

Derbyshire NUM call for general strike

Unite with miners -step up action

AFTER TEN months, despite all the bribes and press propaganda, 140,000 NUM members, 72% of the total, are refusing to cross picket lines. Miners are staying loyal to their union, to their hundreds of sacked comrades and to the fight to defend their communities.

In the six pits around Hemsworth in Yorkshire, a mere 37 out of 4,500 have returned to work. In Midlothian, 150-200 pickets turned out at the Newbattle workshops and the Blinkbonny private mine, far more than in recent weeks.

And at Killoch in Ayrshire, after thorough organisation at local and Scottish level, there were more than 1000 pickets on Tuesday, a marvellous turnout and an important psychological victory for the union.

The miners' loyalty, and the solidarity action of thousands of fellow workers has been an inspiration. Now is the time for that solidarity action to be stepped up, to force the Tories and the NCB to back down.

The crashing pound, the freezing weather and the failure of the back-to-work drive have rocked the Government. Their policies are in disarray and pressure is mounting on them to settle.

More and more evidence is being unearthed to prove that the union's case for keeping pits open is soundly based. At St John's colliery, it has been discovered that a declared "loss" of £7½m includes £810,000 for "area HQ overheads", £435,000 towards the cost of running Hobart House in London, £300,000 for early retirement (despite the fact that there are supposed to be government grants for this) and £1m to run the local washery.

Social and investment costs have been applied to a local pit to make its operating loss look worse than it really is. The real loss

By Ian Isaac
(St John's NUM and
South Wales NUM EC
personal capacity)

is only about £3m and that could be wiped out if there were investment in better facilities and equipment, and if they were to look for markets.

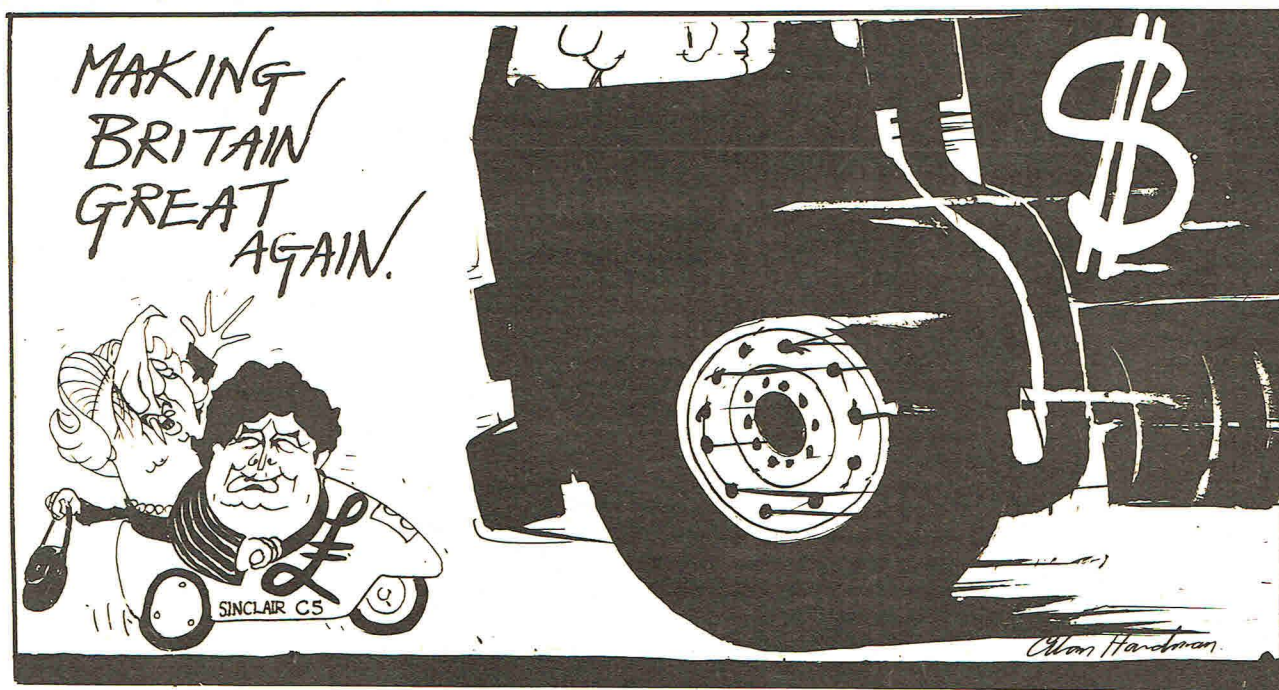
The vast majority of strikers are more determined than ever that they are right, and are going to fight on. There is still no sign, however, that the Labour and TUC leaders are facing up to their responsibility to stand four-square behind the miners.

Deeds, not just words

Pressure needs to be intensified on the TUC to deliver in deeds the pledges made at the Congress in September to organise solidarity action and block all coal movement. They must mobilise the might of the whole movement in general strike action, with mass rallies in every city, to show the depth of support for the miners and, by explaining the issues, broaden that support.

Within the NUM there is a growing demand that the struggle be widened to involve all workers. The North Derbyshire Area Council has just passed, by nine votes to four, a resolution from Renishaw Park NUM asking them "to instruct the National Executive Committee to name a date for general strike action by all rank-and-file trade unionists and sym-

Continued on back page



The £ in crisis -- Editorial, Page 2

£40,000 aim

MILITANT'S fighting fund has now reached £24,930 for this quarter which represents a real sacrifice by many of our readers to ensure that our paper continues to get better and better.

We still need over £40,000 to reach our 31 January Target. We know our readers are most generous with help of all kinds for the miners' fight. But don't forget that a healthy and expanding *Militant* will speed the process of cutting off Thatcher's and MacGregor's power supply for ever! Send a donation now to Militant Fighting Fund, 3/13 Hepscott Road London E9 5HB.

We have no rich backers but our readers have always made sure we not only survived but improved our coverage and regularity. We are sure you won't let us down.

23 January—Lobby the TUC

WELL OVER 1,000 miners and their supporters gathered outside Killoch pit in Ayrshire on 15 January to show the NCB that the strike is still solid. The demonstration lifted the spirits of the regular pickets. The fight for jobs and union rights in Scotland is still on.

Several more strike centres

represented at the picket said they would be sending delegates to Saturday's conference in solidarity with the miners in Edinburgh, organised by the Scottish Broad Left Organising Committee (BLOC), (see page 13 for details). This is clearly going to be a highly successful event.

Support is also growing for the lobby of the TUC General Council next Wednesday (23 January). The lobby, organised by the National BLOC, is designed to tell the TUC leaders that union members want action from them to back the miners, with solidarity action and finance.

**Wednesday 23 January
9.00 am Onwards
Congress House, Great Russell
Street, (Tottenham Court Road Tube
station)**

- ★ TUC must act — with a 24 hour General Strike
- ★ A massive campaign to implement Congress policies.
- ★ Don't cross NUM picket lines.
- ★ Don't handle or transport blacked coal, oil or coke.
- ★ Link up every struggle with the miners strike.

Militant

Collapse of Pound— Workers bear burden of 'casino society'

IN THE run up to the last general election, the capitalist press ridiculed Peter Shore, then Shadow Chancellor, for suggesting that there should be a 30% devaluation of the pound. Yet since that time there has been a virtual 50% devaluation. At the time of the election the pound was worth more than \$1.50 but at hotels and tourist agencies in the USA the pound is already at near parity with the dollar.

The policies of the Reagan government, with its astronomical budget deficits, have been one of the main factors in the pound's collapse by the US economy sucking in huge amounts of foreign currency. But the main reason is the general decay and decline of the British economy.

Because of decades of neglect and a lack of investment especially in the production of real manufacturing wealth, British capitalism has come to an unstable reliance upon oil. The manufacturing base of the economy has been eroded to such an extent that Britain, once "the workshop of the world", is now a net importer of manufactured goods. There is currently a balance of payments deficit of £10 billion per annum on non-oil trade.

What is a sickness for British capitalism, evident in the collapse of the pound, would be an absolute catastrophe were it not for North Sea oil, which contributes £13 billion a year to tax revenue, and £9 billion to the balance of payments. But of course the oil will not last forever. The ruling class have no idea whatsoever how it will be possible in the future to create the necessary wealth to maintain the living standard of the 50 million population of Britain when North Sea oil begins to run out.

The Tories' policies are leading to a disaster. They have worshipped the law of the free market, and now they are suffering precisely because of the free market. Money and investment inevitably flow to those areas of the greatest profit—and that means at present into the United States economy.

The insanity of fluctuating exchange rates increases the instability and the volatility already inherent in the world currency markets. Thousands of millions of dollars of profit are made by speculators and swindlers, including many of the big industrial and financial companies who make a killing by 'playing the market'. It is estimated that more than 95% of all international currency movements are purely speculative, having no relationship whatsoever to any genuine trade.

The real meaning of the free market economy, so much praised by Thatcher and the Tory party, is a *casino society*. Workers supply their labour power, but its value is uncertain from one week to the next. The spokesmen of capitalism describe their system as the most efficient and cost effective form of society. In fact, it is the most wasteful and inefficient.

As it would have done under Peter Shore's Chancellorship, the collapse of the pound will add to the burdens already falling on the shoulders of the working class and the middle class. Interest rates will inevitably rise, including the mortgage rate. Industrial investment will be hit and unemployment will rise faster. Inflation will be raised, by the mortgage increase alone, by 0.5%. The Tories' promise of tax concessions in the budget now look slightly faded. Even the modest growth rates forecast for 1985 look increasingly unattainable.

Nothing demonstrates better the complete incapacity of the capitalist class to run society than the financial chaos of the present time. It should be used by the Labour Party to campaign for the whole system to be swept aside.

Labour needs to advance a programme of socialist planning, based upon democratic control of industry, the economy and the state. The nationalisation of the top 200 industrial monopolies, together with the banks and insurance companies would put a socialist Labour government in a position to plan a stable and secure increase in the production of real wealth, thus increasing living standards.

A bold and clear call by the Labour leaders for fundamental social change, could swiftly find a wide echo, in a society rocked by casino economics. That is the most important lesson of the last week's events.

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National campaign launched to fight youth jobs 'conscription'

A NATIONAL campaign has been launched to fight government plans to cut the supplementary benefit of 16/17 year olds who refuse places on Youth Training Schemes. (See Militant 731).

Organised jointly by the Labour Party Young Socialists (LPYS) and the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign (YTURC) a month of activity is planned, launched on 24 January with a press conference and culminating on 28 February with a mass march on parliament.

A new national YTURC petition has been produced with the aim of handing in at least 243,000 signatures (the number of 16/17 year olds claiming supplementary benefit) to the Houses of Parliament at the end of the march. 400,000 leaflets



Labour Party Young Socialists lobby Tory Conference 1984.

publicising the event have been produced, and 10,000 posters.

The posters, leaflets and petitions are available from Labour Party headquarters 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT.

A national fortnight of action has been planned to involve the LPYS branches

and YTURC organisations, beginning 26 February. The first week will involve visits and leaflet drops at factories, colleges, YTS schemes and dole offices. The second week will concentrate on housing estates and joint LPYS/YTURC public meetings.

It is crucial that there is a

massive turnout on the day to show the Tories what young people think of living on £26.50 a week with no guarantee of real training, and even less chance of a real job. Show Thatcher what you think. Be on the march.

By Tony Cox
(Secretary, YTURC)

Leading Communists expelled as party split comes to head

THE CIVIL War within the 'Communist Party' reached new heights over the weekend.

The *Star's* Editor and Deputy Editor were expelled from the Party. Four other London party members were also expelled, six suspended 12 banned from holding party office and three full-time party workers had their sackings confirmed.

These actions are but the latest extraordinary developments in the bitter faction fight now raging inside the once monolithic CP. All factions blame the others for the decline in party membership, down 10,000 in the last seven years to 15,691, and the fall in *Morning Star* sales, currently 14,820.

The two main factions are the "Euros", who are supported by the Party leadership and the "traditionalists" who back the *Morning Star*. The Euros are mainly young and middle-class, with demands that would not be out of place on the centre-right of the



The editor and deputy of the *Morning Star* have been expelled from the CP.

Labour Party. Their demands are basically 'radical, democratic' rather than specifically socialist. They do not accept the the working class is a crucial force which will change society; for them that is old hat, out of date.

Not surprisingly their attitude has little appeal to workers, and is resented by most older CP members from industrial backgrounds. This second group, the 'traditionalists', main appeal is talk of a return to the 'old values'. So the *Morning Star* has reverted to its uncritical view

of the totalitarian states in Eastern Europe. Their lack of democracy cuts them off from the vast majority of British workers.

And despite the emphasis on 'workers' by the 'traditionalists', they share the same policies as the Euros. Both support the CP's policy of the British Road to Socialism, with its nationalist orientation and programme of reforming capitalism.

Neither faction will be able to arrest the decline of the CP, for its flaw is not organisational, but political. Capitalism can no longer deliver lasting reforms. The

CP's British Road has nothing to offer workers in struggle.

The condition of the Party is now acute. The bitterness of the faction fight will intensify. The CP leadership is now mailing *Focus*, a weekly alternative to the *Morning Star* to all members.

They hope to settle accounts with the traditionalists at an Emergency Congress of the Party, 18-20 May. But it is likely that the fighting will go on.

By Colin Barber

Portsmouth students

PORTSMOUTH POLYTECHNIC Students Union is under attack by the Governors for organising in defence of free education.

On Monday a fine of £16,000 was imposed on the Students Union for organising an occupation. The students are demanding that the hall fees rise by no more in percentage terms than student grant increases, and no extra charges are levied on equipment essential for various courses.

Students told me what they thought—Aryn Jurmani: "It is a tremendous thing for this Polytechnic, it has shown the willingness of students to defend education."

Jim Lowe: "The governors are an unreasonable

bunch of Tories. They have total contempt for the students." Iain Case: "To use the courts in this way shows whether you're fighting for jobs or for education, the Tories have no regard for the ordinary person. They would rather jail us than listen to us."

Rahda: "It shows that only students and workers have interests in defending the basic rights to free education."

The students are continuing the campaign, holding a demonstration on Wednesday, 23 January, and are calling for unions at the Poly to call a 24 hour strike on that day.

By Heiko Khoo
(Portsmouth Poly Labour Club)

The Sun spells it out for Scargill

ARTHUR SCARGILL has been found guilty of a new heinous crime. The *Sun* on 10 January exclusively revealed he made a devastating mistake in a letter to a striking miner's father: " 'Tolpuddle' was wrongly spelt—as 'Tollpuddle'—in Mr Scargill's letter". Oh shame, Mr Scargill.

South Wales

The *Sun* of course, doesn't make such mistakes. Well, with the exception of the article on page six of the same issue. There, in a report on the South Wales miners they write about the "Rhonda" in South Wales. Oh well, they eventually do spell it right. But no matter,

what the *Sun* is really upset about is that miners in the Rhondda still talk about the Tonypandy massacre of 1910.

The *Sun* boldly reports: "In fact the bloodbath never happened. A miner was killed in riots between strikers and blacklegs before troops were sent in to restore order". Not quite true of course. The miner killed was beaten to death by police, who also injured another 500 miners on that day—in most people's books that's a bloodbath. And the troops were called for the day before the riots on 7 November. Still, as the *Sun* reports, "...people don't seem interested in facts in the Rhondda" (sic). Unlike the *Sun* of course.

Notts split - fight for NUM unity

Editorial statement

THE NATIONAL Coal Board and the Tories are greeting with relish the possibility of an organisational rupture in the National Union of Mineworkers.

Already it has been leaked from sources within the NCB that a separate Nottinghamshire union would be recognised. They will give all possible help to Lynk and his fellow right-wing scab leaders. No effort will be spared in an attempt to create a safe scab company union in the Nottingham coalfield, and to split the living body of the NUM.

Militant believes that a systematic campaign is needed to win Nottingham working miners away from the out and out treacherous individuals who at present hold the effective leadership of the Notts NUM.

There is widespread hatred throughout the NUM for these individuals—for the role they have played in the strike, for their open class collaboration, and for their attempts at every stage to sabotage this struggle and aid Thatcher and MacGregor.

Nevertheless most miners nationally understand the fundamental difference between ordinary Notts miners and these 'superscab' leaders. With different leadership at the start Notts miners would have been in the battle. The NCB and the police know that. This is why

the whole force of the state has come down on those miners attempting to discuss with Notts working miners and convince them of the need to join the strike.

A permanent organisational division between striking miners and other Nottingham miners would be a disaster.

The scab leaders dread the prospect of the strikers coming back into the pits. They want to permanently isolate these strikers from the rest of the miners in the Notts coalfield.

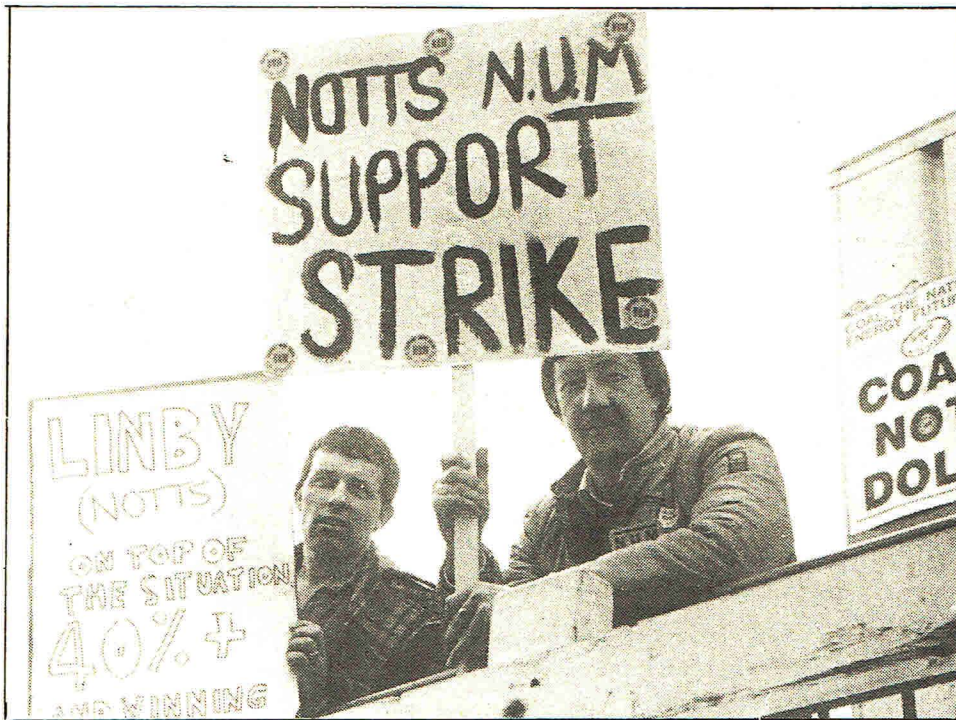
After the strike the ordinary Notts miners can be won away from these traitors by a well organised, systematic campaign, especially as their inability to protect the interests of the Notts miners becomes clear.

Yorkshire was once thought of as a right wing area of the NUM. Now it is among the most solid left wing areas.

The task of winning the ordinary miners from these scab leaders will be made a thousand times worse if those who have been through the hard school of the strike are not in the same union.

One of the key strengths of the NUM has always been that it was the only union in the industry. Many of the working miners—the majority probably—know in their heart of hearts that they should have been involved in this battle.

We believe therefore that



Notts miners at the special NUM conference in April last year—the whole force of the state was brought in to isolate Notts strikers from working miners.

the task of winning the Notts miners from their scab leaders would have been best carried forward after the strike.

However, some of the left leaders of the union, and many rank and file miners have thought that moves to discipline these scab leaders had to begin while the strike was under way.

Disciplinary rules changes that had been discussed prior to the strike were brought forward and passed at a special delegate conference. These were not intended for use against ordinary working miners but solely to discipline the scab leaders for their strike breaking

treachery.

However, in branch meetings in the Notts area, scab leaders used these disciplinary rules changes to frighten working miners with the possibility of widespread disciplinary action against all those who worked during the strike.

Many Notts branches were won over to the rules changes put forward by the right wing, which in effect meant the beginning of the organisational separation of the Notts area from the national union.

We believe that it would have been preferable to have fought this issue through once the strike was over.

Some of the left leaders and many rank and file miners however, believed that rapid disciplinary action against the Notts area was necessary. They hoped that the mass of Notts miners would be quickly mobilised to force the Area to rescind the rules' change. Failing this, new sections of the NUM would be set up in North and South Nottingham to recruit as many Notts miners as possible.

Henry Richardson has been suspended from office. The Notts scab leaders are refusing to back track on their plans for an entirely independent union.

Coventry strikers harassed at home

GAS BOARD workers and striking miners are outraged by a new type of harassment in Keresley, near Coventry.

On 9 January, Gas Board officials, accompanied by a heavy police presence, demanded entry into the house of striking miner Les Styles.

The official said that he wanted to check the meter for safety. When Les asked why two uniformed and two plain clothes policemen also had to enter he was told it was 'normal procedure'.

Policemen

Two more policemen were waiting by a van parked outside, with its door open. "They were obviously hoping I would resist entry and they would have a pretext to arrest me," Les said. The meter was found to be in good order but the official insisted on putting locks and clamps on it. During this time Mrs Styles was prevented from leaving the kitchen. The same procedure was used for other strikers. The houses visited were the homes of the strike committee chairwoman, vice-chairman, and treasurer, the driver who usually took speakers to address meetings, and two very active pickets.

The strikers involved are in-

censed by these incidents and by article in the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* the same day which claimed the Gas Board had acted on an 'anonymous phone call.'

"We were treated as if we were guilty and the newspaper article implied that we were as well," Les said.

Dave Nellist MP has asked the paper to apologise for its 'scurrilous irresponsibility'. GMBATU branch officers have demanded that regional gas board management explain why normal procedures were clearly broken.

Gas workers' shop steward Steve Higgitt said that the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* implied they were working with the police to break the strike. "We are supporting the miners wholeheartedly and refusing to disconnect miners for debt," he said, "one of our members was involved without the knowledge of the stewards, but Coventry depot was by-passed because they knew we'd tip the miners off."

"Our members are demanding action and we've told management that if we don't have an assurance that this won't happen again, the van used will be blacked.

By Dave Hoffman and Tony Cross

Power round-up

★ IN THE North-West Fiddlers Ferry power station has only one unit burning and this at reduced efficiency due to poor quality coal. At Bold power station management are increasing pressure to use scab coal. A TGWU official was refused permission by management to speak to union members. Pickets report coal being stockpiled at Westwood power station. (The next Liverpool Miners solidarity conference will be Saturday 26 January at 10 am, Municipal Annexe, Dale Street, Liverpool.)

★ In what is thought to be a trial run, coal stocks at a North-Eastern pithead were moved by lorry to a coke works. Ten lorries shifted coal on Monday 14 January from Wearmouth colliery to Fishburn Coke Works, ten miles away. Local miners believe NCB management are testing the water for larger scale movement of pithead stocks.

★ A power cut stopped Fords Dagenham car factory for one hour 20 minutes on the morning of Monday 7 January. On the same day power cuts occurred all over East London.

★ Large areas of York were blacked out on Thursday 10 January for half an hour in the afternoon. The electricity board blamed a 'cable fault'.

Every pit is 'economic' —new report

THERE IS not one pit in the country whose closure would save the government money, according to a new report based on a careful analysis of the National Coal Board's profit and loss accounts.

The report, entitled *The Economic Case Against Pit Closures* was prepared for the NUM by Andrew Glyn, Fellow and Tutor in Economics at Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

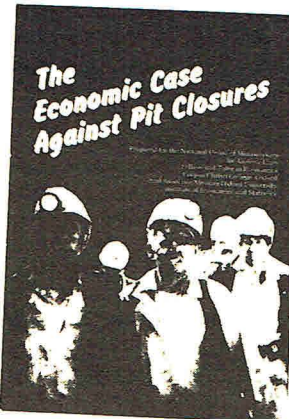
A previous report prepared by Andrew Glyn in October last year described and challenged the NCB's accounting methods and conclusions. (See also articles by Andrew Glyn in *Militant*).

The new report develops the argument about the impact of pit closures on unemployment and adds valuable new information on each individual pit.

Miners' collection stolen

A MINER'S wife from Hatfield Main Women's Support Group had her bag snatched in a Brixton street on 9 January. Personal items apart, it contained over £200 collected at meetings of the EETPU Press Branch and *The Times* chapel in Fleet Street.

The money was to fund food kitchens for miners' kids, money which is desperately needed. We ap-



peal to trade unionists and supporters of the miners to help us make good this loss. Send money to the Hatfield Main Women's Support Group, c/o 26 Abbeyfield Road, Dunscroft, South Yorkshire, DN7 4AF. Cheques and POs payable to Hatfield Women's Support Group.

It includes an Appendix on the economic impact of the strike, which is estimated to have cost the country around £5 billion.

The report is available from Turnaround Distribution, 27 Horsell Road London N5 1XL price £1.50 (including postage and packing).

By Tony Clegg (Hatfield Main NUM)

The right wing leaders of South Derbyshire are moving to try and align their area with Notts.

It would seem that the die is now cast. If this is the case, and the special delegate conference comes to the conclusion that immediate expulsion of the Notts area is necessary then the NUM will have no alternative but to attempt to mount a massive campaign.

Despite all difficulties a drive must be launched aimed at reaching every Notts miner and convincing them to maintain the organisational unity of the NUM.

Police wall

The police have built a human wall between striking and non-striking miners. Management will obviously allow every facility to the scab right wing leaders to campaign among working miners, while attempting to block the campaigning activity of the NUM and those in the Notts area fighting to oppose the split.

Massive propaganda from management, the media and the scab leaders will be poured into the Notts area. The national union must itself therefore spare no effort in this battle. Special material must be produced and special meetings must be organised in every locality.

The whole labour movement in Nottinghamshire and nationally must aid this campaign. Unity is strength. Those who seek to create a split must be isolated. The unity of the NUM must be defended and maintained.

Kent miners jailed

IN AN act of judicial vindictiveness Kent miners Terry French and Chris Tazey have been found guilty of causing grievous bodily harm to a policeman, and sentenced to five and three years imprisonment respectively.

The men were jailed on Friday 11 January at the Old Bailey but this was the second time the men had been before the court on the same charge. In December a jury could not reach a verdict.

Send letters of support to Liz French, NUM HQ, Magness House, Deal, Kent.

TGWU drivers expelled

Lorry drivers at Bickershaw, Lancashire, have been expelled from the TGWU. The drivers have been crossing picket lines throughout the miners' dispute, and this action by the Number 6 regional committee is thought to be the first case of expulsions from the TGWU for this reason.

Every region of the TGWU has a monitoring committee for the miners' strike. In Region Number 6 this committee has both officials and lay members, and this example should be followed by other regions to ensure energetic prosecution of the miners' cause.

Rail-mines solidarity to beat the Tories

RAILWORKERS throughout the country were lifted by the news that the Federation of Rail Unions (NUR and ASLEF) intended to call a 24 hour strike on Thursday 17 January in protest at BRB management's victimisation of members.

Rail trade unionists have loyally and steadfastly blacked the movement of coal, coke and additional oil throughout the miners' strike.

Many members particularly activists in the NUR and ASLEF are disappointed that the strike is apparently to be confined to a number of areas within the Eastern and London Midlands regions.

The unions' head offices have been flooded with resolutions and messages from branches and depots in every region, supporting the strike call and demanding to be included in the action.

At a number of stations and depots, plans are being made to stop work independently on the 17 anyway. Overwhelmingly there is a feeling that those who have been victimised have suffered as a result of implementing national union

By Martin Elvin

policy and carrying out a national directive and that any response should involve national strike action.

Already BRB Chairman Bob Reid has referred to using the Tories anti-union legislation to outlaw the planned action, thereby threatening the basic trade union rights to organise, and to take industrial action. The very existence of ASLEF and the NUR is threatened. Behind the tactics of the BRB lie the plans of their Tory paymasters for a further assault upon railworkers.

Already the management have provoked a number of local strikes and disputes as they have tried to force through cuts and changes despite promises they gave to the rail unions in the autumn. They are planning to enforce further Driver

Only Operation of local passenger services and intend to extend it to freight trains as soon as possible.

In the background of all this lurks the Corporate Plan for further job losses, productivity proposals, line, station and depot closures, denationalisation and low pay. The BRB and the government are only awaiting the end of the miners' strike before launching their attacks upon us.

The unions in both mining and rail industries have a long history of mutual support and solidarity. Some 80% of all coal traffic before the strike went by rail, while about 70% of the rail industry's freight traffic was accounted for by coal.

Rail's interest

The planned decimation of the coal mining industry would have a devastating effect upon every part of the rail industry. By supporting and standing in solidarity with the miners therefore we are helping to defend our own interests.

It is now doubly important that as the miners have

the prospect of victory, the rail unions step up their actions against victimisation and pressure. The 17 January strike must be made a national 24 hour strike to win over the small minority who have been yielding to management pressure. If management carry on with their attacks an indefinite national strike must be called. The same goes for any moves to outlaw our unions' actions, fine us, sequester our funds or discipline our members, with a clear appeal to the rest of the movement to support our stand.

The rail unions must step up the action, keep our members fully informed about what is going on and prepare for future action. We must discuss with the unions in the power industry and transport to ensure that if there are any large scale moves to shift coal, or if troops are used, this will be the signal for an all out rail strike and a clarion call from our unions to other workers to join us.

The striking miners are fighting for our interests. We must back them fully and gain a speedy victory.



Photo: Mark Salmon

Railworker from Coalville NUR on demonstration against Thatcher's visit in Leicester last Friday.

Resist Rail Board's pressure

BRANCHES through the country have twinned with pits and organised regular visits and exchanges. This has not been confined to food and welfare.

In the mining areas the NUM, NUR and ASLEF have worked together to coordinate strike and blacking activities. There have been regular exchanges of speakers between the different union branches which have helped build up a strong relationship and will help resist further pressure from BR management.

The blacking and solidarity have been maintained in the face of an unprecedented onslaught by management. Every week hundreds of members are being sent home for implementing union policy.

There have been constant threats from BR that unless coal is moved, contracts will be lost and jobs will go.

The BRB are also employing insidious means to break rail workers' will and morale. The latest freight workings show BR's intention to divert Clipstone colliery (North Notts) to Garston docks export coal away from Tinsley (Sheffield) which has solidly supported the miners and instead give the job to depots they believe are less well organised. Right at the outset of the miners' strike Healey Mills depot (Wakefield) were told they'd lost 40 trains a week from Wooley pit to Ferrybridge power station, apparently because the CEGB no longer required Yorkshire coal. It is all aimed at pressurising rail union members.

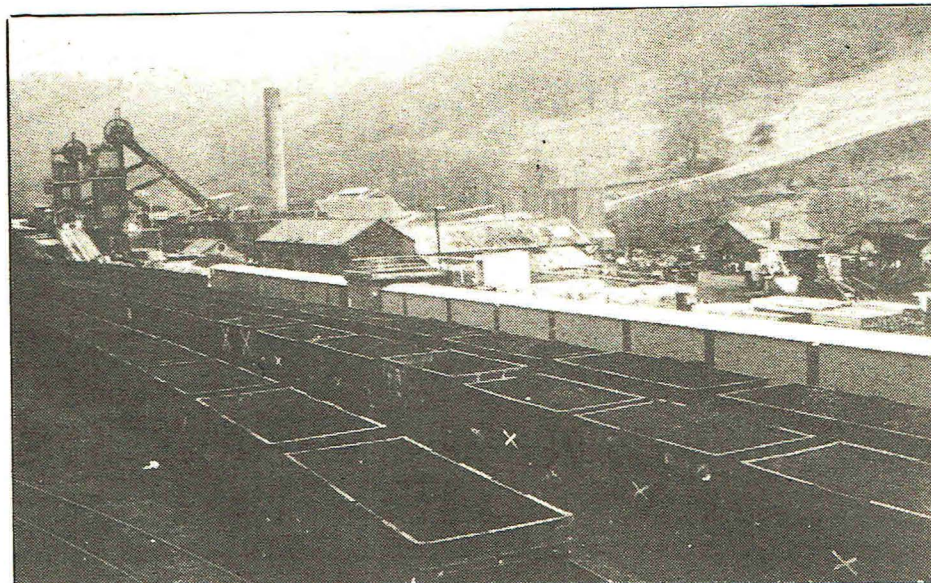


Photo: Dave Sinclair

Marine Pit in South Wales. Pit closures will mean loss of rail jobs as well, a fact many railworkers clearly understand.

Victimisation at Coalville

COALVILLE DEPOT in Leicestershire in particular has been subjected to ten months of harrassment. Guards, drivers and signalmen were informed that all non-coal work was to be transferred elsewhere, the depot and signalboxes were to be closed and those who lost their jobs would not have any protection under the existing transfer and redundancy agreements.

At the same depot members have had their homes raided by the police and have subsequently been sacked after allegations that they had railway rags and used batteries at their homes, though the cases have never been to court.

One signalman has been removed from his post because management allege he is mentally unfit for the job. All this for supporting the miners in an area where more than 90% of the miners are not on strike.

Despite the massive scabbing operations to move coal by road our action in blacking coal is having an impact. The increased pressure on Coalville no doubt reflects the growing problems the Tories and bosses face. A resumption of coal trains in this area would release badly needed scab lorrys to run coal into power stations elsewhere where coal stocks are now reaching desperately low levels.

LEFT LINES

JOURNAL OF THE BROAD LEFT FOR RAILWAY WORKERS

Railworkers and miners unite

National strike action to defeat victimisation

The broad left for railway workers is calling for a national strike action to defeat the victimisation of railworkers and miners. This is a call for all railworkers and miners to unite and support a national strike action. The broad left for railway workers is calling for a national strike action to defeat the victimisation of railworkers and miners. This is a call for all railworkers and miners to unite and support a national strike action.

Support around the country

Throughout the miners' long struggle railworkers have been second to none in the level of support and solidarity action they have given to the NUM, particularly with regard to blacking action. Hardly a cobble of coal or coke has been moved without the NUM's say so. The vast majority of coal fired power stations, normally rail served, have not seen a coal train since the strike began.

Trent Valley

Even along the Trent Valley, although some railworkers have maintained supplies to Ratcliffe power station elsewhere in the area signalmen have refused to let trains pass.

Only a massive and costly scabbing operation involving road transport and anti-union drivers earning over £300 a week has kept supplies moving into power stations in the Trent Valley and other parts of the Midlands.

Doncaster

When BR management tried to run additional oil into a power station near Doncaster the driver dragged a miner off a nearby allotment and told him to stand as a picket to avoid having to work the train in. One platelayer even refused to carry out repairs to the track inside Ironbridge power station because of the miners' picket on the gate.

Orgreave

The massive fight at Orgreave and all the police brutality could have been avoided. The NUM, ISTC together with the NUR and ASLEF had agreed a level of coke deliveries which would have safely maintained the equipment at Scunthorpe steel works. It was only BSC's attempts to increase coke deliveries without consulting the unions which forced the rail unions to stop all coke movements from Orgreave whereupon BSC organised their scab lorry convoys. Deliberate provocation!

Ravenscraig and Llanwern

Not only have railworkers been prominent in blacking coal to the power stations but to steel works as well. When BSC have tried to breach quota amounts for coal, the NUR and ASLEF halted all movements both at Ravenscraig and Llanwern. Furthermore railworkers halted iron ore movements to these works as an additional means to put pressure on the BSC.

Unions charge council over contract

TORY COUNCILLORS have voted to hand over cooking in old peoples homes to a private firm, despite trade union reservations that the firm's American parent has been accused of appalling standards in its private homes, corruption and links with organised crime.

This incredible decision was taken at a social services committee meeting of Wandsworth Council on Wednesday 9 January. It agreed—subject to “an inquiry”—to give the ARA company a contract to provide catering in the council's old peoples homes; another company had already been awarded the contract for cleaning in the homes; these two decisions will mean over 60 workers will lose their jobs.

Stunned

Committee chairman, councillor Chris Flind promised he would hold an investigation before a final decision is made at full council on 6 February. But this offer of a one sided, rushed inquiry, did not impress Labour councillors or ourselves, the trade unionists who made the original revelations.

Our deputation clearly surprised councillors and

By Mick French
(GMBATU convenor,
Wandsworth Council
workers)

observers when we produced evidence of countless law suits and government inquiries in the US against the American parent company of ARA. These included:

★ a string of investigations and law suits over standards in ARA old people's homes in Colorado, Wyoming, California and Texas.

★ In Texas an ARA old people's home was charged with allowing violations which created: “an immediate threat to the health and safety of the residents”, and practices “which were declared to be false misleading and deceptive”. The case was settled in October 1979 when ARA paid a \$6,000 fine but admitted no wrongdoing.

★ New York State Senate investigation into claims that ARA had links with organised crime. Detailed allegations were made in court by former ARA security direc-



Wandsworth dustmen's strike in 1982 against privatisation.

tor that the company had dealings with mobsters. This case was later settled out of court when ARA paid him and his lawyers \$250,000.

★ Claims that ARA was involved in bribery and corruption to win contracts and rebates in several states.

Both myself and fellow trade union representative Dave Benlow stressed we were making no allegations whatsoever about the British company and pointed out that we did not have the resources to investigate it. But it did expose the inade-

quacies of the council's investigations into companies taking over vital and very sensitive services.

Inquiry

Seeing the very delicate nature of the services we believe the committee should immediately award the contract to its own department. There should now be an inquiry into the way Wandsworth Council check companies tendering for private services.

As someone who worked

in an old people's home said, “anything that needs to be done, the cooks and cleaners do it. They don't just cook and clean.

“But if you get a private company they're just going to cook and clean and then go. The cooks and the residents are like a family and the same goes for the cleaners.” Another worker feared a private company could only under-cut the council workers' bid by skimping on food.

Return of the hiring ring

EX CO. DIRECTOR

Wants change. Good connections in Engineering. Excellent admin background. Used to responsibility. Clean driving licence.
Write Box E 660, Thomson House.

YOUTH

17 years old, 1 year youth training scheme in Electronics. City and Guilds. Driving licence. Consider anything in same field. Box E 656, Thomson House.

SKILLED FITTER ENGINEER

59 years, seeks contracts, work in Machine Installation, maintenance Pipe Fitting, Welding, speaks some Japanese. May consider supervising. Box E 516, Thomson House.

YOUNG LADY 19 years of age,

smart appearance, seeks employment in retail shop. Previous experience in fruit and vegetable shop.
Box E 648, Thomson House.

MALE 23

Environmental Studies Graduate, hard working, enthusiastic, ambitious, seeks stimulating, responsible job in creative area, with scope for initiative.
Box E 643, Thomson House.

YOUNG LADY

19 years of age, smart appearance, seeks employment in Children's Nursery. Two years experience with children of various ages.
Box E 645, Thomson House.

Newcastle Evening Chronicle's page of paid adverts from people wanting jobs.

A NEW form of labour market has been launched in the North-East. During the 20's and 30's men in the North East used to parade outside the shipyards hoping to demonstrate that they were fit and strong enough to gain a hard day's work.

Now the local newspaper the Newcastle Evening Chronicle runs a recruitment feature in which the desperate pay from £5 to £10 to advertise for work. With unemployment in the region at 238,865 the paper has started a “Looking for work feature”.

In one week you could find almost a whole page of hopeful job applicants, a total of 145 display adverts, compared to only 97 adverts from employers offering jobs.

“The Chronic” as it is known locally, states that it is providing a “market” for jobs seekers as a “service”—a service for which you pay the multi-million pound Thompson Organisa-

tion. Is this the market that Thatcher's advisor, and sometimes star of Radio 4's *World at One*, Professor Minford believes will prove his thesis that there is no such thing as involuntary unemployment? Will this market reduce the imbalance of supply and demand, and lower wages to kill off, by starvation, some of the ‘excess’ supply of labour in the North East?

To read the 145 adverts shows the myth of the new technology-led recovery. For example,

“Physics graduate” with 4 ‘A’ levels (2 at grade ‘A’) and 10 ‘O’ levels... anything considered except accountability...” and the “Hard working, keen 16 year old” on a scheme at Felling skill centre, with 10 CSE's, 3 at grade 1, who is desperate to become an apprentice joiner.” What a waste of talent!

By Alan Docherty

Joseph slanders teachers

THE PRESS have devoted a lot of space recently to the effectiveness and cost (£7 billion per annum) of teachers. They have been less keen to promote information about the 30,000 teaching jobs lost since the Tories took office or the projected loss of a further 6,000 jobs this year.

Nor have they devoted many column inches to explaining the likely horrific effects of rate capping and cash limits on the education service—which accounts for 60% of local authority expenditure. There have been no ‘Shock! Horror!’ headlines either on the effects of reduced expenditure on books, equipment and buildings over the last five years.

Sir Keith Joseph's proposals must be seen in the light of the Tories' attitude to state education. This is

summed up by the Director of the Social Affairs Unit, Digby Anderson, writing in the *Times* who suggests an end to compulsory education in favour of “a competition to excel in as short a time as possible and at a minimum cost.”

Economics

Teacher assessment will be used as a smokescreen behind which ‘economies’ can be made in the teaching force and numbers reduced while claiming that teaching standards are being improved.

A more sinister interpretation may also be placed on this move. A *Times* editorial talks of the NUT being “led locally by political militants who would be the first to be exposed by a better system of teacher appraisal”!

Any attempt to blame teachers for the crisis in education or break support for teachers and the labour

movement must be opposed. The NUT has already withdrawn from the restructuring talks at which Joseph first announced his views on assessment. The Union's sample survey of 1,000 members reveals some teachers working 100 hrs and an average of 50 hrs per week.

They face the threat of redundancy, redeployment and an education service increasingly starved of resources. Over the coming year the teachers' unions will need to launch a massive campaign of industrial action to achieve a pay claim of £1,200, oppose compulsory assessment and defend state education.

The Tories are not competent to control state education. Any assessment made should be of their performance.

By Anita Dickinson
(President, Ealing NUT)

...and faces student anger

STUDENTS FROM Leeds University and Polytechnic turned up at two hours' notice to lobby Education Secretary—and Leeds MP—Sir Keith Joseph, when it was discovered he was due to visit Leeds City Council's Education Department.

About 50 students assembled in the foyer of the building, waiting for Sir Keith to leave. When he finally appeared, two members of the University Students' Union Executive approached him in an attempt to explain students' objections to Tory education policy, which in Leeds has already meant the closure of a university department and

several courses. In a display of the Tories' commitment to democracy, Joseph refused to listen to the students, and strode out of the building amid jeers and chants.

Fragile

Perhaps Sir Keith was feeling fragile after his student grants climbdown in the face of threatened defeat at the hands of Tory backbenchers—a fair few of whom would have been digging a little deeper in their well-lined pockets to support their gilded offspring at Oxford and Cambridge, had the government proposals on abolition of the minimum grant been carried.

Most of the 20,000-plus

higher education students in Leeds are less fortunate than the well-heeled sons and daughters of Tory lords and ladies; Leeds sent 38 coaches, filled to capacity, to the recent NUS demonstration in London against the Tories' plans to cut grants. Hundreds more students had to stay in Leeds because the city's coach firms had run out of coaches! Could this opposition which Sir Keith has faced from students on his ‘home ground’ be another reason for his lack of enthusiasm for discussion?

By Gordon Nardell
(Leeds Polytechnic
Labour Club)

Gordon Bennet writes—



I ALWAYS thought that the Tories wanted to restore the glorious British Empire but I didn't realise they had their eyes on Norway. Tony Benn recently revealed in the Commons that the British Embassy in Oslo has demanded information from the Norwegian National Union of General Workers about their financial support for the NUM. If I was one of the Norwegian brothers and sisters I'd tell the cheeky so and so's to bjerger off.

MAGGIE THATCHER is probably the world's foremost exponent of corner-shop economics. Her philosophy of government includes a commitment to prompt repayment of debts. No doubt this explains the New Year's Honours List and Frankie Chappello's elevation to a seat in the Lords. Just to complete the picture Frank's got a new job with the scab-loving *Daily Mail*. Birds of a feather...

THE TORY press have recently been crowing about the split in the so-called Communist Party. It's a shame that there are a few people who still believe that it is a genuine Marxist party. If you're interested in telling the difference between the ‘Eurocommunists’ and the ‘Stalinists’, the first group have Swedish pine kitchen suites and the others don't.

UNLESS YOU are a particularly studious reader of *The Guardian* you might have missed an interesting story last week. On Tuesday 8 January, the paper carried an article which claimed that one of the civil service trade union leaders had a ‘Communist Party background’. Nothing very staggering there, you might think—if it was true. But it wasn't and in the present reds-under-the-bed climate it means either sloppy journalism or a red scare. On Thursday *The Guardian* carried a correction and on Friday a full apology. And who was the enterprising reporter with the over-active imagination? None other than Patrick Wintour who, in a previous incarnation as a hack for the allegedly left-wing *New Statesman*, periodically churned out politically illiterate attacks on the *Militant*. What a surprise.

PATRICK THE fascist wonder-boy Harrington was in the news again this week. Not only does he get police protection to stage his provocative stunts in a college with a large number of black students but he also gets personal tuition in a fully-equipped house separate from the main college. In Thatcher's Britain Nazis are treated like royalty, yet when Joe Green was murdered on the picket line nobody was even charged.

Nuclear tests - government lie

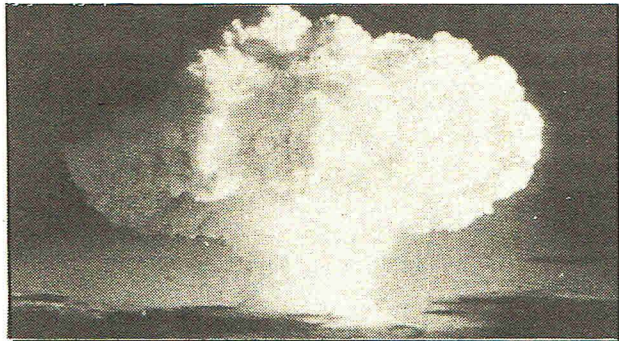
NEW information about Britain's Australasian nuclear tests in the 1950's and subsequent government cover-ups has angered ex-servicemen present at such tests.

Colin Avey, Secretary of Sussex Nuclear veterans, told *Militant*:

"This government are a bunch of liars. You've got to call them what they are". In the last couple of weeks two sources have destroyed the British government's case—an Australian Royal Commission and documents released under the 30-year rule.

Unprotected

At the Royal commission investigating some of the tests nuclear veterans have told how they had no protective clothing. Colin, who has attended the hearings told us: "I was at Christmas Island and we had no protective clothing, just cotton shirts and jeans." The British government has done all it can to block the Commission. It has said that British government officials can give evidence as long as they are not made to face any later charges of perjury; in other words civil servants have been given a green light



Servicemen were exposed to the effects of nuclear bomb tests with little or no protection.

to lie their heads off.

The British government claimed that no-one was in danger from the tests. But evidence given by servicemen on the spot tells a different tale. One of them told the Royal Commission that after a nuclear cloud drifted over Australia, Australian Prime Minister Menzies sent an emergency signal to London: "What the bloody hell is going on, the cloud is drifting over the mainland".

Colin points out: "Menzies was the last one you'd expect to send a message like that, he was a very traditional Conservative".

Documents from 1954, now released under the thirty-year rule, tell of massive government incompetence. One Admiralty file shows that officials con-

ceded their ignorance about the effect of radiation, but went ahead regardless. They invented a new acceptable 'military' dose of 'safe' radiation, which is more than fifty times the level deemed acceptable today.

Yet Adam Butler, a Minister at the Defence Department, has stated in the press: "I am persuaded by the evidence I have seen, and from studying the matter as closely as I can, that precautions were adequate and observed."

Contaminated

How can he say that without his nose growing longer? Just take one example among many. At one test an empty tank was positioned a mile away from a sur-



Colin Avey: 'The government are a bunch of liars'.

face explosion. A half hour after the test a crew were sent to the tank to try and get it started. After they failed they left one of their crew there and returned twenty-four hours later. All of the crew were contaminated. The man left at the tank died years ago.

A government document openly admits that they used the explosions to test the effect on ships, planes and machines. Colin Avey, and other nuclear veterans have seen that document. But after all the current furore, it is not surprising that this document has been re-classified as secret.

Most documents on the tests have not been released. Records which were going to be made available have been re-classified as secret and are

currently "on permanent loan to the Ministry of Defence". The vast majority of documents are not being made available to the Australian Royal Commission.

Colin bitterly points out: "It's silly really. For years we've almost been justifying the tests for them—perhaps they didn't know the consequences of what they were doing, perhaps they didn't understand. Now we find out they knew all along, and the instructions have come down from the very top to shut the lid."

Medical reports

Even in little matters the government are now lying. Butler says he knows the tests were safe because he has seen the medical reports. So Colin sent off to the Ministry asking for his records: "They sent back a letter saying that I couldn't have them. Well that was no surprise, because they had said that twice before."

"But they also said that my service number was wrong, CJ 9624180. Well you don't use that number for eighteen years every day without remembering it. And the number they said I was, CH 962180, would have

meant that I was in the navy in 1939, two years before I was born."

The diseases which servicemen present at the tests have suffered follow the same cancer and leukaemia pattern. The government try and claim that nuclear veterans have the same amount of cancer as other sections of the population, but evidence does not bear this out. Specialists up and down the country have stated that the pattern of cancer which veterans have could only come from a massive dosage of radiation.

The government figures also fail to take into account genetic defects in the children of nuclear veterans, which at 16 per cent is eight times the national average. One girl in Yorkshire has one leg nine inches shorter than the other, the specialist says it is because of her father's contact with radiation.

As Colin points out: "We need a separate independent inquiry. Past British governments have literally got away with murder and the present one is covering up their crimes."

By Jim Chrystie

Geneva talks - no road to disarmament

Leaked papers reveal chemical weapons plans

THE TORIES and the press have attempted to portray the Geneva talks as a 'peace initiative' by the Reagan administration. But it was not a genuine desire for peace that drove the US government, and the Russian bureaucracy, to the conference table.

Both want a reprieve from the current spiral of the nuclear arms race which, besides the madness of mutually assured destruction, is an enormous drain on their battered economies.

The USA's Star Wars project for example—which will merely research into satellite directed anti-missile lasers—will cost at least \$26 billion. Similarly, especially in the USA and the West, they are alarmed at the growing unpopularity of their nuclear arms policies.

The Geneva conference was only 'talks to agree to talks'. These will 'look at' three main areas—nuclear arms in general, short range missiles in Europe such as Cruise, and the Star Wars development. There were no concrete disarmament proposals; nor will the talks involve European nuclear armaments, such as the British Trident project.

Even if there had been a massive breakthrough and both sides agreed to a 5% cut in nuclear arms this year and every year, there would still be enough nuclear arms left to obliterate the world in 35 years time.

As it is, there will not be the slightest reduction in nuclear weapons in the short term. The *Financial Times* (January 10) said the Geneva talks would be the "most difficult and longest" talks held to date, and could take



10-15 years. The 'more amicable' SALT talks of the 1970s did not prevent the present arms build-up so what hope do the "more difficult" Geneva talks have?

Class interests

Geneva illustrates there can be no real peace, no effective disarmament while the present system remains. Nuclear weapons are not some abstract nightmare that can be wished away in endless talks by the representatives of the social systems that spawned these weapons,

to defend their own interests.

The struggle for lasting peace is the struggle for socialism world wide, by the overthrow of capitalism internationally, and a political revolution to regain true workers' democracy in the Stalinist states of the East.

Workers of all nationalities could then live in peace, planning the world's massive resources for the benefit of all, rather than developing multi-billion dollar weapons of destruction that threaten this planet's very existence.

WHILE THE Tory leaders praised the 'peacemakers' at Geneva last week, it was reported that Thatcher and leading members of the Cabinet are considering rebuilding Britain's chemical weapons' stockpile.

According to government papers leaked to the *New Statesman*, Thatcher and a special ministerial committee discussed during the summer rebuilding Britain's stocks of nerve gas. The leaked report said Thatcher favoured the weapons in a "retaliatory capacity" against the USSR.

Thatcher has since denied the report and according to the media is "furious" about yet another leak from the government. But surely, if the report isn't true then there was no government leak and therefore nothing to be "furious" about!

Grandiose

What is true is that Thatcher and the Tory leadership still retain grandiose visions, imagining Britain as a world power based on hideous weapons of destruction.

This latest government leak should be a poignant reminder to those people, especially those in the Labour Party, who are pinning their hopes on the current Geneva talks to secure world peace, and who dismiss the Marxist view that peace and disarmament can only be guaranteed in a socialist society.

Britain, and many



Thatcher wants to rebuild Britain's chemical weapons' arsenal.

other capitalist countries, were signatories to the Geneva Protocol in 1925 which banned chemical weapons. Yet this 'agreement' did not avert the mass slaughter of World War Two; did not stop Britain producing chemical weapons between the 1950s and 1970s;

and has not deterred the Tories from considering rebuilding a chemical weapons' arsenal.

As far as the capitalist class are concerned, when it comes to defending their class interests, agreements and treaties are not worth the paper they are written on.

Class bias kills kidney patients

THE CASE of Derek Sage, who had his kidney dialysis treatment ended because Oxford consultants thought his life 'lacked quality' is not unique.

Consultants, who mostly come from well-off backgrounds, often display their class bias in deciding whether or not to treat patients.

As Dr Payne, Oxford District General Manager, explained: "Possibly if he (Derek Sage) had come from a better background and stable home he would still be treated". If the British Kidney Patients' Association had not intervened and put Mr Sage in another hospital he would have died in a matter of days or weeks.

Only 56% treated

What is unusual about Mr Sage's case is that doctors stopped treatment after it had begun. The medical conditions had not changed; they disapproved of his life style. Yet they never once visited the hostel where he lived, and in which the warden from the charitable

Simon Foundation, said: "Derek Sage is very much loved and is a very loving person."

Normally consultants express their social prejudice before treatment begins. The cutbacks in the National Health Service mean that whereas 2,500 people a year need dialysis treatment only about 1,400 receive it.

As *The Times* editorial, 9 January, pointed out: "Every year in Britain several hundred kidney patients die without ever being offered treatment even though they could perfectly well be saved in the present state of the medical art and would be saved in almost any other country in Europe or North America". This throwaway line from one of the government's greatest supporters glides over massive human tragedy.

And the case of Mr Sage has helped bring to light the criteria whereby some people are refused treatment. Kidney specialist Michael Bewick, a renal surgeon at Guy's Hospital told *Labour Weekly*, 11 January:

"There are doctors in this country who are deciding not to treat people—not because

of medical reasons, but because of their position in society.

"One survey looked at cases of patients turned down for treatment. Among the reasons for turning them down was that the patient was an orphan—that in the case of a 23-year old. Other reasons were 'not speaking English' or being paraplegic. In fact I put a kidney into that 12-year old paraplegic girl four or five years ago and she is perfectly well."

Control consultants

Clearly more money should be provided so that anyone with defective kidneys can get treatment. But there also needs to be some form of proper control over consultants so that they do not play God through class-tinted glasses.

As Dr Bewick says: "We are not here to turn down people if they are dirty or difficult. It's our job to deal with. If we cannot do it we shouldn't be in the profession".

By Colin Barber

Corporate drug pushers

Viv Seal (Gorton CLP) reviews John Braithwaite's *Crime in the Pharmaceutical Industry*, Routledge & Kegan, £25. At this price, get it from the library!

PHARMACEUTICAL profits, prices, patent protection, promotion and safety are all regularly criticised by the labour movement. Nationalisation of the industry is a popular demand on Labour Party conference agendas. But the claims about the industry made in a book recently published will astonish even most *Militant* readers.

Did you know, for example, that Bayer used the same methods for mass marketing of heroin (at the turn of the century) as it had found so successful with aspirin? Or that Hoffmann-La Roche (notorious for having its activities investigated by a Tory government in 1972) had, between the wars, been heavily involved in supplying the underworld with morphine? Braithwaite has a whole chapter on legal and illegal drug "pushing"—past and present—where he makes these claims.

Some of the crimes he outlines are a bit less spectacular: like negligence or outright fraud in testing for safety, market carve-ups (illegal in the USA), bribery and dangerous manufacturing practices. His survey shows that the drug industry has "more than three times as many serious law violations" per firm as any other sector of manufacturing industry. And other capitalists aren't in business for philanthropic reasons.

American drug firms (most of which have subsidiaries in Britain) are

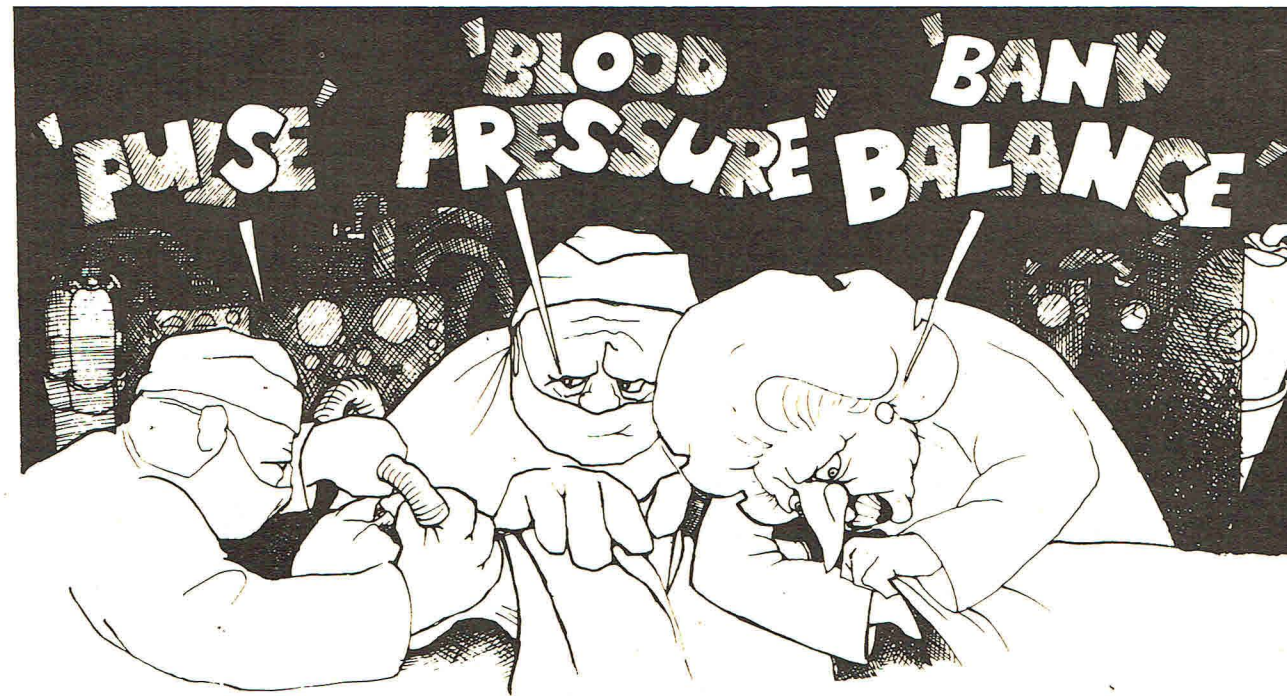
beginning to appoint a vice-president whose responsibility is to go to gaol if the company is found guilty. But very rarely are they found guilty. They use "all available resources to prevent the legal process beginning reaching an unchallengeable conclusion".

In 1965, Pfizer took the National Health Service to court for infringement of the patent laws. The NHS was buying imported tetracycline at around 1/20 of the price charged by Pfizer for its brand name version. Now, it seems that Pfizer obtained its patent by fraud in the first place.

Human experiments

Braithwaite says that suppression of facts in safety testing is particularly widespread, especially at the stage of clinical trials (experiments on human beings). In any case there is close co-operation between the firms and the CSM (the Committee on Safety of Medicines which recommends whether a new drug will get a licence for sale).

The CSM boasts of this good relationship, which was carefully cultivated by Sir Derrick Dunlop from the earliest days of the CSM's predecessor, the Committee on Safety of Drugs. Dunlop, the first chairperson of the committee, subsequently became a director of the Stirling Winthrop Pharmaceutical Co, and since



then it has become standard practice for people responsible for regulating drugs to get jobs in the firms they were previously regulating.

What can be done about corporate crime? Braithwaite makes a number of suggestions. He favours show trials with massive fines and gaol sentences.

But earlier in the book, he argues that most of the punishable crimes committed by drug firms were not in fact punished, because the pharmaceutical companies are as powerful as the states which are supposed to regulate them. "Negotiation between equals increasingly replaces law enforcement." So who's going to put on the show trials?

This book provides the best argument yet for nationalisation of the drug industry, although the author doesn't draw these conclusions himself. In Britain, for instance, a Labour government could win overwhelming support for the nationalisation of the drug companies to be run democratically by workers' control, just by publicising these findings.

The profits of death

THE CASE of a striking miner who could not get a grant from the DHSS to bury his baby daughter brought to mind an experience which my wife and I went through.

My father-in-law worked in the building industry for a number of years as a tower crane driver. The last place he worked was at Windscale where he was for about three years. He died of cancer in 1980 although he had been out of work for a few months before he died. As he was a contractor he never kept in touch regularly and so it came as a complete shock to be told he was dead.

I had just started a job and had no holidays to come so I had to take a few days off to take my wife up to Cumbria for the funeral. When we arrived a friend of my father-in-law gave us some money that belonged to my father-in-law and a tax rebate for £200. I had only just started work and had no

wages to come so the expenses we incurred getting up there had to come out of it.

This left us with £160, which with the insurance policy of £60 gave us a total of £220. The undertaker's bill was £284 which left £64 to pay. I arranged with the undertaker that I would pay the balance as soon as I got back to Scunthorpe and work.

Blackmail

When we got home from Cumbria I was made redundant. The funeral Director kept sending letters to us asking for the balance of the bill to be paid, although I had written and told him that I was on DHSS and when I got back to work the account would be paid in full. I might add that this undertaker owned another two businesses besides the funeral parlour.

The final straw came when he wrote to my wife saying

that he was sure my father-in-law had been an honest and upstanding man when he was alive, and would rest more peacefully if he could be sure his debts were honoured!

This upset my wife terribly and infuriated me so much so that I immediately wrote back saying that this disgusting method of emotional blackmail would not succeed. If he needed his profit so much he could take me to court and get 50p per week out of me, which would have taken him months to get. I did not hear anything from him again.

It just goes to show that even in death working class people sometimes have no dignity, and it won't be until we achieve socialism that the greed and avarice of some people will be banished forever.

By R Malcolmson
(Scunthorpe)



Psychological medicine →
Commonwealth Building →
Medical records →
Metabolic unit →
"B" Block wards →
Medical supt. →
Nursing dept. →
Francis →
Central →
Catering dept. →
Treasurer's dept. →

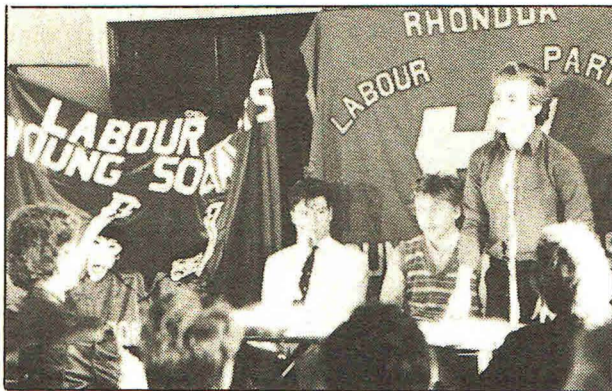
Expelled for selling *Militant*

IN JULY of last year the right-wing dominated Rhondda CLP voted to expel LPYS member Brychan Davies, on the grounds that he sold *Militant*.

The right-wing claimed that this was bringing the party into disrepute and to substantiate this their evidence amounted to a number of letters from individual right-wingers and a resolution from a right-wing ward. It included such things as a report of Brychan being seen selling *Militant* at a demonstration in Cardiff.

There is, of course, no rule which prohibits Labour Party members from selling *Militant* in public and Brychan has at no point denied the fact. Moreover, Brychan's work during the miners' strike has done more to maintain the reputation of the Labour Party than anything the entire right-wing have done.

The expulsion procedure adopted in the Rhondda amounted to a travesty of justice. At no point was Brychan allowed to study the evidence and accusations made against him or to reply in writing and in person to the various ward Labour Parties or to present written evidence in his defence—such as a letter from Emlyn Williams, President of the S Wales NUM.



Brychan Davies addresses a meeting protesting against his expulsion. Photo Militant

In an effort to get the decision reversed, Brychan then appealed to a hearing of the South Wales Executive. Their right wing dominated appeals committee decided to uphold his expulsion by two votes to one. A report of this meeting, which was never sent to Brychan, and which was full of inaccuracies, was then sent to the NEC's Appeals and Mediation Committee.

Pressure to reinstate

This Committee, again dominated by the right-wing refused to allow Brychan to put his case and correct the reports it had received. They decided to recommend that his expulsion be upheld by the November (1984) NEC.

Due to pressure from the labour movement however,

the NEC voted by 14 votes to 13 to reject the Appeals Committee's recommendation and refer back the expulsion.

Amazingly, the Appeals Committee have chosen to ignore this reference back and on the basis of a move by Roy Hattersley have again recommended to the NEC on 23 January that Brychan be expelled.

The Right must not be allowed to get away with this. If passed, it represents a green light to other right-wing cliques in CLPs around the country to carry out witch-hunts. A lobby has been organised and resolutions of protest must continue to pour into the NEC.

By Frances Curran
(NEC member representing LPYS)

Appeal to miners

THE MINERS' strike is the most important movement of the working-class since 1926. A decisive victory would pave the way for a new and dramatic fightback against the Tories, and for a greater radicalisation of the ranks of the Labour Party.

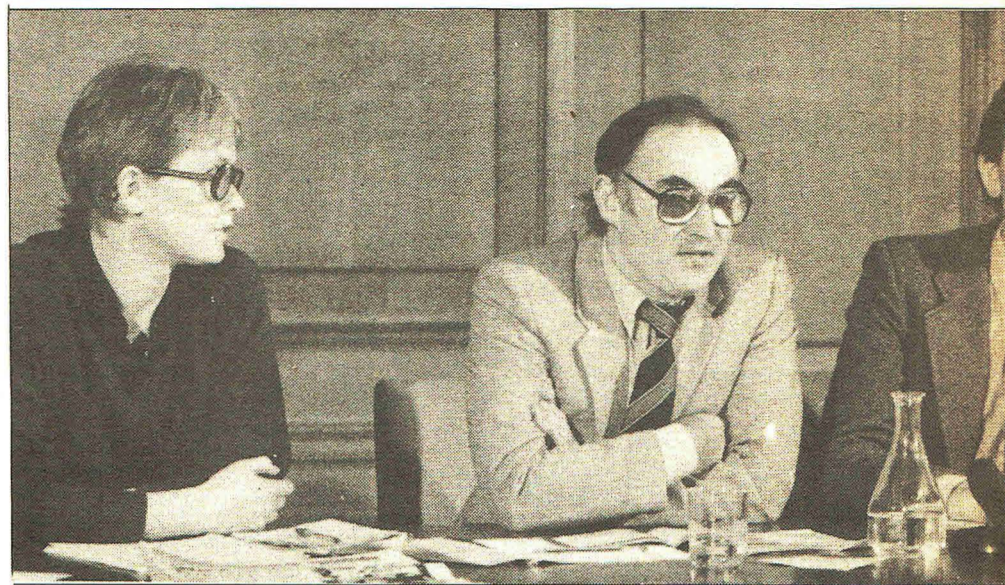
Militant has consistently stood by the miners and has also explained the key issues during the strike and how they can be linked in a campaign to defeat the Tories. The paper has as a result gained the support of many miners during their struggle.

Whatever the results of the strike, miners and their families will continue to face hardships and insecurity as long as society remains based on capitalism. All workers have a vested interest in the struggle for socialism.

We appeal now to miners and all working people to join with us in the campaign for bold socialist policies in the Labour party. Only a socialist Labour government linked to the power of the movement could transform society. That means also fighting for the right to put forward socialist ideas in the Labour Party, freely and openly.

We appeal to those miners who have joined or who consider joining the Labour Party to compare the support given to their struggle by *Militant* to that of the right-wing of the party.

On this basis, we would feel confident that miners would defend Marxist ideas and the right to put these ideas in the party.



The *Militant* Editorial Board, from l to r, Clare Doyle, Peter Taaffe, Lynn Walsh, Ted Grant and Keith D

Fight the not the

THE DECISION of the Labour Party Appeals and Mediation Committee to recommend the expulsion of Brychan Davies is a clear indication that the witch hunt is not over. The NEC is reported to be preparing an "ideological" debate with *Militant*, something the editors would welcome. But Party members should be warned that the right wing will be prepared to use their majority on the NEC to deploy methods of organisational repression rather than arguments, against the Marxists. This week's feature covers the background and the events of the witch hunting of the last three years.

ON PAGE 13 of the 1985 Labour Party diary there appears for the first time the "register of non-affiliated organisations"—44 in total. This is all that remains of the constitutional device used by Labour's right-wing as a means of fighting a political battle against the ideas of *Militant*.

By Mike Waddington

The first 15 years of the publication of *Militant* had seen few attacks. In fact, with other enthusiasts who ran committee rooms, elections and wards, its supporters were welcomed—whilst they remained few in

number. However, with growing disillusionment with the record of right-wing Labour governments the ideas of Marxism gained ground. By 1970 Marxists

had won a majority on the Labour Party Young Socialists National Committee.

November 1975 saw the arrival of the notorious Underhill Report, named after Labour's then National Agent Reg, now Lord, Underhill, on "Entryist Activities". This was periodically revived over the years as a pretext for attacks on *Militant*.

Following the General Election defeat of 1979, Labour's ranks moved left

Why the Right seek a purge

IN THE middle of a miners' strike many workers have been astounded by the Labour leaders' attitude on *Militant* supporters and LPYS members. Workers recognise that the utmost unity is necessary to defeat the Tory attacks. Witch-hunts and expulsions can only divide the movement and distract attention from vital solidarity work.

By Steve Morgan

It has not gone unnoticed that those most vociferous in attacking the Marxists have been the most lukewarm in their support for the miners.

The right-wing still argue the old ideas of conciliation and compromise which today can only lead to job losses and worsening conditions.

On the other hand *Militant*'s 'crime' has been to fight for a bold socialist leadership prepared to defend the struggles of working people and carry out the socialist transformation of society. The ideas of *Militant* are much closer to the policies repeatedly agreed by Labour Party conference than are those of the right-wing.

The right-wing, however, have no intention of challenging a system upon which they depend for their power and privilege. They are only interested in their comfortable positions at the head of the TUs and Labour Party.

The right of the Parliamentary Labour Party is disproportionately over-represented by lawyers, doctors, lecturers and so on,

who entered the Labour Party during the post-war boom and made a career for themselves by covering their Parliamentary ambitions with a thin veneer of socialism. What they fear most is democratic accountability and an active rank and file made up mostly of workers and campaigning for socialist policies.

Democratic changes

Militant supporters have been at the forefront of the battle for such democracy, accountability and socialist policies. Hence the urgent need for the right wing to stifle the paper and its supporters.

The victory of the reselection of MPs and the election of the Leader and Deputy

Leader by party conference was in no small part due to the efforts of *Militant* supporters. Moreover *Militant* has consistently argued that Labour MPs should receive no more income than the wages of the average skilled worker, so that if they chose to represent working people they should understand what it is like to live like them.

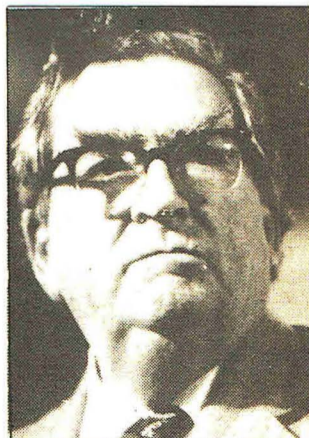
The continuing growth in support for *Militant*'s ideas has propelled the right wing into launching a witch-hunt of the Marxists. They claim that this is not a political question but simply a matter of organisation. This, however, is little more than a ruse to disguise attempts to witch-hunt Marxist ideas from the party and to secure Parliamentary careers by repressive measures and bureaucratic manoeuvres.

It is no accident that with the beginning of the reselection process a new spate of attacks have begun on *Militant* supporters and the LPYS. This will proceed with an attack on the left in general and the radical policies adopted by conference.

Conference commitments

The same leaders who are prominent in pushing for a new purge, like Roy Hattersley, are in the forefront of the campaign to water down or abandon all the Party Conference commitments and push it to the right.

In order to conduct the witch-hunt the right have established their own equivalent of the 'Spanish



Denis Healey, who once talked of "hundreds" of expulsions.

inquisition"—the misnamed 'Appeals and Mediation Committee'. Its role is to "appeal" for further witch-hunts locally and nationally, and to "mediate" in favour of the right-wing.

By attacking the Marxists the Right hope that they will placate the fears of the ruling class about the victory of a radical socialist Labour Party with a substantial



enson.

Tories - socialists

and a number of right-wing MP's were threatened with de-selection. Eight CLP's selected candidates who supported *Militant's* ideas. Helping a right-winger to get elected was one thing to the witch-hunters, but electing a Marxist to parliament was quite another.

The General Secretary of the NUR, Sid Weighell, (later forced to resign over the way he mis-cast his union's vote at the 1982 Labour Party conference) wrote to the NEC in December 1981 calling for the establishment of a register—"It goes without saying that failure to provide the required information would constitute a basis for expulsion from the party."

The NEC in December 1981 established what became known as the Hayward-Hughes enquiry after Ron Hayward then General Secretary, and David Hughes the new National Agent. Their report



John Golding Right-winger and ardent supporter of witch-hunts.

was eventually produced in June 1982.

"It was alleged" the Report said, "that the leaders of the *Militant* tendency were trotskies...who had joined the Labour Party...to build an organisation within the party with a view to gaining support, establishing leadership for different principles, a different programme and different policies." The Report covered its witch-

hunting intentions with a whimper: "We fully support the sentiment...against proscription lists, witch-hunts and expulsions".

When the NEC agreed to establish the register, *Militant* launched a massive campaign throughout the labour movement, resulting in over 1,000 resolutions being carried against witch-hunts. A magnificent Labour Movement Conference of nearly 3,000 delegates and visitors at Wembley in September 1982 demanded "Fight the Tories, Not the socialists!"

The 1982 Party Conference accepted the idea of a register but the TGWU, GMWU, USDAW and the NUM voted against their own conference decisions. Prominent right wingers immediately went to the press predicting that there would be hundreds or even thousands of expulsions.

Despite this, *Militant* submitted a comprehensive ap-

Blackburn Six

THE 1982 Party Conference gave the right-wing the green light to attack *Militant* supporters. The most glaring action, other than the expulsion of the Editorial Board, was that organised by Blackburn CLP, who expelled six supporters of *Militant* in January 1984.

They were Kay Wright, Simon Bush and Des Mulcahy, all leading members of Blackburn YS; Rosina Harris and Mary Orange, who along with Kay Wright had campaigned in Blackburn Women's Council for a number of reforms; and Peter Harris, former Party Officer and anti-racism organiser.

Their crime was putting forward the ideas of *Militant* in Blackburn Labour Party. They were named in the infamous "Gregory Report", a catalogue of innuendo, false allegations and outright

lies, put together by right-winger Michael Gregory and published in January 1983.

Although every point made by Gregory was refuted time and time again, the right-wing were determined to expel the six comrades. Gregory and the Right-wing were actively supported by Blackburn MP Jack Straw.

After expulsion, the six appealed to the Party NEC. However, the report of the Appeals and Mediation Committee, despite being unable to substantiate Gregory's report, found that "it rang true with our experience in the party", whatever that meant. Their appeals were rejected by 14 votes to 12 at last April's NEC.

Despite expulsion, those comrades have continued to fight for Marxist ideas in the Blackburn labour movement. Expulsions cannot defeat ideas.

Since then, Gregory's political ideas have not changed, but, predictably, his Party colours have. Having only rejoined the party in 1982 after his membership lapsed, he became a councillor within a year.

Once again he showed his contempt for the movement by voting against Labour Group plans for the Direct Labour Organisation, and, most scandalously, against a £32,000 donation for the miners. He now sits with the Opposition on Blackburn Council and his defection means that Labour has lost its overall majority.

Gregory once claimed that *Militant* was "very dangerous and subversive". Many activists will compare the records of the Blackburn six and Gregory to decide who is the real subversive.

By Kevin Parslow



Photo: Militant

Three of the Blackburn supporters who were expelled, l to r, Kay Wright, Peter Harris, Rosina Harris.

plication to join the register. This application was not even considered by the NEC who moved to expel the Editorial Board "forthwith".

Having given the impression that the register would be a fair and reasonable addendum to the constitution, and having convinced delegates—especially in the unions—that there would be no generalised witch-hunt, the NEC right wing launched straight into expulsion moves without any reference to the register!

It was only when the *Militant* editors took legal action to make the NEC provide evidence upon which they were basing the expulsions that the NEC took legal advice themselves and revised their plans, effectively dropping the register as the pretext. They decided to rule instead that *Militant* was "ineligible for affiliation to

held up and down the country, attended by almost 5,000 people, contributed £6,500 to the funds of the *Militant*.

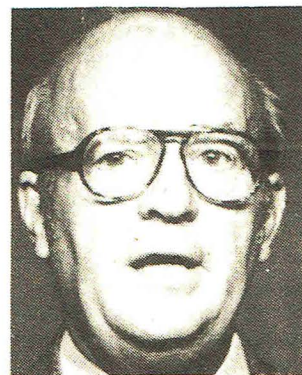
By September 1983 the National Executive Committee had also banned *Militant* from being sold at Labour Party meetings. The 1983 Labour Party Conference heard appeals in a secret session from the five who were eventually told that their appeals had been turned down.

Virtually every NEC meeting between June 1982 and September 1983—and this period covers a General Election—had been devoted to this affair.

Marxist ideas supported

The public opinion of the labour movement was clearly against expulsions and because of this the expulsions were limited to the Five. Even then, further action by the NEC was required to compel the Islington and Hammersmith Labour Parties to removing Ted Grant, Peter Taaffe and Keith Dickinson from their membership rolls.

Militant will always fight for its right to argue its case. The right-wing's plans to stifle ideas have dimly failed, in as much as the influence of *Militant* is stronger now than ever before. There is not the slightest doubt that, as Marxist ideas gain a wider echo inside the Party, the Five will eventually be reinstated. They will not be forgotten, unlike the small-minded men and women who expelled them.



Jim Mortimer, Party General Secretary.

the Labour Party" based on a provision—the so-called proscribed list—which had actually been abandoned by Labour Party Conference in 1973.

The attitude of the right-wing all along was "expel, whatever the pretext."

On the 23 February 1983, the day before the debacle of the Bermondsey By-election, when a safe Labour seat fell to a Liberal, the five editorial Board members, Clare Doyle, Ted Grant, Peter Taaffe, Lynn Walsh and Keith Dickinson, with a combined Labour Party membership of 120 years, were expelled.

Within a month, 45 "reinstate the five" meetings

and indeed the very ideas of "class" are out-dated.

Like the Bourbons, the Right learn nothing and forget nothing. The expulsion of the *Militant* Editorial Board in the run-up to the general election and the divisions this caused in the party gave the Tory press a field-day and was a major contributing factor to the loss of the election. If they are allowed to continue to expel good socialists in the Labour Party and fail to give support to workers in struggle then it is possible they could lose Labour the next election as well.

Further cynicism

Such actions will only serve to create further cynicism amongst both the working class and the middle class. Already, workers are sceptical about the right-wing and the "old" Labour Party, after 17 years of post-war Labour governments

without any fundamental change.

The only way to win mass support is to champion the struggles of workers and to campaign systematically and vigorously for bold socialist policies, as the election victory of Marxist MPs in Liverpool Broadgreen and Coventry South East and the victory of Liverpool City Council have shown.

The right-wing in effect bring the policies and ideas of the ruling class into the labour movement. Roy Hattersley's speech at party conference, in which he stated that the next Labour government could not afford to offer any reforms to the working class, proved they have no intention of challenging the power of big business.

Some of the right-wing are quite prepared to wreck the Labour Party by plunging it into an internal civil war of witch-hunts, bans, proscriptions and expulsions, rather than see it transformed into a genuine socialist and

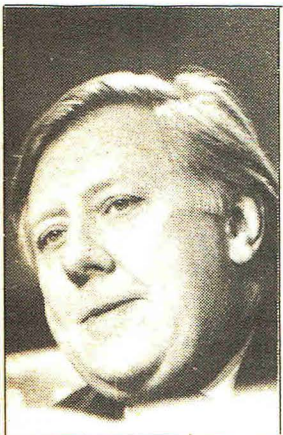
democratic Labour Party.

The fight against witch-hunts and the struggle to create a socialist Labour Party worthy of the working class are thus inseparably inter-linked and must be vigorously pursued.

Need of the working class

The ideas of the right are those of the past. They can offer nothing to working people. The ideas of *Militant*, however, increasingly correspond to the everyday experiences and needs of workers and their families. Marxists are confident, therefore, that whatever steps are taken by the right, they will fail to drive those ideas from the trade unions and the Labour Party. Indeed we are confident that *Militant's* support will continue to grow and will soon become the dominant force among the organised working class.

Photo: Craig Stennett



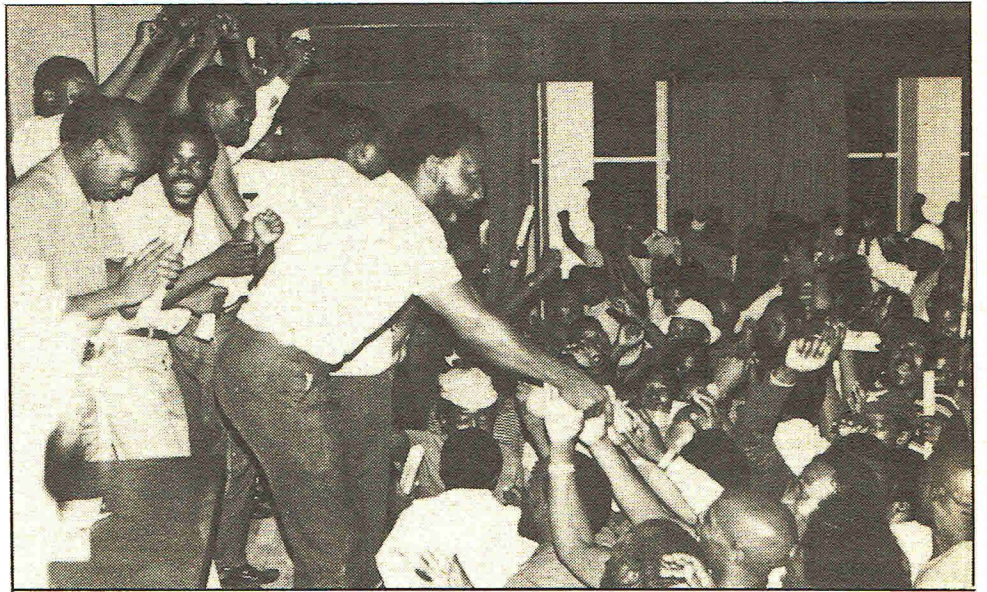
Roy Hattersley, mover of motion to expel Brychan Davies.

Marxist influence and that this in turn will secure them sympathetic coverage in the Tory press, thus facilitating a Labour Party victory in the next election. They imagine that by out-"SDP'ing" the SDP they will win middle-class voters and prove to the ruling class that they are a safe and acceptable "second eleven". As far as they are concerned the working class

South African unions — build direct links



Trade union and political education is taken very seriously by the NUM.



General Secretary Cyril Ramaphosa at a regional congress.

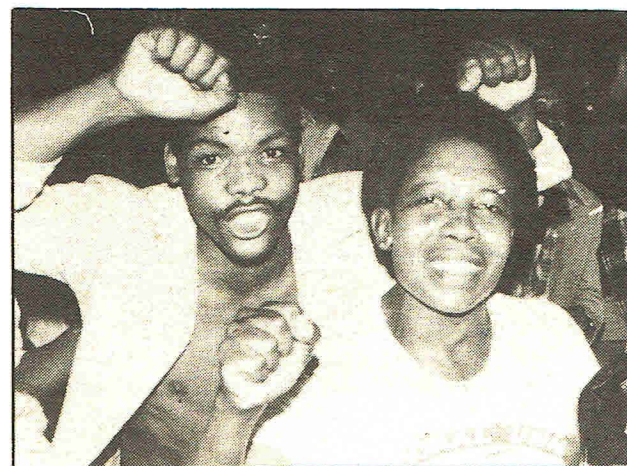
"A worker-controlled union"

IN HIS second article Roy Jones, a striking miner from Staffordshire describes his recent visit to the South African mining areas at the invitation of the National Union of Mineworkers.

Roy pointed out the fighting spirit of the union members. While he was there the rank and file organised a national strike to demand the release of their self-sacrificing

general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa who had been arrested at an "illegal" union meeting.

Roy argues for close direct links between the British and South African miners unions. The South African union is fighting for economic and political improvements and for liberation through revolution. The struggle is the same in Britain and South Africa.



"A celebration of the union and its power."

Women members are drawn from the hospitals in the mining compounds which usually overflow with miners' injuries and diseases. Nurses play a very important role. They see their struggle as the same as the men.

The congresses finished at 7 on Sunday morning. The miners then returned by bus to hostels and townships. Although tired, they were filled with the euphoria of the meeting. Many had to be back at work for the Sunday nightshift!

There were all sorts of resolutions. Meetings to prepare for the 1985 pay campaign were initiated. Disciplinary action was taken against those who had broken the strike in September. The SASOL sackings were foremost in many of the workers' minds, and how the NUM could concretely give support.

The message that I bring back from South Africa is that our struggle against pit closures must be carried on. We must keep on fighting until we've won. The black mineworkers in South Africa know that otherwise, their bosses in SA will feel their hand strengthened.

The other message is: build, build direct links between the British and South African NUM at a rank-and-file level!

MINERS ARE fighting for jobs in Britain. In South Africa miners are also going to be doing the same.

For instance CUSA, the union federation, at the prompting of the NUM, are to support strike action for 6,000 SASOL workers dismissed for participating in the two day stay-away in the Transvaal last November.

The union are still fighting for recognition. Miners and all sections of the working class are having to face the capitalists' use of the police and army in their struggle for organisation.

Even so repression can never suppress organisation. Today you can see many examples of great sacrifice, even to the point of giving up their lives, for their union. This was borne out in 1984 when 11 mineworkers died. Many thousands were injured during the first 'legal' strike which the SA NUM participated in.

The Union is aiming to register shortly, because the bosses' organisation, the

Chamber of Mines, is refusing to otherwise grant the Union stop-order facilities. Without it, they lose R70 000 a month in members' subs, because of their inability to collect it all.

They need all the money they can get in order to expand their apparatus for such a potentially huge union.

"The union is their life"

I believe in worker-controlled unions, and I think the South African NUM is light-years ahead of any in the world in this regard.

I've seen this at the two weekend regional congresses of the union I attended involving over 2,300 members. All decisions were taken from the floor.

At the Central Committee meeting which I attended the decision about registration, solidarity with SASOL workers... it came from the floor. No action by a leading member would be possible

without the full backing of the union membership first.

All union meetings are well attended. There is a genuine desire to participate. There are no proper places to meet. One meeting of 60 shaft stewards was in an old hall with a boxing ring. There were no lights so the combs (transits) which had brought the stewards were lined up and their headlights switched on.

The two regional congresses were a celebration of the union. Workers see the union playing a great part in the future liberation of the black working class and the oppressed in the coming revolution. They see the NUM leading the new union federation; and because they are aware of how important they are to the economy, they have a growing sense of power and confidence.

The union is their life. The organisers when they first started, went months without salaries and hitched and walked everywhere. The officials are controlled by

regional committees of stewards and rank-and-file representatives. Everything is under worker control.

Women's role

The congresses started on Saturday at 6 pm. Many mineworkers had been up at 3, 4 or 5 am to do a Saturday shift. They then got on buses from outlying areas to attend the congresses.

The feeling you get when you walk in is akin to watching 100 FA Cup Finals at Wembley. The singing, dancing, the celebration of the union and its onward march... In attendance were youth organisations and other sections of the local townships who could participate, but not vote.

Elections were at 6 am on

Sunday morning. They were carried out extremely well. Everyone knew who they were voting for and why. This after 12 hours of debate and singing of freedom songs. Not one member fell asleep.

The elections were for regional committees in the Orange Free State and Vaal Reef areas. All members of these committees were working members of the union. Women members took part in the elections; in the Orange Free State, the new treasurer is a woman. She works in a hospital at one of the mines. She put her case forward and soundly beat the men who stood against her. I think this participation of women is something our own NUM would greatly benefit from.

In the townships

THE STATE of the townships is appalling. The roads are unpaved and full of holes. There are ditches filled with water from mains leakage, which people still have to pay for, and over-full drains.

Up to thirty people can be staying in one house, ten people sleeping in a room. No normal marital relationship can be carried out in these circumstances. Most houses do not have electricity—lighting is by oil lamp, cooking on gas boilers. Despite all this, the houses were kept very clean.

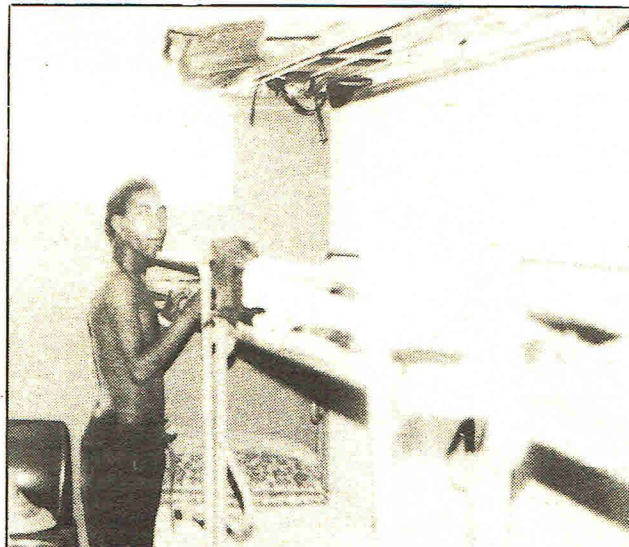
Mineworkers see the effects of official encouragement of alcohol. One weekend I was there, in Soweto, there were 17 murders. There is 25% unemployment and above.

The miners see liquor being used as a conscious tool to keep the workers down. Whenever there is an uprising in the townships, the first thing to be set on fire are the bottlestores. The youth especially, are bitter about the effect drink has on relatives and the way it drugs the struggle.

Botha's new reforms have made no impression on the mineworkers. People understand that it is too late for reforms.

The mineworkers follow closely the regime's moves, for instance, its courting of foreign governments. At the same time, they are cynical about UN solutions. They see the only solution to the problems in society in revolution.

Those who doubt the strength of the working class, should cast their eye on South Africa and watch the marvellous struggle being waged there. You couldn't possibly lose faith in your class after that.



Bunk beds for mineworkers in the hostels.

ROY JONES can be contacted to speak at labour movement meetings through the Southern African Labour Education Project (SALEP), 28 Martello Road, London E8 3PE. SALEP have also produced a broadsheet (price 20p plus 15p postage and packing) giving a fuller report of Roy's visit.

Also available from SALEP is the video *We live like dogs* on the struggle and conditions of black mineworkers. LPYS and Womens Sections hire £10, sale £20. Labour Party and unions, hire £20, sale £30.

In the hostels

THE HOSTEL accommodation is impressive only for the facade which management build on the outside to deceive people driving past. In the FSG No 5 hostel into which I sneaked, there were 16-20 people living per room in the metal bunks with plastic mattresses.

They are treated as animals—herded into pens. In winter it is freezing, whilst in summer it is stifling because there is no proper ventilation. Imagine coming to this from the heat of the shafts. It was like the American slave plantations of the last century.

The food in the hostels is absolutely disgusting. A mine manager showed me around a nice clean looking kitchen. No food to cook was to be seen anywhere. The mealie-meal tasted like cardboard and there is not enough food. The shift which has just finished has to go hungry.

The meat is disgusting, and I bet they only deep-freeze it to kill the maggots. Corruption here is rife. The caterers get a budget, but they spend the minimum amount on the miners' food and pocket the rest. I've seen more droppings from a wooden horse than I saw vegetables on miners' plates.

It's just slave labour. If workers leave the hostels, they have to be back by a certain time. They are separated from their wives, and families who are in the Bantustans.

Their families can visit for two or three days a year at "hospitality centres" attached to the mines, where the conditions are just as inhospitable as on the mines. They are overcrowded, and the husband and wife are unable to have real privacy.

India, Poland, Bulgaria, Ecuador.

Rajiv's fragile victory

In *Militant* (4 January) we published a letter from the Bangalore based "Campaign for a Workers Front" calling for a workers' opposition to India's capitalist parties.

The letter pointed out how the false policies of the workers parties had led to their decline. The following letter was sent after Rajiv Gandhi's 4 to 1 Parliamentary victory in the elections.

SHARE prices, which dropped alarmingly following the assassination of Mrs Gandhi, soared sky-high with the re-election of her son.

Capitalist confidence in the Congress (I) government is not misplaced: within a day of the election, the government revealed its programme—privatisation of state industries and services, further relaxation of state controls, and other measures to please the Party's Big Business backers, who had poured astronomical sums of money into Gandhi's campaign funds.

"IT IS not my fault that I am confused. It is the fault of the parties...I have always voted Congress. But now when I come to think of it, I who came to this basti 22 years ago, the oldest resident here, have seen very few good changes which have made our lives easier. So why should I vote for a Party which has done so little for me or my people?"

—Bombay slum-dweller

However, for Indian capitalism, this electoral victory solves nothing. Riots, communal pogroms, assassinations, local putsches and insurrections, periodic breakdowns of state authority, a massive wave of prolonged strikes...the social background will not go away. To imagine that parliamentary arithmetic is stronger than the class struggle is what Lenin called "parliamentary cretinism".

Rajiv Gandhi chatters about the beginning of "200 glorious years" We predict Gandhi's government will be facing deeper crisis than

"I'VE never been a shirker. You give me work, I will never refuse it. But, who is ready to give me work here? I have to beg for a livelihood. Where is the question of my voting? It is quite inconsequential whether or not I vote. A leader's victory does not guarantee a decent life for me. Their concern is five-yearly."

—Bombay slum-dweller

ever, and divisions within his parliamentary majority, within 200 days.

The freak result is another indication of the volatility of Indian society. Three months ago, even Congress (I) leaders were admitting their Party could not hope for an overall majority. Since then, a Prime Minister was murdered by her bodyguards, rampaging lumpen mobs seized control of the capital city, a community deeply rooted in In-

dian society became the victim of a massacre. The 1984 elections, staged hurriedly before the shock of the assassination had worn off, represented another wild lurch.

The people did not show satisfaction with the way things are. But they had no confidence in the ability of the Opposition to change things.

Karl Marx said that in a bourgeois democracy, every five years the people choose which section of the ruling class will mis-represent it. In every election for twenty

years, the Indian voters have used their vote the only effective way they could: to register their yearning for change.

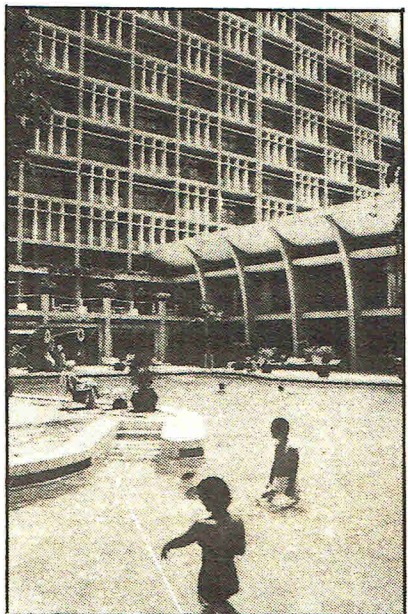
Extinction

In 1967 they warned Congress by drastically cutting its majority. In 1971 they rallied to Mrs Gandhi's radical crusade against the Congress bosses, for an end to poverty, nationalisation of the banks, abolition of princes' privy purses, liberation of Bangladesh, etc. In 1977 they brought the hated Emergency regime crashing and in 1980 they sent packing the squabbling factions of Janata. But not in 1984.

Paradoxically, Congress (I) became the major party

of Hindu chauvinist bigotry (routing the BJP which now has a total of two MPs!), while remaining for want of any alternative the refuge for frightened minorities seeking protection from ugly communalism (especially the Muslims—the Sikhs have turned their backs on Congress).

Far more significant than the hollow triumph of Congress (I) is the extinction of the doomed reactionary capitalist parties. The BJP, DMKP and Janata Party, representing the major trends of the old Janata which swept to power in 1977, have been reduced to a total of 15 seats! All that is reactionary is now concentrated in the party of big business.



Contrast in New Delhi. The opulence of the plush hotels and the slum dwellings almost on their doorstep.

Workers want a real change

WE HAVE received the following letter from a Pakistani visitor to an industrial suburb of Delhi just before the elections.

"The whole society is disintegrating. Most of the roads, buildings and other construction work here are incomplete or broken.

"The idea of the combined and uneven development of capitalism is very clear in every scene. Around the huge industrial units are the houses of bonded labourers who leading a slave's life. They dig a hole

in the land and put a roof on it and live there.

"Most of them are working in the massive modern industries. The Election is arousing very little enthusiasm amongst industrial workers. The opposition are not likely to win because they could not agree on a programme which is a real alternative, voters see Gandhi (wrongly) as a way of keeping India united and also see Rajiv Gandhi as 'new blood' and workers do want change."



One of the many problems Rajiv Gandhi faces. His own party's treatment of national minorities and opposition groups threatens the possible break up of the Indian state. Photo: John Harris (IFL) II

International notes

Workers oppose 'scab' regime

THE strike-breaking role of the Polish Stalinist military regime during the miners' strike has opened many workers' eyes to the real nature of Eastern Europe.

Far from being a "socialist" society as their own apologists claim, Poland (together with the USSR and the Eastern European bloc) is run by a bureaucracy, an elite in wealth and power who cream off most of the advantages of a planned economy for themselves.

Their resistance to all attempts by the working class to gain control and create a democratic workers state was shown at its most brutal in the military crushing of Poland's independent union Solidarność at the end of 1981. The murder of pro-Solidarność priest Father Popieluszko shows the continued vicious repression.

The following letter was sent from workers writing in the Warsaw based underground bulletin *Robotnik* (The Worker) to the NUM backing the British miners strike and calling for support for Solidarność.

"For months we and thousands of our union colleagues have attentively observed your struggle for the right to work.

"We know well that at the present time your fight takes on more universal significance. We have already condemned and we maintain this condemnation with all firmness of coal exports to Great Britain by the Jaruzelski regime.

"If Thatcher is getting along so well with Jaruzelski it is a great time to make logical conclusions. That is why we hope that in the name of workers' solidarity you will reverse your unfriendly positions towards our movement.

"We want to express through you our solidarity and support for the striking miners and all British workers."

Executive Board of Robotnik
(Paper of the Inter-Factory Workers' Committee of Solidarność)
Robotnik Political Group
Group Emmanuel Goldstein

Bulgarian bureaucracy under attack

A LOCAL Communist Party organisation in Bulgaria has been criticised by the country's main Communist newspaper for stage-managing meetings and "stifling all genuine discussion".

A member of a local party committee wrote to the paper saying that all official statements were read from a typed manuscript suggesting it had "perhaps already been checked and approved". Local leaders read enormously long reports which were followed by silence, and any questioning of party democracy led to "rude attacks".

Officials' fear

The lack of internal party democracy reflects the bureaucracy's fear of the working class. Even

though the vast majority of Communist Party members in Eastern Europe are servile officials, the top bureaucrats do not relish any questioning of their activities. But where capitalism has been abolished as in Bulgaria a huge privileged bureaucracy is a barrier against both democracy and efficiency.

Workers' control and management are essential to a healthy workers' state but that would mean the end of the power and perks of the bureaucracy, hence their fear of the working class and anguished opposition to any real change.

The Communist Party paper may "tut-tut" at local officials but only a political revolution to give real power to the working class will change things.

General strike in Ecuador

AT LEAST seven people were killed and dozens jailed on the first day of a 48-hour general strike in the South American state of Ecuador on 10 January.

Factories and transport were affected by protests at the huge increase in petrol prices and bus fares. The rises were part of a government assault on price controls. The unions are demanding a minimum wage twice the present level.

A new monetarist government was elected last August. Febres Cordero's government promised "bread, roofs and jobs" through encouraging foreign investment. The economy shrunk by 3% in 1983 and paying interest on the foreign debt was taking up about half of all annual ex-

port earnings.

Commodity prices of coffee, cocoa and the country's previous lifeline of oil had collapsed in the recession. The powerful military had pushed the previous "centre" government to increase arms spending, raising the possibility of conflict over Ecuador's border with the oil producing area of Peru when Ecuador's own oil dries up in the next few years.

The IMF have given a loan to the new right-wing government while the USA seem to be dangling more assistance in front of the government's eyes-provided it can inflict a defeat on the working class, and give number one priority to capitalist stabilisation.

FIGHTING FUND

This week: £3,851

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
Eastern	1482		2900
East Midlands	1049		3550
Humberside	1168		1850
London East	1224		3200
London West	1416		2150
London South East	343		1950
London South West	706		1650
Lancashire	466		1950
Manchester	855		2200
Merseyside	568		6100
Northern	1944		4400
Scotland East	420		2950
Scotland West	763		3650
Southern	1574		5100
South West	683		2150
Wales East	481		2550
Wales West	851		2050
West Midlands	1642		4300
Yorkshire	1600		5350
Others	2367		5000
Total received	21602		65000

Give a week's wage to Militant

The £3,256 raised this week, plus the £600 profit from the raffle, takes the overall total to £21,602. On the way also is £1,500 the profit made from the Xmas cards. So the amount we still need to raise has dropped to £41,000—with 2 weeks to go. We can still do it.

This week let's follow the example of the Eastern Region who gave a lead as to how to raise money for the Fighting Fund. A brilliant appeal was made at an event held in the Eastern Region and the supporters there donated a total of £956. The appeal started by asking for supporters to donate a week's wages or income to the Fighting Fund—and the response was tremendous.

The donation which represented most sacrifice was an unemployed supporter who gave up a week's dole money; this was followed by a student supporter

from Colchester donating two weeks student grant; Steve Lenihan from Harlow, employed for only four weeks, donated £65 and Frank McDonagh donated £70. Others included a donation of £50 (an Xmas present) and a donation of £5 from an OAP.

Follow these examples

All the donations represented the tremendous sacrifice supporters are prepared to make to bring a daily Militant nearer. No-one can underestimate the great role a daily worker's paper can play in the labour movement—the support it can give to worker's struggles up and down the country. With that understanding it's easy to inspire workers and supporters to make sacrifices, to donate money that is hard to come by.

How many areas can now match the examples set by the Eastern Region and West Glamorgan? How many of

our readers are prepared to follow the sacrifice and also donate a week's income or even a day's income? That is what is needed now to get us back on target.

Obviously no-one can really afford to make these donations but we are determined to show the Tories that they will be beaten and that's what makes the sacrifice necessary.

By Kim Waddington

Donations this week include: Scunthorpe Labour Party Young Socialists, Humberside £70; Midlothian Disco £64; Xmas Bazaar Rotherham £60; Birmingham appeal to readers £34 so far; Miners at Monktonhall, Midlothian £15; Eppleton NUM Co Durham £10; Peter Traynor Southwark £10; Tom O'Carroll London Overseas Telegraph POEU £4.75; Barry Simmonds Sutton Valence UCW £4.50; NW Leeds LPYS £2; NW Leeds students £1.50; South Shields LPYS £1; P Kenny East Mids South £1; Mrs Trott Boston Nottingham £1.

First ever Fighting Fund?

The years from 1815 to 1848 saw a whole series of revolutionary upheavals. Far from leading to stability in Europe, the end of the Napoleonic Wars opened the way for social upheaval. The rising liberal capitalist class challenged the old feudal-aristocratic order in one country after another.

At the beginning, the new industrial working class, spurred on by its own grievances, was easily drawn in behind the capitalist liberal-democratic revolutionists. The reactionary and parasitic landed aristocrats were the glaringly obvious first targets. Many even saw the capitalists as fellow members of the oppressed 'industrious classes'.

Independent voice

But thirty years of bitter and turbulent experience taught them different. The primacy of the class war implications of the irreconcilable conflict of interests between capital and labour came to be realised. The 'Communist Manifesto', written by Marx and Engels in 1848, summed up the acquired experience of the working class, and pointed the way forward.

The necessity of a completely independent working

By Ian Hunter (Sacriston Labour Party)

class press was also realised. With the triumph of reaction after the failure of the 1848 revolutions only the most resolute and class conscious elements of the workers' movement were able to carry on. In 1852 the Chartist leader Ernest Jones, together with Marx, (then an exile in London) decided to launch the *People's Paper*, to rally those forces which remained.

Absolute independence from rich benefactors was essential if the paper was to carry out its purpose. A fighting fund of £500 was needed to launch the paper, £3 a week thereafter to help support it, and a further £200 the year after, to help bring down the cost from 5d to 3½d to make it more accessible to workers. The first issue, in May 1852, launched an appeal: "Let every reader

remember the object for which this paper is started. Let him remember that it is established by public subscription of the sons of toil. Let him remember that we are precluded from the usual copiousness of advertisement and publicity...Let him canvass among friends and acquaintances. Let him remember that this is indispensable, and to be of use must be immediate and then a surer success will attend this paper of the people than attends even the gold supported papers of the wealthy classes."

Weekly penny

In a later issue a letter from a Nottingham workman showed how money was raised: "As a beginning", he wrote, "I now send 6d, and mean to send sixpence a week myself towards its support. In addition to this I am collecting in my shop and among all the readers of the paper in my locality that I know, their weekly Penny."

Whatever the equivalent in today's money, it's obviously an example to follow.

ads

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

LENIN and Trotsky on the National Question. 5 articles in a 9 page duplicated pamphlet 20p (plus 15p postage) 5 or more copies post free. Send to Box E, 3/13 Hepscoth Rd London E9. (Make Cheques Payable to Militant)

Militant

Meetings

SOUTHAMPTON: Marxist Discussion Group meets every Friday 7.45, 206 Honeysuckle Road, Bassett, Southampton. Tel: 551420 for details of subjects or any further information.

ELTHAM Militant supporters:
17 Jan: What is Marxism?
24 Jan: British capitalism in crisis.
31 Jan: Socialism and peace.
7 Feb: Northern Ireland.

All at 8 pm, Lionel Road Community Centre, Westhorne Avenue, Eltham.

UPPER RHONDDA Marxist Discussion Group. Meeting every Sunday at 7.00 pm in the Red Cow, High Street, Treorchy. Phone Steve Brown on Treorchy 773455 for more details.

HULL Militant public meeting. Victory to the Miners, socialist policies for Labour. Hear: Pat Wall (President Bradford Trades Council) On: Friday 8 February 7.30pm. At: Trades and Labour Club, Beverly Road.

Miss them at Wembley & FELS? Wembley Conference badge '84 only 65 left, red fist "better to break the law than the poor". Labour logo "Militant Labour Liverpool" New design "black & white unite LPYS" with red militant logo. 25p each + minimum 25p p&p.

Payable to P. Cooper, 31, Balmoral Rd, Fairfield, Liverpool 6 8NB.

HATFIELD MAIN

WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP invite all sections of the Women's trade union and labour movement to a rally and picket in support of Doncaster miners on Monday 21 January, 9.30 pm at Dunscoft Miners' Welfare, Broadway, Dunscoft, Doncaster. Speakers include Peter Heathfield. March from rally to picket Hatfield Main colliery in Pit Lane. Come show your solidarity. On to victory!

INQABA YA BASEBENZI the journal of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the African National Congress. Issue number 15 contains a supplement: "South Africa, how close to revolution?" an 11th second part of "Southern Africa after the Nkomati accord" plus articles on Zimbabwe, Botswana and Malawi. Send payment with orders (75p including postage and packing) to BM Box 1719, London WC1 3XX.

NORTHERN IRELAND—a Marxist analysis. A 32 page analysis published by Militant Irish Monthly. 75p (plus 15p postage) 5 or more post free. Order from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9.

OUT NOW!



£1.50 (+25p postage + packing) Available from Militant, 3/13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB.

Scottish BLOC delegate Conference solidarity with the miners. (Note new venue).

Venue: Caley Cinema, Lothian Rd. Edinburgh. **Date:** Sat 19 January 1985. **Speakers include:** Terry Fields MP, Ian Isaac (S. Wales NUM Executive, personal capacity) and other NUM and leading TU speakers.

Delegations on basis of 5 per Miners strike cttee/Miners' wives support group/Union branch/s/s committee/combine committee/regional, district committee etc £1 per delegate (free for miners/miners wives)

For credential details phone 031-665 5431.

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

Now available on cassette: all centre page articles from issue 693-721. Send either seven blank C-90 cassettes or £6.30 payable to *Militant* Tapes, 18 Blandford Grove, Woodhouse, Leeds 2. Phone: (0532) 455936.

PAINTING AND DECORATING. Contact P Hocking, 13 Eckford Street, Cheatham, Manchester, M8 7RB. Tel 061-202 1139. Willing to travel. % to fighting fund.

MILITANT supporter wants bed-sit accommodation within travelling distance of Central London. Ring Jimmy between 9-5 on 01-388 6609.

BASILDON LPYS Public Meeting. Wednesday 23 January 8.00 pm. Pitsea Leisure Centre, Basildon. 'How the Miners can win'. Speakers: Bill Deal (President FBU) plus NUM, LPYS reps.

BADGES—1" button badge with 20th anniversary slogan 20p each (10p each for orders over 20)—1" button badge—"Militant" on coloured background (white/yellow/green/blue) 20p each. Enamel stud badges—"Militant for Labour and Youth" 75p each. All orders for badges must be accompanied with minimum 25p p&p.

Cash with order. Cheques made payable to 'Militant' send to 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London. E9 5HB

Cancel our debts

LAST YEAR, with the move to our marvellous new premises we took a massive leap towards our goal of a daily Marxist paper. Every reader who has contributed to the fund can look forward to the first issue of that daily paper knowing that your money helped bring it about.

But, before that daily can be produced we still have to pay off the huge debts that have been incurred with the move. Not only do we have

to pay back enormous amounts to the bank for the purchase of the premises. On top of these we also have to pay interest on loans for the repairs and installations that have been carried out to make the building fully equipped and operational.

For example, we had to spend £22,000 on installing a telephone system—absolutely essential for the running of a newspaper: Keeping in touch with all the areas, receiving last minute reports and organising distribution. Other essential items of expenditure have been on roofing work, including asbestos removal, £13,000 and on making the

building more secure, over £6,300.

Now we have to get the money in. The longer that takes the more we have to pay the banks. We are appealing to every labour movement body—trade union branch, Labour Party branch, YS, shop stewards' committee—to make a donation to our fund.

All our readers should ensure that a request is made for cash at the next meeting of their own organisation. Then we can enlist the help of the workers that will in turn be helped by a daily paper giving their side of the story.

Solidarity Conference of Mineworkers Defence Committee. (Sec K Livingstone) on Saturday 9 February, Octagon Centre, Sheffield.

Speakers include: Peter Heathfield NUM, Betty Heathfield WAPC, Tony Benn MP, Johnie Tocher AUEW Presidential candidate, Phil Holt BLOC.

Each TU body can send 2 delegates, each Labour Party/other organisation 1. £3 per delegate. Send to Mineworkers Defence Committee, 31 Cranwich Road, London N16.

Name

Address

TU/Organisation

No. Delegates

BLOC Conference. 23rd March 1985.

Manchester Free Trade Hall. Speakers include K Livingstone, D Hatton, Johnie Tocher AUEW. Each TU organisation can send up to 4 delegates. £3 per delegate. Send to BLOC c/o G Williamson, 11 Sutton Place, London E9 6EH.

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

Fight for survival

IF THIS is a boom god help us in recession and slump. Last week saw redundancies announced from Hartlepool to Eastbourne and the highest October to December business failures recorded by the credit insurance company Trade Indemnity since they started keeping records in 1966. Yet the Tories tell us the British economy is well 'on course'.

The gruesome answer to those people who say the miners are wrong to wage all-out industrial war in defence of their jobs is given in this rash of redundancies. If you don't fight you've even less chance of survival in Thatcher's Britain.

Steel

Steel leader Bill Sirs' crawling to the government during the miners' strike hasn't saved the 250 jobs BSC are cutting in Hartlepool plate mill this week, on top of tens of

By Ian Ilett

thousands lost under his rule.

The right wing full time TGWU officials in the Stoke area and a plant leadership frightened by the prospect of complete closure haven't stopped the company imposing 2,400 redundancies. (see article below).

The non-militant, low paid shopworkers at Littlewoods have still been hit by a 1,000 job loss in stores around the country.

Giant bakery firm Rank Hovis MacDougal continue the so called 'rationalisation'



Leicester demonstration against Thatcher visit last Friday brought together council workers protesting against rate-capping, striking miners, nuclear protestors. The labour movement must unite and lead the fight to end Tory rule.

strategy which has cost bakery workers thousands of jobs over the last ten years despite some gallant struggles.

Van and stores

General Motors' commercial vehicle subsidiary Bedford have announced nearly 500 jobs to go in Bedford, Luton and Dunstable. The fact that Dunstable workers refused to join the Vauxhall strike earlier this year hasn't saved their bacon.

The figures themselves on-

ly reflect part of the disastrous consequences of such closures and redundancies. At Littlewoods, for instance, many more will be laid off than the 1,000 jobs figure indicates because of the large number of part-timers. In Stoke, the redundancies, will reduce spending power in the town dramatically, component and supply firms will be hit, the nearby pits which supply Michelin's methane could well join the NCB's hit list.

In the middle of this boom the engineering unions have just settled for a 5.2% pay

rise, the steel unions, except ISTC, for 2.5% to 3.25%, the first rise since 1981! ISTC will no doubt settle for something similar. Local authority manual workers look set to get about 4.5% to 5%—starting from a very low base. That great socialist Robert Maxwell looks set to try to chop 25% of Mirror Group Newspaper staff. Things aren't so hot even if you've got a job. And keeping your head down doesn't ensure you'll keep it.

The lesson screams at every worker from the pay packet, the pay claim, the in-

security of continual redundancies and closures. The miners are right. We have to fight.

National action

Above all, we cannot fight alone. We need national action in support of the miners and every other group in struggle—and a labour movement leadership prepared to carry the struggle through to the end. It's never been clearer, we can't afford capitalism in 'boom' or slump.

Tired of Michelin lies

MICHELIN'S announcement last week of 2,400 redundancies at their Stoke-on-Trent site has left the workforce absolutely shattered.

Production at the plant will be cut by almost one-half. In December, 1982, there were 1,500 voluntary redundancies. Most workers seem to think that this latest announcement is only the second stage towards final closure.

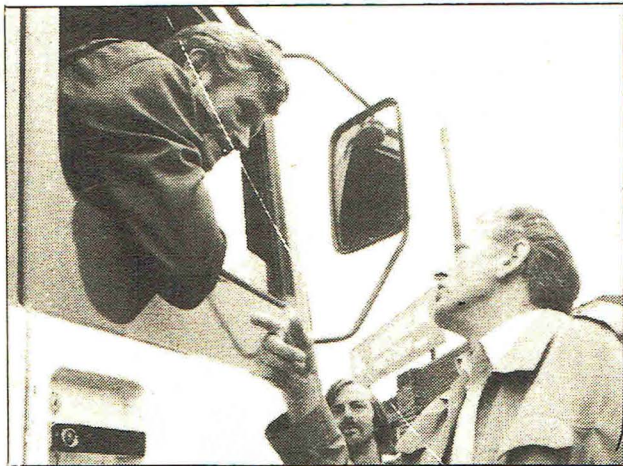
According to official statistics unemployment currently stands at 12.4% in Stoke. Michelin's announcement will increase this by a further 1.2%. It is estimated that a further 800 redundancies will ensue as a direct result of Michelin's actions.

Local industry has been devastated, with the pottery industry losing 20,000 jobs between 1979 and 1983 and the threat of closure hanging over two out of the five coal mines in the area.

The Shop Stewards Committee have unfortunately not come up with any proposals to fight the redundancies and in discussions before the meeting none of the Stewards was prepared to second a resolution drawn up by TGWU Shop Steward and Militant Supporter Chris Simpson to fight the redundancies.

Chris argued for total opposition to all redundancies and that the committee should appoint an accountant to seek access to company accounts to clarify the real financial position. He also argued for a plan of investment to be demanded from the company with a job share programme with no loss of pay.

Chris felt that the devastation of this semi-closure to the local community was too big a price to pay and urged a strong lead be given from



Michelin workers putting up a fight against job losses in August '83.

the TGWU. He called for an occupation of the site and for blacking of Michelin goods. These demands, he said, should be campaigned for amongst the workforce with a series of mass meetings.

The mood amongst the workers is a mixture of despair and just wanting "out". Last year Michelin recruited 300 apprentices and some of these youth are now to be made redundant.

Redundancy money

Undoubtedly Michelin's threat to withdraw redundancy payments, should any disruption occur, has had an initial affect. On the other hand management are insisting on a high level of production being maintained until May, when most of the redundancies will have taken place, on the pretext of saving the remainder of the factory.

It is hard to believe that only last year Michelin promised job security until the year 2000. They broke that promise. Why should they keep their word this time?!

The T&G have totally refused to pick up the

gauntlet thrown down by Michelin. Many workers must be puzzled by the union's refusal to call any mass meetings at all. The next meetings, when members can express their opinions will be normal branch meetings in another two weeks time.

What has compounded the failure to fight the closures by the union has been the statements made in particular by the union's full time officials who have, in radio and press interviews, explained that the remaining workforce "should realise the sacrifice being made" by those made redundant.

The failure of the local leadership and officials of the T&GWU, with a few honourable exceptions, to attempt to mobilise opposition and the shock of the announcement has temporarily devastated many workers. But that mood can quickly turn to anger. It needs mobilising and organising for a fightback.

Chris Simpson, TGWU shop steward Michelin (personal capacity) talked to Ruth Campbell

Rhondda forced to fight Labour

A STRIKE by 330 members of Rhondda NALGO branch has paralysed local council services. Rhondda Borough Council (a Labour-controlled authority with one of the largest majorities in the country) intend to introduce a "re-structuring" scheme which would mean the loss of 25 posts.

GARATH CHILDS, NALGO Branch Secretary spoke to Brychan Davies:

"Rhondda Borough Council have consciously kept the 25 posts vacant in order to do away with staff. Our NALGO branch opposes all redundancies, even when a vacant post is lost, it means one less job for the community. At a mass meeting in December Rhondda council workers decided to take selective industrial action in opposition to the 're-structuring' plan.

Solidarity

"The Leisure Services Department came out on im-

mediate strike, closing the local sports centre, community centres and the Parc and Dare Hall, Treorchy. The Parc and Dare, however, was given special dispensation by Rhondda NALGO to hold a concert by the 'Flying Pickets' to raise money for the NUM.

"As the result of a letter received by NALGO threatening to lock-out all 335 members, further action has been taken. The meals on wheels service, unfortunately, has been hit by the dispute. All libraries and borough council buildings have been shut since before Christmas, and all rent rebates, council house repairs and other administration has come to a halt.

"Now, tons of rotting rubbish is accumulating at Ferndale and Treorchy, and at the refuse incinerator at Dinas. The health inspector has declared the situation hazardous. When contractors were called in to remove the rubbish, NALGO immediately organised pickets

and stopped all attempts, to move any refuse in the Rhondda. The council have since threatened to use outside non-union contractors. The NALGO action has the support of all the other council unions."

Support

A series of public meetings have been organised by the NALGO branch in various parts of the Rhondda to explain the issues to the public. Rhondda LPYS branch will also be holding a public meeting with speakers including: Derek Hatton (Deputy Leader, Liverpool City Council) Gareth Childs (NALGO Rhondda Sec) and Mike Walker (Lady Windsor NUM, Rhondda LPYS). Venue and date to be arranged.

Messages of support should be sent to: Gareth Childs, Rhondda NALGO, 23 Carne Street, Pentre, Rhondda, Mid Glamorgan.

USDAW Broad Left National Meeting. Sunday, 27 January 1985, commencing 2.30 pm at the County Hall, London SE1 (near Waterloo tube). All USDAW Broad Left members welcome.

USDAW Broad Left (Scottish Division) meeting Sunday 20 January 1985 commencing 2.00 pm at the Trade Union Centre, Picardy Place, Edinburgh (opposite the Playhouse). Meeting will elect officers and will discuss forthcoming USDAW elections. All USDAW members welcome.

INDUSTRIAL

Ticket to chaos - Tory bus plans

THE TORIES' proposed parliamentary bill on the bus industry was due for publication this week but as a result of the wide opposition to government plans, including a threatened revolt by up to forty of its own MPs, the bill has been delayed until the beginning of February.

Press reports suggest that deregulation is not planned now until 1987 at the earliest and the break up and sale of National Bus will be held over until late 1987 or '88. This shows the Tories' weakness but is only a temporary tactical delay whilst they discipline

SINCE 1979 the Tories have been chopping away at public transport using privatisation and cuts in subsidies.

The new method of attack is 'deregulation', that is the abolition of road service licencing. Anyone with a bus or coach will now be able to operate any route in the country. Private operators, or 'cowboys' to give them their true name, will be allowed to compete for the rich pickings of profitable city routes.

Cross subsidy

For the first time in 50 years there will be no control over bus operators. The principle of cross-subsidy, the bedrock of all public transport, will be thrown out of the window. Last year it was estimated that over £1,500m was transferred in cross-subsidy from profitable to unprofitable routes, by individual bus operators. This allowed many rural services, off-peak and Sunday services to run.

In place of this £1,500m the Tories hold up the fig leaf of £20m annual grant to protect rural services, to cover their nakedness. The remaining profit will be handed out to the Tories' private sector backers.

This policy spells disaster. As the Director General of Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Executive said: "This is the end of integration of public transport in this country. It did not evolve naturally. We have worked painstakingly for 15 years to put the system together. Now, within the space of 12 months it looks as if it is all to be pulled apart".

Since 1980 the government has allowed three areas of the country to test out deregulation. In these areas every service has to stand on its own feet. The White Paper concludes: "Deregulation has not been sufficient to halt the overall decline in rural bus services".

What an admission. However, Ridley has brushed aside the evidence and even protests from the Conservative-controlled

backbenchers from rural areas worried about votes as a result of decimating local bus services.

It is vital that the unions now go on the offensive, taking up Ron Todd's promise of official support for industrial action against the Tory legislation at Sunday's Birmingham TGWU bus conference.

SIMON HEATHER, TGWU vice-chair, West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive, explains the White Paper proposals and what they would mean for jobs and service.

TGWU PASSENGER SERVICES GROUP

BUSWORKERS THESE AFFECT YOU

BUSWORKERS have had a tough time over recent years. They've seen services disappear, garages close and jobs go. Their already poor wages have fallen further and further behind inflation. And while other workers have won increased leisure time, busworkers still have to rely on overtime to get anything like a decent wage.

WORSE TO COME. Bad as things have been they could get a whole lot worse. Further big cuts in transport subsidies, more privatisation, rigid control of public sector pay, removal of trade union rights - that's the Government agenda for busworkers and the passenger transport industry.

IT AFFECTS YOU. This isn't happening to somebody else. It's happening to you. It's your job, your wages, your conditions, your future at risk. You can join 4 million unemployed in the dole queues. You can work more unsocial hours, and worse shifts for less pay. Or you can join the TGWU in fighting to protect public transport and

YOUR FUTURE.

Association of District Councils who concluded: "The government plans would inevitably speed up the decline in local services".

One of the trial areas, Hereford, gives a glimpse into the future. One of the privatised operators, 'Flashes Coaches', lost their operators licence. The Traffic Commissioners, an independent body that oversees safety and operating standards, discovered 47 defects on their buses.

The enquiry revealed that drivers were employed as mechanics and were expected to maintain their vehicles. The maintenance contract had been liquidated, but the buses were still operated, maintenance being done on a lay-by on a dual carriageway.

The White Paper proposes to do away with the Traffic Commissioners, and replace

Maintenance

them with a central body. There will no longer be road service licences, so it is obvious what will happen. Would you want your kids

to go to school in one of these buses?

It is important to realise the implications for mechanics, engineers, bodymakers, cleaners and other maintenance workers. Tenders for service contracts will also go out to private tender. The lowest tenders must be accepted. Large operators with specialist equipment and purpose-built works will find it impossible to compete with the street corner garage. Already Midland Red has sold off its works with the loss of 300 jobs.

National and local action must be organised to defeat this threat. Workers must be prepared to take industrial action to defend their jobs, it is clear that the Tories won't listen to logical argument, not even from their own local authorities!

Public transport, like the Health Service is now expendable for the Tories. In fact they admit it in the White Paper: "In some of our major cities the cost of subsidising public transport is now unacceptable". Public transport workers will say that the costs of subsidising this Tory government are now unacceptable!



White Paper proposals

1. Break-up and privatisation of the National Bus Company.
2. Municipal bus companies will be forced to put all their services out to private tender. The lowest tender must be accepted, inevitably leading to privatisation. Subsidies paid by local councils towards concessionary travel for the old and disabled will be shared out to all operators. So local councils will be faced with the ludicrous situation of subsidising private operators to run the services previously run by the council. It's like paying a thief to break into your house.
3. PTEs will be broken up into smaller units, made in-

dependent companies ready for privatisation, similar to the Municipals. The abolition of the metropolitan county councils in 1986 will deprive the PTEs of essential funding for low fares and good services. Local authorities will only be able to keep services under public control by undercutting private operators when tendering. This will mean abandoning most loss-making services.

As if all this wasn't enough, from next year the Government Transport Supplementary Grant (TSG) will be abolished. Any subsidy towards public transport will have to be found from the General Rate Support Grant.

Hard pressed local councils will have no extra funds allocated for public transport. If they wish to protect public transport, money will have to be taken away from education, housing, social services, etc.

It is estimated that the West Midlands PTE needs £18m TSG for next year just to protect existing services. The abolition of the cross-subsidy alone would mean a 22 per cent rate increase to protect services in a city like Plymouth. In Nottingham deregulation would threaten 30 per cent of bus routes and cost the council at least £1.2m, opening them up to the threat of rate-capping.



Effects of Tory policies

1. Rural routes, off-peak and Sunday services will cease to exist. The ending of cross-subsidy will result in massive service cuts and in the long run fare rises.
2. The elderly and disabled may not lose travel concessions (according to the Tories). However, what good is a free pass when there is no bus to get on. At present over one in every five bus journeys are made by pensioners. Without their bus services many will become prisoners in their own homes.
3. Bus workers will be thrown on the dole as services are slashed and bus operators are split-up and privatised. 16,000 jobs will go in London in the next three years, 1,600 in the WMPTE, 5,000 redundancies in National Bus Company.

4. Wage rates and conditions of employment of bus workers will be driven down to the level of the lowest paying operator. In the free for all, wages will be cut to that paid by non-union operators at present.

The Tories will destroy the hard-fought for wages and conditions built up by years of struggles. The value of our pensions could be dramatically reduced if we agree to accept lower wage levels, since our pensions will be based on the new wage rates.

Workers will be offered new conditions of employment, with longer hours, longer duties, shorter holidays, and lower wages. These new companies will be made 'efficient' and ready for privatisation at our expense.

If you think this is

scaremongering look at what has already happened to the National Bus Company. To compete with private operators, drivers accepted loss of motorway payments and a longer working day in some areas. In Evesham it is reported that workers accepted two wage cuts, loss of holidays and uniforms to keep their jobs and wages dropped from £2.50 to £1.50 per hour.

5. Safety standards will be relaxed, maintenance standards will drop as operators cut costs to stay in business. Operators will find it impossible to purchase new vehicles, causing a collapse of the bus construction industry. For example, Hestair Denis, a major bus manufacturer estimate they will build only 400 busses in 1986, compared with 3,700 in 1979.

Militant

No to witch hunt

Pages 8-9

Nuclear tests

Page 6

Defend rail workers



ONE OF the Tories' main aims is to destroy the power of the trade unions, the working class' first line of protection against capitalist crisis.

* They have tried special anti-union laws and a massive police presence on picket lines. On the railways they are trying to use intimidation against rail union members for their unrivalled solidarity with the miners strike.

The decision by the Federation of Rail Unions (NUR and ASLEF) to call for a 24 hour strike in two regions on 17 January against victimisation got a warm welcome from railworkers. Many trade unionists in fact would argue for a national strike to defend our members.

ASLEF members and NUR guards at Waterloo plan to come out. The general feeling at their meeting was disgust that on-

By Martin Elvin

ly a regional strike was being called.

Workers have been victimised by BR for carrying out national union policy. In Coalville in Leicestershire, an area where the miners' strike has been weak, railworkers have faithfully and bravely blacked coal movements from the Leicester coalfield. For this the future of the depot has been threatened, trade unionists' homes have been raided by the police and management have tried to intimidate workers. (See article page 4 for details).

Union rights

Thatcher and the British Rail Board are only waiting for the end of the miners strike to start further attacks on rail jobs, and conditions. We must fight now to defend our members and support the miners' struggle

so that a miners victory tells the bosses that union rights are not up for grabs.

We need action throughout the country that to ensure our members are not victimised. If management continue their actions, an indefinite national strike must be called. We must make plans now with other unions in transport and power; if there are any attempts to shift coal on a large scale or if the government bring in troops this also must be the for an all out strike on the railways with a campaign by our unions for spreading the action.

The Tories are in deadly earnest with their assault on union rights; they want workers to face their attacks with no effective protection. But if the railworkers, miners and other workers use their industrial strength, all the plans of the MacGregors, Reids and Thatchers can rapidly come unstuck. Now is the time for us to fight.

Photo: John Harris (IFLU)



An example of railworkers solidarity was the 24-hour NUR strike in Manchester last September when BR management refused to allow a workplace collection for the miners.

Legal attack on seamen's union

A WRIT has been served on Sam McCluskie of the National Union of Seamen for the union's support of the miners' strike.

The Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) tried to get around the blacking of coal by chartering two ships the *Stability* and the *Speciality*. The *Stability* was ordered to take open cast coal from Workington docks to the port of Shoreham in Sussex. The NUS blacked the movement and refused to take it out.

A writ was taken out by the firm *Everards of Workington* but the hearing was adjourned for seven days. The judge gave the instruction that during that week the NUS was not to "induce the breaking of contracts."

After the hearing, workers at Workington agreed by the narrow margin of 7 to 5 to allow *Stability* to leave for Shoreham and the other vessel, *Speciality*, to leave for Iceland.

The solidarity action has been made harder by the fact that the TGWU manned ship

Kindrance has been carrying coal on the Shoreham run.

Active trade unionists in the NUS are calling for action by the union's ports committee, preferably together with the TGWU and striking miners to visit every port to ensure every seaman is fully convinced of the need to back the NUM. That is the only way to stop the writ-hungry Tories bullying workers out of solidarity action.

By Julie Harris

paganda, but because of all the court actions, there is now an urgent need for money specifically for campaigning work. Food parcels are still needed, but it is essential that the union should still be able to pay for petrol and other picketing expenses if we are to get to all the workplaces and organise the solidarity action upon which success now depends.

Most important is the need to get to the power sta-

tion, oil terminals, oxygen suppliers, tanker depots and other key areas where solidarity action could bring decisive victory. Action to stop all movement of supplies in and out of the power stations would force the Tories to retreat.

A general strike called by the NUM would get massive support. The miners are fighting for the future of every worker; it is a fight that must be won!

Power behind the miners' strike

TILBURY power station workers and striking miners met for the first time on Monday 14 January.

The meeting was called by Tilbury shop stewards and over 30 workers from one shift turned out, despite appalling weather, and management distribution of leaflets under the name of the 'Keep Tilbury Working Committee' calling for a boycott of the meeting.

Miners applauded

Charlie Cheavills of the NUM and Brian Allen, a full time official for the NUS, appealed to Tilbury workers to follow the example of West Thurrock power workers who have refused to accept scab oil for three months. West Thurrock has worked either on minimum capacity or not at all.

Initial scepticism among the power workers about the miners' case was changed after the issues were explained. Miners speaking from the floor were applauded

when they explained why they were on strike.

This is probably the first time that Tilbury power workers have heard the miners' case directly, apart from leaflets handed out by pickets.

The power workers were concerned about victimisation if they took blacking action. But at West Thurrock no-one has been disciplined, despite management threats.

A mass lobby of Tilbury power station has been called by the South East Region TUC NUM Support Committee for Monday 21 January at 6.45am.

This meeting was a crucial part of the campaign to stop power stations using scab coal and oil. Similar campaigns are vital at every power station in the country using lobbies, 24 hour

picketing and solidarity meetings.

Dungeness

★ Solidarity action scored a victory for Kent miners and rail workers who refused to move nuclear fuels from Dungeness power station. On Thursday 10 January management at the nuclear power station attempted to move nuclear flasks.

Police arrived in full riot gear determined to get the flasks through. The local NUR refused to move the flasks, not only to help the miners, but also for health and safety reasons. There will no doubt be renewed attempts to move the flasks. The miners have responded by calling for a mass picket on Monday 28 January.

Join the lobby of Labour's NEC on 23 January to protest at the threatened expulsion of Young Socialist Brychan Davies. Venue: Labour Party headquarters 150 Walworth Road, London SE17. Starting at 8.45 am. See pages 8-9.

Miners

From page one

pathisers in support of the National Union of Mineworkers."

This call needs to be taken up, not just within the NUM, but throughout the trade union movement. Solidarity action, now more than ever, is the key to winning this dispute.

Cash is still needed. £1000s are still being sent in, despite all the hostile pro-



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