achieve victory in those struggles than in the present battles.

Now the miners have come up against the stubborn resistance not just of the NCB but of the Tory government who obviously planned the attack on the miners in consort with MacGregor. Thatcher obviously was planning an "industrial Falklands".

She calculated that a defeat of the miners would cower the British working class and would result in electoral benefits for herself and her party. However, she reckoned without the magnificent capacity for struggle of the miners.

The shattering of Murray's concordat with the government is not because of Thatcher's failure to see "reason". Nor is it because the trade union rank and file failed to recognise "new realities". His dreams floundered because of the absolute collapse of British capitalism and the resulting intensified struggle between the classes that we now see taking place in British society.

There is absolutely no possibility, as the Marxists argued in the aftermath of the last general election, for any lasting agreement between the trade union tops and the Tory government. Any attempt by the right wing to maintain such agreements would open up an unbridgeable gulf between them and the rank and file.

It is because the more sensitive trade union leaders saw this development that they have been compelled into semi-opposition to the government. Hence the rupture of all connections with the govern-

ment including the boycott of the National Economic Development Council.

The strategists of capital, particularly within the Tory cabinet, see no other way out for their system except by ruthless cuts in the living standards of the working class. They have already pauperised wide layers of the working class since they came to power in 1979.

Living standards have been squeezed while the profits of big business have been massively increased particularly in the course of the last two years. However, as we have explained in previous issues of *Militant* and *Militant International Review* the British ruling class is relying falsely on a policy of cheap wages rather than investment in machinery to compete with its rivals on the world market.

The unions, however, stand in the way of this scheme of Thatcher. Contrary to what some trade union leaders have maintained, the British ruling class including Thatcher at this stage dare not contemplate and do not have the power to introduce "fascism" which would involve the complete annihilation of all workers' democratic rights including the trade unions.

However, they wish to limit, restrict and render incapable effective trade union resistance to their proposals to savage the living standards of working people. At best they want a tame trade union leadership leading virtually "house unions" on the pattern of some unions in America and Japan.

Shamefully, some of the right wing trade union leadership are prepared to go down this road. Thus we have seen recently the leadership of the EETPU and the right wing AUEW leaders frantically competing against one another to sign "no-strike" agreements with Japanese and American companies.

This has rightly been condemned by the rest of the trade union movement with sharp denunciations of the EETPU recently at the Welsh TUC. The right wing leadership of the AUEW and of the EETPU will themselves come under increasing pressure to abandon their pro-capitalist policies.

Encouraged by the attempt at conciliation and retreat by the General Council the government were preparing to move on to hamper and restrict trade union rights in other "essential services". In the wake of the miners' strike it is not certain that they will proceed with their previous plans.

But no matter what the outcome of the miners' strike, the next period will see a further shift towards the left within the trade unions. On a higher plane the trade union movement is now moving into a period similar to the period of 1968/72 which saw a huge move to the left in the miners' union, the engineering union, with the election of Hugh Scanlon in the AUEW and Jack Jones in the Transport and General Workers Union.

This in turn was a reflection of the massive discontent of the majority of the trade union membership with the role of previous right-wing general secretaries. However, those victories would not have been possible without an organised left opposition within the unions.

Moreover these victories were not capitalised on by the left. On the one side the Broad Lefts which ensured victories for Scanlon in the AUEW for instance were primarily an electoral machine. Once the agreed candidate is elected then the organisation falls into a state of disrepair.

Trade Union Broad Lefts

Also the inadequacies of Scanlon who claimed to be a Marxist but did not have a clear Marxist programme and perspective, was never brought out.

Even in the early 1970s such was the parlous state of British capitalism that the struggle to defend the rights and conditions of the working class was bound up with the need to change society. When Scanlon saw this he drew back: "I went to abyss and didn't like what I saw". He then sought an accommodation with the government of Heath.

One of the factors in the precarious maintenance of the right wing domination in some of the major unions has not been the mood of the rank and file but the lack of such opposition. This is why the recent Broad Left Organising Committee conference in Sheffield was of such significance for the further development of the trade union movement in Britain.

There are many indications of the powerful leftward trends within

many unions at the present time. This is shown by the demand for the democratisation of the unions. Pressure for the regular elections of general secretaries, presidents, executive committees, etc has increased enormously in the past period.

Thus in the formerly right wing dominated General, Municipal, Boilermakers and Allied Trades Union the demand for the regular election of officials has gained renewed support. It is not without significance that the newly formed Broad Left within GMBATU has gained support and in turn has given a greater shift towards the left, towards democracy, accountability etc within that union.

Throughout the history of the labour movement when the workers are blocked at the top, they seek an outlet through organisation at the bottom. Thus developed the Minority Movement which was formed in the period before the 1926 General Strike and played a significant role in those titanic events.

The Broad Left Organising Committee is not in a similarly influential position in the trade union movement at the present time. Moreover, contrary to what some tiny ultra-left sects imagine, this organisation is not a substitute for the official trade union movement but is complementary to it.

It is necessary to provide a means for the trade union membership to organise and fight factory and industry wide, and at branch level while at the same time seeking to transform the official trade unions.

The trade unions in Britain will shift towards the left in the coming period. But experience in the past two decades has shown that there is no room for "non-political" trade unionism in Britain. Every serious struggle of the working class comes up against the opposition not just of the employers but of the government representing the employers as a whole.

It is therefore childish as some right wing leaders imagine that the trade unions in Britain can adopt a neutral position. The right wing on the General Council imagine that they can return to the so-called "partnership" of the MacMillan era of the 50s and 60s.

Thatcher has rudely broken off these negotiations and discussions not just because of any prejudice on her behalf. It is the brutal realities of capitalism which demands that the Tories inflict savage cuts in the living standards of the working class.

The days when trade union leaders could gather together around a table to share out the national pie with the government and employers are over. Once the surplus which is extracted from the labour of the working class begins to contract, as Trotsky points out, then the struggle between the classes is enormously intensified.

This is the situation which faces the British working class and British society at the present time. We need a trade union movement which is capable of fighting for a living wage, for a 35 hour week, for a massive boost in public expenditure and all the reforms guaranteed in the programme of the trade unions and labour movement. At the same time the trade unions need to continue their implacable resistance to any attempt to impose Tory anti-union laws.

But only by linking the day to day struggles of the trade unions with the wider struggle to transform society can there be any lasting future for the British working class and for the trade unions. Already some of the representatives of capitalism have opened up the future prospects of the whole position of the trade union movement being challenged.

All-out assault

Lord Denning, former Master of the Rolls, has warned the trade unions—"if they flouted the law their existence was threatened". (*Guardian* 29 March 1984). It is absolutely impossible for such an attack to succeed at this stage, because of the power of the unions and the working class. But as sure as night follows day, within the context of a declining and epileptic British capitalism, the ruling class at a certain stage will launch an all-out assault on the labour and trade union movement in Britain.

Therefore the trade unions must combine the struggle to defend and extend rights with the socialist transformation of society. On the basis of a planned economy the trade unions will play a key role in the drawing up of a socialist plan and the management and control of that society.

But to achieve that goal the British working class needs unions and leaders equal to them. The resignation of Murray could usher in a period of transformation of the unions which could give them such a programme and leadership.

Bangladesh

The revolutionary history of Bangladesh

On 1 March, a general strike shook Bangladesh. On 29 March, oppressed rickshaw drivers demonstrated in the capital Dhaka (previously named Dacca). Police vans were driven through the demonstrators, killing three, and wounding fifty.

Such movements have forced the military junta to concede elections and allow some political prisoners to be released.

In this article, Abu Rasul and Anil Kumar bring up to date a previous article by Roger Silverman;

THE FIRST act of the independent Bangladesh government was to disarm the masses who had spearheaded the revolution (see article below).

Under India's patronage an orgy of corruption raged under Mujib. Awami League officers openly took over the "abandoned" property of West Pakistan and collaborators. The corrupt officialdom grew fat on the two billion dollars' worth of relief supplies. More aid had flowed into Bangladesh in 2½ years than in the previous 23. It lined their pockets.

The landless peasants earned 17% less in 1973 than they did in 1949. People were literally starving to death in the streets. Others were committing suicide or refusing inoculation against epidemics, preferring a quick death to slow starvation.

By late 1974, Bangladesh had crumbled into chaos. Over 3,000 AL officials had been assassinated, either by guerillas or by factions of the party. Mujib, the hero of 1971, dared not venture on to the streets.

Posed as leadership

These events disillusioned the best heroes of the liberation struggle, symbolised by the defection of Ziauddin to the Serbhera Party, a guerilla force, and of Abu Taher in the left-wing Socialist National Party (Jatyo Samajtanrik Dal), or JSD. They commanded 90% of the infantry in 1972.

Taher became leader of the military wing of the JSD and therefore of the revolutionary mutiny of 7 November 1975. Unlike all the other left parties, the JSD never turned its back on the national liberation movement in 1971. The capitalist Awami League, just like the Congress politicians who were interned in 1942-45, was enabled to pose as the leadership of the oppressed masses in their struggle for freedom.

Food hoarding

While the pro-Moscow CP turned its back on nationalism and armed struggle, the pro-Chinese CP was at first blinded and then torn into fragments by the cynical double-dealing policy of Peking. True to its strategic alliance with the Pakistani dictators, China openly opposed the right of self-determination for East Bengal, shrugging off the whole struggle as a "plot by Indian expansionism and Soviet social-imperialism," and even a threat to... Pakistan's "territorial integrity"!

China even loyally provided Yahya Khan with the use of Chinese air bases from which to launch his murderous blitzkrieg. After

these betrayals Maoism is virtually extinct in Bangladesh.

During 1974, the world commodity crisis had combined with the worst floods for 20 years. Where Mujib had promised to halve the price of rice, it had risen ten times over, Mujib and his Indian patrons were universally identified with the food-hoarders and black marketeers. Memories had stirred of the Great Bengal Famine of 1943, in which 3 million had perished.

Officers paralysed

When junior officers murdered Mujib and his family on 15th August, the former demi-god died without arousing a whimper of protest. However, the new regime depended on the backing of the USA and Pakistan, and comprised hated collaborators and repatriates, who sat out the war in West Pakistan. The regime lasted until 3rd November when Mrs. Gandhi's secret police staged a new coup which was equally loathed by the masses. The threat of civil war between rival factions of the army was poised.

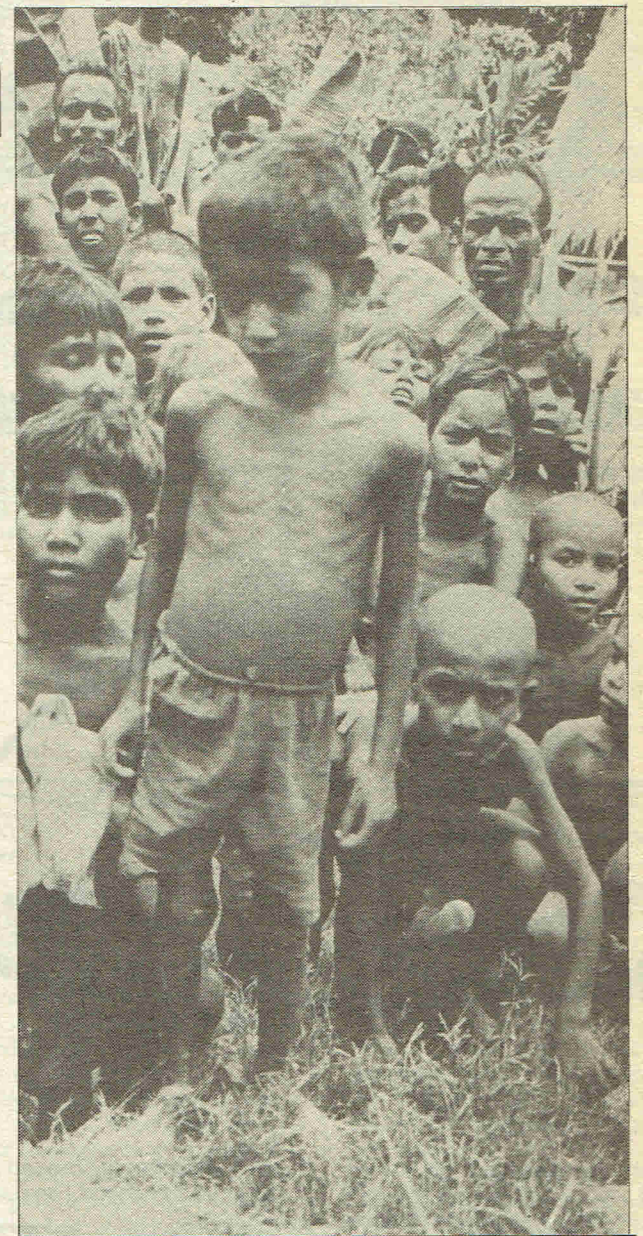
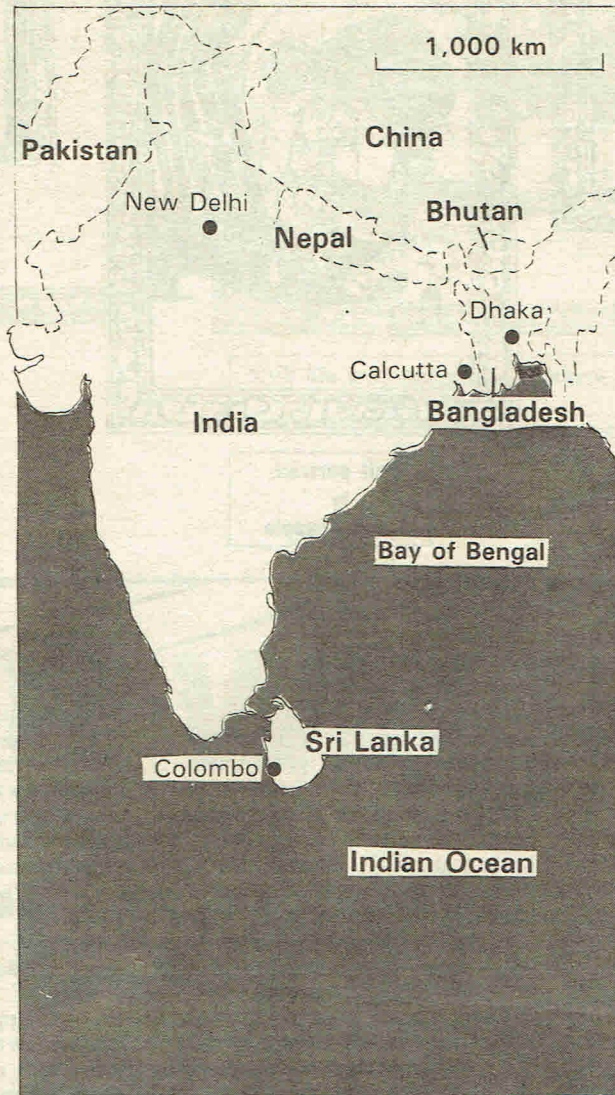
The ruling class was split, the officers paralysed, the people ready to stake their lives. The JSD began the uprising of November 7th, it rescued General Zia, an ally of Taher in the war. It appealed to the soldiers, "This revolution is for one purpose—the interests of the oppressed classes... The rich have used us for their own interests... This time we have to revolt alongside the masses of the country."

Their twelve demands included the release of all political prisoners, an end to officers' privileges, abolition of the batman system, selection of officers from the rank and file instead of elite military academies, higher pay, rent-free accommodation, and "a class-less army as a step towards a classless society".

The whole army rose up, defying army officers who stood in their way. Conscripts ripped off insignia from their officers' lapels, Revolutionary committees were set up within the barracks. Unlike successive putsches, to which the masses were mute bystanders, this mutiny was cheered by thousands of workers who poured on to the streets in spontaneous demonstrations. Crowds rolled through the streets, and soldiers fired into the air shouting: "The soldiers and people have united!"

This revolt reverberated through Bangladesh like an earthquake. In the remotest villages, poor peasants and paupers rose to acclaim the revolution. Rich landlords were bought to heel, local

Bangladesh



Refugee camps in Bangladesh in 1973. People starved while relief ships refused to unload food after political pressure.

The war of liberation

WHEN Pakistan was artificially created by British imperialism in 1947, half a million people died in communal riots and ten million refugees migrated across the new borders. Three-quarters of the population were victims of national oppression. In the 1971 war to liberate the majority East Bengali nation over a million perished.

Divide and rule

Pakistan, the creature of imperialism's cynical policy of 'divide and rule' was an abortion. From its beginning its dominant political force, the Muslim League, split into wrangling factions. The military dictatorship of Ayub Khan (1958-69) failed to hold the country together as it was blown sky-high by a wave of massive strikes, gheraos and also student demonstrations—General Yahya Khan took control, promising free elections and provincial governments. But once the lid of repression had been

blasted off no force could hold the masses down.

East Bengal, the poorest and most populous part of Pakistan, entirely dependent on jute production which wavered at the mercy of world market prices, revolted by voting unanimously for Sheikh Mujibur Rehaman's Awami League, the nationalist party. The AL won a majority of the seats in Pakistan's National Assembly!

"Inappropriate" results in elections invariably result in the suspension of democracy. On March 25, 1971, the Pakistan General Headquarters sent 100,000 troops to Dacca with the instructions: "Burn everything. Kill everyone in sight." Thousands were massacred. The war had begun.

Overnight, the masses rose up, while Mujib waited at home Mahatma Gandhi-style, to be arrested. 12,000 Bengali troops had been wiped out in days, the Pakistani columns were victorious. Mujib complained openly "is the West Pakistan government aware

that I am the only one able to save East Pakistan from Communism? If they take a position to fight, I shall be pushed out of power, and the Naxalites (revolutionary guerillas) will intervene in my name. If I make too many concessions, I shall lose my authority. I am in a difficult situation."

Why India intervened

India, then intervened, terrified that a people's war of liberation would set ablaze turbulent West Bengal, which was poised on the brink of revolution. The Indian rulers seized their chance, to neutralise its Eastern flank, avenge itself on Pakistan, pillage Bangladesh, and assert its dominance of the sub-continent. 150,000 Indian troops intervened, with popular support, this ensured Bangladesh a quick victory.

The Indian Army was cheered on by the masses, both Mrs Gandhi and Mujib being hailed as liberators.

bandits were executed, ragged sharecroppers formed committees.

The tragedy is that the heroism and noble intentions of Taher and his comrades were not enough to successfully lead the revolution. The JSD consciously handed over power to a "neutral" figure—Zia himself. Confused perspectives held them back from mobilising the working class as the vanguard of the movement.

Sixteen days later, Zia had Taher and his comrades arrested, and after nine months Taher was hanged. A shudder of revulsion ran

through the country. Zia hastily formed an elite paramilitary police force to hunt down the JSD and smash any resistance.

The arch-traitor paid the price in May 1981, a coup by junior officers led by General Manzur Ahmed overthrew the bloodthirsty regime of Zia. Manzur lasted for three days! Zia was killed.

Unstable democracy

Ershad the present president knows that he is sitting on a volcano. A bewildering excess of parties have

descended from failed capitalist politicians and ex-dictators. Any capitalist government elected will from the very start be in crisis, being constantly under threat of being undermined by a military coup.

It is of paramount importance to mobilise the small but potentially decisive working class and to draw in its wake the soldiers, students and peasants. The need is to offer not merely abstract political liberation, but an immediate means of resolving the eternal battle for the necessities of life, by taking over the wealth, the

land, the mills out of the hands of the parasites, landlords and capitalists and organising a socialist plan of production.

Power of working class

The stirring events of 1975 have been cloaked in obscurity by the world capitalist press. But they show the power of the soldiers, workers and poor peasants in one of the most poverty stricken backwaters of the planet. Next time, the power must not be given away.

What the Democrats didn't say

THE DEMOCRATIC Party's Presidential caucuses and primaries have grabbed the British press headlines on the USA recently. John Reimann, an activist with the Carpenters Union in the San Francisco area, writing to *Militant*, points out that not one of the candidates, "radical" or "conservative" has said a word about the labour struggles of the last six months. But as Brother Reimann shows, they continue to reflect the change in the mood of the American working class.

John Reimann
(Carpenter Local 36 (Oakland) personal capacity)

CHANTING "two gates must go", some 300 union building trades workers massed at the Veterans Hospital here in San Francisco in March to protest the use of a non-union electrical contractor in the multi-million dollar remodel of this hospital.

'Dual gate' system

The action followed a rally of about the same number on Tuesday night with leading union spokesmen.

Under the "dual gate" system, a construction site with both union and non-union contractors puts up two entrances—one for union and one for non-union contractors. It is then illegal for unions to picket the "union" gate, thus forcing union workers to work alongside non-union workers.

In this action, the pickets came out as "concerned individuals" and were able to picket both gates without putting their unions in legal jeopardy.

The dominant theme of the speakers at Tuesday's rally was the need for labor unity, and over and over the participants roared their approval of such calls. In addition to bickering and jurisdictional struggles within the building trades over the years, there

has been something of a problem with one union not respecting another's picket line. On Tuesday night, it was abundantly clear that, as far as the rank and file is concerned, now is the time for solidarity and joint action.

In addition, the call by speakers such as Jack Henning of the California State Labor Federation, for a Labour Party met with overwhelming approval. Considering that the threat of the double gate has grown since 1949, under both Republican and Democratic administrations, the reason should be obvious. Most recently, organised labor tried to get the law changed when Democrat Jimmy Carter was President, but they failed.

Strength of labor

The spirit at the picket was excellent, with all starting to sense the tremendous strength that the labor movement has in its hands if the rank and file is mobilized.

This action comes shortly after some 500 trade unionists massed in (nearby) Rodeo to protest the killing of Greg Goobic, who was picketing the Union Oil refinery. Shortly after that action, Union Oil backed off from its demand for steep pay cuts for new hires, although some smaller concessions were granted by the union. Major contracts coming up in auto and construction this year may well lead to further large-scale strikes.

Indian dock workers shake Gandhi

THE RECENT dock strike in India closed the country's ten largest ports for over three weeks and forced the Gandhi government to give considerable concessions. Their victory was gained by biting at India's exports.

The 300,000 workers braved horrific attacks from state forces. At Paradip, an eastern port in Orissa, on 19 March, the Special Armed Police Reserve burned a colony of huts belonging to striking dockworkers.

One hundred people were killed. This was "revenge" for the death of four policemen killed in earlier clashes between port and dockworkers and armed police thugs/goondas. The police, according to many statements "went berserk", looting homes, killing indiscriminately and then burning the huts which were occupied in many cases. A large number of burned bodies were thrown into the sea. Later, the police attacked factories and other industrial establishments.

Orgy of violence

Despite this orgy of violence and repression the 300,000 Indian dockworkers continued their strike for parity in pay with other public sector workers, for decent housing and health provisions and many other elementary demands. The police action increased the determination of the workers to win.

Scab casual labour, drafting in of the army and navy to unload ships, all the old methods were tried to breach the devastating strike. Estimates state that each day the strike cost 1 billion rupees (£65 million) (especially as March was India's major trading month). All major ports were paralysed.

After seven days the port authorities and government officials begged the union leaders to allow 'essential supplies' through. Failing this, the navy was deployed to unload edible oil and crude oil. However, only a trickle of normal trade was discharged by these means.

Incensed by arrests

In Cochin, the workers initially agreed to provide 'essential' services but were incensed by the arrest of eight strikers and the use of the navy. They walked out completely. Picketing was escalated despite the ominous presence of the Border Security Police and the Central Reserve Police (a paramilitary wing noted for its brutality).

In Madras and Panaji (Goa) the strike was solid. The large cities particularly felt the effect of the strike, prices of raw materials rising due to the shortages. Export fruit crops' prices have collapsed in Bombay. Mangoes, watermelons could not be sold as they were highly priced for export merchandise

By Anil Singh

for the Gulf states.

The trade union movement declared it would fight "all repressive measures and that the strike would continue until all the demands of the workers are met". Before SR Kulharni (president of the All-India Port and Dock Workers Federation) left along with other leaders for talks in Delhi, a massive rally took place with solidarity from Air India workers, the railway workers and even the naval security press employees.

After almost a week of 'negotiations', all the capitalist press spoke of a 'deadlock'. These talks have been dragged out in the hope that the mood of anger would diminish and the scabs and police organise a counter to the pickets.

Nor surprisingly, government ministers declared the strike 'illegal' in order to justify, under the draconian 'Essential Services Maintenance Act', the use of the armed force of the state. The capitalists would cheerfully agree to the massacre of the port and dockworkers if necessary to preserve their profits and wealth.

No strike contracts

Their programme was clear. The monopolist Tata, who donated nearly £500,000 to Mrs Gandhi for the 1977 elections said "... I am against banning strikes, except in essential services, like banks, railways, ports, police, civil service, defence, posts and telegraph, hospitals and communications. A government employee should only be recruited on the contractual understanding that he voluntarily surrenders his right to strike since the government cannot lock out".

The reply of these Indian workers to the pious remarks of the capitalists was magnificent. All four union federations were united in the demands and in struggle. The abortive talks were a cover by the capitalists who wished to prevent the growing unity, hoping that the workers' anger would quieten over time, that they would forget the horrific state atrocities and accept any compromise by the union leadership.

The rotten ruling clique of Indira Gandhi could be toppled with ease. A powerful working class, youthful and determined are prepared to sacrifice and even risk death for their rights. A clear Marxist leadership has to be built. It is vital to a lasting victory.



American workers need a political voice.

'It's going to fall'

WE PRINT below an interview with an active participant in the "Protest Committee" in the North of Santiago. These committees are in existence in all districts of Chile.

"IN THE week before 27 March there were a lot of police patrols in vehicles and also groups who went into bars and arrested anybody who was there even though they had their papers in order...

"As for the level of participation; in my area I saw lots of new faces, young people who hadn't been involved previously and many older people who didn't take part in setting up and manning the barricades but who did come out on the streets defying the curfew.

Barricades

"Before the protest we had spent some time talking to people to get them to join in. But mainly the preparation was stocking up old tyres to burn on the barricades.

"In my area nothing much moved on the 27th. From early on there was practically no activity;

traffic or pedestrians; businesses, shops all closed very early in the afternoon. By nightfall, at the time of the curfew, the barricades went up on the street corners, mainly burning tyres, one of them was a tree which was chopped down and put across the road.

"Everybody was waiting for the repressive forces to show up but they didn't, so we decided on a march through the *poblacion* shouting, 'it's going to fall', 'The people united will never be defeated' and 'they'll see what they get when the workers take power'.

"After marching through the *poblacion* we decided to march to the nearest police station. When we got there we started shouting insults at the police, they came out and chased us off shooting so we went back to our *poblacion*.

"The next day we learned that the police



Slums in Santiago.

had arrested a few youths and that they had been savagely beaten and kicked, also hit with large batons. One youth had hidden in a house but they saw him go in and they went in and smashed the windows and furniture after beating up the people who lived there.

"Some young people who were there drew the conclusion that you can't attack the police with insults or stone throwing. You've got to be armed because that's the only language they understand.

Letters

Write to *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Nottingham Evening Post hypocrisy

Dear *Militant*,
Recently the *Nottingham Evening Post*, that virulently anti-union rag reprinted the leaflet put out by South Wales Miners which contains the classic 'definition of a scab' by Jack London.

The *Post* then stated in its editorial that this showed how the miners' dispute was being used by "Left wing revolutionary anarchists" to stir up hatred against the NCB and the Tory government.

The editorial went on to

lament the lack of moderation between the two sides and reeled out all the claptrap about national ballots and reasoned negotiation instead of confrontation.

This is a bit rich coming from the mouthpiece of owner Christopher Pole-Carew, who during the provincial journalists' strike in 1978-89 arbitrarily sacked 28 journalists who took industrial action, and who was behind the hired thugs who broke up picket lines at the *Post*. This shows what a nice moderate individual Pole-Carew is.

Fraternally
Simon Lawlor
North Nottingham
LPYS

No more job losses

Dear Comrades,

Why do I support the NUM in their present struggle? Do I not think that Liverpool has enough problems of its own without becoming involved with the miners' fight? These are questions put to me after a recent meeting to support the Liverpool City Council in the struggle against the Conservative government.

In reply I asked if we could really separate the two arguments, I think not. Their struggle and ours have one thing in common, no more job losses. Enough is enough.

The government say miners who lose their jobs will be compensated by very generous redundancy payments, I was made redundant four years ago

after a nine week struggle of sit-ins and picketing. The mine workers rightly say in some areas if a pit were to close the whole community will suffer. In Liverpool we have prime examples of this. One in particular is Vauxhall Ward, the area I was born and reared in close to Liverpool dockland.

What has happened to that community today? The docks, warehouses, and small factories all closed down. With the closing of the Tate and Lyle factory, Thatcher and her hatchet men have succeeded where Hitler failed, they have flattened it, and is now a wasteland.

Join the Labour Party. Join the LPYS. Support the Liverpool council in their fight and stand shoulder to shoulder with the miners in their struggle.

Yours
Bill Kearney
Unemployed
trade unionist

Socialist fish and chips

Dear Comrades,

Some weeks ago the LPYS in Ashington distributed old copies of *Socialist Youth* and *Militant* around local chip shops to be used for packing up the fish and chips.

Last week the LPYS were on the street giving out leaflets and selling papers, when one young lad approached us saying: 'I'll take

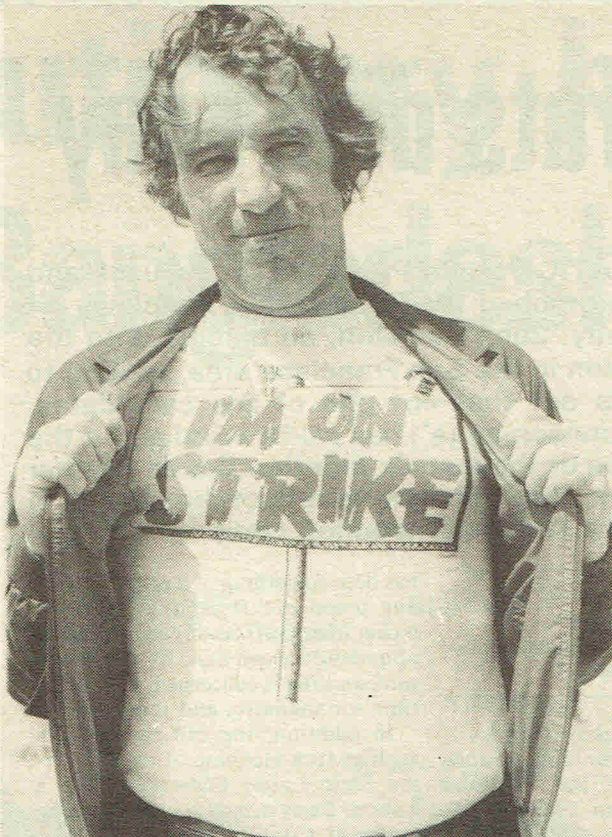
a copy of that it's a paper for working class people.'

When asked where he'd seen it before, he replied: "My fish and chips had been wrapped in it". The young lad now wants to join the Labour Party and fight for socialism.

With imagination, there's many ways you can get the message of socialism across!

Yours comradely
Pete Marsden
Ashington
Northumberland

Photo: Jacob Sutton



Appeal for assistance

Dear Brother,

On behalf of the striking miners of the Leicester Area I appeal to you for assistance.

Though we are following the national policy of the NUM, our area is not, so we are unable to claim anything from anywhere. I hope you will excuse writing due to shaking hands as it is 5.30am and cold on the picket line.

A donation to our strike fund would be appreciated. Should you wish we will gladly send a speaker along to one of your meetings. We are fighting for the working class of Britain.

Yours sincerely
ME Barnes
Bagworth Miners' Strike
Committee, c/o 24
Merrylees Rd, Newbold
Verdon, Leics.

Media and ballot

Dear Comrades,

Is it not strange that few weeks ago the media was full of reports on how 60% of miners would vote yes for strike action in a national ballot—but now they are saying that it is highly questionable that a majority would support such action? It seems clear that early

reports were to tempt the NUM into a ballot so that the "poison press" could stick the knife in.

But now that the NUM leadership has shown resolution in avoiding such a move the media attempts to undermine support for the miners among the wider movement.

Yours fraternally
Keith McIntyre
Rutherglen LP

Romford gets 'Militant'

Every Saturday we sell *Militant* in Romford, Essex. Nearly every week the police are there but say nothing. But on 28 April things started to change.

From 11 am to noon they kept watch on us and then said we would have to move on. When we asked why they said we were not a recognised newspaper. We pointed

out that *Militant* was a registered newspaper with the Post Office, but to no avail.

It is significant that the police did not move on local pressure groups, nor the fascist NF. But then perhaps, unlike *Militant*, they do not represent a threat to the capitalist system. We will not be defeated by the police. We will be back on Saturday.

Yours fraternally,
Peter Ackhurst
Havering Labour Party

Their newspaper venture will almost certainly be as successful as their strikebreaking commuter scheme.

Pensioners up for sale

In their enthusiasm for privatisation the Tory controlled London Borough of Wandsworth have "offered for sale" an old people's home complete with 21 resident pensioners. Incredible as it may seem, the Tories are quite serious. The pensioners, aged between 65 and 90, live at Carlton Lodge in Broadstairs, Kent, which is up for sale at £250,000.

Each resident comes with a 'dowry' so the private owners can 'look after them' until they die, with a guaranteed income from Wandsworth ratepayers.

The director of Wandsworth Social Services said: "We want to change the type of service we are offering to the people of Wandsworth." He believed it was the first time a home had been sold as a 'going concern.' Our concern is for those pensioners going into this new, exciting example of Tory enterprise.

The council are already negotiating with potential buyers. The interests of the residents will no doubt be uppermost in their minds.

Miners raise political consciousness

Dear Comrades,

I was proud to be part of the unity expressed by working class youth at the recent LPYS national conference. It has proved to me that the YS is not just a youth section on a par with the Tories and Young Liberals, but a strong, active, campaigning part of the Labour Party.

The scenes that we see at football matches have now become part of a new political consciousness expressed by young miners, many of whom attended the conference.

Many young delegates attending their first conference

made clear their determination to rid us of the capitalist system. The despair of unemployed youth was highlighted in many debates, particularly in drug abuse in areas of high unemployment.

The conference has left me with a feeling of strength and fight to return to my LPYS with new determination to carry out the policies that were passed at the conference.

We, as *Militant* supporters, have the job to guide the anger in the working class young and old into political consciousness rather than just into leisure pursuits.

Yours in the fight
Philippa Carlyle
Selly Oak LPYS
Birmingham

Electric response for YTURC

Dear Comrades,

By way of a 'poke in the eye' for all those doom and gloom merchants who insist that workers are selfish, apathetic and generally unresponsive to the campaigns of the labour movement, I should like to report the following:

My mum works on the cable form section at Cossor Electronics, Harlow. She buys the *Militant* each week and also takes one in for her mate. One week I also ask-

ed her to take in the YTURC petition to see if anyone might sign it.

Mum took the petition round on her section, got 18 signatures and £6.17 in donations to the YTURC campaign.

If EETPU members can see the value in trade unions for YTS trainees with Franco Chappeli for a leader, then there should be no looking back either for the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign or for the Broad Left Organising Committee.

Yours fraternally
Terry Brown
Harlow

Changes to furniture grants

Dear Comrades

The Tories never cease to amaze me with their meanness. One recent demonstration of this refers to DHSS furniture grants.

In the past people moving who needed furniture would be refused a grant if the DHSS could prove that suitable alternative furnished accommodation existed. However, a recent decision of DHSS Commissioners now means that the burden falls on the individual claimant to prove that there is no suitable furnished accommodation.

Or in other words unemployed people are guilty until proved innocent. One lad in our LPYS has already been refused under the new procedure and thousands of other people must be in a similar predicament.

So what should you do?

Firstly you can claim a grant if you can prove that there is a serious risk to your health or safety, but the likelihood of you getting any joy from this approach is limited. If there is a Citizens' Advice Bureau in your area they may keep a list of furnished accommodation which you can chase up.

Your local Unemployed Workers' Centre should be approached to draw up a list of furnished accommodation if there is any. You should ask them to provide you with evidence to prove that your claim is justified. The Trades Council and Labour Party can bring pressure to bear on local councils to produce evidence to help people. It is essential to understand that you, an individual, have a much smaller chance of beating regulations like this than if the labour movement takes up the issue and fights on your behalf.

Yours fraternally
Terry McPartlan
Blyth NUPE

Opinionated polls

The weekend of 28/29 April saw a flurry of opinion polls showing the Tories ahead of Labour 'because of the miners' strike'. This was helped by the fact that *Weekend World*, the Sunday current affairs programme on TV, suppressed a poll they had commissioned. Their results gave Labour a five point lead over the Tories.

The *Daily Mirror* (3/5/84) reports the *Weekend World* editor's reason for dropping the poll: "The result of the state of the parties was so violently out of line with the other polls at the weekend that we decided unfortunately that we had a bad sample."

He agreed, however, that they would have used it if it had shown a Tory lead. If at first you don't succeed

A touch of class in the barrack room

Police away on anti-picket duties in Nottingham are staying at army camps. Constables sleep in the barracks and use the cookhouse for meals. Sergeants are only two to a room and use the Sergeants Mess. Inspectors however have single rooms and the Officers' mess available.

LEFT and **RIGHT**

Strikebreakers organise

The Self Help Organisation, a right wing group formed by Ross McWhirter in 1970 is making plans for maintaining essential services in the event of a general strike developing from the miners' dispute.

The group was last heard of during the 1982 rail strike when it advertised a scheme for getting commuters to work.

Their main aim is to produce a national daily newspaper in the event of a printers' strike. They claim to have the facilities to print and distribute such a paper. Their current newsletter is the *British Gazette*, named after the government scab sheet produced during the 1926 General Strike.

A leading member of this virtuous group is Lady Jane Birdwood, a notorious supporter of fascist and racist causes.

GLASGOW-Socialists kick out Tories

IN THE general election in June 1983 two cities in Britain stood out as Labour refuges from the tidal wave of support for the Tories in Britain, namely Liverpool and Glasgow.

These were the only cities then showing a swing to Labour. This support has been built on represented in the victories in the district council elections on 3 May. The district election results in Glasgow have made that city the strongest bastion of support for Labour anywhere in Britain.

In Glasgow on 3 May, 66 seats were up for election. Of the 216,000 votes cast, Labour took an incredible 128,000 votes or 60% of the vote. By comparison the Tories could only muster 35,000 or 16.2% of the total vote. Labour emerged with 59 councillors, the Tories 5 and the 'also-ran' Alliance 2. This must be the best result in the history of Labour in the city and it has been achieved on the most radical

Liverpool stance

election programme ever.

In January of this year the Glasgow City Labour Party debated the content of its election manifesto. *Militant* supporters Larry Flanagan and David Churchley moved that the manifesto should adopt the Liverpool programme of "no rent increases, no rate increases, no cuts and take on the Tories".

By Bob Wylie

Abuse was hurled at this position from left and right, with the usual tirade about it being 'irresponsible', 'unrealistic' and accusations of it being an 'electoral albatross'. However, with the votes of many trade union delegates, the policy was narrowly carried.

To its credit the Labour Group followed the line set by the city party and consequently the battle cry of "no rent increases, no rate increases, take the Tories on", was heard in every corner of the city during the election campaign. Labour election material had, 'Labour will freeze the rents, Labour will freeze rates, Labour will fight' emblazoned on it.

The workers of the city responded accordingly. They understand that socialism cannot be won by percentages, but that it means struggle. The voters have given the council an irrefutable mandate to wage class war on the Tories and the "money men" behind them. The Glasgow results are another stark confirmation that radical socialist

policies win votes, in contrast to the pathetic whimperings of the pessimists of the right and left who say the working class is moving to the right in fear of socialism.

Labour's results where *Militant* supporters stood deserve special mention. On the television after the elections an astute political commentator asked a former

Young blood

Labour Lord Provost of Glasgow: "What have you to say about the young blood of the Labour Party, the *Militant* Tendency, who have given you two seats out of nothing?" The commentator was referring to the victory of *Militant* supporters Stuart Bates and Frank White in the former Tory wards of Shawlands and Kings Park.

These results were won for Labour where the campaigns were based on hard socialist politics and thorough attention to detail and organisation—these factors overwhelmed the sitting Tories.

In Shawlands Labour beat the Tory by securing 1,378 votes against 1,210. This seat has been held by the Tories since the Second World War. As recently as 1980 the Tory had a majority of more than 900. In the campaign Stuart Bates consistently ex-



Run down council estates in Glasgow. Now the battle must begin to implement Labour's manifesto. Photo: Militant

plained that the election of a socialist Labour council in Glasgow was only part of the greater struggle that was for socialist policies implemented by a Labour government determined to break the rich and powerful.

One comment from a worker sums it all up. She was canvassed on election day in the evening and asked if she'd voted. She said she'd seen the Labour Party earlier: "They were making speeches for Labour, collecting money for the miners. It was great. I've had three people knocking on my door today to see if I have voted. What a marvellous go you have had at the Tories. Have

I voted? I took everybody, all the neighbours, to vote as well!"

This achievement was arguably only bettered by Frank White and his team of Young Socialists in Kings Park. Exact comparisons cannot be made with previous performances because of boundary changes, but Frank's campaign probably increased the Labour vote in the area on the last election from 57 to 80%. He defeated the deputy leader of the Tories in

High turnout

Glasgow who has been a councillor for 15 years. On a high turnout Frank polled

2,211 to the Tories 1,901, to produce probably the biggest shock of the night.

In Glasgow now any charges that *Militant* is an electoral albatross, or that socialist policies frighten away the votes, should be shot down with the bullets of facts and statistics. However, all of this is now history. Now comes the real test. People have given the council a mandate to fight. They must not be let down. Glasgow must plan now to link with Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, and in the south with Liverpool and Manchester and lift the gauntlet thrown down by the Tories.

Liverpool—no climb down

AS WE got to press (16 May), a delegation from Liverpool City Council are meeting with Tory minister Patrick Jenkin, in a meeting set up by Labour's environment spokesman, John Cunningham.

There has been speculation in the press and by others that this is the beginning of a climbdown by the council. But at a press conference on 9 May Derek Hatton, deputy leader said: "It may suit the media to

think we are backing down. It may suit some of the opposition. But nothing could be further from the truth. We are saying very clearly that the bottom line that we have outlined before is no different to what it was; not one single job will go from the authority and not one service will be cut."

Tony Byrne, chairman of finance said:

"We have never been 'helled' on passing an illegal budget but certainly we are



Derek Hatton.

for no job losses, no cuts in services and no rent or rate increases to compensate for Tory cuts in grants."

Party meeting this week Bob Quick's attack was overwhelmingly condemned. We challenge Bob Quick to come to the next DLP meeting and debate his case openly, otherwise to apologise for attempting to split the party ranks at a time of confrontation with this government.

There is no evidence whatsoever of intimidation. Political views in Liverpool Labour Party range from the Marxism of *Militant* to the Quakerism of John Hamilton, the Labour Leader, unanimously re-elected this week.

We are sure that even at this unopportune moment, Labour can and will win a victory in the by-election Bob has caused and place a real fighter on the council in his place.

Women back cuts fight and Blackburn 6

MILITANT supporters joined 200 angry parents who greeted Neil Kinnoch's arrival to address the rally at the National Labour Women's Conference in Swansea last weekend.

They were demonstrating against the West Glamorgan Labour Council's cutting of school busses, leaving their children to walk long distances to school on roads with no pavements.

That action is in sharp contrast with Liverpool City Council which was discussed at conference on Monday morning. The issue of Liverpool was constantly put off but by 11.15 am on Monday conference had had enough and voted to suspend

Cynics answered

Standing Orders to discuss Liverpool.

Cath Wilson (Isle of Wight), seconding the emergency resolution, said that the election results answered cynics who hoped that Liverpool would fall flat on its face. Lesley Holt said that Liverpool council was not in any way a special case—that Swansea and

Wakefield are both councils who face problems because of the cuts.

A delegate from Newark Women's Section said that, as a person living in the Nottinghamshire County Council area which was Labour controlled, she was envious of the situation in Liverpool.

A delegate from Edinburgh said that in the rally the previous night Neil Kinnoch had congratulated Edinburgh on its Labour victory, but that would be an empty victory unless he was also prepared to back their stand against the Tories.

Unfortunately the only contribution to the conference which marred this discussion was the NUPE delegation who said that they would abstain on the vote, saying the actions of Liverpool would seriously destroy services and jobs. The resolution was carried on a show of hands with only the absentions and no votes against.

The conference responded enthusiastically to the call for support for the miners in an emergency resolution by a Lancashire miner's wife Chris Sullivan (Broadgreen)

and Sue Wilkie (Stoke).

Unfortunately a pressing engagement obliged general secretary Jim Mortimer to leave the conference two minutes before the emergency resolution on the expulsion of Blackburn *Militant* supporters, moved and seconded by Rochdale and Manchester. The platform made no recommendation, but the conference overwhelmingly called for their reinstatement.

SALEP success

One of the fringe meetings at the conference was held by the Southern African Labour Education Project and was very successful, discussing the struggles of women in South Africa and Zimbabwe.

A very enthusiastic *Militant* readers' meeting of 150 listened to Christine Sullivan and Terry Fields MP, along with several miners' wives who spoke about their campaign and support for the strike.

By Vivian Seal
(Manchester Women's Council)

ON MAY 7 the *Guardian* carried the comments of Bob Quick a 'left winger' (according to the *Guardian* report) who has resigned his councillor's position on the city council to become a full time official for COHSE. In it he criticised the council's policy

and Liverpool *Militant* supporters.

Felicity Dowling, secretary of Liverpool District Labour Party, has replied to his remarks in a letter to the *Guardian*, extracts from which are printed below:

TO HAVE taken our campaign for jobs and services out to the people and to win magnificently against a vicious, scaremongering opposition from the Tories, Liberals, the press and the government is no mean achievement. The petty carping of Bob Quick last weekend were therefore particularly inappropriate. He insults the Labour Party membership. Never have

the members of the District Labour Party, the Constituencies or the Wards been cowed by *Militant* or anyone else.

Bob Quick has had every opportunity to raise criticisms, he failed to take his opportunities. He has quit now and chosen to criticise the Labour Party and *Militant* where he cannot be answered.

At a packed District Labour

Welsh LP conference—looking for a way forward

THE WEEKEND'S Labour Party Wales Conference will be overshadowed by the miners' strike.

Shamefully last year the Welsh party was the only regional Labour Party to endorse a witch-hunt against *Militant* supporters.

Fortunately this year the agenda is free from such divisive motions and indeed many resolutions look in a positive manner to the way

forward for the Labour Party.

Cardiff Central calls for full support for the NUM and a massive investment programme for the coal industry. The same CLP, in a separate resolution, calls for effective economic socialist proposals.

Other excellent resolutions call for; full support for Liverpool council (SEA), workers' democratic control

of the NHS (Caerphilly CLP), a 24 hour general strike against anti-union legislation (South Glamorgan Labour Party), a socialist policy for FE students (Ceredigion & Pembroke North CLP), and a campaign to attract working class women to the party (Swansea East CLP).

Marxists are also standing, in the various sections, for election to the regional ex-

ecutive committee: CLP South Wales section: Lynne Cuthbert (Caerphilly CLP). Affiliated organisations: Andrew Price Socialist Education Association), Tony Wedlake (Cardiff West) and Richard Morgan (Aberavon) have been elected on from LPYS regional conference.

By Andrew Price
(SEA delegate)

National Fightback Conference

Saturday 23 June 10.30 am - 5 pm

Invited speakers:

Tony Benn MP, Arthur Scargill, Terry Fields MP; Derek Hatton, John Hamilton
At the Philharmonic Hall, Hope Street, Liverpool.
Five delegates per labour movement organisation.
(£2 each fee) Credentials from: Andy Pink, Conference Arrangements Secretary, Room 41, Central Support Unit, Liverpool City Council, Municipal Building, Dale Street, Liverpool L69.

Industrial reports

Two victories

British Leyland

BRITISH LEYLAND workers are beginning to fight back. This is largely due to the miners dispute which has given us inspiration.

BL was the first to feel the hatchet of the Tory government in 1980, and now the time is right to win back what was lost.

In Cowley we have had the ending of three minutes washing up time, massive speed up—the line is currently running at 36 cars an hour on the Montego, jobs which took 3 minutes to do in 1978 are now taking 1 minute 40 seconds.

In the nine weeks of the miners' strike there have been numerous disputes over manning levels, suspensions and bonuses. Now the victory of the workers in Longbridge and the success of the Montego have given the workers in Cowley renewed confidence against

management.

On Thursday 10 May both shifts on the new model Montego have been out on strike over decreasing bonuses. Bonuses have gone down by five pounds even though there has been increased production on the lines.

The Maestro line has also been affected. The night shift has gone out on three occasions in two weeks due to the suspension of three workers, allegedly for not working hard enough!

New strength

On the Montego, management have given way on a whole number of issues. BL workers are now a powerful section and we will see the workers in Austin Rover striving to turn back the tide of management attacks.

By a BL Cowley worker

Liverpool printers

RECENTLY TRADE unions have taken a battering, not least the NGA. Now just below the surface a regrouping is taking place. A perfect example of this occurred in Liverpool recently.

The FOC of Graphic Communications, a small chapel (union branch) of six NGA members was victimised. After a week of attempts to have him re-instated by Liverpool Branch Secretary Ray Williams, together with Regional Officer Len Walker, the chapel came out on strike. This was made official the same day (Monday) at Branch, Region and National level. Cox-Rockliff chapel, which is in the same group voted unanimously to support the strike.

National strike threat

The following day talks were held in London—to no avail. By Thursday the National EC of the NGA had given National Officer Chris Harding permission to escalate the action. Faced with a national strike by Friday, management came to its senses and capitulated to the NGA demand for reinstatement.

In the meantime the local UCW branch had blacked the mail, and POEU Internal Branch offered the chapel use of office and telephone facilities and undertook not to cross the picket line should the phones break down. This was

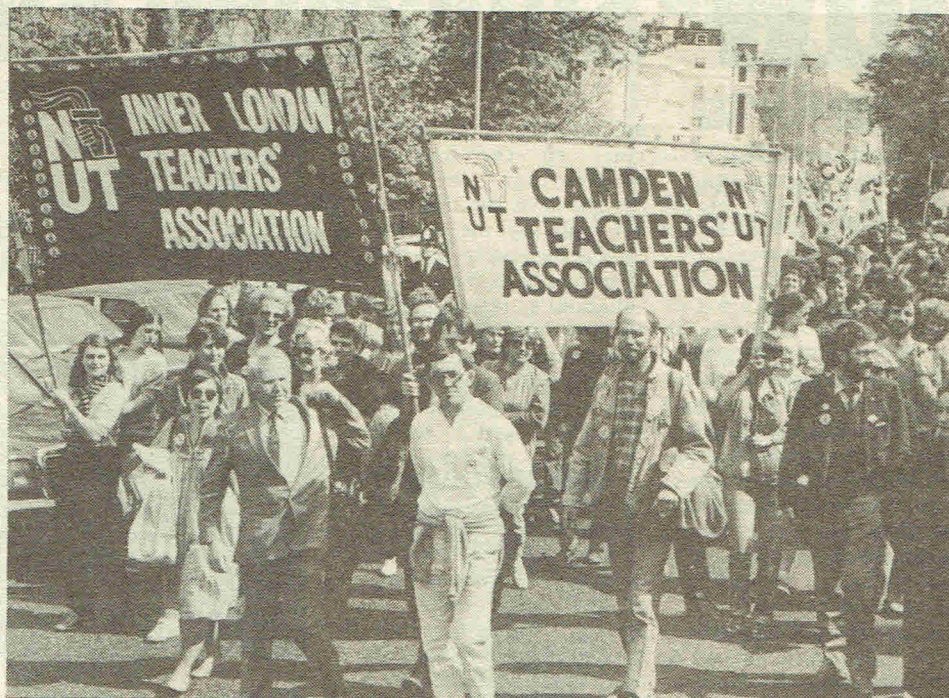
as a result of seeing our strike placards. Similarly the manageress of a local tobacconist had seen the placards and proceeded to supply the pickets with tea for the duration of the stoppage.

Many people, on seeing the placards expressed sympathy and support for the struggle. A Church of England lady said she would pray for victory for the strikers—every little helps. On two occasions van drivers with equipment for other firms on site, not connected with the dispute, saw the placards and drove off—the consternation of the respective managements!

It was a fine example of how a dispute should be organised, with complete harmony throughout chapel, branch, region, and national levels. The victory was undoubtedly due to decisive action at every level, co-ordinated by Branch Secretary Ray Williams. The solidarity and sympathy expressed by individuals (one even provided a chair for a picket with a bad back!) and by sections of the trade union movement, together with the cohesive action within the NGA, demonstrates a new mood in process of development.

The final word should be left to the director who had done the sacking, and who was now forced into line by the NGA. When a local sales representative asked him was he relieved it was all over he replied: "No, I'm angry. I'm very angry."

By Reg Lewis
(Liverpool NGA)



Teachers on the march in London.

Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (IFL)

Teachers take action

THE MASSIVE response to last Wednesday's strike call by the NUT illustrates the depth of feeling and willingness to extend the battle to secure a decent pay increase.

Even in rural areas the strike was solid, resulting in thousands of schools being closed across England and Wales.

The NUT leadership, together with the other unions, have been forced to reject the 4.5% offer and hold out for more. However, both the nature of the claim and the proposals for action have left union activists confused and concerned. In particular the NUT leadership's insistence on arbitration is seen as an inappropriate, and potentially dangerous, irrelevance.

Pay rise and arbitration

As far as the membership is concerned it is a fight to secure a substantial increase, not about the right to arbitration. Indeed, what if the employers' side were to seek arbitration? Effectively the action would be torpedoed and a government appointed agency would be given the power to impose a figure, binding on the teachers side. There would not even be a 'salaries' conference to discuss the deal.

There can be no doubt that the arbitrators would decide on a low figure, given the two principal criteria on which they would judge the

By Bob Sulatycki
(NUT, West London Association, personal capacity)

settlement. Firstly they would look at the going rate of recent settlements, notably the Scottish teachers, who accepted 4.5%. Secondly there would be considerable pressure from the local authorities who would argue that they were unable to increase the offer significantly.

NUT must lead a campaign for 12.5%. Although this does not represent a restoration of 'Houghton levels' it is a figure that leading activists have taken up and one which is seen as winnable.

It is also important that the claim be fought on a flat rate basis. The 12.5% must be distributed in the form of a £20 a week increase across the board for all teachers. As this year's annual conference demonstrated, such a strategy would win enthusiastic support from the membership.

Militant Teacher argues that schools where two thirds of the membership are willing to take action, should be pulled out as soon as possible. This should be linked to a strike levy of all NUT

members, to be paid on a graduated basis according to salary scale. Such a step is made necessary because of the failure of the union to develop an adequate strike fund. Those striking teachers should be involved in building the action in their local areas.

Joint action

At local and national level it is crucial that joint initiatives are developed with the NAS/UWT. At the moment there is a fear that the leadership of the NUT and the NAS/UWT are too concerned with scoring points against each other rather than fighting for the claim.

The NUT proposals for action are that 1,500 teachers from each of the 12 regional areas should be brought out for three days, without disturbing examinations. Effectively, this would mean that the action would be very limited and only involve 2½% of the membership—a sure way of dissipating energy and frustrating the membership.

With a forceful and determined leadership a 12½% claim can be won this year. But it is dependent on the union ranks pressurising the NUT executive to give a more decisive lead. In particular we must urge the teaching union leaders to link our struggle with those of other trade unions engaged in battle over pay and conditions at present.

Salford teachers

SALFORD NUT—at a meeting organised during the one day strike, attended by over half the members in the area (over 500)—unanimously endorsed the union's industrial action and fully supported further action.

The meeting heard speakers from the Executive of the NUT (local and national) and representatives of NAS/UWT and NALGO.

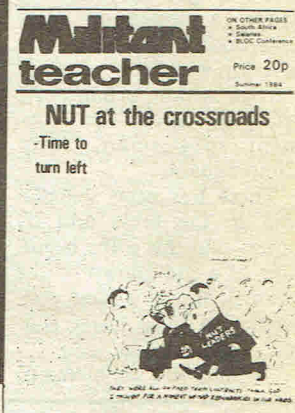
A long standing *Militant* supporter told the meeting that this year's pay dispute was the testing ground for next year, when we could expect to face up to 60,000 redundancies in teaching due to Rate Capping. He argued that we must support the union now or else we will be walked over next year.

Confidence

Most members left the meeting with a sense of pride that everyone in the union was ready to fight and take on the Government.

A collection in support of the sustenance (strike) fund raised over £150. We sold 32 copies of *Militant Teacher*.

By Colin Aitkin
Salford NUT
Local Executive
Committee
(personal capacity)



Journal of Militant supporters in the teaching unions. Price 20p and 15p postage and packing. Order from World Socialist Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Postal workers vote for jobs

THE BROAD Left of the UCW held a meeting of 300 conference delegates on Sunday night. Tony Benn MP was the main speaker, and received a rousing reception. Ian Isaac from South Wales NUM also spoke. Phil Waker, national secretary of the Broad Left explained its programme and called on all UCW members to support the Broad Left.

On the first day conference voted unanimously to reject new technology and the linking of pay with new technology. The mood of delegates was that if we did not stop new technology it would mean large scale redundancies. The British Telecom section of con-

ference also rejected new technology but they were told by the executive that it was coming anyway, and there was nothing they could do about it!

On Monday the Postal section conference came alive and showed the general change in mood. Eddie Thorpe from Oldham Indoor branch and a *Militant* supporter moved and replied to the debate on YTS in the Post Office. The conference overwhelmingly supported his motion to reject YTS. "Youth Training Slavery" Eddie called it to cheers and clapping. He called for a solution based on the 35 hour week, and trade union rates of pay for youth. He

pointed to the struggle going on now in Germany to get the 35 hour week. During the debate Trevor Harris of Ipswich Amalgamated branch condemned the society that needs Youth Training and youth turning in despair to drugs and in desperation to riots.

In an emotionally charged debate Executive Committee speaker Les Hewitt defended the YTS scheme saying it did not come from the Tory government but a committee of MSC with 3 TUC representatives, 3 business reps. and 3 educational experts and therefore is OK. He spent some time pointing to what is a good growth in the number of postal cadets

and how good their training was. But he totally failed, as Eddie Thorpe in his reply said, to take up the key questions of the YTS poverty wages.

To enormous applause Eddie replied with a call on the union to come out and fight for real jobs, and reject Tory cosmetic policies. He quoted extensively from the Labour Party conference resolution passed last year as an alternative to the YTS. Eddie said it was criminal of the UCW delegation to vote against that alternative at Labour Party conference.

By Bryan Beckingham

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Militant

Stop Police Bill

Baby 'arrested'

IN THE last week I have spoken to many Warwickshire miners whose view of the police has changed dramatically during their dispute.

Last Thursday gave one reason why, when a 20 month old baby was arrested in Coventry. In an incident on a local picket line, police warned a miner "if you do that again you're lifted." Several hours later police turned up at his house to arrest him.

Police refused to wait

The miner was there alone with his 20 month old son. The baby's mother was serving dinners to pickets. No relatives or friends were in.

The miner asked the policeman to wait another half hour but the police refused and took him and his baby into detention at Nuneaton police station. The baby had a dirty nappy and the police station had no facilities for changing. For two days after, the boy had nappy sores.

No wonder the attitude of striking miners and their local communities is hardening.

At the moment we are debating in Parliament the Police Bill which will give even more powers to the police to stop and search, detain without charge, fingerprint, get access to personal files, etc.

Democratic control

Young people, in particular young black workers have suffered badly from such harassment for many years. In the Metropolitan Police area in 1982 about one sixth of London's population and horrifyingly about a half of the capital city's black population and half of all youth had been stopped by the police. Only about one in twelve had led to an arrest or report.

The main victims of this treatment have not been violent criminals but unemployed youth and trade unionists. Miners have suffered enough arbitrary arrest without the Bill's provision to allow for 96 hour's detention without charge. (In a "concession" this may be reduced to 36). NUM members, I am sure, will support moves to stop the Police Bill but the fight

PHOTOS: Left. Miner arrested after NUM Special Conference 19 April. Right, Arrests at Stockport Messenger picket last November.



Photo: Jacob Sutton

against police harassment will not end if the Bill becomes law.

The struggle will go on for full accountability and democratic control of the police and for a society

where the police are not used to stop ordinary workers defending their jobs and living standards.

By Dave Nellist MP

Expulsion threat

LABOUR ACTIVISTS in Wales have been appalled at the proposed expulsion of *Militant* supporter Brychan Davies in the Rhondda. The executive of Rhondda Constituency Labour Party voted to recommend to the local party his expulsion by 14 votes to 11.

Brychan, a former white

collar colliery worker who is now unemployed, has been accused of 'bringing the party into disrepute'—the only 'evidence' to back this absurd claim is that Brychan was seen on a demonstration in Cardiff selling *Militant*!

His expulsion will come before Rhondda Labour Party general committee on June 22. The ranks of the Welsh labour movement will bitterly oppose this blatant witch-hunt of an active socialist.



Photo: John Smith (FL)

Strikers on riot charges

THE USE of archaic riot laws to charge over fifty striking miners is the most blatant attempt yet by the police—and behind them the Tory Government—to intimidate the miners back to work.

These laws which can carry very heavy penalties have lain on the shelf gathering dust for decades.

They have been trundled out now for the sole purpose of being used against workers on strike.

Saturation

Miners will have been justly incensed at the saturation television and newspaper coverage given to the Nottinghamshire Chief Constable, Charles McLachlan last Tuesday and Wednesday, almost like a party political broadcast on behalf of the National Coal Board. As Labour MP Martin Flannery complained, "he has allowed his hostility against

the miners to run away with him."

Police intimidation

The Chief Constable waxed lyrical about the problems of working miners. Not a word about the intimidatory and massive use of his police, the direct cause of most of the violence. Not a word about miners' pickets being physically attacked by police. Not a word about the wholesale overstepping of the law by the police themselves—questioning detainees about their political beliefs, fingerprinting and photographing arrested pickets, introducing unofficial 'pass laws'.

This episode is one more example of the way that laws are mis-used and interpreted in a blatantly political manner. There's one law for the bosses and another for the labour movement.

By a *Militant* reporter

CPSA conference—fighting mood

THE 1984 CPSA conference continues the swing to the left which has characterised the last few years.

This has been confirmed by early results in the elections. In the Department of Health and Social Security section of the union the left increased its majority, wiping out the right wing almost completely. In the Department of Employment section similar trends were evident. In other sections too, there

have been moves to the left. In the Postal and Telecomms section, *Militant* supporter Ann Jones came second in the list and the right wing could not even find enough people to distribute the so-called "moderate" propaganda. All the indications are that this could mean a left National Executive Committee.

Graham escapes

Unfortunately an opportunity to do a service to the

whole labour and trade union movement has been lost with the narrow defeat by 505 votes to 400 of a move to hear a motion of "no confidence" in Alistair Graham. Graham's disgusting role in the undermining of the NGA and the miners' strike and his advocacy of reactionary "new realist" policies have alienated him from large sections of the CPSA membership.

Unfortunately some leading people in the Broad

Left—the "Communist" Party and others opposed this move and confused many delegates who would otherwise have voted for the motion.

Militant meeting

At the *Militant* readers' meeting addressed by Dave Nellist MP, Kevin Roddy, some striking Notts miners and Aylesham Ladies Section, £3,506 was collected for the *Militant* fighting fund.

Political questioning

ON 8 May an NUM member, a *Militant* supporter, was arrested in Nottinghamshire. He was questioned by the police for five minutes about picketing, then for an hour about *Militant*: who ran it, how many miners supported it, etc.

The police photocopied all the political material in the comrade's possession, leaflets and papers.

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