

Miners must call...

A 24-HOUR general strike must now be organised to stop the Tories' attacks on workers. If the government uses troops to scab on striking miners or dockers, an all-out strike must be organised.

The labour movement has a perfect opportunity to deal a decisive blow to the Tory Government. All the struggles of the miners, dockers and seamen have come together.

Thatcher has claimed that it is a fight of "only 200,000" workers against all the rest, but the trade unions must now demonstrate that the miners, dockers and seamen do not stand alone.

After 19 weeks on strike, miners and their families must not be allowed to suffer hardship for one day longer than necessary. The greater the support given them now, the sooner will be the victory.

Cabinet Splits

The action of the NUS and the dockers has reinforced the bitter determination of the miners to win. Every attempt by the Tories and the NCB to break the strike has failed.

Behind the public facade of 'unity' and despite Nicholas Ridley's claim that "the government is going to win these strikes", the Coal Board and the Cabinet are riven with splits, doubts and misgivings.

Faced with the dock strike the ferry strike and the extension of solidarity action the Tories are whipping themselves into a frenzy.

Dark hints are being made about a possible State of Emergency and the use of troops to work the docks or to move coal.

The Tories are furious that workers dare to oppose their plans to cut jobs. Thatcher especially is rattled over the trade unions daring to scupper her dreams of an "Industrial Falklands".

But the trade unions have no other option than to fight. They are the only organisations that stand in the way of the Tories' plans to slash living standards and working conditions. If the miners and dockers were to be defeated today, all workers would suffer tomorrow.

The Tories have created a chasm of class hatred. No Prime Minister for generations has faced so much personal animosity from working people as Thatcher. Tory inspired misery has accumulated a mountain of explosive social material.

Job Guarantees

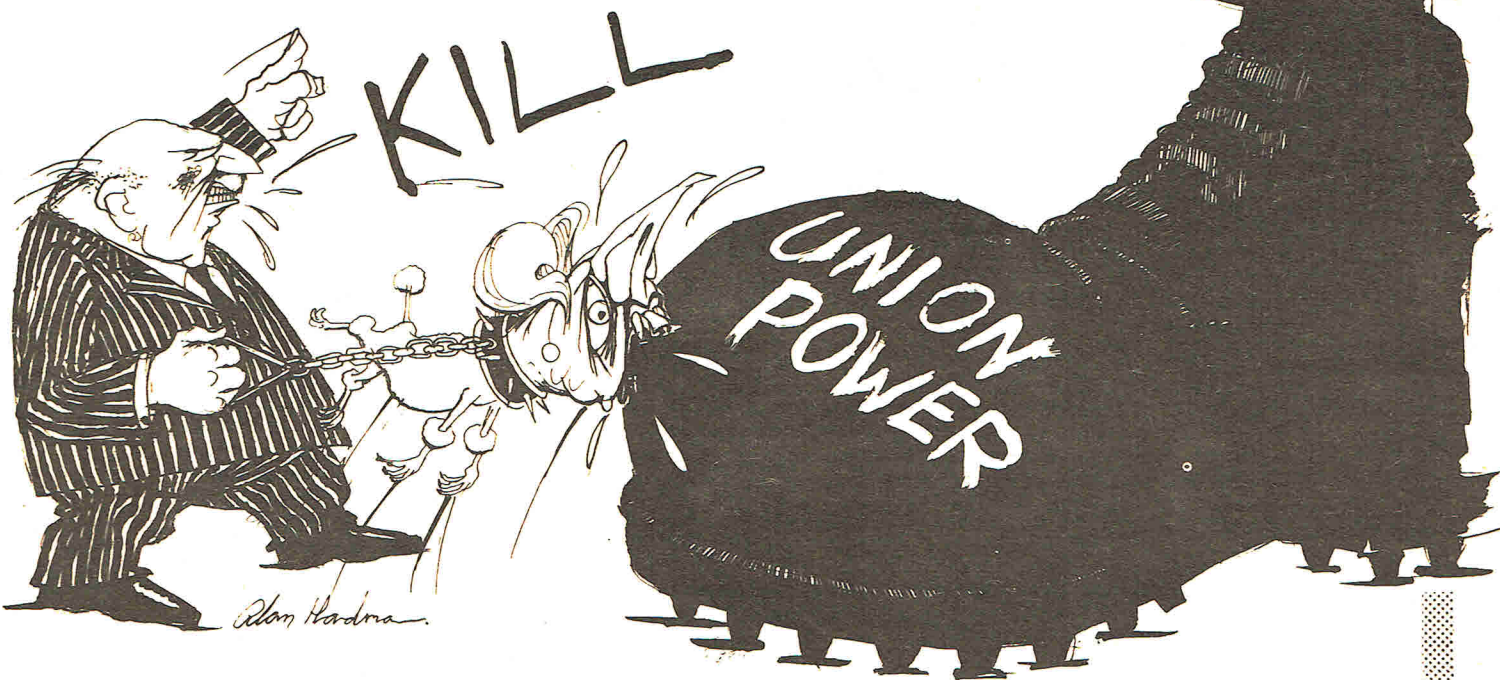
The time has never been more ripe for a generalised campaign that would ensure a victory for those workers in struggle and put the skids under the Tories.

As we go to press the dockers' conference has yet to meet. But if they achieve a victory, including guarantees for jobs, then the labour movement should still drive home the advantage, stepping up the action and forcing the Tories to back down over the miners and seamen.

The TUC right wing have shown that they are incapable of putting up a serious fight. If they were a leadership worthy of the name, they would have organised a 24-hour general strike before now. Instead, the National Union of Mineworkers should use its authority to take up the call for a national campaign.

The NUM executive should name the day, in a week or two, for a national day of action in which they would invite the other left

24-Hour General Strike



unions to take part in a 24-hour general strike.

If the miners were to issue the call to the left industrial unions which have already backed them and go out with leaflets and appeals to other workers, there would be massive backing for the action.

A 24-hour general strike must be used now to mobilise a huge campaign against the Tories. It would involve rallies, meetings and demonstrations up and down the country. It would be the best guarantee of a miners' victory and a warning to the Tories and the ruling class to "back off".

Trade union activists should also call special meetings of shop-stewards committees, trade union bodies, and workplace mass meetings to discuss the implications of Tory

policy, the threat to use troops as blacklegs and solidarity backing to miners and dockers.

The call for a 24-hour general strike must be taken to every workplace and every worker. But if the government tries to use the army as blacklegs, there must be an all-out strike until troops are withdrawn and the miners' and dockers' demands met.

Socialist government

The labour movement can no longer restrict its vision to any one single industrial dispute. The policies and methods of Toryism, and the crisis in British capitalism, have politicised industrial disputes more than ever before.

The Tories and their system offer no future to working people. The labour movement must take up the fight for the return of a Labour government committed to fundamental socialist change.

The only genuine guarantees there can be for the livelihoods of workers are a democratic socialist plan of production, public ownership of the big industrial and financial monopolies and democratic workers' control and management. A Labour Government, as loyal to the working class as the Tories are to theirs, must now be the immediate goal of the workers' movement.

But it is only the power and organisation of the trade union movement, campaigning and pushing the Tories from office, that can make that a reality.

Dockers show their power

MANY DOCKERS may be surprised at the power we still wield. But the panic run on the pound and the threat to declare a state of emergency show that we are still a major power.

Over 80% of the country's trade passes through our hands. This government cannot ride roughshod over dockers' rights.

In Hull one of the notable aspects of this strike is the pleading tone of the employers as they come to us asking for dispensation. We are under no illusions, though. If we lose they will be calling for our guts.

That's why it's important that the strike is properly organised, the demands clearly worked out and that no settlement is finalised until it has been agreed to by a recall Docks Delegate Conference.

In Hull, as soon as we found out on Monday that there was to be a strike, we organised pickets for Tuesday and explained to the lads what the strike was about. On Tuesday morning we formed a strike Committee consisting of the docks district, the negotiating and the stewards committee. We wanted as many lay members as possible.

We also appealed to the shoregang riggers and bargemen, who are not yet in the scheme. We are also involving the lorry drivers and a rep usually attends the strike committee.

We have a daily rota of three members to decide if any employer should be given dispensation. Nothing's coming through we haven't allowed. On the picket lines we've got dockers aged 60 and over.

We also have a committee covering all ports on the Humber, including Hull, Goole, Grimsby, Im-

mingham, Kings Lynn, Boston. They met last week with representatives from unregistered wharves on the Humber and Trent to try to persuade them to come out.

The unregistered men said they'd go back to their men but they decided to stay in. We're meeting again on Friday and offering to send men to the wharfs to speak directly to the men.

On Thursday the national committee of the TGWU Docks and Waterways Group meets to discuss the strike, the Docks Labour Scheme and plans to extend it to unregistered docks and wharves. At the moment the negotiators and the national docks officer can call off the strike if they consider that the employers have met the demands. But there should be no settlement until there have been mass meetings of dockers all over the country to discuss any negotiated deal, followed by a recall Docks Delegate Conference to make the final decision

on that deal.

We must demand:

★ The government gives a written, cast-iron guarantee that they will not attack the Scheme in any way.

★ The Docks Labour Scheme is extended to cover all ports and wharves.

★ All dock workers come into the Scheme.

★ If any scab labour is used, there will be all-out action.

★ No victimisation after the strike.

★ Mass meetings of dockers to discuss any negotiated deal.

★ The Docks Delegate Conference changes from an advisory to a decision making Conference.

Troops threat

Thatcher has threatened the use of troops to break our strike. We must make contingency plans for that now. In Hull representatives of the NUR rail union still working on

the docks say that they will come out if the troops come in.

We can't just expect a general strike though, it will be us who will have to organise it. We cannot expect the TUC to do it first. Even in 1972 they only called a 24 hour strike after thousands of workers were already out.

In Hull there has been a call for a meeting now of all TGWU shop stewards to discuss the situation, and for them to report back to their members. It's part of a campaigning approach to build a dockers' support committee which can be widened out to include all local union representatives if the troops go in.

The mood and morale in Hull is solid. We are determined that whatever the Tories try to do, we will win this dispute and safeguard dockers' jobs and conditions.

Paul Spooner
(TGWU Hull Docks)



80 miners and dockers turned up for a joint picket at Dowd's wharf, Newport (report below).

Photo: M. Shakeshaft (IFL)

Strike spreads

After just one week, the docks strike is already more solid than the last national dispute of 1972. Now not only are the 78 ports belonging to the National Docks Scheme out, but all the biggest ports outside the scheme are also closed to freight traffic.

The decision at **FELIXSTOWE** (a non registered port which worked through the 1972 dispute) to come out on strike this time has had a major effect. Brendon Lamb, T&G convenor Felixstowe, told us: "There's a complete stoppage of all hourly paid workers of the docks and water company groups at Felixstowe and no traffic at all is getting through. The workers will not go back to work until there is a guarantee of no future attacks on the Dock Labour Scheme. Since 1972 the Felixstowe TGWU branch has advocated that local dockers should be able to join the Docks Labour Scheme." (Report Trevor Harris)

At **NEWPORT**, 17 July, over 80 dockers and miners organised a joint picket to stop coal and iron ore from being unloaded at Dowd's wharf. Despite police attacks, they are planning to continue to organise joint action to win their disputes. Thirty of the pickets were arrested, and in a particularly vindictive action, police announced that they would not be charging or allowing medical attention to be given to anyone arrested until the mass picket was called off. (Report by Dave Reid).

In **SOUTHAMPTON** the management have made it absolutely clear what is at stake. The Director of Southampton

Docks went on the regional TV programme *South To-day*, 16 July, to announce that after the strike he would be wanting 500 dockers' jobs to go, (that is about one in three).

But dockers there have shown their power. When Customs Officers do their check they are now accompanied by a docker to make sure that no freight is being carried. Last weekend whilst normal passenger ferries were allowed, the luxury liner QE2, whose passengers consume two-thirds of the world's caviar, was refused permission to dock as it returned to Southampton from its five day—£6,000 cruise. (Report by Julie Harris)

The volatility of the situation is clearly seen at **IMMINGHAM**. There, in the port which began the dispute, local dockers have accepted management promises that they do not need to keep a picket line on, because they will not try and move any more scab iron ore. But if troops come in, it will be a totally different situation. As Denis Collins, a docker in his late 50's, told us: "If they bring in the troops to break us, I'd sell my house to win."

At next door **GRIMSBY** the importance of widening the strike is shown. At Grimsby the commercial port is closed, but the fish port, also part of

the registered scheme is still working. This port, which has a history of casual labour, is using the boats' crews to unload the fish and scab labour to drive it away. There are pickets on the gates to stop TGWU drivers coming in, but the key to winning this port would be to involve the lockgate men (members of the NUR), for if they come out no-one would be able to use the harbour. They should follow the example of fellow NUR members in **NEWHAVEN** who have come out in support of the strike, and helped close that unregistered port to all except passenger traffic. (Report by Ian McEwan)

At **TILBURY** the 500 unregistered staff and foremen have joined the strike of the 1,500 dockers. All the clerical sections of the TGWU there are now out. After last year's disputes which divided clerical staff and dockers, the current strike is pulling the workforce together. A key section now is the tugboatmen. Members of the union are hoping to persuade them to follow the example of their colleagues in Southampton and Bristol and come out on strike.

At last Saturday's meeting of the TGWU Docks 1/6 branch, dockers organised a picket rota to go out and explain the issues at stake to dockers in the smaller East Coast ports. As Lee Waker, a member of that branch, explained: "We need a team of dockers to go round the ports and discuss in an individual way to convince them, because even if they come out at first, if they are not convinced they could drift back to work."

"We've got to learn from the miners and organise

meetings and produce leaflets, etc. Now dockers are out they want a victory. The governors say they won't do it again, but the dockers' strike was coming anyway. We need to make sure we extend the scheme. We don't want a Notts situation, where only some dockers are out and TGWU men are crossing the picket line." (Report by Roger Gow, ACTSS shop steward Tilbury and Lee Waker, 1/6 TGWU Docks branch)

In **BRISTOL** the dispute covers all sections, tugboatmen and lockgatemens as well as registered and unregistered dockers. As one shop steward told *Militant*: "The employers hoped to break this union, but this action shows we are prepared to defend our right to work. Any attempt to introduce scab labour into any of the docks in the scheme will result in a national strike". (Report by Roger Thomas, Bristol NW CLP)

In **Scotland** all the registered ports are out. The only place still working is non-registered **PERTH**. And union members there are noting the lorry companies still going into that port, to ensure that they are blacked at all other places throughout Britain.

At **LEITH** dockers meet regularly to work out tactics. Morale is high and so is the Forth estuary. For the one concession that dockers there have made is for the "Gardy Loo"—a sewage ship. And that about sums up the strike. Dockers will take the Gardy Loo what they won't take from the employers. (Report from Gordon McKinley, SAI Leith Docks Joint Shop Stewards' Committee, personal capacity)

Extend the scheme

What is the general feeling about the strike?

Great. Morale has been boosted by us coming together in Hull and the decision of Felixstowe an unregistered port, to come out.

They very much welcome Dover's decision. This clearly is a national instruction and a mandate to defend the scheme which has existed for some time.

What happened at the mass meeting in Hull on Monday?

It was a report-back meeting and was the best attended meeting for years with nearly all the 1,000 registered dockers attending. Lately there has been opposition to the stewards especially after the failure to get a sympathy strike for the miners a couple of weeks ago, where the vote was lost 60/40. Yet no voice was raised against the strike this time.

The mood was solid and it was moved from the floor that the guarantee of the scheme from the port employers was not worth the paper it was written on. The meeting demanded an assurance from the government and Nicholas Ridley that there will be no future breach of the scheme. *Do you think that Thursday's National Committee will call not just for the retention of the scheme but for its extension?*

Personally, not speaking on behalf of the T&G, I think that with the miners out there will never be a better time to fight. An extension of the scheme to cover the unregistered wharves and ports is what's needed. What

Walter Cunningham
(Member National Committee T&G Docks and Waterways Group and Chair Hull Docks Strike Committee interviewed by Jane Hartley)

bothers me is that the dispute could be called off without reporting to the National Committee or to the recall conference.

What about the wharves around the Humber?

At the moment we are still trying to convince and persuade and not use the big stick. Some stewards from Harwich (an unregistered port) visited Hull and told us they are on a six day rota of three shifts, and the employer tells them which day they can have off.

Often they have to work their rest day, in which case for working seven days they take home £90. They were astounded at the wages and conditions that the registered ports had.

What about Nicholas Ridley's threat of the troops?

As far as I could see this would probably lead to a general strike and what would they look like on a Russian cargo ship? I don't feel they would be used at the present time but if the strike carries on I expect they would be putting through the emergency powers before parliament breaks up.

Dublin sends in the troops

THE **TORIES** will be watching developments in Dublin now the Fine Gael—Labour government in Southern Ireland has sent in troops to break a bus strike in the city.

This is not the first time a Dublin government has resorted to military strike breaking. Previous examples were the tanker drivers strike in 1980 and another bus drivers dispute in 1981.

Miners' dispute



Lea Hall scabs on the run

THE ATMOSPHERE was tense before a recent Lea Hall Special Branch Meeting (South Staffs), which was to discuss a resolution calling for the national disciplinary committee to be set up.

It was the first meeting for two months where strikers and scabs would attend, and we had heard they intended to pack the meeting to defeat the resolution.

We heard a report that one scab had said: "Let the battle commence and the blood flow."

Fifteen minutes before the start of the meeting one side of the hall was packed, not with blacklegs but 250 strikers.

We waited anxiously, and with two minutes to go they came—1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8, then another 4, making 12—yes 12!

All was quiet except for a low hissing sound aimed in their direction. Morris, Dickenson and Wilson formerly branch office holders, sat (appropriately) at the back—almost in the toilets.

Midland Area President Joe McKie delivered a half-hour sermon attempting to justify his actions, or rather lack of them, during the strike.

Leading from the back

It was painful to watch him wriggle and squirm, as he dribbled on about a peaceful settlement. One striker near me said it was typical McKie, leading from the back. Another replied: "If he steps back any further he'll be in the bloody car park."

When the resolution came up one scab complained that the meeting was called at too short notice.

He was shot down by another scab who retorted: "Everyone at the pit knew about this meeting and were supposed to be here." He added: "Those who are concerned and committed about the union are here." The resolution was proposed and adopted, unanimously.

At this point Morris and his cronies retreated from the meeting to a nice friendly chant of "scab, scab, scab". They were clearly shocked at the size of support for the strike. When we left the hall we felt ten feet tall and even more confident we were on our way to victory.

By John Owen
(Lea Hall Strike Committee, personal capacity)

NCB Peeping Tom

THE NCB director of Derbyshire, Ken Moses, has had a camera installed over NCB offices in Bolsover, apparently for security. However, the camera points into the bedrooms of local families. Residents have complained to local councillors who have taken up the issue, alongside Dennis Skinner MP, who has dubbed Mr Moses the 'Peeping Tom of Bolsover'.

Durham gala scents victory

TO GREAT cheers Dennis Skinner told the Durham miners Gala: "The miners are out, the railwaymen are out, now the dockers are out, and very soon the Tories will be out."

Earlier 60,000 miners and their families from all over Britain supported by many other trades unionists had demonstrated through Durham. The biggest show of strength during this dispute was matched by a mood of imminent victory over the Tories. "The miners united will never be defeated" was the constant chant.

No fudging

This mood was carried on to the "big meeting" by Peter Heathfield NUM General Secretary, Dennis Skinner MP and Arthur Scargill. All made it clear that the miners are well on their way to victory.

Scargill in particular emphasised: "There has got to be no fudged compromise. We have got to win this dispute, if we believe in what we have been fighting for over the 18 weeks of the strike and during the 19 weeks overtime ban."

Unfortunately this militant stance was not matched by Neil Kinnock who said: "This is only a political strike in so far as the government has tried to make it such. As far as the miners and the Labour Party are concerned it is not and never has been a political strike, it is a strike for survival."

Kinnock was given a very

cool reception and thousands streamed away during his speech.

At the rally the *Militant* and *Young Miner*, produced by the LPYS, were well received, both selling hundreds of copies.

By Ray Physick
(Sunderland North CLP)

Notts gala

THERE WERE 6,000 people at the Notts Gala, not a policeman in sight, and no trouble.

It showed we're not alone, people are willing to put themselves out, travel to Notts and show the working miners here that there's support for the strike. They came from all over—Scotland, Wales, Kent, London, as far away as Plymouth and Portsmouth.

The drivers on the five coaches from Worksop put their wages in the fund, and 24 coaches from Sheffield brought a large consignment of food and money, to be divided up among the striking miners.

Drax AUEW construction donated £1,000, plus another £400 from the

power workers later. Central TV gave £50 for filming. Preston Trades Council gave £4,000, Turkish Solidarity promised 1,000 and gave away 2,500 kebabs. Sheffield Trades Council provided 2,000 free hot dogs. Every child had a picnic bag and, one of the vendors gave 20 kids a can of pop and a lolly each.

Everyone thought it was a fantastic day—better than the Berry Hill gala. We only had ten days to organise it, but there were only a few minor hiccups. I'd like to thank Martin Bower, Ric, Liz, Tina, and Ian for the work they did.

By Terry Martin
(South Notts Strike Committee)



Thousands march at Durham miners' Gala in a mood of confidence and growing optimism.

150,000 pit jobs at risk

150,000 mining jobs are at risk from NCB plans according to a recent academic report.

Dr Martin Newby one of the authors of the report (by the University of Bradford Working Environment Research Group), said that the effect of the Coal Board's modernisation plans would be "an accelerating programme of pit closures as the board brings in its 25m tonnes of new capacity."

The study, mainly into the

effects of the Coal Board's Mine Operating System, increases its estimates of the number of threatened job losses from an interim report.

The study says that the best case estimate of jobs at **No 'safe' areas**

risk is 74 per cent, leaving 59,000 workers, and the worst case would place 83 per cent of jobs at risk.

Miners still working in what they think are 'safe'

area would be in for a rude shock if the NCB are allowed to get away with their butchery.

The report also calls for a court of enquiry into the miners' incentive scheme, set up in 1978. The report says that the bonus scheme has degenerated and no longer provides bonus levels that were intended originally.

By a Militant reporter

Miners back Asian strikers

THE STRIKE by 15 Asian workers at Kewal Brothers in the West Midlands has been given a great boost by the support shown by striking miners. Despite the enormous struggle they face themselves, the miners from the surrounding coal fields have been getting up at the crack of dawn to join the

picket line at 7am.

On Tuesday July 17, a mass picket was swelled by 70 miners mainly from the Staffs area. The miners have learnt the chants in Urdu, and are joining in barracking the Kewal Bros Management!

The workers at Kewal, members of the TGWU,

have been on strike since May. Management is beginning to feel the pressure. They say they will take the workers back with one exception, but the strikers say they will not return until they are all reinstated.

By Les Kuriata

Fighting spirit at Asian youth conference

ON 14 July Bradford had its first Asian Youth conference organised by the Labour Party Young Socialists.

A total attendance of 240 Asian and West Indian youth showed the tremendous response from the community. The morning session included discussions on conditions faced by black youth in Bradford and Britain as a whole. Anil Singh was enthusiastically received when he called for united action to get rid of the Tories.

Pat Wall warned against the potential dangers of racism and fascism under a future Labour government similar to those under the present Mitterrand 'left' government in France. Max Madden MP and Hashida Dave discussed the position faced by black women in Britain and overseas.

A young miner from Cortonwood explained that the police harassment the miners face is what blacks have faced over the last decade. A collection for the miners raised £105.

After a film on last year's Aire Valley Yarns strike where 30 Asian workers won the right to a union, there were seminars on race and education and blacks and the Labour Party. Hamid Khayam showed that the LPYS did not support separate schools, or religion being taught in schools and got a good response.

On blacks and the Labour Party there was even more positive feeling against the idea of separate black sections which would undermine the instinctive unity of the movement. Many new attendees asked for more details of the LPYS.

A final session on the Indian sub continent showed that young workers, even though born and brought up in Britain, knew their struggles could not be separated from those of workers fighting the vicious regimes in Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka.

By Hamid Khayam
(Bradford North LPYS)

Miners' dispute

THE NATIONAL Coal Board justify their demand for an initial cut in production of four million tons of coal on economic grounds. Put another way, they want the miners to pay for the crisis created by capitalism.

The real reason for Thatcher's plan was revealed in a leaked Cabinet minute dated October 1979: "A nuclear programme would have the advantage of removing industrial action of coal miners and transport workers." In other words, the nuclear strategy is part of the Tories carefully laid plans to attack the NUM.

If energy production was planned with the real need of society in mind—full employment and decent living standards—there would be a need for millions more tons of coal. The Thatcher government is planning to have half of electric power generated by nuclear means in the next 15 years. This will put 100,000 jobs at risk in mining.

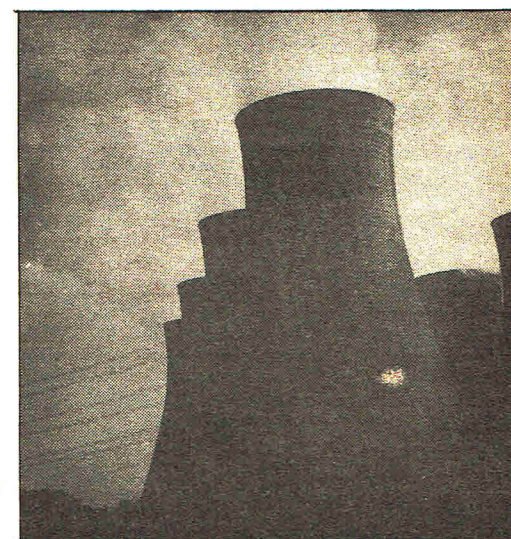
The Department of Energy and the CEBG claim that nuclear power stations are more economical than coal fired stations. The figures they use, however, don't allow for the full capital cost of constructing the pressurised water reactor (PWR) nuclear power plant. The figures also don't take account of research and development costs or the full interest charges.

The PWR reactor was the type installed at the Three Mile Island site in the USA which caused the nuclear emergency in 1979. During the crisis, the radioactive material at the core of the reactor came to within 700 degrees of its melting point of 5000 degrees F. If a 'melt down' had happened there would have been a major disaster.

Growing concern

There is growing concern about the health risks due to low level radioactive emissions. These are caused by the dumping of radioactive waste such as at the nuclear reprocessing plant at Sellafield (Windscale). An inquiry is being conducted at the moment into the

Tory energy policy - attack coal



THE GOVERNMENT will be forced to introduce power cuts in late August or early September, according to a report in *New Statesman* magazine (13.7.84).

The article uses evidence from the June edition of *Energy Trends*, the official publication of the Department of Energy, which, the writer says, "totally contradicts the Government's picture of vast stocks lasting well into 1985."

Using figures for stocks at power stations at the beginning and end of April, and for how much coal was burned at

the stations in the month, the article concludes that 1.29m tonnes of coal arrived at the power stations during the month, "much less than suggested in some papers."

Taking into account the switch to oil-fired stations, reduced coal deliveries from Notts due to rail unions solidarity action, and consumption trends over the last two years, the *New Statesman* estimates that stocks in September will be reduced to under 7m tonnes—dangerously close to the CEBG critical level of 6m tonnes.

21.9m tonnes of coal is stocked at the pits—the basis of Government boasts of plentiful stocks. Thatcher's dilemma is how to transfer the coal in sufficient quantities to the power stations to avoid power cuts in the autumn. The likelihood is, says the writer, that Thatcher will hang on as long as possible before admitting that a crisis is approaching, and therefore that the government has lied to the public. Even using the army at that late stage would be unlikely to guarantee enough coal.

high incidence of leukemia in children who live in villages near the plant. The government has admitted that the beaches in the area are contaminated with radioactivity.

To continue with a massive expansion of the nuclear programme is reckless and irresponsible, putting lives at risk. Even from the point of view of capitalist economics, the nuclear programme doesn't make sense.

The government is also hindering the implementation of technology based on new uses for coal. When coal is burnt in a power station only 35% of it produces electricity. The remainder is lost through the cooling towers in waste heat. By using this waste heat in

domestic district heating systems the efficiency of power generation can be increased from 35% to as high as 80%. Twenty average sized district heating systems would use another 10 to 15 million tons of coal a year.

The most dramatic recent development in coal technology has been the invention of fluidised bed combustion (FBC). Coal and sand are mixed together and burnt in a moving bed, leading to greater efficiency by improving the rate at which heat is transferred from the coal. The result is that boilers can be made much smaller, increasing their possible range of applications, and pollution is dramatically reduced.

The huge investment in the conversion

of appliances to burn North Sea gas over the past 20 years will be wasted unless steps are now taken to begin to produce natural gas from coal. North Sea gas production will fall from the mid-eighties. Gasification of coal would create a demand for another 120 million tons a year.

The "energy policy" of the ruling class, when it is not used to justify crude political attacks on the miners, is based on providing cheap power for big business to maximise profits. They are not interested in the safety of workers producing energy, or the most rational long term development of the different sources of energy in the interests of society as a whole.

The so-called energy crisis of the Seventies has been replaced by a glut in the Eighties as the economic crisis has deepened and demand has fallen. The main reason for the fall in demand is that most firms in the main capitalist countries are running at 70-80% of capacity. It is impossible to plan the production of energy on the unpredictable roller coaster of economic boom and slumps. Miners, and other workers producing energy, will ultimately never have a secure future until the present economic system is replaced by a democratic planned socialist society.

By Pete Dickinson

France power link

THE *Financial Times* recently gave details of the plan to link the National Grids of the UK and France. The first of four 500 megawatt (million watt) cables under the Channel is due to be commissioned in February. When all are in place it will enable 2,000 mw—the output of large power station—to be transmitted.

The justification for this massive £600 million expenditure is, firstly, "the opportunity to trade electricity at favourable prices made particularly attractive by differences in the national daily peaks of demand".

Emergency

Secondly, the ability to help each other in an emergency. And, lastly, "the saving on "spinning reserve"—the generating capacity kept ticking over in readiness for a sudden surge in demand". (*Financial Times*, 4 June). According to the article the savings made will pay for the initial investment in six years.

At present France is 70% dependent on nuclear power and this will soon rise to 100% as the nuclear stations at present under construction replace the existing fossil-fired units. The result of such massive investment will be to make the cost per

unit of French electricity the cheapest in Europe and half the cost of Britain's.

The stated aim of the French equivalent of the CEBG is to become a net exporter to the rest of Europe. In such a situation it is idiocy to suggest that even at off-peak prices the French will buy any of Britain's output let alone the huge quantities claimed by the government.

Although at present the capacity of the cables is only 2,000 MW this will inevitably be increased as technical problems are overcome. Yet by this time it could be too late for the power workers. As a recently leaked Tory policy document reveals, the large pay increases in the power industry are only a temporary measure whilst other unionised areas are taken on one by one.

The strength of the power unions has always been the solidarity of other groups such as the miners who, by threatening the power stations' fuel supply prevented troops being used to break a strike. It is vital that power workers defeat the divide and rule tactics of the Tories by refusing to handle coal stocks. The miners' fight is everybody's fight.

By Lev Harrison
(Wakefield)

Growing alarm among Thatcher's backers

BEHIND THE posturings of the government and MacGregor lies a nervous and worried City.

Whilst MacGregor sends out letters and tells Derbyshire NCB bosses that he is out to smash the NUM three independent City brokers have sounded a cautionary note in the government's ears.

The brokers show that the strike is now costing the government £65 million a week. They estimate that the effects of this massive expenditure, already totalling well over £1 billion will: reduce the economic growth rate from an expected 3% to 2%; cause annual inflation to rise from 5.1% to 6.5%; cause interest rates to rise further and will leave the country with a balance of payments deficit of around £1.6 billion. They conclude that if the strike drags on into the winter months then the economic boomlet now taking place will be seriously damaged.

One solution being put forward to avoid the weakening of the pound is a cut in local authority spending, ie forcing the working class to finance Thatcher's intransigence in terms of lost services and redundancies. But any measures brought



NUM pickets at Eggborough power station—now closed down.

in, whether economic or emergency energy restrictions, will involve an embarrassing loss of the government's face. They have constantly denied that the strike is having any effect and that it is possible for them to sit it out.

When this is proved to be untrue the growing con-

fidence of the miners will be reflected in the rest of the labour movement. As that happens the already magnificent support will greatly increase as others join the struggle. The city brokers warn the government that if "the miners were joined by the road and rail unions the power sta-

tions could only operate normally for three months and industry much less". As Scargill has said throughout the strike, we will win and the more support we get the sooner we shall win.

By John Chapman
(Houghton Main NUM)

Defend Docks Labour Scheme

DOCKERS CAN be under no illusion about the Tories' plan for the Docks Labour Scheme, if they lose this dispute.

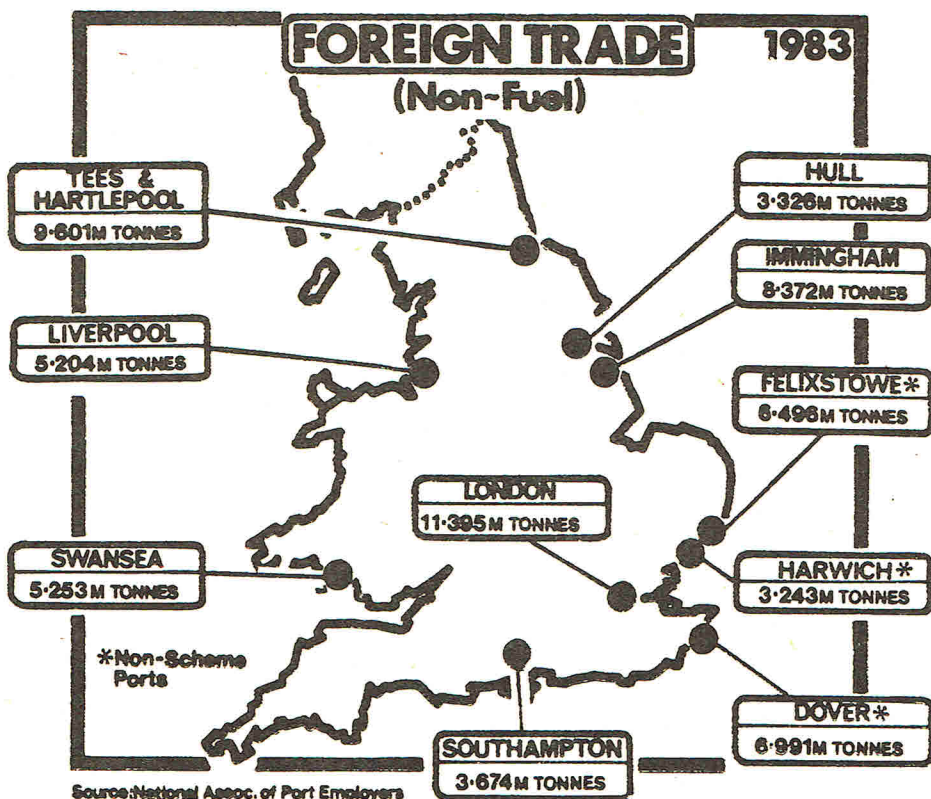
At the annual lunch of the employers in April, Donald Stringer, chairman of the National Association of Port Employers said they wanted the scheme ended. Their guest, Transport Minister Ridley, promised he would keep "a clear eye" on the Scheme because "I understand its drawbacks. It acts as a distortion of fair competition as between the Scheme and non-Scheme ports. If it is remain credible, it must serve wider interests than those of the registered dock worker".

Ridley's idea

Again this week Ridley has point blank refused to give the commitment that the Scheme will stay unchanged for the lifetime of the current Parliament.

The Tories want to return dockers to the days before the Scheme, of the days of casual labour and the cattle market where docker would be set against docker—and the net result was low pay and appalling working conditions.

It was the determination



Despite the growth of containerisation and East Coast ports for EEC traffic, the power of the registered ports is still overwhelming. Seven of Britain's top ten ports (above) are in the Scheme, and the other three are all out on strike this week.

of dock workers to end the anarchy of casual labour that led to the setting up, in 1947, of the Dock Labour Scheme Boards and the register of dock workers. The employers' hatred of the register stems from the say that dockers and their representatives have over hiring and firing.

The Docks Labour Boards operate at local and national levels. Nationally the Board is made up of an equal representation from the docks and waterways trade group of the TGWU and the National Association of Port Employers.

On the Local Boards the union has equal representa-

tion with the employers and there is no casting vote. The Board oversees the running of the port and where the union Board members are accountable to the shop stewards, it provides a measure of workers' control. As one Hull docker said, "Until we can sack the management no worker can

be sacked by the Board".

With no compulsory redundancies, if an employer ceases to operate in a port those dockers who refuse the redundancy payment have to be reallocated to other port users. Again if employers wish to recruit labour they have to apply to local boards and make agreements with the trade union representatives.

Concentrated power

In many aspects of the river or port usage the role of the Dock Labour Boards is decisive. It is this power the bosses have to swallow that lies at the root of the current dispute.

Over the years they have tried to bypass the Scheme by use of containerisation and development of non-registered ports. It was this that lay behind the last docks strike in 1972.

But despite the heroic battles which got the 'Pentonville 5' dockers out of jail, 1972 was only a limited victory. The Labour government of 1974-9 was to have extended the scheme to the unregistered wharves and ports but two right wing MPs (Brian Walden and John McIntosh) voted against the government and the bill collapsed.

The example of what has happened since in Hull is typical. In 1972 there were

40,000 registered dockers nationally and about 4,000 dockers in Hull; now there are only 13,000 nationally and just over 1,000 in Hull.

With redundancy handouts now having risen to £25,000 there has been a drift away from the docks. No new workers have been taken on in Hull for five and a half years.

This might have let the employers to believe that dockers no longer had the power. But in reality power has been concentrated in fewer hands, in 13,000 hands, with 70% of all trade still going in and out of registered docks.

And the development of ports outside the scheme like Harwich, Dover, Felixstowe (mainly for containers) has not proved the divisive weapon that bosses hoped. All of those ports are now out on strike.

The bosses though will try and chip away the gains of the past. Only the extension of the scheme to all ports and all dockworkers can halt the employers' attempts to undermine the scheme.

By Jane Hartley
(Hull)

and Dave Jennings
(TGWU Tees Port
strike committee)

Seamen oppose Sealink sale

THE GOVERNMENT'S decision this week to hand over Sealink to Sea Containers is just about the worst possible news for the company's workers. Even before the sale was announced, Sealink workers banned all movement of freight. The battle lines to defend jobs and conditions are now drawn.

Sea Containers, a US-owned, Bermudan-based outfit, has all its ships under flags of convenience, thereby undercutting union rates of pay and conditions. Sea Containers Chairman, James Sherwood, is reportedly a close personal friend of Thatcher and there can be little doubt that he will try and cut services, jobs and pay in his new company.

Financial killing

He has picked up the company for a bargain £55m, although Sealink's Annual Accounts report assets of over £200m. Sealink own 38 ships and 8 ports—£55m will buy you just two ships.

The company have made their intentions clear. They plan to float Sealink on the Stock Exchange and presumably make a further financial killing for themselves. But seamen will not accept they will be sacrificed.

The determination of seamen to resist this latest threat to their jobs and conditions of service runs deep. In the last ten years the number of British seamen has fallen from 100,000 to 25,000.

Threat to jobs

During the Falklands war it was the British merchant

WHAT HAVE Danny La Rue, a troop of elephants and the Nolan Sisters got in common? The polite answer is that they are all stranded by the dockers' and the seamen's dispute. Danny La Rue, was unable to get his two vanloads of props back to the mainland after appearing in Jersey.

And going out to the Channel Islands were a troop of elephants from Roberts' Circus, and the outfits for the Nolan Sisters. We think they were appearing at separate shows but they are all now stuck on the mainland.

fleet that got Mrs Thatcher off the hook and saved her political career. Nearly 50 merchant ships and 3,000 seamen were sent to the South Atlantic. But no fewer than 14 of the 48 merchant ships in that task force are

now either laid up or are no longer part of the British fleet.

Jim Slater, General Secretary of the seamen's union, NUS, told the union's Conference this year: "even Galtieri in his wildest dreams could not have imagined that the British themselves by their own wilful neglect would skuttle a quarter of their merchant navy. He must be cursing that he did not delay his invasion until now when a task force of the kind we saw two years ago would be much harder if not impossible to assemble."

In Weymouth, the heart of soft south, there have been no fewer than six stoppages due to industrial action since the end of May. Many seamen who voted Tory in the last election now see their battle against privatisation inextricably linked with the miners' fight for jobs. 400 crew men in Weymouth and Portsmouth donated £200 per week to miners' families for the past four weeks and one seaman on the Alisa Princess has done a sponsored dive for the miners.

Great solidarity

If Thatcher thought that she is taking on a demoralised cowed workforce she is very much mistaken. A 48 hours national ferry stoppage on 30-31 May had



Dover docks during 1980 seamen's strike.

100% support, with tremendous solidarity being shown by members in P and O, Townsend Thoresen, Caledonian MacBrayne, and the Belfast car ferries.

Step up campaign

Leaders of the seamen's union have shown how to conduct a campaign. Arguments against privatisation were explained at mass meetings in all the ports of freight and ferry services, leaflets and pamphlets have been produced not only for the seamen but also for the travelling public.

But now the government has chosen the scab Sea Containers company to run Sealink, it is important that the union intensifies its campaign, and together with the union intensifies its campaigns to ensure decent jobs and proper conditions of work.

By Julie Harris
(Poole CLP)

New links built

"The co-operation we have been getting from trade unionists here and abroad has been a notable feature of this dispute. This week seamen from Belgium and France met with leaders of our union to discuss common action."

"In the past when one country's seamen were in dispute, other countries companies laid on extra ferries to pick up the cross-channel traffic. But at the meeting this week, the French and Belgian union promised "full support" for our fight against privatisation. They said they would not allow extra ships to be laid on, and that if it could be identified they would ban freight which had been transferred from Sealink ships."

"They also promised that if troops were brought in during the dockers dispute, they would black all ships

loaded by troops.

"We have also had promises from the NUR rail union supporting our fight. In a circular issued to branches, 14 July, Jimmy Knapp, General Secretary of the NUR instructed his members to give "full support to the NUS action."

New situation

Since we begun our ban on freight last week, the situation has therefore clearly changed. It is important that our Executive now meets again, as soon as possible, to discuss our tactics to defend the jobs and conditions of Sealink workers".

Brian Fagan (Chair
Weymouth and Port-
mouth Ports committee)
spoke to Julie Harris

When the police attacked me

On 22 June *Militant* published scenes of a mounted policeman attacking a woman at the Orgreave picket (reprinted right). This week we publish an exclusive interview with the woman involved, Lesley Boulton, from Sheffield Women Miners' Support Group.

THE INCIDENT shown in the photograph happened after the police had pushed people into the village and then charged through it. Snatch squads and police on horses were charging all over the place quite indiscriminately bludgeoning the miners—they had gone completely bananas. It seemed to me that they were hitting anyone not in a police uniform.

Call ambulance

I was going up through the centre of the village and noticed that behind a low wall was an injured man. There were a couple of other men with him but I hopped over the wall to have a look



The attack on Lesley Boulton

Photo: John Harris (IFL II)

at him. He had got some sort of injury to his ribs and was in a lot of pain.

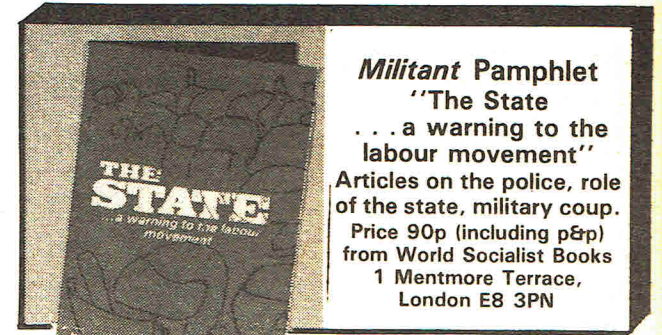
I stood up and was just calling for an ambulance when this mounted policeman bore down on me. As I ducked, a man behind me pulled me out of the way—

and the policeman just missed hitting me.

Shattered and shaking

I sat on the wall, and a friend of John Harris (who took the pictures shown)

went off to get an ambulance. He approached a policeman and said could he get an ambulance for an injured man. The policeman asked whether it was for a picket or a policeman and on being told it was a picket, said "Well you'll have to



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wait" and showed very little interest.

An ambulance eventually did come. When I saw the ambulance had come and he'd been taken away I went back to my car where I just sat and shook for about half an hour.

Swung at photographer

I didn't make a complaint at first. John Harris told me that just after he had taken the photographs, the policeman had had a go at him and he had had to dive into the bushes to get away. You can see from the photo where John was standing and he took a swipe at John as he dived backwards.

After he had past John

Civil damages

said to me "You'll be pleased to know I got a shot of that". *Labour Weekly* got in touch with me later on in the week because they were printing the photo. I didn't realise that it was that good a photograph or that anything had come of it.

But once I'd seen the photos in *Militant* and *Labour Weekly* I decided to see my solicitor and claim for assault damages. Also Terry Lewis, Labour MP for Worsley, has tabled a Parliamentary written question on the incident for Thatcher.

I had gone to Orgreave with a couple of friends up from Greenham. They were appalled at what was going on.

We have had a lot of experience with the police at Greenham and obviously they can't hit us over the head with truncheons. They use different techniques.

Greenham techniques

But none of us have ever seen anything like Orgreave that Monday. It was obvious that the police wanted to beat the miners. Tony Clements who was in charge of the police deliberately used the kind of tactics which would inflame the situation and create the violence. ♪

Thatcher at bay

THE MINERS' strike has shattered the illusion of Thatcher's impregnable majority.

By Lynn Walsh

Preoccupied with class battle in the coalfields, where they thought they would win a quick and easy victory, the Tories have committed a series of disastrous blunders on other fronts: on Liverpool (forced to capitulate), on the EEC (chicken-feed at Fontainebleau), on the GLC elections (defeated by Lords), on GCHQ (TU ban condemned in the High Court), and on the economy (City blames Lawson's tardy intervention for the sudden leap in interest rates).

These banana skins have led *The Economist* (7 July), which once trumpeted praise for Thatcher & Co, to warn that her government is becoming the "most inept since the war."

This turn of events, only a year after the general election, also refutes the pessimistic idea adopted by the Labour leaders—that Thatcher's 144-seat landslide made her invincible for the foreseeable future.

Her apparent strength rested on only 42% of the popular vote (1.5% down on 1979) or only 30.8% of those eligible to vote. In his recent book, Francis Pym correctly observes that "a true verdict was never delivered".

Rather than vindicating the government's policies, he writes, the landslide "owed far more to General

Galtieri and Michael Foot than it did to Milton Friedman" the prophet of monetarism.

From his own standpoint, Pym confirms *Militant's* assessment at the time. Thatcher's lucky victory in the South Atlantic enabled her to project an impression of strength and to draw on the nationalistic prejudices and nostalgia for past glory dredged up by the Falklands war.

Cracks open

The Labour leaders, some of whom spent most of the campaign attacking Labour's own manifesto, failed to put forward a credible alternative. The Alliance, especially the SDP, backed by big business and built up by media, served its purpose in splitting the traditional Labour vote. Thus through a presidential-style campaign which deliberately skirted round the real issues, Thatcher was able to secure electoral victory.

Faced with the dock strike—and the possibility of a general strike, a "senior minister" confessed to *The Guardian* (16 July) that "last year's election triumph was at the heart of her present difficulties." Victorious only in terms of seats, the

Tories "had really suffered defeat in terms of votes. Yet the manner of Mrs Thatcher's exercise of power, he said, had not reflected this fact."

The results of the local elections, of six Parliamentary by-elections, and the Euro-elections have revealed a dramatic erosion of support for the Tories. The results particularly show a melting away of support amongst the middle class strata whose support is vital to the Tories.

At a recent conference in Wales, for instance, farmers' wives who previously voted Tory pelted Thatcher with eggs—and handed the ammunition out to miners' wives as well.

They are mainly switching to the SDP/Liberal Alliance, the capitalists' safety net for disaffected Tory voters. At the same time, working class voters who had illusions in Thatcher or abstained because of disillusionment with the last Labour government, are increasingly turning out to support Labour.

The brutal facts of economic decline, aggravated by the Tories' harsh attacks on workers' conditions, are destroying confused illusions in Thatcherism—and this is unmistakably expressed in election results which have been systematically played down by the Tory press.

In the local elections, the Tories not only forfeited

control of Birmingham and Southampton, but they lost their majority position even in such true-blue areas as Cheltenham, Eastbourne, Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire.

In the EEC elections, the Tories lost 15 seats to Labour and there was a particularly big swing to Labour in London, where Labour had done badly in the general election. This undoubtedly reflects massive opposition to Tory moves to wind up the GLC and abolish next year's GLC election.



Tory leaders, Whitelaw and Thatcher, in anguished, puzzled disarray.

For a government which supposedly achieved a "landslide" only last June, the Tories have suffered humiliation in recent Parliamentary by-elections. The Tories vote has dropped in all six.

In Chesterfield, where Tony Benn increased the Labour vote, the Tories came in third place with only half their previous vote. In Cynon Valley, the Tories scraped a mere 2,441 votes and came fourth after Plaid Cymru.

The latest defeat in the Portsmouth South by-

election has sent the alarm bells ringing in the Tory Party's inner councils. This was considered a safe Tory seat, and the by-election campaign coincided with the D-Day celebrations which were expected to revive Tory feelings in relation to the Falklands. Yet the Tory candidate polled only 14,000 votes compared to 25,000 in the general election, losing the seat to the SDP.

Writing in *The Times* (21 June), Ronald Butt gave a glimpse of the turmoil provoked among Tories: "Conservative anxiety about the

future now extends beyond those with a personal or doctrinal grievance against the Prime Minister. Some of them not only believe that it is time for a change of key, but also associate this with a change of leader before the next general election... Portsmouth has sounded a warning signal to the Conservatives, and it is essential that they should start to think about the dangers ahead."

Since then, there have been "mutterings", among Tory MPs about replacing Thatcher. Last weekend,

Biffen set out to dismiss rumours of palace coups, challenging the malcontents to stand against Thatcher for the leadership in the autumn. It was immediately reported, however, that one group of back-bench Tory MPs was planning to put up a candidate precisely to test the strength of the opposition—and to expose the extent to which Thatcher has been undermined.

The Tories and their big-business backers in the wings are unlikely to move against Thatcher immediately. That would destroy the credibility of the Tory Party, which has appeared as a band of Thatcherite loyalists, and disastrously undermine their support in coming elections.

Nevertheless, the writing is on the wall. Thatcher, who once upon a time could do no wrong, is now being lined up as the scapegoat. However, her government is coming apart not just because of her personal ineptitude but because of the crisis in the system—and the hammer blows delivered by the miners. If the Labour and trade union leaders were giving a lead, this reactionary government could be swept away now.

Nevertheless, the firm, resolute, apparently unbending leadership of Thatcher will, under the impact of impending events, give way to the fragmentation of the Tory leadership and the shattering of the Tories' electoral basis.

Under the corrosive effects of the class struggle the figure of the Iron Lady will crumble into a heap of rust.

Hemsworth-stop police attacks!

ONLY FOUR nights after brutalising villagers in the Fitzwilliam Hotel, police were again brought into mining villages near Wakefield.

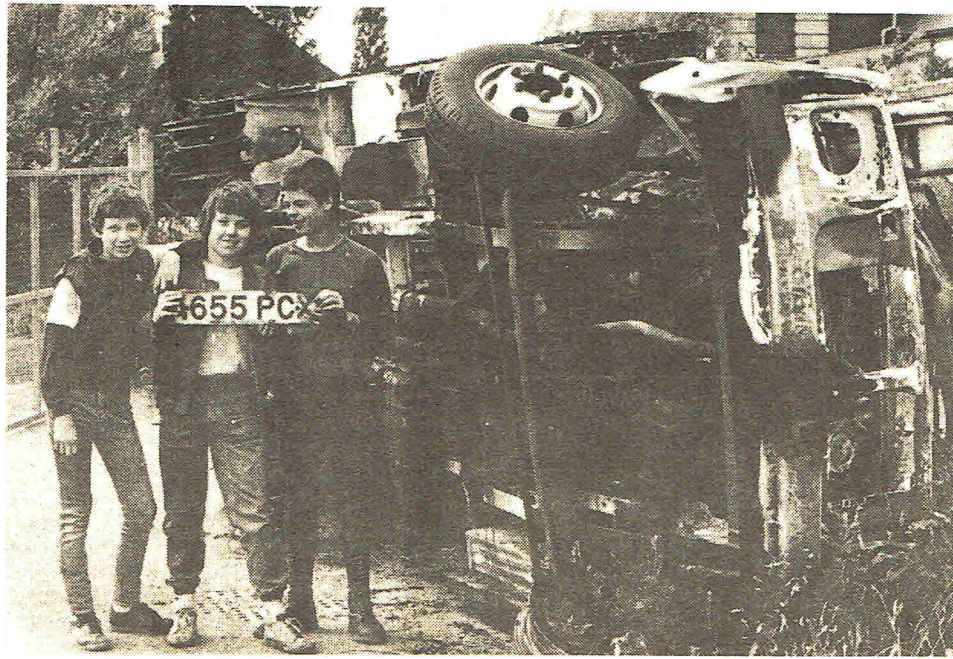
Last week's *Militant* reported how a hundred police swooped on the village of Fitzwilliam on 9 July, attacking workers in the Fitzwilliam Hotel and arresting members of the newly-formed Fitzwilliam LPYS and local *Militant* supporters. They were charged with breach of the peace and have had a curfew imposed on them—they must remain at home from 7 pm to 7 am. The police provocations have been met by widespread resistance in the Hemsworth area by youth and workers.

Pub invaded

At the weekend in a copy-cat attack, the police marched into the Bluebell Hotel in Hemsworth. The landlord, Mr Smallman, said: "They never said anything to me but went straight through the lounge and out onto the streets. There had been some isolated shouting but this seemed to spark everything off."

"I was dumbfounded by the way the police behaved. In my view there is no need for it at all". This response is typical of local people who are incensed at the way the miners have been attacked in their communities.

Friday night's events saw 18 people arrested and several are needing hospital treatment. One young lad



After the riots of July 9. Youth stand alongside a burnt out NCB van. Photo: John Ingham

whose arm was in a sling (mending from a break) had his arm pulled out of the sling and pushed right up his back, ripping open all the medial treatment he had received.

Three young lads who had been to Wakefield for a night out who were totally unconnected with the earlier events, found themselves being thrown in the back of the police wagon, just for the crime of walking home.

Bitterness

The community policeman from Hemsworth was seen pulling 'outside' police off their victims as they laid into them on the floor. Crowds of around 150-200 would only disperse when

the community policeman asked them to if he could get rid of the outside coppers.

He was heard to remark bitterly that nine years of hard work building community relations, galas, and charity work had been destroyed in one night by them.

The attempt to drive a wedge in the mining communities has completely failed. The LPYS has organised a mass protest meeting in Fitzwilliam; the miners' wives support group immediately launched a petition against police brutality, and a campaign has been fought to lift the curfew from people in Fitzwilliam.

As one of those arrested last Monday put it: "The village has always been a

village like any other village. But now we are more than that—we are solid and we are organised."

Pickets

Since the police attacks last Monday in Fitzwilliam many older miners have been lining up to fill spare places in the vans going out for picket duty: "I've sat on the fence for long enough. Now its time to join in". In that typical comment lies the key to victory—full support for the NUM, for a victory over pit closures, for a four day working week, the lifting of the curfew and all outside police off the village streets.

By John Ingham

'We'll not live like dogs'

IN THE aftermath of the riots on 9 July in 'Fitzy' the national press and media poured adoration on the police for beating the inhabitants of a mining village indiscriminately, without mercy. Our determination to save jobs and the community constitutes a threat—and therefore a crime—to Thatcher's government.

Community

It has become blatantly obvious that Hemsworth, Kinsly and Fitzwilliam, predominantly mining areas, will not succumb to the NCB propaganda and threats. So therefore a new tactic is being used—to smash us physically.

But we have been united on the picket line

and we are now united in our community. A mass meeting has been organised for Tuesday 17 July, where hundreds of people have already pledged to attend. The meeting includes a South African speaker and the film *We live like dogs*, which portrays the struggle of South African trade unionists. The feeling in Fitzy is that they will never make us 'live like dogs'.

On Sunday every single house (apart from the copper's house!) in Fitzy and Kinsly was leafleted, and over 100 *Militants* were sold over the weekend, as local people were keen to read our side of the story.

By a young miner from Fitzwilliam (South Kirby NUM)

Solidarity—a crime?

IN THE community everybody fights for the miners. Several of the pickets are AMCO men, who are contractors—if there are no pits they lose their job.

Peter Hurst, who is under virtual house arrest from 7 pm to 7 am following Monday night's incidents, is a self-employed builder.

House arrest

As Peter explained: "How can I be some sort of terrorist when I spend all my time working in other people's houses? The only crime I have against me is living in a mining village and supporting the miners. And why not, when they are working they provide me with work. I get all my orders by word of mouth from the miners' families".



Fitzwilliam Labour Party Young Socialists. Press Note

The leaflet put out by Fitzwilliam LPYS.

Just as Peter goes picketing, so do some of the village's many unemployed. Young Socialist Paul Batty explained how he considers himself a 'miner without a job': "Unless we stop pit closures I will never get a job in this area. That's why I turn out with the pickets every day. When its all over I want a job and the only way I can get a job is for these lads to win".

MP's visit builds support

"IF IT'S done nothing else, it's brought friends to our village". So said Peter Hurst after Dave Nellist, Coventry South East MP, left Fitzwilliam with the task of raising the issue in Parliament and publicising the village's case.

Dave also visited Brendon Conway (chairman of the local LPYS branch) where an impromptu meeting of around a dozen people took place, each giving a blow by blow account of how the police attacked Fitzwilliam.

An older worker asked Dave to do all that he could before someone was killed by the police.

Evidence

Dave Nellist was able to report that near Coventry miners have also been subject to the same brutality. He said they have to campaign on two fronts. Firstly document as much evidence as possible. Dave gave the example of the Coventry case, after one of the miners had had his head

bashed brutally against a car bonnet. They took photographs of the blood-stained car-bonnet and took hair and blood samples for tests.

Mass meeting

The day after the MP's visit people were sitting down with the NUM legal advisors, starting to amass evidence against the police.

Dave had also explained how in the long run, the courts are used against workers in struggle. The only real defence is to make sure the whole community knows exactly what's going on. He was impressed by the fact that 200 local people had turned out on a minute's notice to prevent Brendon Conway from being arrested, and he applauded



Dave Nellist MP.

the mass meeting being organised by the LPYS.

Dave said he would attempt to raise the issue in Parliament in every possible way. As one young miner put it: "You know with visits like this, right in the homes of the lads under curfew, that Fitzwilliam is not isolated. The LPYS and *Militant* has given us friends all over the country"

Memories of 1926

AS REPORTED in last week's *Militant*, 69 year old Kathleen Doody confronted 23 riot police when they came to arrest her son on 9 July. Below we reprint Kathleen's memories of the 1926 General Strike, taken from the *Young Miner* by her nephew Mick Conway of Acton Hall NUM:

I WAS a child of 12 years old during the General Strike. I can remember vividly the soup kitchens, where we had to queue up with a basin or a jug for the soup and a chunk of break three inches thick.

Humiliation

I detested all this, the horrible feeling of humiliation and degradation. My two brothers and I had to walk two miles to school, and each morning we

called in the back yard of a public house to a breakfast centre which had been set up for us.

We received a mug of cocoa and a thick bread roll with butter, sometimes jam. At school free boots were given to us, hard uncomfortable things, the same style for both girls and boys.

Then came the coal picking from the stacks, always in fear of being caught by either the police or the pit manager. I remember one day my mother and I pushing an old pram up the pit field in Fitzwilliam full of coal we had picked from the stack, when we saw the pit manager walking towards us.

My poor mother nearly sank to her knees in fright but all he said was: "It's quite alright, you may pass". What a relief.

I can remember the ugly scenes of the blacklegs being escorted to and from work flanked by uniformed police. The boos and jeers that used to break out when these 'men' were escorted down the pit lane would pierce your ear drums.

I wouldn't have stood in their shoes for anything in the world. They caused themselves bitterness and isolation for the rest of their lives.

STOP PRESS

Over 350 people came to the Fitzwilliam LPYS meeting at Kinsly—this represents one tenth of the population of both Kinsly and Fitzwilliam. 200 attended the main meeting and a special overflow meeting was laid on for the extra 150 who turned up. The meeting demanded the lifting of the curfew imposed on the people arrested. Full report next week.



'We have

THE SUCCESS of Liverpool Labour council's campaign to force more money for the city out of the Tories has brought howls of outrage from all directions. Those who opposed the campaign or tried to undermine it with 'faint praise' or carping criticism have tried to belittle Liverpool's victory. Thatcher and Jenkin, the Labour leadership, even the so-called Communist Party and ultra-left sectlets are singing the same tune. But as JOSIE AITMAN shows on these pages despite minor concessions the workers of Liverpool have a crystal clear message for the rest of the country—"We have won".

£60m won-budget

The celebrations following Liverpool council's budget meeting on Wednesday 11 July were like scenes at Anfield when Liverpool won the cup, said the local media. A soccer-style rendering of "We have won, we have won, we have won" and "We'll support you ever more" captured the jubilant mood.

The lobby of the council budget meeting turned into a victory celebration as local authority workers, miners, young workers, unemployed and housewives with their young children gathered outside the Town Hall to hear victory speeches before the historic meeting.

Representatives of the NUM from North Wales, St Helens and Nottinghamshire congratulated Liverpool on an achievement which can only assist miners in their battle with the government. Martin Ulmann, NUM Bersham in North Wales said: "It's a fantastic victory for Liverpool and will be a stepping stone to a victory for the miners".

Pauline Dunlop, Liverpool Labour councillor, explained the nature of the victory: "The Liverpool labour movement has achieved a brilliant victory, and the biggest U-turn for this Tory government since 1981 when Thatcher had to climb down over pit closures. Thatcher has been called the 'Iron Maiden' but now we have seen the rust set in. We've had a victory for Liverpool City Council and the working class of Liverpool, now let's win a victory for the miners".

John Hamilton, council leader, moved the Labour budget, pointing out how Labour have stood by their promises and that the campaign has given heart and spirit to the people of Liverpool and an opportunity to fight back, not just in Liverpool, but nationally as well.



Tony Mulhearn.

The Liberals and in particular their leader Sir Trevor Jones have never been as demoralised and ineffective as they were in the council chamber that day. In Derek Hatton's words such was the "political bankruptcy" of the opposition parties all Sir Trevor could do was resort to lies and distortion.

He continually attacked Derek Hatton personally. He claimed that Labour had fooled the public, fooled the media and had even fooled the clergy. The 'public' weren't im-

pressed. During his whole speech he was jeered from the public gallery. When he said that a 17% rate increase would mean a mass exodus of people from Liverpool his answer came from the gallery—"When are you moving?"

Sir Trevor did get round to moving an amendment to Labour's budget based on a previous Liberal proposal of privatisation, redundancies, cuts and a 25% rate increase. He amended that to a rate increase of 4% due to the extra money coming from the government.

He quoted from *Socialist Worker* which accused the Labour council of a sell-out. Indeed, the



Derek Hatton.

only support the SWP could find that day was Sir Trevor Jones—their members were virtually chased from the Town Hall by angry local authority workers.

The leader of the Tory group Chris Hallows, Mr 3% as he is known locally after registering that level of support in a recent opinion poll, only succeeded in clearing the council chamber by boring people out. He didn't put forward any opposition to Labour's budget, just said he supported the Tory government—which part of the Tory government he didn't make clear.

The Liberals and the Tories clearly knew they were beaten and this was rubbed in by contributions from Labour councillors and cat-calls from the public gallery. Peter Ferguson, Labour councillor for Dingle, told how the Liberals tried to use scare tactics in the Dingle by-election only the week before by saying that Labour would put up rates by 50% and rents by £6 a week. They failed to dent Labour's majority.

Tony Mulhearn referred to *The Times*' editorial which called the Tories' concessions 'DaneGeld'—as in the tenth century when English and Scottish kings would buy-off the Danes from invading. Tony warned the Tories that the Liverpool labour movement would not be bought off. Liverpool still faced appalling problems and wouldn't be satisfied until the Tory government is removed from office.

Derek Hatton closed the debate.

He put on record Labour's thanks to the local authority workers for supporting the stand of the council and that if the Tories had not climbed down Labour was prepared to implement an illegal budget in defence of jobs, services and to refuse any rate increase to compensate for Tory cuts with the support of the working class in Liverpool.

On the question of rates, Derek explained that Liverpool District Labour Party has always been consistent—that a Labour council would not increase rates to compensate for Tory cuts—but remember, he said, since 1979 every single penny that the Liberals and Tories have put up in rates didn't improve services, didn't increase jobs but merely went to line the pockets of Thatcher's government.

He asked people to remember what the alternatives of the Liberals and Tories were. The Liberals had suggested a 75% increase in rates in the past, plus a loss of jobs, services and rent increases. The Tory government had suggested an increase of 39% plus 1,000 redundancies, non-filling of vacancies and a rent increase.

Derek went on to issue a warning for the future. The Tory government has backed down from the organised and mobilised City of Liverpool. But just as the Tories regrouped and tried again after their U-turn over the miners in 1981 so the Liverpool labour movement must be prepared for future battles.

Referring to *The Guardian* quote from Patrick Jenkin that Derek Hatton had danced on Jenkin's political grave, Derek said: "We won't be satisfied until every Tory minister has lost his seat and we see the return of a Labour government with socialist policies."

The vote for Labour's budget was carried by 57 votes to 38. The chamber resounded to loud cheers and a standing ovation from the public gallery.



Pauline Dunlop

AT THE beginning of Liverpool's campaign Jenkin and the Tories were adamant: Liverpool would not get a penny extra. At various times they said they would let Liverpool sink into bankruptcy and see Labour rejected as a result; councillors were threatened with surcharge, the whole council with suspension; rumours abounded that commissioners would be sent in. At the end of the day what did they really do to halt Liverpool's magnificent campaign?

They gave Liverpool council the equivalent of £60m:

★ £3.2 million of urban programme cover to pay for "time expired schemes" (landscaping for instance) which the council had expected to pay for and which would have been carried on the rates.

★ £0.5 million (capital) for environmental works on the housing action and general improvement areas.

★ £1.5 million of new urban programme funds to cover schemes otherwise borne on the rates.

★ That is just under £7 the penalty rules every; another £2 in rate surcharge, so the cost about £20 million.

★ They also provided a result of capitalisation from housing repairs.

Instead of being paid revenue account repaid borrowed money on taking from Jenkin of a year from the government thus reduced, after £40m. If this money is then the decision on reversed and the £13.6 into a deficit in order to ing programme.

Part of Labour's election a £2 reduction in rents tenants receive supplementary rebates. They would take it off automatically take it off



Press verdict

The Times

"Today in Liverpool municipal militancy is vindicated... A government minister has bargained and cajoled, suspending cash limits here, raiding special funds there, for all the world as if public finance were a Levantine souk..."

"A third rate provincial politician... Mr Derek Hatton has made the government give way. Mr Hatton and his colleagues threatened a course of disruptive action. Their reward is the abrogation of financial targets which four hundred other local authorities have been told are immutable... in order to buy off Militant."

The Standard (London)

"Mrs Thatcher and her shell-shocked Environment Secretary Patrick Jenkin were again criticised by a number

WON

Get a 95% victory

million net, but under off the rate attracts port grant from the to the exchequer is

other £40 million as n of £13.6 million

out of the housing will be paid from basis of an under-round £130 million ment. The rate bill is alty, by a further not made available pitalisation will be n will be converted carry out the hous-

on programme was s. 70% of council entary benefits or refore be penalised —the DHSS would of their benefits. It

was attempted to overcome this by giving it in the form of a decoration allowance.

Two such block payments have been distributed but the government have since introduced new legislation which means that even the decorating allowance is regarded as income and it will again go straight back to the government. The DLP have pledged that new methods will be found to meet the manifesto commitment.

The 17% rate increase is 8% above the maximum the DLP was prepared to countenance under the manifesto. It is recognised as a necessary though regrettable compromise—a 5% concession in a 95% victory. It will add 45p to most tenants' costs. Given the various alternatives previously proposed, from 200% to 60% and 34% minimum rate increases, the high percentage of tenants on benefits or rebates and the fact that Liverpool's rates remain lower than virtually all major cities, the people of Liverpool see the successful defence of services and jobs this package entails as the major victory it is.



Howard

of Tory MPs today for sanctioning massive government cash aid for Liverpool.

"Disgruntled Tory backbenchers branded the Liverpool deal as a sell-out and a surrender to threats of illegal action by the city council's militant Labour leadership".

Daily Express

"Environment Secretary Patrick Jenkin seems to have bought himself some peace from the Militant-led Liverpool City Council.

"This is a shoddy and cowardly deal... Mr Jenkin has shown that defiance pays..."

The Economist

"After all its huffing and puffing, the government this week capitulated to Liverpool City Council's threats of an illegal budget—and set the scene for a full-scale rebellion next year by Labour councils threatened with rate-capping.

"Both Mr Jenkin and Mrs Thatcher have made brave efforts at damage limitation. There was no concession, they insisted."

How Liverpool beat the Tories

"THIS IS a fantastic victory. It has vindicated the support of local authority workers and the working class in general.

It has proved that when we're prepared to stand up and fight the Tory Government we can win", said Ian Lowes, GMBATU convenor and vice-chairman of Liverpool City Council Joint Shop Stewards' Committee, following the city council meeting.

Derek Hatton, the council's deputy leader, explained at the council meeting that the negotiations by Labour councillors and MPs with Patrick Jenkin were very important but the reason for the victory, the reason for the government U-turn and climb down, was the magnificent support of the working class in Liverpool. It was the enormous pressure of the Liverpool labour movement which the Tories could not ignore. The miners' struggle and Liverpool council's campaign, he said, became the two issues which led a massive swell of opposition against Thatcher and her government.

The Labour Party won control of the city council in May 1983 with the biggest swing to Labour in the country, on the basis of a campaign led by local authority workers—on Labour's socialist policies and against the Liberal-Tory council threat to privatise services.

Labour inherited a Liberal budget which would have meant 5,000 redundancies, cutting back services drastically or a 200% rate increase to implement Labour's programme. The only alternative as far as Liverpool Labour Party was concerned was to launch a

massive campaign for the government to give Liverpool back £30 million out of £120 million stolen from the city since 1979. This alternative won overwhelming support locally.

There was a tremendous demonstration on 19 November 1983. 20,000 people marched through Liverpool in support of the council. We also saw the tremendous role of Militant supporters and Labour Party Young Socialists in building up to this demonstration.



Photo: Militant

Council campaign won mass support.

At every stage of the campaign the council leadership reported back to the local authority workforce and were given full backing. There is no other Labour council in the country that has involved the local authority workers in this way. Workplace meetings, with Labour councillors addressing the workers, explaining why their support was needed and answering any questions, have been held regularly. We saw bin wagons driving through Liverpool with red flags flying.

The biggest demonstration of support was the one day local general strike in Liverpool on March 29th where 50,000 people marched through Liverpool before the council meeting where the illegal budget was voted down due to six traitors in Labour's ranks. Prior to this tremendous demonstration a whole round of mass meetings had taken place throughout the local authority and

the majority of private industry in Merseyside. 17 public meetings were held throughout Liverpool where over 3,000 people came to hear Labour's case.

Support from the local community was massive. Women with young children walked seven miles from their homes to take part in the demonstration as the buses were on strike in support of the council. The campaign raised the political consciousness of the working class in the city. Discussions took place in the pubs, the bus queues. Young children supported the Labour council like their football team. It was this support that in May 1984 led to Labour's excellent local election results. With a record turn-out of over 50%, Labour increased its majority from 3 to 17.

Before Labour put through the budget last week a meeting was held of over 400 District Labour Party members who gave full support to the deal. The following morning a meeting of 500 local authority stewards was held to explain the deal. They cheered and clapped John Hamilton and Derek Hatton even before they spoke. Mass meetings were held on the day before and on the morning of the budget meeting to explain the offer.

One meeting in particular shows the support and achievement of the Labour council. A mass meeting was held of the 1,000 new workers taken on by the council. These jobs were created using MSC money, with a guarantee by the council that jobs would be made permanent with the success of the campaign. Derek Hatton received rapturous applause at the start of the meeting and when he pointed out that victory meant the 1,000 jobs would be made permanent and that all council jobs would be guaranteed.

As Mick Hogan, a young council worker pointed out: "The day Jenkin backed down was one of the happiest days of my life, after spending four years rotting on the dole queue I now have a permanent job."

The Liverpool campaign has destroyed the myth that Thatcher and the Tories can't be beaten. It has also shown the vital influence of Marxism. The lessons of Liverpool's victory must be learned by workers everywhere.

Kinnock & Co- egg on their faces

NEIL KINNOCK and his shadow Environment spokesmen Jack Straw and John Cunningham consistently tried to separate themselves from the fighting campaign waged by the Labour Party in Liverpool.

Kinnock's contribution to the campaign can be summed up in the following extracts from his July speech.

"It has been put to me that if as Leader of the Labour Party I were to make a declaration of support for the intended action of the Liverpool Labour Group I could have a major effect upon the outcome of the conflict between the Labour Group and the government".

"I refuse to make what would, in the circumstances, be an idle gesture. In the short term it might provide some emotional encouragement".

"In short, the present law and the power of the government to enforce that law means that defiance by councillors or others in Liver-

pool cannot have the effect of preventing job losses or of securing additional necessary resources".

The Labour leadership's main contribution to the discussions with Jenkin was to put pressure on the council to propose a budget based on what the council reckoned would be a 60% rate rise. Above all they consistently opposed any steps which would take the council into so-called "illegality".

Cunningham actually warned Liverpool councillors that their refusal to implement Tory cuts was "the worst course of action as far as jobs is concerned". He even called the seven Labour traitors who voted against the Labour Group at the first budget meeting "brave and sensible".

Now Cunningham and Straw have had the audacity to issue a four page briefing to Labour MPs in which they try to paint themselves as the architects of Liverpool's victory! In the briefing note (of unprecedented length in

this Parliament) they recount modestly how they had to explain that the councillors had not properly understood "various local government accounting conventions" and that a standstill budget would only involve a rate increase of "about 50%" and that if an unbalanced budget was passed, Labour "would lose power in the city".

"It was fortunate", they say, "that these six (renegade) councillors acted as they did". Yet if it had been twenty-six renegades instead of six, Liverpool workers would have suffered massive council redundancies and bigger rises.

Labour leaders can wriggle and squirm as they like. But they cannot avoid the fact that they have half a ton of egg on their faces. Their policy of capitulation and "humane cuts" was a million miles removed from Liverpool's policy of mobilising massive popular opposition to Toryism. The Labour leaders can claim no credit. They played a shameful role throughout the whole campaign.

India, Taiwan

Must India fall apart?

IN THE aftermath of the communal riots in Bombay and the massive military operation at the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the threat of total disintegration of India, a danger first raised by Marxists, has become evident.

This slightly edited version of the editorial in the Indian Marxist paper *Indian Left Review* looks at the problems in the context of the dire crisis of Indian capitalism.

IT IS fruitless for Mrs Gandhi to rant against communalism and secessionism.

It was Gandhi and her clique of sycophants—including the former Punjab Chief Minister Zail Singh, now President of India—who systematically patronised and cultivated those same frenzied communal bigots who have grown into monsters threatening the very existence of an Indian nation.

Bosses play with fire

The big Indian capitalists—the giant monopolies that rule India through Gandhi's Congress (I) party need a united India. But they and their political agents have so utterly discredited themselves that they are impotent.

They can no more hold India together than they can develop a home market, wipe out the survival of bonded labour, feudalism and cottage industry, lead society out of medieval caste superstition, or solve a single other one of their own historical tasks.

And just as the capitalists cheat their dirty way around their own laws to make a fast buck out of smuggling and black market business transactions, making a mockery of their own tariffs and tax systems, so their political agents freely indulge in communal politics. They make cynical, unscrupulous deals with the dark forces of communal gangsterism, for the sake of personal careerism and a chance to milk the state exchequer by capturing public office.

"Royal family"

Gandhi is not insincere when she belatedly upholds the cause of a united India. The Nehru dynasty is the sole public institution in India which still symbolises that cause. That is why the bourgeoisie has no alternative but to cling on to her family. The three nightmare years of Janata government (1977–1980) gave them a glimpse over the abyss. Even the mediocrit Rajiv Gandhi will enjoy their continued patronage in coming years—if India survives. This is the newest and at the same time the most classical Royal family in the world.

"Only this family can hold India together," commented a Bombay

newspaper after Mrs Gandhi's token appearance in riot-devastated Bhiwandi. She was consoling the stunned, grieving, homeless victims of a drunken rabble led by the communal gangster whom her own party had brought to prominence—Bal Thackeray, leader of the Shiv Sena mobs and admirer of Adolf Hitler.

Her own army had the following week to engage in a ferocious and bloody engagement in Amritsar. One of its biggest operations ever, involving 70,000 troops, and meeting resistance with sophisticated artillery including machine guns (that could fire 700 rounds per minute!), to crush a virtual insurrection led by another recent ally of her own party, "Sant" Bhindranwala.



The ruling dynasty. Indira Gandhi with her father, Nehru, Indian leader up to his death in 1964.

The Fascist Bal Thackeray was promoted, armed and financed to provide a rallying point for unemployed Maharashtrian youth, and mobilise a drunken lumpen proletarian army to be used as a battering ram to terrorise trade unionists and break strikes.

Take away the beards and turbans and you find the same kind of crazed blood-thirsty communal gangsters as Shiv Sena around Bhindranwala. Dressed in religious robes they smell no sweeter than the Sinhala Buddhist monks hunting Tamil blood, or General Zia's Islamic mullahs sentencing the poor to floggings and mutilations. Bhindranwala was a creation of Congress (I) scoundrels seeking to split the Akali/RSS axis and to destabilise the main Sikh party Akali Dal.

Thackeray's mercenary gangs were sold to the capitalist moneybags of

Bombay, Bhindranwala's to a section of prosperous kulaks (landowners) in Punjab. And the new broker to both deals was Gandhi's Congress (I) party.

Even now Congress (I), riddled with factions and rotting with corruption and careerist rivalries, has one foot in the camp of this type of communal disintegration. Mrs Gandhi is toying dangerously herself with it; having lost ground in the southern states she is trying to rally Northern Hindus with her "firm stand" in Punjab, and even Kashmir where the communal problem is of her own making.

Racist pogroms

This is an ironic last twist to the downward spiral of her party, which in the past did at least have some claim to an anti-casteist and anti-communal tradition and to a policy of defence of the minorities.

After the murderous rampage of the Shiv Sena mobs



Photo: John Harris (IFL)

All over India, demands for self-determination, even secession, grow. The execution of Maqbool Butt in February by the central government increased tensions in the border area of Kashmir.

ty who organised the anti-Thackeray demonstration.

In parallel with this, the Bombay police force melted away wherever Shiv Sena appeared. Whether through cowardice or communal prejudice, or a combination of both, there was no attempt at defence of the community against mobs (who were armed with clubs, knives and home-made bombs) by the civil authorities.

But in the aftermath of the massacres, the full police fury descended on the devastated ruins of the slums, beating and arresting all those who had stockpiled any meagre means of self-defence against the onslaught on workers' homes and families.

In effect, the Bombay police had spontaneously followed Thackeray's call, made in the same foul speech, for Bombay police to show the same partisanship to "their own" (ie Hindu Maratis) as the Punjab police had shown towards the Akalis and Khalistan terrorists. (Such was the arch Hindu Thackeray's "solidarity" with the innocent Hindu Punjabis murdered by Bhindranwala's thugs!).

Police morale

Both in Bombay and in Punjab, it took a full-scale mobilisation of the army to restore the rule of the Indian capitalist state, power had virtually been captured by private mercenary armies. The police are by now almost useless, even for traffic duties. In Bombay they constitute a massive criminal conspiracy, with officers paying bribes of hundreds of thousands of rupees allegedly for postings in the lucrative Colaba district.

The 1979 all-India police strike, and that of Bombay in 1982, testify to police demoralisation. Correctly, they wonder why they should resist the constant temptations to corruption, when political bosses openly flaunt their criminal practices; why they should risk

their lives defending communal harmony when their bosses clandestinely pour money into the pockets of the communal demagogues.

Double dealing

Both the Bombay and Punjab highlight also the utter breakdown of the intelligence system. A carefully-laid conspiracy had been made for the Shiv Sena riots, and yet even after Thackeray's speech the authorities were taken unawares. This, despite days of enforced bandhs dictated throughout Bombay by handfuls of thugs on reluctant shopkeepers as a prelude to the riots.

There are some grounds to think that a conspiracy of landlords and building companies had hired the Shiv Sena mercenaries to clear the slums for them, following repeated failures to evict slum-dwellers by legal means. If so, it is hard to believe that sections of the Congress (I) legislative party were not involved—hence the silence of the state government.

The same kind of double-dealing and sleight of hand by Congress is seen in its attitude to the Punjab crisis.

The second part of the article will deal with the Punjab.

Profits before lives

TWO MINING disasters have cost the lives of at least 174 miners in recent weeks in Taiwan, the US "protected" island off mainland China.

First the Haishan mine in Taipei county collapsed killing 74 men. The government was forced to threaten the closure of any of Taiwan's 120 pits if they failed to meet government standards of safety. Then came the fire at Meishan mine which killed 100 miners who were trapped underground. They mainly died from carbon monoxide poisoning and suffocation.

Success story?

The pits in Taiwan are privately owned in this model of capitalist "enterprise". But they only carry on operating with the aid of large government subsidies, as coal from the USA, Australia and Canada is considerably cheaper. State-owned enterprises keep the mine owners in profit by buying local coal.

But the entrepreneurs do

not put any of this money into improving safety equipment. The government realises that the social costs of closures would be too high and seem embarrassed by the disasters. But it will have to be the workers not the reactionary government who will fight for public ownership with workers' control and management to ensure investment for proper safety levels.

Taiwan is one of the low wage, high profit economies so popular with Reagan and Thatcher. A repressive regime with large numbers of political prisoners rules over an economy which has grown formidably and made a small minority very rich.

The secrets of "success" are very low wages, long hours and child labour. A government survey admitted that about 10% of the country's factories employ children, with three firms even making children work a 14 hour day. The rising standard of living may be keeping the situation quiet at present but the growing working class will have many scores to settle with their rulers and bosses.

Life without unions

IN DECEMBER 1981 the military government of General Jaruzelski seized power in Poland and brought to an end a year and a half when the independent union *Solidarnosc* gave new hope to Polish workers.

The Stalinist regime could not tolerate independent unions which challenged their rule and moved to crush the workers' movement. Until the working class move again—this time to establish workers democracy in Poland, the military and civilian bureaucracies will rule the roost.

The letter from Poland below shows some of the problems faced by ordinary workers.

"WE STILL see not the slightest improvement in our conditions. Real trade unions are dissolved and

By a Polish metal worker

there is nobody to defend our interests.

Massive price rises

"The events on 1 May this year in many big Polish cities, with such a small turn out for the official demonstration, prove eloquently what standing the system has. From day to day the purchasing power of currency falls, it gets harder and harder to find your way.

THE self-styled "socialist" government in Poland is nothing of the kind. It is what Trotsky termed a deformed workers state. Capitalism has been abolished but instead of workers control of industry and the state, a small caste of officials, of bureaucrats, rule society in their own interests.

"Things get dearer. The majority of daily necessities are simply not in the shops. Increases are around 400%—1000%. In the West it must be hard for you to imagine what it is like. Food, clothes, lodgings, household equipment, are very dear. Most people do not even dream about a car. Also, you have to queue for hours, even at night, to buy anything.

"Practically everybody works a bit on the side after normal working hours, otherwise you cannot sur-



Queuing in Warsaw.

vive. Skilled workers are reduced to painting pictures, giving a bit of coaching, cultivating plots of land in order to have fruit and vegetables. We are all overworked, there is no time for recreation. Free Saturdays are treated like any other day, you have to do overtime to make a living.

Political censorship

"My wages average 14,000 zloty a month. This equals about 20 US dollars at

black market prices.

"Life for large families is really very hard. There is no money for leisure or cultural activities. What is worse books have largely disappeared. Many people are simply not in a position to buy them. The average price of books is around 200—400zl. Big books cost 1000 to 2800 zl, that is one fifth of my monthly pay.

There are enormous difficulties in buying books, a print run for the whole of Poland is often as small 5000 to 10000 copies. Practically

all good books can only be obtained under the counter. Encyclopedias, Histories of Poland, literary classics, dictionaries are items which nobody can get hold of. They discriminate against a great many writers, especially recently for political reasons. They don't publish their books.

"Whoever does not put up with these conditions finds themselves behind bars. I would like to write more but in a letter I cannot, but it gives you a picture of our grey life".

Stalinists scab on the miners

MEMBERS OF the British NUM have had to spend valuable time in the past few weeks picketing the Polish Embassy in London.

Officially the Federation of Polish miners, the state-run mining "union" supports the strike. But the Polish government have been increasing their exports to Britain, both directly and indirectly through Rotterdam and Amsterdam and, it is believed, through Southern Ireland.

State run unions

The *Financial Times* on (13 July) quotes Graham Renton a NUM official from Fryston colliery near Castleford on the response of Polish Embassy officials. They told the miners the coal was coming from

Czechoslovakia (another so called socialist country) and not Poland. "They just tried to fob us off. They're glad we're on strike because they're getting extra currency."

Workers' internationalism is not just a pleasant dream, a good idea to spout on May Day processions. It is a burning need, day to day. Miners and other trade unionists have given magnificent help to the NUM throughout the world. They know that when jobs and wages are at risk, international co-operation is vital to stop scabbing.

Polish workers know from their own experience with *Solidarnosc* the value of international workers unity. If they had their own unions as in 1980-81 no coal would have moved. Also if Poland had a socialist government coal scabbing would never have been considered. Why would socialists give aid and sustenance to a hated Tory

government? Poland has instead a military dictatorship and "trade unions" run by Stalinist bureaucrats.

About 500,000 tonnes of Polish coal has been imported during the strike. Dutch dockers have told British miners that Polish coal is taken off large freighters, often from Germany, and shipped in small non-union boats often bearing flags of convenience. They go to non union ports in the UK. They hope this way to make the imports less vulnerable to the dock strike, though dockers in Britain may have different ideas!

Bureaucracy must go

It has probably kept many large businesses in production, including British Steel who used 325,000 tonnes of Polish coal last year. The Polish government say they will bring in the 675,000 tonnes necessary to reach the 1



Coal at a Polish colliery.

million tonnes BSC contracted them for last year!

Miners and dockers will be determined to stop this scab coal. Many workers will also take the hint that toppling the bureaucrats of Eastern Europe is as important for their future as ending the rule of capitalism worldwide.

Danish dockers back British miners

DOCKERS IN Aarhus, Denmark together with supporters of the Danish Marxist paper "*Socialisten*" invited Stan Pearce of Durham NUM and me to Denmark to tell workers of the importance of the British miners' strike.

We found great interest and financial aid was freely given. Stan was well received particularly amongst dockers who had recently faced police brutality and media bias as well as vacillation from the Danish Labour Party leadership in their own unsuccessful 9-weeks stoppage in 1982.

Workers internationalism

All major ports were visited and we had hospitality second to none. Without exception, workers listened with interest, patience and, occasionally, incredulity. Our translator, from *Socialisten*, was first class and drew constant parallels between British and Danish workers. The workers

themselves asked intelligent questions in a warm manner.

Good discussions followed. The similarity of the bosses' tactics became clear. The forming of international links on a worker-to-worker basis came up again and again. "On every question of importance, housing, health, wages etc, it was easily seen that our duties were to our class not our capitalists or multi-national companies.

The Danish dockworkers are members of the Transport Union and moves are afoot in some quarters to break as have Swedish dockers in Gothenburg because of poor national

leadership. Since the strike the mood has been flat—a natural reaction. Another difficulty is that dockers are still casually hired as in Britain before the Devlin Report.

The strike failed because it had no political direction—the dockers are generally radical but belong to no political party. The roots of syndicalism are still evident and they have a healthy scepticism of the Communist Party and an even poorer opinion of the Danish Labour Party despite its Clause Four-like constitution. Our advice was to get in the party and change it to a fighting machine for working people.

Political voice

Workers were not surprised to see that the Danish Labour Party expelled 7 *Socialisten* supporters even before they had got around

to organising a paper! The party leaders having consulted with the British Labour Party, said they were not prepared to tolerate Marxist ideas. This was widely interpreted as not being prepared to fight for the working class in the coming crisis.

But Danish workers must have a political voice and this can only be through the mass party of the Danish working class; Labour. It is essential also that the dockers stay in the Transport Union and the Danish TUC to prevent further slipping to the right.

Despite the temporary pessimism a number of Danish workers are already coming to terms with the need to reform their organisations from defensive to offensive machines. The high living standards enjoyed in Denmark are all too easily snatched back by capitalism in crisis.

After Labour's victory

THE HUGE struggles of the labour movement, that culminated in the regional General Strike of New South Wales, preceded the election of the Labour Party in Australia last year. History has repeated itself in New Zealand with the Labour victory on 14 July.

One section of workers after another have struck against the policies of the ruling National Party, resulting in the police being used politically, in an attempt to defeat the disputes.

Strike wave

In one strike at an oil refinery, the government's legislation was more savage than the original disputed offer by the employers. Scaffolders were told to accept working with scabs and to outlaw strikes. But the ultimatums have failed. The Muldoon government tried to ban closed shops but have had very little effect on trade unionism.

In the election on 14 July the Labour Party won a majority of 17 seats over the right wing National Party

which had been in power.

A Labour victory may not mean an end to the present strikes, but rather a temporary lull. David Lange the leader of the Labour Party is already talking of national "consensus" and the need for sacrifice.

Bob Hawke took just three days on his election to office, to ditch the Australian Labour Party's manifesto, and call upon the labour movement to look at "reality". This meant wage restraint and falling living standards. Lange will inherit far more difficulties than Hawke.

New Zealand on top of the downturn in the economy, has a rapidly increasing foreign debt of about \$11 billion, and it will be the working class that is again forced to bail the bosses out of their crisis.

Already there is talk about devaluation of the New Zealand dollar, with the banks making threatening noises throughout the campaign.

The lessons of France, Greece and Australia, must be learnt by the labour movement, to ensure that a Labour Party once elected must be committed to socialist policies.

By Chris McNulty

Letters

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

Coppers collect cash!

Dear Comrades,

In last week's paper (issue 707) a comrade from Birmingham explained the situation in his city concerning street collections for the miners, emphasising the importance of obtaining a licence from the council.

In Gravesend we have faced similar problems with two of our members being cautioned by the police while collecting money in the town centre. Although they were not actually arrested, they still face possible charges. It was quite a frightening experience, especially for the younger members.

We therefore went to the council and applied for a licence, but unlike our comrade in Birmingham our council is Tory-controlled.

Although it is still going through the appropriate channels, it is very unlikely that it will be granted.

We contacted our local paper and managed to get a reporter along to the council sub-committee. As a result of this the LPYS has started a public debate in Gravesend over the fact that the £16 we collected is now in the hands of the Assistant Chief Constable of the Kent Area Police Force.

The LPYS has been back in the town centre every Saturday morning selling papers and giving out leaflets explaining the situation and we have received a lot of support from the people of the town.

Yours fraternally,
Rachel North
and Janetta Kimber
Gravesend LPYS.

Cold war

Dear Comrades,

I was interested to hear that Sir Geoffrey Howe, on returning to Britain from the Soviet Union, was reported to have said that "he found the Kremlin cold". One can only assume that this was due to a lack of coal in Russia which they are busy

sending to Britain at the moment. One possible solution to the falling temperatures in the Kremlin is that they immediately stop exporting coal at a time when miners here are bravely fighting to preserve their own industry.

Yours comradely,
Mick Barnwood
Brighton LPYS

Fascism underestimated?

Dear Comrades,

In his article on the European Election results in France (issue 707) Philippe Rolland states that, despite receiving 11% of the vote, the Front National doesn't represent a serious threat. This is because, "it has no solid basis" and, anyway, "with the almost certain return of a (right wing) RPR-UDF government in 1986, the FN will probably fade away... sharing the fate of the NF in Britain after Thatcher's victory in 1979".

Surely the present crisis in France is far more pronounced and society more volatile than in Britain in 1979? Also, maybe the NF has been so conspicuously silent because the Tories are

doing their dirty work for them, and perhaps something similar could happen in France. Isn't it conceivable that the FN in France could somehow consolidate its position, in a sense, under the auspices of the traditional right wing parties?

As Marxists we shouldn't dismiss the resurgence of fascism so readily—Nazi Germany came about partly because of the inability of many on the 'left' to recognise the threat posed by Hitler and his "band of hooligans".

Only by appreciating its inherent threat and by putting forward a clear socialist alternative can fascism be defeated.

Yours fraternally,
Mora Maclean
Glasgow
Garscadden LPYS



A scab's eye view of the picket line. Yorkshire miners join Notts strikers for a picket of Beavercotes colliery.

Photo: Jacob Sutton

On the front line

Dear Comrades,

This fight is not just for the miners' jobs, but a fight for many more mining-related jobs such as railways, transport, mining equipment suppliers and private contractors to name just a few. Its anybody's guess how many jobs could be lost in these industries alone if the Tory government's pit closure plan is not withdrawn.

I have spent four days out of five every week since we came out on strike on the picket lines, and have witnessed many scenes of violence. Not just at the Orgreave works, but in the Notts and Lancashire

coalfields—much of which is provocation on the side of the police.

For example I saw, outside the Orgreave plant, a young man arrested for spitting at a police van. He was bundled into the back of a police transit van along with about 12 police officers. I will leave the rest to your imagination.

Another incident happened when we went to picket a Scunthorpe steelworks. Very few pickets made it due to an enormous road blocking operation by 'Merseyside' police—no Yorkshire or Humberside police were to be seen.

After being turned back

by police for the third time we stopped at a lay-by for a drink and sandwich. Two men came up to us and asked us for a lift home, saying that their driver had been arrested.

It appeared that their car was stopped by police on the road to Scunthorpe. When the police asked them to turn around and go back the driver refused, saying he pays his road tax and Britain being a "free" country he was entitled to go wherever he wanted. He was removed from the car and arrested; with the other two men told to walk home.

They had walked 1½ miles when they came across us, and we gave them a lift as they lived about five miles from us.

Also I have only just

recovered from hand and knee injuries due to being charged by mounted police wielding four foot batons outside the Orgreave plant.

Nowadays, trying to get into the Notts coalfield is nearly impossible, as police have blocks on virtually every road into the county. But this will not dampen the spirits of the Yorkshire lads, whose determination is as great as ever to picket those "scabs" still crossing picket lines in Notts and Lancashire, to try and talk sense into these people and make them realise what Thatcher and McGregor are trying to do to our coal industry and the trade unions in general.

Yours fraternally
P Jones
NUM
Barnsley

Exam bonus scheme

Dear Comrades,

I am a sixth-form college student and I have just completed my final 'A' level examinations. Like many working class students I opted for Further Education simply because I was told there would be better job prospects for those highly qualified.

So you can imagine how horrified I was when being told by our history teacher that the majority of 'A' level examiners were receiving £1.50 for every 'A' level script they marked.

He then went on to tell us

of one history examiner who told him that he couldn't be bothered to spend more than five or six minutes on each script, thus making it blatantly obvious that he was doing the job just to fill his wallet as quickly as he could.

Our own history teacher, who himself is the chief 'O' level London Board examiner, told us that at least 35 to 40 minutes should be spent on any type of script. These examiners couldn't care less about errors which could affect the prospects of many working class students.

Yours sincerely
Sat Dhadli
Chairman Leicester
East LPYS

Scab convoy

Dear Comrades,

According to the press, no fewer than 300 loads of coal and iron ore are being shifted every day by road, between Hunterston in Ayrshire and the Ravenscraig steel plant.

The operation involves 80 scab drivers and trucks. This means that the majority of the trucks must be making about four return trips a day, adding up to a total daily journey of 480 miles for every scab driver, including runs to and from their own depot in Strathaven.

Assuming that they average a steady 40 mph, the total driving time per driver works out at no less than 12 hours a day, seven days a week, adding about two and a half hours a day for loading and unloading.

This in turn shows that cowboy companies, such as the notorious Yuill and Dodds firm, are prepared to go to any lengths to break the rail unions' embargo on the movement of coal and iron ore. It shows that they are even prepared to breach an endless list of laws and regulations governing road transport, aided and abetted incidentally by the police who accompany each convoy.

The Tories like to bleat about "illegal picketing" but we'll never hear them complaining about "illegal scabbing". As usual its one law for us and another law for them.

With capitalism in decay (if I was a dentist I'd pull it) the bosses will go to any length to defend their interest. So let's get behind the miners in this struggle and show the capitalists just how much power we hold.

Yours fraternally,
Thomas Kerr
TGWU 7/200
Glasgow

Ravenscraig support

Dear Comrades,

During an estate sale in Bellshill last week we sold over 30 *Militants* in the space of an hour. This is significant because Bellshill is just a couple of miles from Ravenscraig steelworks, with many families dependent on the plant.

But there was no bitterness towards the miners on the doorstep. What was causing people more concern was the state of the local Labour Party. "Pathetic",

"jobs for the boys" and "it's worse than the masons", were just a few of the comments from disgruntled Labour voters.

Motherwell North constituency, of which Bellshill is a part, has one of the largest Labour majorities in the country—let's hope the party will change when true, socialist ideas are given an airing.

Yours comradely
Colin Brown
Bellshill LPYS.
P.S We even sold a paper to a local policeman.

LEFT and RIGHT

The profits are back

All over the billboards just now are large posters advertising the film 'Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom'—"The hero is back" they proclaim. Not just that though, in its first six days in the USA it brought in a record \$42.6m.

Since it only cost a mere \$27m to make then we can safely say that another box office success is already made. In fact it's guaranteed a further \$54m by the cinema owners—interesting when you consider that it is only one in a fairly long line of films made by the Paramount film company. You may have seen some of the following: '48 Hours', 'An Officer and a Gentleman', 'Trading Places', 'Flashdance', and 'Terms of Endearment'. All big films, all big stars and all very big profits. In 1983 they managed profits of \$100m on an income of \$844m—that's entertainment?

Sun discovers scabs

The *Sun* had a relapse on July 17. It carried a story about a striking copper worker in Arizona who streaked (hence the *Sun's* interest) in protest at police attacks on the picketline. But the report added that: "Scabs have kept the copper mine going". Scabs? Its funny that the *Sun* should use this term when it champions the case of any confused worker who breaks a strike. Funnier still that, given the *Sun* journalists were on strike at the time, the story must have been written, to use the *Sun's* phrase, by a scab.

Nannies for socialism?

Nothing discredits Labour politicians more than their preaching sacrifice to members of the working class whilst themselves enjoying a different life-style. The leaders of Islington Council are a case in point. The Labour Council itself is locked in dispute with nursery workers and the Labour leaders explain there is not the money to provide a decent service.

But Margaret Hodge, leader of the Council should not have that problem. She is advertising in the *Lady* magazine for a nanny—wages £60 gross a week plus free accommodation and meals.

FIGHTING FUND

Final total
£41,035

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 7 July
Eastern	2071		2700
East Midlands	1781		3050
Humberside	1483		1700
London East	2011		3500
London West	1079		2100
London South	2054		2850
Manchester & Lancs	1938		3700
Merseyside	2057		4800
Northern	1766		4050
Scotland East	985		2450
Scotland West	1471		3300
Southern	2369		4400
South West	1098		2050
Wales East	848		2100
Wales West	862		1950
West Midlands	2500		3800
Yorkshire	2147		4500
Others	12516		12000
Total received	41035		65000

THE FINAL total for the second quarter was a magnificent £41,035 a record on the £33,414 collected in the same quarter last year. Nearly £10,000 came in the final ten days and the profit from the Summer Draw was over £2,000.

This would not have been possible without your tremendous sacrifice and commitment shown consistently to the ideas of *Militant*. Thank you to all our supporters, many of whom sent in a week's wage; unemployed supporters donated money from their dole cheques, housewives sent money from their supplementary benefits or child allowances; OAPs sent donations from their pensions while the miners showed that even workers on strike are willing to donate to build the paper that fights for all workers. Only with such magnificent assistance have we been able to meet all the additional costs of covering the miners' strike and even plan for new equipment and staff.

Excellent work

Some of the areas deserve a special mention too for their hard work in particular the comrades from Hull, Lancs, Eastern Region, South London and West Midlands. There were some excellent examples of donations from events, definitely examples to be followed; a week's pay from I Williams Urmoston, (see letter this page) a West Glamorgan "hit list" raised £40; a Coventry picnic raised £38; rattling tins raised £20 for Portsmouth comrades on Tolpiddle demo and savings on 'beer' raised £1.28 from a Skipton comrade. How many of our readers are willing to forego a pint or two

By Kim Waddington

Dear Comrades,

Please accept this cheque for £45 towards the fighting fund. I am paid monthly and this amount represents one week's pay of approximately £64 excluding the £19 rent for my bed-sit.

I have only recently joined the Labour Party and was introduced to your ideas after buying a copy of *Militant* from a comrade in Dayhulme CLP and was so impressed I have stated subscribing to it. It makes a refreshing change to see someone actively campaigning against this repressive government and reporting what Fleet Street hides. Having lived on an NCB estate until last year and having my father involved in the miners' strike I have especially been grateful to your work during this dispute. Keep up the good work.

Yours
Ian Williams
Urmston
Manchester

towards our new quarter target of £65,000? It would make a good start.

Many donations poured in from the movement. Definitely worthy of another mention for their consistent support are the workers at British Gas Easington, Hull for their regular weekly donations including a further £16 this week; even workers holding a sit-in at Landis and Gyr, Dundee spared £50 to build our

paper; and £4.62 collected from striking miners staying in Bristol—these examples show the sort of sacrifices workers are prepared to make—no one can underestimate their determination to struggle. £43.50 was collected from Labour Party members in Hull; Shaw and Littleborough Women's Section gave £5 while Uxbridge LPYS held a sponsored walk. Why not follow the example of Uxbridge?

New target

We have a new target for the third quarter of £65,000. But while more workers move into battle and while the miners show their continued determination to win, we too must continue our support by raising as much cash as possible to campaign for all workers' futures. So keep the donations pouring in. If you are short of cash then there are plenty of fund-raising ideas to follow up that you can still donate to the FF.

£250 Pual Durrant Chesterfield; £84 Crookston and Pollok social; £20 students at Gwent College of Higher Education; £25 NGA and SOGAT supporters Merseyside; Howard Askew Collie Wood £10; Ayrshire comrades £10; £7 LP GMC Glasgow; J Clifton Stepney £5; £4.20 members Hull AUEW No 12 branch; H Bodalbhai Thornton Health APEX £4; K Burgess and W Powell from Stoke Florence Colliery NUM both £2; Walthamstow Dust Depot £2.60; Stockton South and North LPYS £1; Felling LPYS 82p.

The collections for COHSE conference and the Eastern Region LPYS conference MRM last week should have read: COHSE conference £758 before expenses and Eastern Region LPYS conference MRM £145.

ADS

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

AMY AND Alan Runswick proudly announce the birth of their daughter Amanda Jane, on 12th July, 1st Grandchild to George and Alma, Roy and Doris.

MIKE Sutton is planning a parachute jump in October for the Fighting Fund and would like sponsors. Contact him at 10 Rodney Court, Southampton.

YOUNG MINER: issue number 3, out now. Available from Wakfield LPYS, 16 Vicarage Street, Wakefield. 10 copies, 1.00 + 30p p&p. Cheques payable to R. Clarkson. Articles about: Power station stocks, South African miners, Sandinista supports NUM, Look back at 1926. A must for all 'YS branches.

LABOUR LAND Campaign: Meeting 25 July; The politics of the countryside with special reference to the private ownership of land presented by Alan Mattingley, Gen. Sec., The Ramblers Association, 8 pm, County Hall, GLC, South Bank, SE 1. Contact LLC 267 2245(e).

TWO *Militant* supporters need rented accommodation from July. South London preferred. Temporary or permanent. Contact Andrea or Neil on (01) 968 9674.

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

WALLSEND WOMEN'S Section. Weekend School 25/26 August. Crèche and accommodation provided. For further details, phone: Sandra Thompson (0632) 634889.

FOR SALE stereo Hitach Dolby VGC. Good for socials, silver grey colour smoke glass top. Ring Jo for address 985 1442.

SERTUC PUBLIC MEETING "support the miners". Thursday July 26th 6.00pm Bishopsgate Institute, 230 Bishopsgate EC2 (Near Liverpool St Station). Speakers: B Morrison (Kent NUM) I Beavis (NALGO London Sec) M Witham (Westminster and City Trades Council) M Perkins President SCPS, Dave Nellist MP.

LABOUR PARTY National Support Group, national raffle for gold disc donated by Paul Weller of the Jam. Ticket outlets in London. Details from the promoter: Tim Mahon, 24 Chapel St, Bradford.

Militant

Meetings

Send us details of your *Militant* meeting (no charge). All copy must arrive here by Saturday.

NEWCASTLE *Militant* Readers Meeting "Britain in Crisis". Speakers Pat Wall and a miner. Sunday 22 July 7.30 pm, Bridge Hotel, Newcastle.

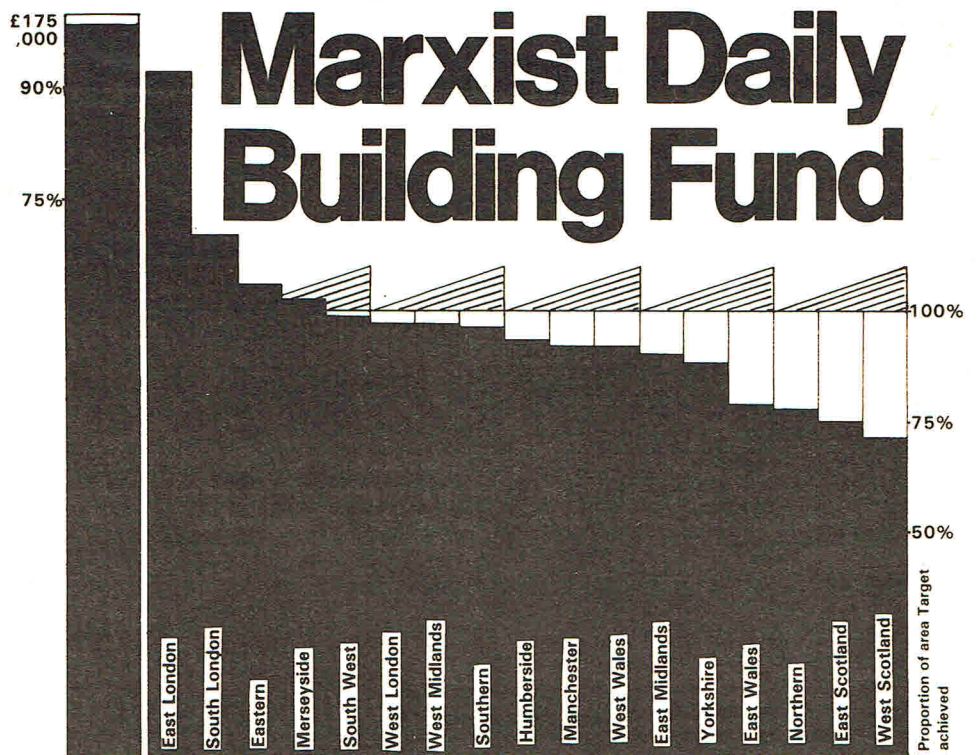
WOOLWICH 'Victory to the miners' at Woolwich Town Hall 8 pm, Wednesday 25 July. Speakers Keith Dickinson and from Kent NUM.

LINCOLN: Marxist Discussion Group. Every Tuesday at the Victoria Pub, Union road, Lincoln, 7.30 pm. For further details tel: (0522) 27922.

BRIXTON READERS meeting 'Local Government in Crisis— which way forward?' Speakers John Bryan (Southwark Councillor) Mike French (Sec Wandsworth Joint Works Ctte) Theresa Wrack (Greater London Labour Party exec) + Liverpool City Councillor. Venue Room 5 St. Matthews Meeting Place (opp. Brixton Town Hall near Brixton tube) Date Wednesday 25 July 7.30pm.

Militant pamphlet

"The Crisis—where is Britain going" by Ted Grant. First written in August, 1983, this new *Militant* pamphlet analyses the main political and economic developments in Britain. Price 40p (plus 10p, p+p) from World Socialist Books, 1, Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.



Only £2,154 needed

ROBERT MAXWELL, erstwhile Labour MP and now publishing millionaire, has taken over Mirror Group Newspapers at a cost of £113 million. The *Daily Mirror* will remain the voice of the 'sensible Left' he says.

Of course this means continued support for the right wing of the Labour Party against the genuine ideas of socialism.

Recently, after hearing Tory Chancellor, Nigel Lawson give a lecture expounding Tory economic philosophy Maxwell told him, "well done Nigel, I agree with every word of that."

Can we really expect a devastating attack on the Thatcher government from papers owned by someone like that? There is no way that the *Daily Mirror* will give full and true coverage of workers' struggles. Maxwell himself has taken his own

print workers to court under the Tories' anti-union laws.

The only worthwhile daily workers' paper will begin when *Militant* is produced every day. A daily Marxist paper would give workers an alternative to the Tory Fleet Street rags. We are getting nearer and nearer to having the ability to produce such a paper.

Militant or Mirror

The Marxist Daily Building Fund has almost reached the fantastic sum of £175,000. This week the total stands at £172,846 leaving

only £2,154 left to take us to the full target. This is a tremendous achievement for workers who don't have the resources of Maxwell.

While some of the Labour leaders have welcomed this takeover of the *Mirror*, the rank and file will be looking forward to the first issue of a genuine worker's paper. You can help bring that day nearer by contributing to our Fund and helping us to buy the necessary premises from which a Daily could be produced.

This week's contributors include M Sparks, a school student in Wittington YS, £20; P Barr, Wearside, £60; M Lindsay, Streatham, £150; Kate Hirst, South Yorkshire, £50; J North, Oldham, £50; and C Simpson, Staffordshire.

One week before LPYS Camp

Saturday 28 July – Saturday 4 August
at Bracelands Campsite, near Coleford,
Gloucestershire
(nearest rail station, Lydney)

Come and enjoy:

- ★ Political discussion.
- ★ Sport
- ★ Films
- ★ Discos
- ★ Club nights
- ★ Crèche

Cost is only £27 inclusive of camp fees, admission to films, discos and other events, sports equipment and facilities. Children under 3—free; 3—12 years—£13.50.

Contact your local LPYS branch or write to:
Andy Bevan, National Youth Officer, The Labour Party,
150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT.

● WHAT DO YOU BRING? A tent, sleeping bag, stove, cooking utensils. The LPYS shop on site supplies food etc. Bring a complete change of clothing, wellies and a kagool, just in case it rains (although socialist planning should take care of that).

● WHAT ABOUT THE KIDS? Bring them—they have a better time than anyone else! There's a professional creche provided. And there's pony-trekking, swimming, and lots more to keep them happy

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

British Aerospace

Reinstatement battle won

WORKERS AT British Aerospace have scored a victory in securing the reinstatement of 36 workers sacked in a battle over new technology.

On the question of new technology and pay, the management have been forced back to the negotiating table.

The strike by AUEW/TASS members at British Aerospace, Warton Division, was called three weeks ago over payments for using new technology and the management's refusal to reinstate 36 sacked members.

Home visits

The management responded by sending MacGregor-style letters to technical staff and visiting some members at their homes, in an attempt to per-

CLS - 'We'll fight'

CAMMELL LAIRDS workers are going to fight for their jobs! That was the message which came out of a meeting on 6 July between the shop stewards at Lairds and Terry Fields, representing the Merseyside Group of MPs and John Duncan of the Merseyside County Council.

New chairman

The shop stewards explained that at the beginning of the year a new chairman was installed at British Shipbuilders, put there by Thatcher to axe jobs and close yards. A few months later he announced that there would be 1,500 redundancies. Despite the existence of an agreement that there would be no enforced redundancies, management put this redundancy programme into effect. In the first group, four leading shop stewards were given their cards.

During this period the yard had two vessels in—a gas rig and a Royal Navy frigate. The frigate was due to leave the yard on 2 July and, when the workers found out that the management intended to sneak the gas rig out to Brest in France, although there was still four months work left to do on it, they decided to take action and the staging department occupied the vessel.

Determined

It was obvious to the workers that the management was intending to close the yard during the summer and possibly sell it to private ownership. The action was escalated and a group of workers occupied the frigate to stop that vessel from being moved out of the yard. The workers were adamant that the only time they would come off the two vessels would be when management rescinded the enforced redundancies.

By Dave Clark

suaide them to ignore their elected union representative's recommendation to continue the dispute.

Software

Fortunately British Aerospace employees are used to their management's tactics and it just reinforced their will to continue the fight. The strike, followed a battle since September when management introduced a nine week computer software training course, which allowed partially trained clerical and manual staff to earn more than qualified technical staff.

The dispute affected production of the European

fighters, the Tornado, The Jaguar and the Advanced Combat Aircraft (ACA) which was scheduled to fly in 1986.

Trade unionists at the division, which employs over 16,000 people, supported TASS and agreed to block work normally done by TASS members. They collected money to support strikers. However, many of the TASS members will be watching the proposed negotiations carefully to make sure that management do not again attempt to push through their aims to the detriment of the union's demands.

By a BA worker



Workers at Eastern Gas, members of NALGO, picket their depot on July 12 in a dispute over losses of jobs due to the introduction of new technology. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

Maxwell's Mirror grab

A FREE press? Of course. As long as you have the odd £100 million at hand.

Robert Maxwell's acquisition of the *Daily Mirror* group is a stark reminder that ownership of the media—and therefore effective control of the freedom of speech—is strictly in the hands of big business.

When the owners of the *Mirror* group, the massive Reed International multinational, first 'floated' the *Mirror* Group of Newspapers (MGN) for sale, there was much huffing and puffing about the papers keeping their so-called independence, and even talk of a scheme where MGN employees took up the shares in the company. However, all this was jettisoned when Maxwell came up with the cash. He has brought MGN for

£113 million—that includes the *Daily Mirror*, *Sunday Mirror*, *the People*, the *Daily Record* and *Sunday Mail* in Scotland, and *Sporting Life*. Maxwell will also get over 5% of shares in the Reuters news agency (which as a whole is worth a staggering £1 billion) and over 5% stake in the Press Association. It shows the increasing monopolisation of the national press; Fleet Street is now virtually stitched up between the 'terrible twins'—Murdoch and Maxwell.

BPC record

Maxwell has an appalling record in 'dealing' with the print unions, typified by the BPC battle in Watford this year. The takeover spells danger for the unions at MGN. As *Militant* (issue 678) reported, Maxwell is



A mass meeting of British Aerospace workers in Preston on July 13, votes to continue the strike. Their determined stand forced management to back down. Photo: John Harris (IFL)

POEU rejects wage offer

AFTER THE POEU annual conference in June overwhelmingly endorsed their leadership's rejection of the British Telecom/Post Office 1984 wage offer, it seems we are about to enter into industrial action.

Both boards are sticking to their original offer and the POEU national executive meets this week to decide their next step.

Conference

The June conference, despite the set back over the privatisation issue, re-elected the existing Broad Left executive members with most gaining additional votes. *Militant* supporters Donald McDonald and Phil Holt

substantially improved their votes. Those 'lefts' who voted against taking action on Mercury, and were subsequently withdrawn from the Broad Left slate, saw their votes decline.

In the ballots for the TUC and Labour Party conference delegations, the Broad Left slate was again successful in obtaining a majority of the rank and file part of each delegation. These delegations will both have left wing majorities.

A further blow to the right wing was the support that Phil Holt gained in the ballot for the Labour Party National Executive nominations. This year for the first time, conference was allowed to determine who the

POEU should nominate, and the right-wing expected John Golding, their nominee, to have an overwhelming majority. However, the actual voting was only two to one in favour of Golding, which should not fill him with confidence for the future.

Confidence

The trend to the left within conference was obvious. Such a movement will give confidence to the national executive to pick up the gauntlet over pay. A call for action will meet an echo within the ranks.

By Phil Lloyd
(Swansea POEU)

Rover stewards black coal

WORKERS AT Land Rover Ltd, Solihull have stepped up their support for the miners' strike. The shop stewards' committee on 11 July unanimously agreed to a resolution, moved by *Militant* supporters, to black coal still being delivered by non-union labour.

The decision was car-

ried despite the objection of the convenor who maintained that no official request had been received from the NUM. Unfortunately at the Longbridge plant, the same argument has been used and the union there is yet to take the same firm line as Land Rover. There have even been

NUM pickets visiting Longbridge to try to stop coal going in.

But both factories have been giving financial support to the NUM, which is vital. However, no trade unionist can be content with that. The sooner all coal is blacked, the sooner the miners' strike can be won.

Blackburn Brewers

WORKERS AT D Thwaites Brewers in Blackburn went on strike over the sacking of two men and the arbitrary way that discipline was used.

Fifteen members of the AUEW and five in the EETPU took strike action after two men were sacked for a clocking offence—the time involved was two minutes! What's more, the manager who raised the issue has himself been in breach of company discipline for sacking offences, yet has only received warnings.

In solidarity the GMBATU members at the brewers blacked machinery that broke down and was fixed by management.

As a result, production was stopped when a conveyor belt broke down. Despite management at first rejecting going to ACAS on the basis there was 'no common ground' between them and the union, they soon went to ACAS when production stopped.

The workers have now returned to work awaiting the decision of ACAS which will be binding.

not interested in this so-called 'responsible attitude' by these two chapels, when Maxwell laid the money on the table.

Instead of looking towards management for a way out time could be better spent building the confidence of the rank and file members of the chapels and relying on their own strength.

Unity vital

If such a wave of redundancies is to be beaten and new technology agreed to the benefit of the workers, there must be unity by *all* the *Mirror* chapels and past problems overcome to ensure this latest Fleet Street baron does not successfully divide and rule. The watch word must be hang together—or hang separately.

keen to get a site in one of the free enterprise zones of London and build a new factory with complete implementation of new technology. The chairman of MGN, Clive Thorton, (who has resigned with Maxwell's takeover) has warned that under Maxwell 3,000 jobs could be lost.

There must be unity of all the MGN print unions if such a threat of massive redundancies is to be fought. Unfortunately last week, in the 11th hour before Maxwell's takeover, the *Mirror* NUJ and SOGAT '82 chapels agreed to a 12 month 'no-strike' formula with Thorton. Where this agreement stands now is not clear, but was obviously a last minute attempt to get Reed International to intervene and save off Maxwell's bid. But the actions of Reed International showed they were

GCHQ-Tories found guilty

THATCHER AND the Tory government have been found guilty of acting illegally in banning trade unions from GCHQ.

Mr Justice Glidewell said that in the interests of natural justice, the government should have consulted the unions at GCHQ before imposing a union ban.

The court's decision will be a further hammer blow to the sagging confidence of the Tories, already taking a battering from the miners, dockers and Liverpool's Labour council.

As the news was given by the CPSA General Secretary Alistair Graham, to the CPSA's executive committee who were in session discussing civil service pay, national officer John Macreadie urged Mr Graham and the Council of Civil Service Unions to begin recruiting the GCHQ workers back into the unions before the Tories launched a counter-attack, of court appeals and possible emergency retrospective legislation.

Good news

The 'illegal' ruling is undoubtedly good news for the workers at GCHQ, in particular the 150 heroic workers who refused to give up their union membership. Every now and then, the judiciary tries to give the impression that it is independent of the capitalist state and its political representatives, the Tories.

It would be foolish however, to rely on the court's decision. After all, the courts did not find the ban itself illegal, but the manner in which it was carried out. The unions must prepare for the next round in the battle—that is why the mistakes of the past must not be repeated.

Already Alistair Graham and Council of Civil Service officials have requested a meeting with Thatcher and have even hinted at an agreement on a 'no-strike deal'. Mr Graham was the



Civil Servants demonstrate in support of trade union rights at GCHQ in February after the government's initial attempt to ban unions. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report).

architect of the earlier strategy which placed its faith in talks with Thatcher, offering her a 'no-strike deal' instead of placing his faith in the workers at GCHQ, civil servants and workers generally, to defeat the union ban.

Begin campaign

CPSA conference in May overwhelmingly carried a motion censuring Graham, Losinska and the unions' right wing for their actions, and opposing out-right any 'no strike' deal at GCHQ or elsewhere.

The Broad Left majority on the CPSA executive committee must en-

force this motion. It must convene mass meetings at Cheltenham and other GCHQ establishments to recruit the workers back to the unions.

The Labour Party must clearly spell out its support for the unions at GCHQ and declare its opposition to any no-strike deal. The Tories are in disarray, Labour must boldly and clearly champion the cause of all workers and unions in struggle.

By Kevin Roddy
(CPSA National Executive, personal capacity & Broad Left national chairman)

Computer strike solid

THE STRIKE by computer staff at the Newcastle DHSS Centre is now entering its tenth week. The action is over changes in shift patterns and subsequent cuts in pay.

Morale of the strikers is as high as ever. The strike has cost the DHSS over £8 million so far. As the dispute started because management wanted to cut back on shift allowances to 'save' £44,000, it shows how stupid and hypocritical the Tories are.

The cost is so high because when order books run out local Post Offices are franking books and paying out benefits. Each time the Post Office does this the charge to the DHSS is 50p.

The DHSS are also sending out mail by first class post which, with the workload of the DHSS, amounts to a fortune. Add to this the national newspaper adverts, the costs of taxis to take the few scabs in, and the thousands of pounds lost in over-payments, the sum that the taxpayers are supposed to be 'saving' is embarrassing the Tories.

The government thought that they could get away with cutting £10-£14 per week from the shift workers' pay. The response by the shift workers has been to organise one of the most effective actions in the civil service. A 24 hour picket is in operation and visits to other offices to get over the strikers' case have taken place.

The strikers have now unofficially twinned themselves with striking miners from the nearby Bates colliery in Northumberland, with miners attending the picket line.

On Thursday 12 July, over 20 miners arrived to help out at the picket line. The one policeman on duty immediately began speaking into his radio and, low and behold, 40 policemen turned up, one of them on horseback!

The shiftworkers are delighted to receive help from the miners and at the weekly strike meeting gave them a marvellous welcome.

No pay cuts

Someone who did not see such a welcome—in fact he received stony silence—was Alistair Graham, the right wing general secretary of the CPSA. It was the first time that he has shown his face on the picket line in nine weeks of strike action. His call to involve ACAS to force the government to talk was answered by the branch secretary Doreen Purves. She said: "We will talk anytime, but what we will not do is agree to any cuts in pay or water down our just demands."

By Kevin McHugh
(CPSA NEC, personal capacity) & **Colin Ely**
(CPSA, personal capacity)

Washington walk out

STRIKE ACTION is also being taken at the Washington computer centre. Bob Telford and Mark Stallers spoke to Ray Physick about the strike:

"The negotiations on the change in shift patterns that took place proposed a 'transitional period' of up to two years. Though at the end it seemed clear that we would suffer a cut in shift allowance. Yet the old right wing national executive of the CPSA advised us to accept it—'this is not a winnable dispute' they said.

Work on

The Washington members, though split, accepted the NEC decision. Newcastle shift workers however refused to accept it, and came out on strike on May 14. We worked on for a total of six weeks.

Management were constantly trying to enforce the computer link with Newcastle, which

would have meant accepting scab work. We refused. The management threatened to bring in clerical staff or even casual labour.

Strike vote

Under such pressure it was only a matter of time before we came out on strike. On Friday June 12 the day shift walked out. The following Monday we organised a joint meeting of all the shifts—at this meeting we voted to strike. Our demand was the same as Newcastle—status quo shift patterns and allowances.

Management are attacking the strongest section of the union. If they win here they'll attack all the other sections.

The strike is staunch. Everybody is involved. Its only a matter of time before we win, especially as we are now being supported by the newly elected NEC.

Pay Campaign launched

DESPITE THE overwhelming rejection of the pay offer by civil servants, the Tories have bluntly refused to increase the offer.

Civil Service union officials met the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Nigel Lawson, on July 13 and were told there would be no more money and no more arbitration.

As a result the National Executive of the Civil and Public Services Association met on Monday July 16 and agreed to recommend a plan of mass rallies, meetings and protests up and down the country in opposition to the government, to the Council of Civil Service Unions which met the following day.

This national campaign will give members a chance to voice their anger at the Tories' blunt refusal to give way on pay, and will build a mood of confidence within the ranks of the civil service, in preparation for a campaign of industrial action.

Jobcentres face closure



A sign of the future? A disused Job centre up for sale.

Photo: Militant

JOB CENTRE staff in Manchester are on all out strike, with selective strike action taking place in London.

They are fighting Tory plans to go ahead with the widespread closure of Job Centres as part of their plan to introduce 'Job Supermarkets'. The Tories are trying to bulldoze the scheme through ignoring consultation with the civil service unions. They want to reduce the present number of Job Centres, from 1,000 to 350, through using 'job points' in supermarkets, libraries and display boards. It will mean

job losses and for the unemployed, no advisory service.

Privatisation

Job Centre staff quite rightly see the Tories' plans as a prelude to privatisation. They point out that prominent Tories have connections with private job advisory firms. Indeed, the wife of Sir Geoffrey Howe is president of the Personnel Services Association.

Staff at Bury, Prestwich and Radcliffe Job Centres are on all out strike while in South London workers are taking week long selective

strike action. Dave Jones, secretary of the South West London CPSA branch said there were few people holding back from joining the action and the response has taken the Tories by surprise.

Support

Caroline Beebe, CPSA rep at Tooting, added that public response had been very good—on their local petition they had collected over 2,000 signatures, and there was general sympathy from passers-by and the unemployed.

Make your voice heard

Support for the BLOC lobby of the TUC congress is building up. Already BLOC supporters in Liverpool and South East London have booked coaches to go to Brighton.

A letter has also been received from a member of Bridgewater Labour Party who are also planning to book a coach after seeing one of the leaflets distributed at the Tolpuddle rally.

This lobby will attract all the best militants and trade union activists who will come along to the TUC and say—we need a fighting socialist leadership in the trade unions.

Details of Liverpool coach: Tickets £10 from Jimmy Hollinshead, 48 Arkles Lane, Liverpool. Coach leaves mid-night Sunday 2 September from TGWU Offices, Islington, Liverpool.

BLOC

BROAD LEFT ORGANISING COMMITTEE

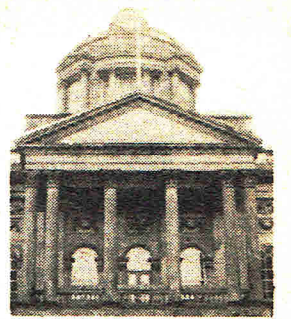
LOBBY THE TUC

Monday September 3rd 1984
8.30 am onwards at Conference
Centre Brighton

- * Full support for the miners.
- * Defend unions against Tory anti-union laws.
- * For a fighting, democratic, socialist leadership in the trade unions.

Militant

Feature on
Liverpool
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Follow Liverpool's lead

THE HOUSE of Lords' brief "rebellion" against Thatcher predictably collapsed last Monday with a comfortable government majority for its plans to abolish the GLC.

The only 'concession' gained is an extra year in neutered office for ex-isting councillors.

The other wing of the Tory attack on local government—cuts in grant aid from central government also looks like being stepped up.

Thatcher has recently chaired a cabinet committee which is believed to have decided on new curbs on a wide range of local authority capital spending projects.

Campaign

Liverpool Labour council's victory through its marvellous campaign of defiance shows the Tories can be defeated.

Despite Thatcher's claims they have made "no concessions" to Liverpool, many councillors in the Tory Party want to know why they aren't getting £60 million-worth of "non-concessions"! As Tory MP Terry Dicks said in the House of Commons—will his council get the same preferential treatment "or is it only militant Labour councils?"

When Labour took con-

By Eddie Doveton
(Secretary Coventry
South West CLP,
personal capacity)

trol in Liverpool, in May 1983, they faced a Liberal budget which meant either 5,000 jobs would go with cuts in services, OR a 200% rate increase just to stand still. Last Monday they got the equivalent of £60 million in extra finance. As the *Liverpool Daily Post* said, they could spend £250 million without incurring any financial penalties, even though the government's spending target for Liverpool was originally £216 million.

The scale of Liverpool's victory is tremendous, and the ignominious climb-down of the government equally so. Liverpool's victory has rightly had a tremendous effect on the mood of other local authorities to oppose the government.

The claim that Liverpool was "going it alone" "too early... wait for next year when we will all face the cuts together" has been heard



Local government faces attack on two fronts. A united, campaigning fight like Liverpool's is the way to victory.

quite a lot over the past months. Many councils will face crisis next year.

Ratecapping threat

Indeed a list of provisional financial targets for 1985-6 will be set on 26 July marking out those authorities for ratecapping. Many have already overshot government targets for the current year,

hence the emergency curbs on spending now being prepared.

With the government's success in the House of Lords on Monday the GLC's publicity and parliamentary lobbying campaign is in danger of running out of steam. Whilst forcing by-elections and a popular referendum on abolition may provide a useful focus for mobilising support it

needs to be linked to a political campaign around socialist policies on all the enormous social and economic problems Londoners live with every day. It must stress the fact that only the organised labour and trade union movement has the power or political will to defeat the Tories.

Liverpool's strategy, based upon active involvement of the working class (see cen-

tre pages) contrasts sharply with the tactics adopted by many other Labour councils, who have reduced their opposition to manoeuvres and 'clever tricks'. Words alone will not defeat the government when next year brings a further round of even more stringent Tory cuts.

Only by mobilising the labour movement and the working class, can the tide of Thatcherism be turned back.

Support for the miners

A FEATURE of the miners' strike has been the growth of support groups involving wives, girlfriends, daughters and sons of striking miners. Their role has been very far from passive.

Four members of Upton miners support group near Fitzwilliam, used town-twinning schemes to build links between Yorkshire miners and German steel workers and saw for themselves another feature of the strike, workers' internationalism.

Edith Woolley, Carol Low, Dave and Hazel Mountain arrived in Dortmund, Leeds' twin town in Germany in Dave and Hazel's car with £30 between them, no place to stay and no food. They told Jane Ingham how they raised £760 for their support group and built links with a group of German steel workers.

International backing

"When we set off on the ferry, we were excited and full of high spirits, but we arrived in Germany tired and a bit apprehensive. We went

to the offices of the steel union IG Metall in Dortmund to meet Gerd Kaplehauf, the union vice president.

"With the language problem we were getting more and more worried we had bitten off more than we could chew." But with the help of an interpreter Hartmut Herbold the group were put up at the union training school in Sprokthovel, introduced to a group of trade unionists at the college and spoke at a students meeting where a collection was taken.

"We were treated like royalty and on the Wednesday Jo Derber from Hoesch

AG Dortmund, a steel works took us along to the steel union meeting." All the steel union leaders from the area were there, about 200. Hazel spoke ("She was the only one with guts" said the others) and it went down well. "Though they didn't seem to be as far advanced as we are on strike tactics. They were shocked that women were doing as much as we are".

35-hour week

The group were in Germany just as the battle for a 35 hour week was ending. The meeting they spoke at

accepted a 38½ hour deal but they didn't seem too cheerful about it and they felt the workers wanted to hold out for 35 hours.

"We got a very good response; it's amazing really with us at loggerheads with the steel union leaders here, that they accept us". The group was also shown round a steel works by Rainer Korsinkowski the shop steward and again the response was fantastic. As well as the money they collected, other collections are being taken and sent over.

Dave and Hazel both lived in Germany for a time as Dave was in the army. They explained the differences between then and now. Hazel said "We really got to know the German people. When we lived here, they always seemed a step above

us, but we found out they are the same as us, ordinary working people.

"You will fight"

"They understand what we are going through. One trade unionist told us they would never get this far in a strike but I said to him this 35 hour week claim is due to be reviewed in 2 years time; by then, when your people have had enough, you will turn like we've turned.

"How long have miners here been saying no to Arthur Scargill and sitting on the fence? Then all of a sudden everybody stood up to be counted. I think they (the German workers) are watching us for a lead."

Feature on Hemsworth/
Fitzwilliam—page 7



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