

All out on February 11

Mobilise for miners



Mass picket at Monktonhall, Scotland on 17 January.

THE MAGNIFICENT fight of the miners is reaching a critical stage. The overwhelming majority remain loyal to the strike, braving the hardship and all the inducements of the NCB and the Tory press to give up.

Their fight has inspired workers throughout Britain. Miners remain adamant that they will not see whole communities destroyed and their children's futures ruined just so MacGregor can balance the books and make the industry "fit" for privatisation.

There is now, however, an urgent need for the NUM to draw on the enormous sympathy for the miners, to come off the ropes and take a bold initiative to turn support into solidarity action to defeat the Tories.

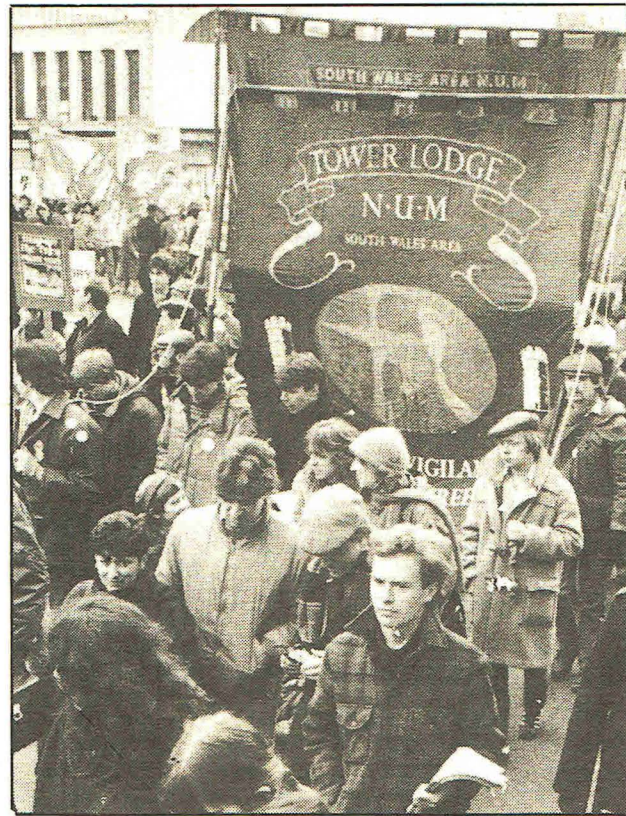
Seeing the weakness at the top of both the political and

By Tom Dury
(NUM Tranent Strike Committee E. Lothian)

industrial wings of the labour movement, the government are now intent on smashing the NUM and rubbing the miners' faces in the dust. That is why the Coal Board said that Monday's talks "had not brought negotiations any nearer."

Legal threats

They have clearly been ordered by Thatcher to offer



Solidarity march in Islington 19 January. Turn sympathy into action.

nothing. She took the view that new talks might slow down the return-to-work.

The legal moves against Austin Rover unions and railworkers proves that the ruling class are preparing an offensive against other workers willing to fight. It is an open confrontation between the classes and the labour movement must be mobilised as never before.

In the absence of a lead from TUC or Labour Party leaders, the responsibility

Continued on back page

Power crisis

NEW INFORMATION received by Militant from sources in the electricity supply industry and leaked information from the CEGB published in the *Guardian*, confirms our analysis that there will be a power crisis in the North of England in mid February if the present cold weather continues.

See article—page 3

But there is no guarantee that power cuts will occur. Cuts will only happen if the power workers refuse to accept new deliveries of coal or oil which the government and CEGB will try to move in as the crunch approaches.

If they fail half the electricity consumers in the North can expect to be disconnected during the late afternoon peak period when the coal runs out.

(BRB). Above all it has raised the morale of those railworkers who have withstood harassment for ten months and continue to black coal coke and oil.

But there are signs that the BRB and the Tories now plan a full assault. They want to break our solidarity which has been second to none. The 17 January action lifted mineworkers' morale so the Tories want to step up the movement of fuel to break the miners particularly as this harsh winter pushes up power demands.

Continued on back page

Young Socialist expelled

'Evidence forged'

BRYCHAN DAVIES has been expelled from the Labour Party—on the basis of forged evidence!

The first attempt to endorse Brychan's expulsion from Rhondda CLP at Labour's NEC was referred back to the Appeals and Mediation Committee. Rather than regard this as a rejection as is normally the case, the committee brought the matter up again at Wednesday's NEC meeting with "new evidence".

They tried to use a letter written by Brychan which gives the names of people who want to join Cynon Valley LPYS, and also indicates that some of them read *Militant*.

Manoeuvres

However, the photocopy placed before NEC members, which purports to be a copy of Brychan's, is another letter on which Brychan's signature has been forged. The forged letter, carefully typed in such a way as to mimic the original, even replicating a spelling mistake is nevertheless clearly different from the original. The person to whom it was sent has also confirmed that the photocopy given to the NEC was of a fake letter.

In addition, reference in the first sentence of the original letter to "people who want to join Cynon Valley LPYS" has been deliberately altered to "people who want to join Cynon Valley CLP", presumably in

an attempt to make the "plot" dreamed up by the right-wing seem even more sinister.

At the NEC, Roy Hattersley claimed that David Hughes, the National Agent, had written to both Brychan and the recipient of the letter to check its authenticity, but that neither had replied.

LPYS representative Frances Curran moved reference back of the Appeals Committee report, on the basis that their "new evidence" was a forgery. Neil Kinnock then argued that Brychan's letter was not the issue and that they should vote on the basis of the original report, the very report which had been referred back at the previous meeting!

Frances Curran appealed to the chairman to rule they could not re-vote on the same report that had already been referred back, but she was ignored and her reference back defeated by 15 to 13.

This attempt to mislead NEC members shows how far the right wing will go to concoct "evidence" to justify an undemocratic, bureaucratic purge of socialists from the party. This manoeuvre will stink in the nostrils of rank-and-file Labour Party members and trade unionists who are overwhelmingly opposed to

Continued on back page

Oppose witch hunt with your cash

ONCE AGAIN *Militant* is under attack. As we report on page 5, Maxwell's *Mirror* hysterically raved last week about the "evil sitting on the shoulders on the Labour Party."

Workers are campaigning for solidarity with the miners and an end to this Tory government not for witch hunts. The *Mirror's* crude slurs must be answered.

The best answer of all is to show your support for socialism with cash.

We are just £36,282 off our target with just a week to go. We must go all out to reach that target and show our enemies their claptrap doesn't frighten our supporters.

If you want to show solidarity with the miners who have gone without for 46 weeks, send one weeks income to the paper that fights the Tories the hardest. If you agree with our demands for a one-day general strike, send us a day's pay now.

If you're young and hate the Tories get your LPYS branch to back *Militant* with cash. Ask your union branch or shop stewards committee to help us.

In 1983 the Fighting Fund and the Building Fund made £184,867. If we reach our target this quarter, the 1984 total will be £324,421. That will be 324,421 steps nearer an even better and more frequent paper. We know you can do it. See page 13 for more details.

BR bosses threaten unions

THE 24-hour strike against victimisation of railworkers who backed the NUM was a great success. The depots called out were joined by workers at Waterloo and Willesden even though Waterloo never work coal trains. (See page 4 for details).

Many other branches throughout the country voted not to cross picket lines, demanding from their union head offices that they be involved in the action. Many were on the verge of walking out anyway.

Even this limited action forced some local concessions out of the British Rail Board

Militant

Kinnock's own goal

NEIL KINNOCK'S attack on those Labour MPs demanding a debate on the miners' strike is a disgrace.

After nearly eleven months of struggle and hardship, the miners are now at a critical stage in the fight to save their industry. They have been sustained by magnificent support, in both action and money, by thousands of rank-and-file trade unionists and Labour Party members. Labour MPs themselves have been levied £5 a week and the Shadow Cabinet is moving that this be increased to £12.

Important though it is however, financial and moral support is not enough if the miners are to win. Industrial and political support from the whole trade union and labour movement is the key. Seamen and railwayworkers have shown what this means in practice. But not all workers will move to take solidarity action unless there is a campaign to convince them that the miners are fighting on behalf of them all, against a Tory government determined to crush active trade unionism.

That is where the movement's political leadership has a vital role to play. The strike will not be won within the Palace of Westminster, but Parliament provides a platform for the Tory conspiracy to be uncovered, their lies exposed and the real political nature of the dispute to be explained to the wider movement.

Even before last week, the record of Labour leaders in carrying out this task was pathetically inadequate, but Kinnock's reaction last Thursday was positively damaging the miners' case.

The MPs, he declared had been "sufficiently self-indulgent to put their own luxurious opinions and attitudes and activities before any strategic assessment of how best the miners' case can be defended".

Yet all they were demanding was the opportunity for the Labour opposition to defend this "strategy". Kinnock seems to have so little confidence in it that he virtually admitted on *Weekend World* on Sunday that the Tories would win any such debate. It would he said, "be about the condition of the National Union of Mineworkers, and that is the target that we ought not to present voluntarily to the Conservative Party."

That is as good as admitting that he is incapable of defending the NUM from the Tories. His conduct is an insult to the miners who have struggled so bravely.

Nor has he done the Labour Party any good. He claimed that: "without a strategy to win the next general election, without such desire for power to put our policies into effect, all is indulgence, all is a hobby for which people are fortunate enough to get paid."

But what could do the party more harm and reduce its chances at the next election, than the internal rift that his outburst has caused? He has managed to divert attention away from the Tories' crisis with the pound and allow the Tory press once again to portray the Labour Party as weak and divided.

The Campaign Group of MPs were entirely justified in demanding a debate. They were stepping into the vacuum left by the refusal of the official leadership to use their position in Parliament to put the Tories on the spot and convince the ranks of the movement to take action in support of the miners.

The striking miners will not be deflected from their struggle by these events. They will appeal over the heads of the leaders to the ranks of the movement to step up solidarity action. They will also have learned the importance of having a fighting political leadership within the Labour Party which is worthy of the sacrifices they have made. The whole membership must demand that the resolutions of support passed at last year's TUC and LP conference are turned into deeds.

Editor: Peter Taaffe
Militant, 3/13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB
Phone: 01-533 3311

Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office. Published by Militant; printed by Cambridge Heath Press (TU) Ltd., 3/13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB. ISSN 0144-9275

Left MPs step up Commons pressure

By Dave Nellist MP
(Coventry South East)

LAST THURSDAY the Campaign Group of Labour MPs decided to step up the pressure on the Tories over the coal strike.

We are angry because the government are covering up the real reasons why they provoked the strike, based on the Ridley report, to try and fragment the trade union movement, starting with the NUM.

The Tories have not initiated a single debate on the strike, and have been refusing to answer questions about the levels of coal stocks at individual pits or power stations; generating problems on the grid, such as the yellow alert on 5 November; and the cost of the dispute in oil imports, lost revenue, BR's losses and policing.

Grave disorder

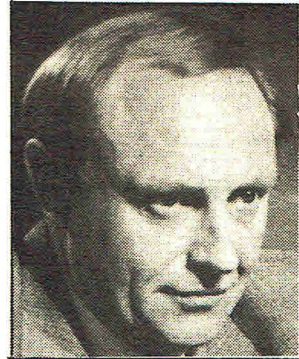
Myself, Tony Benn, Dennis Skinner, Terry Fields and others called on the speaker to arrange a debate, but this was refused and he ruled that there was no more opportunity to press for a debate. The Campaign Group remained on their feet, at which the Speaker suspended the house for "grave disorder". All we did was refuse to sit down!

Immediately after the suspension, I was approached by the media in terms of "why are you attacking the government like this?" After 7.30 however, it was "what is this split between you and Kinnock?" His intervention at the meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party, managed to change the issue from an attack on the Tories into an internal split in the Labour Party.

He was vitriolic, describing our action as a piece of entertainment, self-indulgence, a hobby! He even said that the NUM was split from top to bottom and that we may be witnessing the last miners' strike of our lifetime.

I am not worried by threats of discipline. Parliament is supposed to debate the national issues of the day, and for Labour the miners' strike must supercede all the other issues. But the Tories are refusing to grant a debate or answer questions and the Labour leaders are not taking the opportunities within Parliamentary procedure that are open to it.

If a Labour government were in power, the Tories would be raising it every



Neil Kinnock—turned protest into party split.



Dave Nellist, one of the protesting MPs.

single day, as they did during the "winter of discontent". A vacuum exists in Parliament and this is not the fault of those Labour MPs who protested last Thursday.

● **TERRY FIELDS, MP for Liverpool Broadgreen told Militant:** "Last Thursday has been described as an 'adventure', but if you are a workers' MP on a worker's wage, there are serious implications in risking being suspended from the house; it was not an adventure. "Does Kinnock not realise the damage he is doing to his own standing and that of the Labour Party? When I visited the picket line at Sutton Manor colliery, the talk was of the deplorable way in which he has acted."

● **DENNIS SKINNER MP** has written to Neil Kinnock

urging that a Labour Party political broadcast be used to present the miner's case.

In the letter he writes: "As you have said, the case in support of the NUM is soundly based and that you would like to see the issue of pit closures and the need for strike action presented without the media distractions.

"Therefore I suggest it would be a good idea if you would advocate the use of one of the Labour Party's political broadcasts on the reasons for the strike at the very earliest opportunity."

The letter suggests that the programme could be made fairly cheaply and quickly. A copy of the letter has been sent to Labour's General Secretary Jim Mortimer, asking him to place it on the agenda of the Press and Publicity Committee.

Rates campaign reaches crucial stage

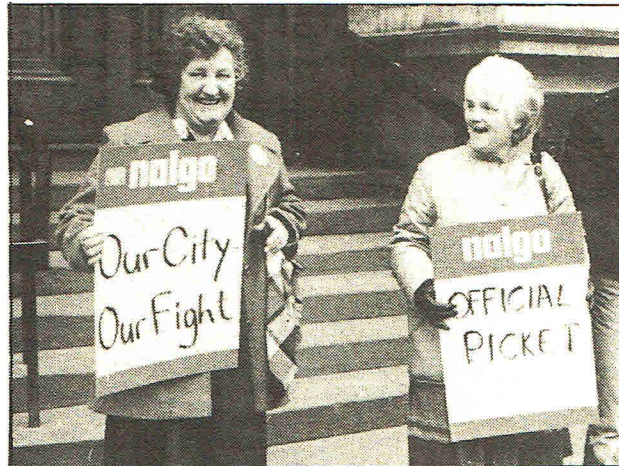
THE NEXT two months will be crucial to the campaign against rate-capping. On 7 March, a year and a day after the miners' strike began, all London local authorities facing rate-capping will hold their budget meetings.

The likelihood is that all the eight London local boroughs affected will refuse to implement the Rates Act. They will not cut services and jobs. The amounts which they have been told to slash their budgets vary from Hackney (£33 million) to Islington (£8.5 million).

So far, in an unprecedented show of unity, the local boroughs have refused to sanction such cuts. A crucial factor in their defiance has been the determination of their workforce to fight to save their jobs.

As one speaker said at the London Labour Party conference last weekend: "Councillors may be wrestling with their conscience over whether to break the law. We have not got that luxury. For us it's our jobs or years on the dole."

On 7 November last year



Liverpool's budget day last year—'a city in revolt'

Photo: Militant

those councils in confrontation with the government."

What happens on 7 March is critical but even more important is what happens before and after. There is no doubt that Liverpool's victory last year over their budget has strengthened the resolve of London Labour councils. As Ken Livingstone pointed out last Saturday the government were defeated in Liverpool because they faced, "a city in revolt".

The government can be beaten. It will require a mass campaign. This is the lesson of Liverpool's success last year. The council and the unions won local community support by holding joint meetings. Not everyone saw eye to eye on everything. But they went back again and again to people to explain the latest developments. It is vital that council workers now take their case out into the community and unite with tenants, local Labour Parties and other trade unionists to defend their jobs and services.

By Jim Chrystie



AH YES A LITTLE EXTRA NEEDED FOR HEATING I'LL COME BACK TO YOU ON THIS ONE...



MRS THATCHER HERSELF HAS CALLED FOR REPORTS - YOU'LL SEE ACTION NOW



WE'RE STUDYING THE VARIOUS OPTIONS - WON'T BE LONG NOW - MUST DASH



GOT IT - THE COLD SNAPS OVER SO YOU WON'T NEED EXTRA CASH ANYWAY

Alan Handman

Jailed miner attacks conditions

A JAILED striking miner attacked freezing conditions and poor diet at Boston North Sea Camp, where he served a fourteen day sentence.

Frazer Mallen, an apprentice at Whitwell Colliery, North Derbyshire, described the camp as "corrugated zinc huts in the middle of a marsh". "We never had enough to wear. It was always freezing cold, and all day long I did the same thing - scrubbing floors," Frazer said.

Their diet was "cabbage and potatoes, cabbage and potatoes and cabbage and potatoes". Sometimes as a 'treat' they were given a small piece of meat.

Eighteen other miners were at the camp with Frazer. As each reached the end of his sentence warders commonly tried to provoke them, so that they would get extra sentences.

"I wonder what Arthur Scargill had to eat today? ... I hope he's having a nice Christmas. ... What has he sent you for Christmas. ... were the type of witty comments miners had to put up with. Frazer's crime was that in a 'push' at Markham he and others were forced through the police lines. The police arrested and charged them with obstruction and besetting. Of eighteen accused, fourteen were found not guilty in front of an ordinary magistrates' court, and four found guilty by a stipendiary magistrate. (Pete Watson reports)

● ERIC LIPPIT, chairman of Lea Hall strike committee, was arrested on Thursday 17 January and held in Winson Green Prison. He has been charged under a 124 year old law with threatening to kill by words. Fortunately he was released the following day, but with stringent bail condition. The arrest took place five days after the alleged incident at the previous Sunday's branch meeting. Perhaps it took that long to dig out this obscure Act (Brian Debus reports)

Sea and oil solidarity

TGWU BRANCH officers and shop stewards in the oil trades group met on 9 January and agreed on supportive action. It was decided that all firms that crossed NUM picket lines would be blacked from working at or being supplied by oil terminals in the London area. Action will be taken if any member of the union is disciplined for carrying out this policy, and a committee has been set up to monitor the action.

Meanwhile, the National Union of Seamen have said that any foreign flag vessels carrying cargo to power stations that would normally be carried by British ships crewed by NUS members, will be blacked. It called on workers in the power industry to support this action.

Power crisis looms in North

NEW INFORMATION confirms Militant's analysis of an approaching power crisis in the North West and North East regions (see front page article)

At the giant Fiddlers Ferry power station in the North West, coal has virtually run out and the plant is running at only 20% capacity on the 'sweepings up' from the stockpile. Ferrybridge power station in Yorkshire is using its two remaining generating sets for 16 hours a day. The *Guardian* article confirmed our report of last October that half the capacity at Ferrybridge is out of action due to the generators being cannibalised to provide spare parts for oil fired stations. Although the decision of workers at Didcot power station to use scab coal is a setback this will not affect our calculations.

Most of the power stations in Yorkshire are 'peaking', that is, they are being turned on and off several times a day as demand fluctuates.

Pit democracy—right wing style

TO READ the Fleet Street rags, you'd think that those right wingers who want to split away from the NUM were doing it in the name of democracy. We had a taste of this new form of 'democracy' on Sunday morning.

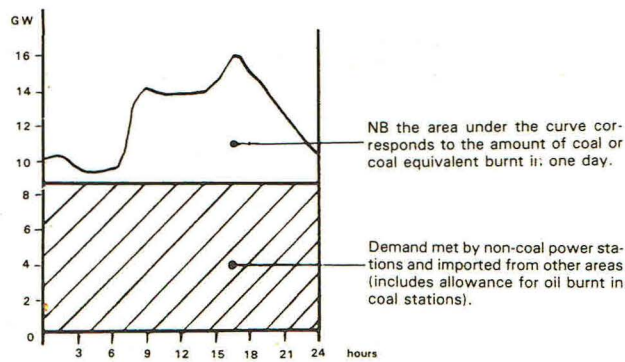
Our branch, Cadley Hill in South Derbyshire, met that morning in Burton on Trent. Although those of us on strike were not informed about the branch meeting, we found out and four of us went along. We wanted to move an emergency resolution against any proposed split away, and backing up the NUM's national decision that any member not making contributions because he is on strike was not to be penalised.

There were only 30 or 40 present (out of a branch of around 1,000). The chairman ruled that not only could we not put the resolution, but we shouldn't be allowed even to attend the meeting, because we hadn't made financial contributions.

This was despite the national ruling (which takes precedence over the rules of the South Derbyshire area), and that when the NUM's national executive voted on this ruling, it was unanimous; we presume the South Derbyshire leadership voted for it too. But these right wingers weren't interested in the rules. We were threatened with all sorts, and then the chairman called the police! A transit van full turned up to kick us out.

Many working miners have come up to us to say they are disgusted with the branch leadership's behaviour, and although at work they want to stay with the NUM.

By Kevin Machin
(Cadley Hill NUM)



Daily electricity demand for the NE plus the NW regions of the CRGB during the present cold spell.

This means they are using a lot of oil which is needed to start up the generators.

Workers are voting this week whether to black the oil in line with TUC guidelines. Blacking oil will shut the stations down in days rather than weeks, since only Ferrybridge has large reserve tanks of oil. This explains the attempt by the CEBG to put an oil pipeline into DRAX which was blacked by the workers on site.

If we look at these regions together in detail we can calculate coal consumption from the demand curve for the present cold spell, shown

in the figure above. The area under the curve is the amount of electricity consumed in one day. If the shaded area is subtracted from this, the amount of coal burnt in the coal fired stations in the regions is obtained using the conversion factor shown. Doing this gives a total burn of 55,000 tonnes per day. Assuming, conservatively, that the stations run only five days per week, the weekly consumption is 275,000 tonnes. Since the cold spell began 3 weeks ago, it is likely that 825,000 tonnes of coal have been burnt.

An aerial survey on the 21st October showed stockpiles at 3.3 million tonnes (excluding stocks at a few small power stations in the NW which are being supplied with coal. The output from these stations is included in the shaded area of the graph). Assuming peak demand between Oct 21 and the 12 weeks to the second week in January to be averaged at 12GW (conservative estimate) the coal consumption per day was 22,600 tonnes using a similar graph to the one shown.

This gives a total consumption (assuming a five day week) of 1.36 million tonnes. Adding this to the coal burnt in the last three weeks gives 2.24 million tonnes, leaving approximately one million tonnes stocked.

This will last 3½ weeks if the present cold weather continues, up to 2 weeks longer otherwise. When the coal runs out there will be a shortfall of up to 7 GW, nearly half the peak demand.

By Pete Dickinson

Manchester march



On the NW Labour Women's miners support march, 19 January.

A MINER'S wife appealing for solidarity industrial action received a standing ovation at a rally in Manchester on Saturday 19 January.

Rita Aspinall from Cop-pull spoke following a 3,000 strong demonstration called by the North West Labour Women's Organisation.

She said that although food and kitchens were vital there were other issues to discuss: "To put it bluntly we are sick and tired of standing alone. What we want is action, industrial action to make sure we win as soon as possible." Rita described Tory attacks on working people and said: "This is all the first step in a campaign to take away the rights of the working class. It is a campaign which will affect every trade unionist, the young, the old, the sick and the unemployed. No-one in the labour movement can stand on one side and say it is not their strike."

She said that TUC words and circulars were not enough: "We want meetings of all workplaces to explain

the importance of the strike to all workers... There must be industrial action, the most massive mobilisation of industrial action our movement has ever seen, and we must have it now."

Betty Heathfield also received a standing ovation for her speech, which included support for those Labour MP's who had disrupted Parliament on Friday.

Earlier Stan Orme had described how MP's had just voted to increase their donations from £5 to £12 a week to the miners. Some women were surprised that some MP's had been giving so little and applauded a suggestion from the floor that they should take what they need for the basis necessities of life and donate the rest to the movement.

The collection at the rally at which at least a quarter were miners' wives, raised £872 as well as large quantities of food given by the marchers at the start of the rally, and the collection during the march.

By Margaret Crear

● A STRIKING power group craftsman Robert McSporrán has been elected to the NUM executive for the Midlands power group. He replaces right winger Ray Ottey who resigned his seat last year.

Mr McSporrán is one of only 30 strikers in the Leicestershire coalfield and the election area encompasses Leicestershire, South Derbyshire, and Staffordshire.

He gained 2,140 votes. Another striker, James Dowling from Florence in Staffs got 1,637 while Terry Carr from Silverdale who has been working through the strike got a mere 325 votes. Another working miner got no votes at all.

Leicester Area

MOVES FOR the Leicester Area of the NUM to join Notts changing their rules have not had unquestioning support from the membership, as the media would have us believe.

At a meeting of the South Leicestershire Lodge on 19 January the lodge committee recommended not to accept the rules changes. They went through the rule book and explained the changes to the members present. After a discussion the men said they needed time to examine the implications of the changes.

They asked the pit delegate to take to the Leicestershire Area Council a call for an area ballot of all members. If this fails, and he is outvoted by the other three delegates, then the lodge would call another special meeting to decide whether to follow Leicester or the national union.

By a South Leicestershire striking miner

Build for Yorkshire day of action

SUPPORT MUST be built amongst all sections of the labour movement in Yorkshire for the coming day of solidarity on 11 February.

Miners here were uplifted by the rail strike and see the need for similar action by the whole trade union movement. On 11 February workers in Yorkshire are being asked to take strike action for a day or half-day if they can, or at least make a contribution to NUM funds on that day.

While we will all be building support for 11 February, there is a feeling that unless a firm call for strike action is made, the response may be limited. Even so, the utmost solidarity action must be campaigned for.

The need for widespread industrial action is gaining support amongst Yorkshire miners. Before Christmas, two pit branches passed resolutions which demanded the TUC call a 24-hour general strike, or if the TUC failed to do this, the NUM itself should make a direct appeal to all trade unionists and name a date for strike action.

Unfortunately these resolutions were rejected at the Yorkshire Area Council of the NUM, although they received the backing of 19 delegates, a sizeable group within the council.

In Yorkshire the latest back-to-work drive is petering out. The majority of Yorkshire miners are still solidly behind the strike. However, as the 11th month of the strike approaches, many rank and file miners are looking for new initiatives to take the strike forward to victory.

By Gary Ironmonger
(Cortonwood NUM)

NACODS slam MacGregor

THE PIT deputies' union NACODS have broken off all pay talks with the Coal Board.

Delegates at national conference voted unanimously to boycott talks over the 5.2% pay offer (to be balloted on 25 January). The union's President, Ken Sampey, criticised MacGregor's "negative attitude" to negotiations, accusing him of wanting to see the NUM decimated. "We are not prepared to sit back and watch this happen." Sampey said the sooner MacGregor was removed from office the better. The union walked out of a consultative meeting with MacGregor on 15 January.

Pay negotiations will be affected, but more importantly a breakdown of the delicate relationship between the NCB and NACODS strengthens the NUM as working pits cannot produce coal without NACODS members.



Gordon Bennet writes—

APART FROM being the year of GCHQ, the miners' strike and the Brighton bombing, 1984 was also the year of the 'ex-leftie' Neil Kinnock decided that being a rabble rouser was all very well while you're a valleys MP living in the shadow of Nye Bevan, but once you're leader you have to act like a 'statesman'.

David Owen, the Hon. Member for Transylvania and former Labour minister, discovered that leadership of the SDP is the quickest way to become a favourite to be the next leader of the Tory party; and Eric Hobsbawm, the 'communist' academic delved into history to bring us the hot news that Lib-Labism is the answer to all our problems.

Although former shipyard worker now 'freelance journalist' Jimmy Reid just missed the closing date, his performance on Channel 4's *Opinions Special* was so exceptional that he gets my vote for the title of Ex-Leftie of the Year.

If you missed the programme the transcript was published in that popular shipyard workers' paper *New Society*.

In the fantasy world that Jimmy Reid inhabits, everything is very simple—Arthur Scargill is a strike-happy, totalitarian loony who's leading a mob of deranged pickets in attacks against EVERYTHING THAT WE SHOULD HOLD SO DEAR IN THE BRITISH WAY OF LIFE.

It's no wonder that Jimmy Reid is so popular with the Tory press although I recall that he was not top of their pops in 1971.

Apart from virulent attacks on Scargill, the Jimmy Reid Show was characterised by a miserable display of posturing about democracy (which doesn't exist in the NUM) and violence (which the miners invented).

It would take a lot more space than this column permits to detail all the distortions and wishful thinking that passes for Jimmy's 'analysis'.

Suffice to say that he argues that Scargill snatched 'defeat from the jaws of victory' in July when MacGregor agreed to use the word 'beneficial' as part of the colliery reviews procedure. If Reid believes that this 'concession' would have saved jobs in the pits, he presumably also believes in Santa Claus, Tinkerbell and the Easter Bunny.

At one stage in the programme Jimmy Reid accused Scargill of trying to relive the past. I don't know about that. I don't possess the psycho-analytical power of this ex-communist. But if there's anyone who's milking the past for all its worth it's none other than 'Sir' James Reid.



Coalville ASLEF and NUR members joined by South Leicester miners. Photo: John Harris (IFL)

Coalville morale lifted

ROY BUTLIN of Coalville NUR, the branch at the centre of the blacking and victimisations gave his views of the 17 January strike.

It was highly successful at all eleven depots which were officially called out plus Waterloo which joined the strike. That worried BRB and our union executives.

The strike has put morale up at this depot and among striking Leicestershire miners. The evening before the strike management started to concede some of our demands—that men refusing to work coal be employed on alternative work and not sent home. This week we've got men out on road-learning. The signalman suspended on grounds of "mental instability" has been reinstated, though at a box near Lichfield.

But management didn't concede on our demands to stop trying to shift coal or import scabs to fill blank shifts, so

they can run trains. Management can't get trains through to Drakelow power station (Leicester), but one train is only one hour's burn at Drakelow so its only use is for propaganda.

On strike day we had a big contingent of miners on our picket lines with representatives from the six areas where strikers are in a minority. South Wales sent up a contingent from Maerdy. It was moving to see them march down Mantle Lane behind their banner. South Wales miners were some of the first at the picket and we have built up close relations since our four-day strike from 4 April.

If there is any move to fine our unions for this strike there will be a fierce response. I believe in many areas railworkers will strike regardless of the leadership's response.



ASLEF picket during the 1982 rail-strike. The Tories aim to deal with the miners, then return to attacking railworkers' jobs and conditions.

Shirebrook resists pressure

GRAHAM STRATFORD is a signalman and a member of Worksop NUR. He describes constant pressure and intimidation against railway workers abiding by their union's decision not to move coal.

"The Shirebrook area along with Coalville has been singled out for special treatment by the Rail Board because most pits are working in the area. People are constantly being harassed and sent home. Management have been so abusive to me in the past for not moving coal trains, that I've shut up the box and gone home. I've received letters at home and they've shown disregard for local and national roster arrangements.

Coalville workers have been charged for "possessing" bars of British Rail soap and British Rail rags.

"NORTH NOTTS collieries resume work on Monday—will you? "Road hauliers are now conveying more than 1/2 the total production of the North Notts coalfield. They stand to win major contracts at our expense. If you doubt this fact I will gladly arrange for you to see the fleets of lorries

Yet look what happened at Worksop. A train stood for two hours unable to move until someone discovered that the signalman was missing, and was being charged with shop-lifting. He'd actually left the signalbox but next day he was back at work because he lets coal trains through!

Apparently the board conceded some points last week to try and stop the strike but

Persuasion wins support

AT SHIREBROOK depot (Eastern Region) in North Derbyshire management had some small success in moving coal—though well below normal levels. On strike day a joint ASLEF/NUR picket persuaded even some of those who had been working coal trains to participate in the strike.

Members can be won over when the issues are explained. With a full-blooded national campaign, coal movements and victimisations could be stamped out.

now serving local power stations. "Traffic lost today could mean job losses tomorrow. Please work normally". So says one of the many British Rail Board posters pasted up around the depots and signal boxes in the Midlands.

these practices continue unchanged. The support's there—the union needs to take a tougher line. The action last week was great but it wasn't big enough—we should have called out the key depots on the West Coast. Next time we need proper national action.

By Pete Watson

Rail strike—solidarity round up

Waterloo's action flusters manager

WATERLOO ASLEF members struck in solidarity on 17 January against harassment of railworkers for backing the miners.

We know victimisation could just as easily happen on Southern Region and that any "lay low" tactics by the unions could leave those depots already in the front line isolated.

Waterloo's action was not expected by management. Area Manager Futter had sent out pathetic and insulting letters to train crews.

Futter: "The first point I must make is that in strike action, nobody ever wins, all we do is lose business and in the end that means jobs—your jobs; if you have any doubt look at what is left of London docks".

We don't have to look at the docks for job losses, thousands have vanished on the railway already. If the miners were allowed to lose, the slump in coal traffic alone would make this far worse. We have to take action to back the miners in

our own interest. Futter: "The conditions our passengers had to endure yesterday in getting to and from work were disgraceful, packed into compartments with hardly room to breath...we will lose yet more customers".

Management attitude

These are just crocodile tears. Train crews complain constantly about management's real attitude to the public, such as on the new generation of suburban trains taking passengers in to the 21st century with no public conveniences.

We are proud of the stand we took, we are loyal to our branch whereas management are loyal only to the profit system even if it means attacking jobs and services. The feeling for action was widespread in the rank and file and the unions must tap it in future actions.

By Andy Flett (Waterloo ASLEF, personal capacity)

Miners join rail picket at Tinsley

THERE WAS a carnival-like atmosphere on the Tinsley depot picket lines. Not only were ASLEF and NUR solid but most maintenance and workshop staff in the AUEW and EETPU refused to cross picket lines.

Miners from Treeton were particularly impressed when after a discussion with the pickets one supervisor at the depot agreed not to go in. As one miner said "if only we were allowed to do that" referring to the way the police have been put between pickets and working miners.

The welcome news that Waterloo ASLEF members had come out on strike independently was quite a talking point.

The feelings at Tinsley were reflected at Doncaster, Worksop, Sheffield, Barrow Hill and throughout the whole area. Virtually every branch sent a resolution to

head office calling for national strike action and members also said that BREL staff should have been called out in the workshops.

We feel that the growing crisis will only be settled after major confrontation. Already some of the Tories and the ruling class are talking about an end to "appeasement"—of getting tough with rail unions, using the blacking of coal they hope to collapse support for the NUM, defeating their strike as well as weakening our position.

Railworkers' mood is probably more explosive than any other section at the moment. We have flexed our muscles and now want clear leadership.

By Geoff Bright (Tinsley NUR)

East Midlands out

SUPPORT AT depots in the East Midlands area called out on 17 January was overwhelming.

Despite the Area Manager's cheerful assertion that all signalmen and station staff were working in the morning Derby didn't see a single train until the afternoon. In fact only half a dozen platform staff and one guard reported for work at the big rail centre. Not only services from London but all those from the South West to the North were completely stopped.

At Nottingham only a handful of guards and drivers reported for work early in the day and hardly anyone appeared for the afternoon shifts. Permanent

Way and workshop staff had a better response than at the start of the 1982 strike, with all but a handful out.

Permanent Way staff were out picketing at Toton (near Nottingham) although the response from train crews was rather patchy.

Thursday's action showed the support of NUR and ASLEF members in our area mistakenly taken as weak by BRB. However many members showed anger at both unions' national leaderships who have not shown the same determination and understanding of what was needed.

By Bill Esmond (Notts, No 2 NUR)

Gillingham suspension threat

THE RIGHT-wing in Gillingham Labour Party have renewed their witch-hunt against the left of the party, by proposing that two *Militant* supporters are suspended from membership for three months.

In August 1983 Gillingham CLP's General Management Committee banned the sale of *Militant* on party premises. The right-wing, plunging the party into a damaging and unnecessary internal struggle lasting 11 months, then attempted to expel Bob Hurley (a Labour Party member for 30 years and a former councillor) for selling *Militant* on party premises.

The last attack began on the 9 January when myself and Tony Baker, appeared before the CLP executive committee charged with the "crime" of having sold *Militant* on party premises after the November GMC.

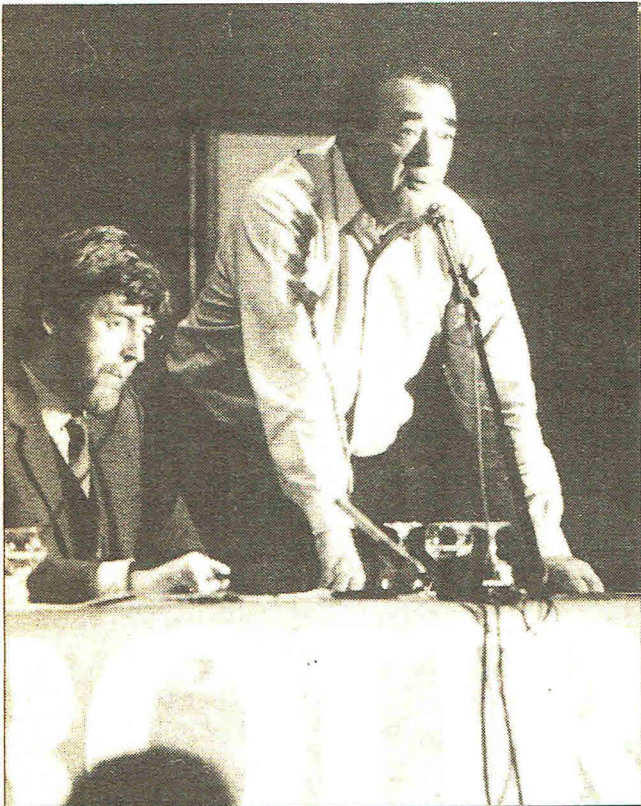
Party unity

For the sake of party unity we offered to sell in the car park outside the Labour Hall, but this was thrown back in our faces and the EC voted by six to three to recommend our suspension for three months to the GMC.

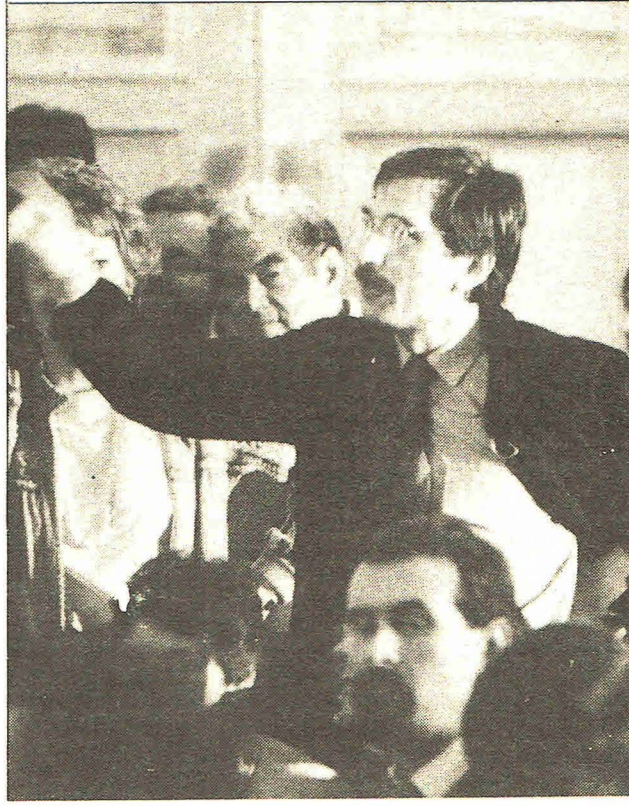
A similar fate may await another Labour Party member, Mary Turner, who will appear before the EC charged with the same "crime".

The rank and file of the Labour movement in Kent and nationally must react swiftly to stop this renewed witch-hunt. Send letters and resolutions to the CLP secretary; Mrs D Gilry, 152A Twydall Lane, Gillingham Kent ME8 6JU. Please send letters by recorded delivery and send copies to me at 74 Chalfont Drive, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent ME8 9DN.

By David Turner
(Gillingham LPYS)



Maxwell (left) at *Labour Weekly* meeting at last year's Labour Party conference, being taken up by *Militant* reporter John Pickard (right). Photos: Dave Sinclair



Labour's millionaire mole

ONCE AGAIN the *Daily Mirror* is seeking to bulldoze the Labour Party into a witch-hunt.

Witch-hunt is the apt word; as the vocabulary of the front page article and editorial of 17 January is reminiscent of the hysteria of the medieval world, with Maxwell cast as Torquemada: "Their strength lies in their willingness to work every hour the devil sends to further their cause... *Militant* is a cancer, and there is only one thing to do to a cancer. Destroy it before it destroys you."

Maxwell bought the *Mirror* to promote his views, then made a £42,000 personal donation to the Labour Party. Does he think he can buy influence in the Labour Party too? His performance at the *Labour Weekly* fringe meeting at the 1984 Labour Party conference demonstrated that he is obsessed with *Militant*.

Gregory report

The *Mirror's* new "revelations" are undoubtedly embellished reports taken from the *Militant*, spiced with the usual "authoritative" claims from the likes of the "Gregory Report"—provided by the renegade Labour councillor of Blackburn now sitting with the Tory/Liberal opposition.

It is no secret, *Militant's* support has grown. Many miners, far more than the "300" referred to are now supporters of the *Militant*,

and many more will be joining them. The financial successes of *Militant* are well publicised—by ourselves! In 1984 we reported (issue 712) that £320,000 (building fund and fighting fund) had been raised! *Militant* employs around 70 people and unfortunately not yet the 250 the *Mirror* claims.

The point however is that all the achievements of *Militant*, unlike Maxwell, who has only ever bought things, have been made by fighting for our socialist ideas; regular sellers and financial contributions are enlisted by our 'prospectus'—the *Militant* newspaper.

Conspiracy could never achieve what *Militant* has! *Militant* is entitled to ask workers everywhere to question the motives of the so-called 'socialist' millionaire Maxwell. The print unions are currently seeking Maxwell's expulsion from the Labour Party for his utilisation of Tebbit's law to inflict redundancies on his workforce. He is opposed to most of the policies of the Labour Party.

The real "sinister" influence in the Labour Party is not the *Militant* but those big businessmen behind the scenes who financially ingratiate themselves to the Party's leaders and seek to manipulate the Labour Party into committing suicide by adopting pro-Tory policies. The rank and file of the labour movement will decide for themselves: Maxwell or *Militant*.

By Mike Waddington

DAILY Mirror

STARTLING new proof of the Militant Tendency conspiracy to take over the Labour Party can be revealed today by the *Mirror*.

It is contained in top-secret documents produced by the Trotskyist organisation and circulated only to trusted members.

The documents reveal that:
● *Militant* now has more than 6,000 members—that is one in five of Labour activists—compared with only 2,500 three years ago.
● It raised £½ million last year only slightly less than

By DAVID SEYMOUR

council—the equivalent of a party conference—at a meeting last September.
Six hundred supporters from all over the country met at London University amid

Daily Mirror's front page on 17 January attacking *Militant*.

'Left-winger' turned hack

COMRADES MIGHT have noticed that Maxwell doesn't have the monopoly (at least not writing it) when the *Mirror* goes into one of its outpourings against *Militant*. One David Seymour is the regular writer of this junk. Just another hack scribbler from Fleet Street? Not quite. David Seymour was, maybe still is, a member of Hackney Labour Party.

I remember this very vocal type challenging the old right wing leadership of the Hackney Central LP GMC in the late 1970s. He was for a while identified as a 'left' and used to attend left caucuses to discuss who would stand for positions against the old guard. (No conspiratorial conscience then!) He even managed to get himself elected as party

chairman. Things seemed to be going well for young Seymour, he was delegate to Greater London LP Conference etc, but it didn't last long. He was voted out of the chair at Hackney's next AGM! He then virtually slid out of sight, never to be seen again. But as a *Daily Mirror* (laugh) journalist, maybe his little jaunt into the LP was just to pick up or perfect the gossip, distortions and lies. I remember talking to him at a GLLP Conference about *Militant's* policies—he looked most disinterested. He was probably thinking 'why all these facts, they only get in the way of a good story.'

By Bob Faulkes
(Hackney South LP)

Right-wing move in Blackburn stopped

BLACKBURN Constituency Labour Party has rejected a resolution calling for the LPYS secretary to be 'severely disciplined' for carrying out activities which 'clearly made him a *Militant* supporter'.

The resolution from Ewood ward was moved by Judith Gregory, wife of the author of the infamous 'Gregory Report' which led to the expulsion of six *Militant* supporters in January 1984.

The GMC, lobbied by members of Preston, Burnley and Blackburn LPYS branches, voted to drop Gregory's resolution, and adopt instead the Executive Committee recommendation that the LPYS should come under GMC control, and that the LPYS officers should meet Constituency officers, which is a return to

the status quo. The dropping of any disciplinary action is a setback for the right-wing.

The right suffered a further setback at the AGM of the Women's Section. This had been set up by *Militant* supporters several years ago, but in 1983 the right wing mobilised to gain all the ward delegations and officers' positions.

Militant supporters warned that their aim was to close the section down. At the recent AGM every officer of the section said they would not stand again and proposed that the section be wound up.

A majority of members, however, voted to continue the section's activities, and new officers were elected.

By Peter Harris

Ellesmere Port judged

DELEGATES TO Ellesmere Port and Neston GMC were last week discussing a resolution opposing the expulsion of Brychan Davies and calling for the party leadership to concentrate their efforts on attacking the Tory government and supporting the miners.

After Ray McHale moved the resolution, a solicitor from Neston moved an amendment which deleted

any reference to Brychan's expulsion and called for uncritical support for the Labour leadership and stopping the sale of *Militant*. The solicitor concluded his lengthy, well-rehearsed speech, "and finally, your Worship..." "You what?" howls of laughter filled the air. "Err, Um, Err, Oh that's what comes of being in court all morning."

Expulsions thwarted

A WITCH-HUNT attempt by a right-wing clique in Liverpool's Vauxhall Ward was blocked when the Riverside Constituency management committee overwhelmingly rejected the proposal.

On the 8 January Vauxhall Ward decided to recommend the expulsion of eight *Militant* supporters—a city councillor, three GMBATU city council shop stewards, members of the Young Socialists, and a black comrade who has had great success in bringing black and white workers together to fight the government. The reason given for the expulsions was that they were 'bringing the party into disrepute'.

Political

Terry Lindsay, one of the eight threatened with expulsion, is a GMBATU city council shop steward and LPYS member. He told *Militant*: "The reasons the right-wing gave are pathetic. They're just a cover for political attacks. Last year we worked hard for the council's campaign, while Vauxhall Ward was notorious for its two renegade councillors, Paul Orr and Joe Morgan. Now they're stirring it up again when

maximum unity is vital".

At the full General Management Committee of Riverside Constituency Labour Party on 18 January delegates were so incensed by the ward's actions that they voted by 45 to five to reject the expulsions, despite advice from the regional officer that they should not vote until the comrades concerned had been individually interviewed by the Constituency Executive Committee.

The EC had infact met the week before and decided unanimously to recommend rejection of the expulsions.

The Vauxhall area is devastated by high unemployment. Many young people are taking drugs. Housing conditions are the worst in Europe. *Militant* supporters will continue to campaign for socialist policies and accountability of local councillors to the rank and file.

They will continue to support the miners with collections of food and money, regular attendance on picket lines, and the organisation of public meetings. Vauxhall Ward's right-wingers have different priorities.

By Billy Keogh
(Riverside LPYS)

Post engineers' demand

IN A letter to Labour's NEC, the Post Office Railway and Postal Mechanics branch (London) expressed their long standing opposition to witch-hunts and urged the reinstatement, of Brychan Davies, expelled by Rhondda CLP.

The branch also said that the Labour Party Young

Socialists should be commended on their 'excellent work carried out in support of the miners,' and that attacks on hard working socialists will 'be held in the utmost contempt not only by members of this branch but by thousands of fellow trade unionists and Labour Party members'.

Fighting racism in East London

Newham

THE EVICTION of the McDonnell family in Newham will be applauded by the labour movement and Asian workers. This family harassed Asian tenants, forcing several of them out of the block of flats in the east London borough.

Newham's Labour Council were right to evict the McDonnells—the borough's Asian community have suffered an unending catalogue of racist attacks and abuse by National Front inspired racist gangs.

The National Front boasted they would make great political capital out of the eviction—a claim greatly played up by the local media. The fact is the NF inspired 'protests' over the McDonnell eviction have been pathetic. An NF meeting outside the flats involved addressed by Mrs McDon-

nell was attended by only 40 or so NF members.

In East Ham the NF have stopped meeting in a pub on East Ham High Street and have moved to the Boleyn pub in Upton Park, which suggests the East Ham branch has collapsed and they are now meeting jointly with the Upton Park mob to bolster their morale.

But the labour movement should be on its guard. As the fascists lose support they hit out hysterically. Asian workers in Newham have suffered terror attacks for years. Now the NF thugs have turned on the council, last week attempting to break up a council meeting with stink bombs, chanting and daubing slogans over the town hall.

The council must not be intimidated. The labour movement must give full backing to the council and their anti-racist policies.

By a member of Newham NE Labour Party



Demonstration in Brick Lane, Tower Hamlets against racist attacks.

Tower Hamlets

ATTACKS ON Asian workers living in east London are reaching horrifying proportions. A recent report estimates that Asian workers are 50 times more likely to suffer violent attack than whites. But these attacks are not all on the street. For too long Asian council tenants have been forced off housing estates by racist gangs, forcing Asian families back in slum areas such as Brick Lane.

Labour Parties and Councils in Tower Hamlets and Newham are looking for policies to deal with this.

While the McDonnell family has been evicted in Newham, tenants on the Exmouth estate in Tower Hamlets are being prosecuted under the race relations act for signing a petition against an Asian family being moved onto the estate. The flat allocated for this family was daubed with racist slogans and made uninhabitable.

To their credit the GLC and Labour councils have begun to move against the racist gangs that intimidate

Asian tenants. However, while the eviction in Newham was a clear cut case, the situation in Tower Hamlets is not so straight forward. Sitting in an office showering writs on tenants of run-down council estates will not provide a solution. Such out-of-the-blue, arbitrary action will not win these misguided tenants away from the poisonous, racist elements who have placed themselves at their head. What is needed is a campaign of explanation with leaflets and canvassing to firmly answer the lies put out by the racists.

But more importantly, the labour movement must understand that action is needed against the causes of racism, not just the symptoms. As long as local authorities cannot provide enough housing, services or jobs, the racists can peddle the myth that black and Asian workers are competing for these scarce resources. Socialist policies for housing, employment and services would cut the ground from under the feet of the racists by securing adequate facilities for all.

By a member of Bow and Poplar Labour Party

The 'Baby Cotton' controversy

THE RECENT "Baby Cotton" case has aroused enormous controversy. There is undoubtedly sympathy for couples who long for children but suffer from incurable problems of infertility. For most people, however, this is outweighed by even stronger feelings of disquiet at the huge sums of money involved in the surrogacy arrangements, which have become a big commercial operation.

Women especially react, understandably, against the "Baby for Sale" headlines and news of Kim Cotton being paid £6,500 to bear a child and the agency concerned collecting a £13,000 fee from the prospective parents.

While suggesting strong moral disapproval of mercenary motherhood, however, the Fleet Street papers have been falling over one another to buy stories from Kim Cotton and other surrogate mothers, hypocritically sensationalising every last detail. This is cynical cheque-book journalism, not serious consideration of the issues involved.

It is no coincidence, moreover, that this story hit the headlines as Enoch Powell is attempting to introduce a private Member's Bill in Parliament which will ban any experiments on human embryos.

If passed Powell's Unborn Children (Protection) Bill would effectively prevent further embryological research, not just on fertility but also on conditions like Down's syndrome and other inherited defects. There are rightly fears about doctors, social workers, judges, and other officials being allowed life-and-death powers. But the opponents of progressive social legislation, while claiming to defend "the sanctity of human life", usually demonstrate little concern about the health and happiness of the majority of people here and now. Why no crusade against NHS cuts? Why no protests about the abuses of the big drug companies?

This attempt to restrict scientific research is just one in a whole spate of attacks by a Moral-Majority style alliance, consisting of the leadership of the Catholic Church and individuals such as Powell, Mary Whitehouse and Victoria Gillick, who successfully challenged the DHSS guidelines on contraception for girls under 16 years old. The removal of the facility for under-16's to be prescribed the pill, without the consent of their parents, will undoubtedly result in increased under-aged pregnancies and abortions; it is the start of an attack which its sponsors hope will result in reversing the 1967 Abortion Act, which provides the facilities for abortion on the NHS.

These moves must be resisted by the labour movement, as they represent an attack on the rights that women have won over the past 40 years. But it is also important for socialists to



More resources could help the one in seven couples in Britain who are unable to have children.

understand the issues in the recent Warnock Report, which deals with surrogacy and experimentation on embryos, in order that we can answer these self-styled guardians of our morals.

The recommendations of the Warnock Report, commissioned by the Tory government, seek to legislate for practices already being carried out, mainly in the private sector. An embryo, at present, has no legal status and the Warnock Report, recommends that embryos should only be experimented on, up to a limit of 14 days development.

This time span has been set because 14 days is the stage at which an embryo attaches itself to the wall of the womb, making human development possible. Up to this point no human life is possible and many embryos never reach this stage, being washed away in the menstrual flow.

Embryo test

However, although a 14 day limit would seem logical and reasonable, the Warnock Report will run into problems by categorically stating that no experiments can ever be carried out after this period. For instance, if it were found that a generic disease could only be arrested at a later stage in the development of the embryo, the limit would need to be extended.

This raises the question of who has control over the limits on and the methods of experimentation. Embryo experimentation will not be used for the benefit of ordinary people while it lies in the hands of drug companies and private medicine—an issue that Warnock makes no attempt to tackle.

No amount of good intentions, as expressed in the report, will prevent abuses, especially when it is the Tory government which has control over the granting of licences for these experiments. The ruling class have shown their blatant disregard for human life in the past, as witnessed by the use of human 'guinea pigs' in nuclear tests in the 1950s

(see article, *Militant* last week). We cannot rely on them to protect human embryos, especially where private profit is at stake.

The opponents of the Warnock proposals have been raising the bogey of "Nazi-style" human experiments. Without the democratic checks guaranteed by the labour movement there would be a danger of barbarous perversions of medical science. But at the moment the fantasies of genetically engineered monsters are an exaggerated propaganda ploy designed to whip up opposition to a wide range of relatively progressive social legislation.

The abolition of private medicine and the nationalisation of the pharmaceutical industry, as part of the transformation of society, is the only guarantee that embryo experimentation will not be abused and will be used for the benefit of working class people.

The issue of private profit is also at the heart of the controversy surrounding surrogacy. Many working class women, in particular, will feel deep sympathy towards any couple who are not able to have children. The main cause of the public outcry in the 'Baby Cotton' case, however, was the fact that a woman had 'rented' her womb.

A private surrogate agency exploited the problem of infertility, as well as exploiting Kim Cotton, who carried a child for nine months, in order to buy items for her house. The Warnock Report recommends that commercial surrogacy should be banned, which the majority of working class people would agree with, but fails to offer any real hope for working class, childless couples in its place.

At present, infertile couples are offered no effective solution to infertility under the NHS. Those who can afford to pay can be treated at institutions such as Bourne Hall, the private clinic of Dr Patrick Steptoe, where artificial insemination costs approximately £2,000,

with only a 16% success rate.

Working class people cannot afford to gamble with such a huge sum of money. What is needed is a massive expansion of the NHS to provide fertility treatment for all.

At present one in seven couples are unable to have children. Yet the technology is there to solve most of their problems. The main obstacle, as ever under capitalism, is the need for profit. Fertility treatment is very costly.

Warnock on NHS

In the era of massive Tory cuts, the Warnock Report is utopian in its recommendations that such treatment should be more widely available on the NHS.

In a socialist society, the resources would be made available and scientific technique advanced to a point where infertility could largely be overcome.

At the same time, surrogacy could not be ruled out as a very last resort for couples who failed to respond to all other forms of fertility treatment. This surrogacy, however, would not be on a commercial basis, but under the control of the NHS. It would provide adequate counselling and support at all stages, from conception until the first years of the child's life, for both the parents and the woman who had voluntarily agreed to assist a childless couple by bearing a baby for them.

The issues of fertility, embryo experimentation and surrogacy may, on the surface, appear to be 'moral' ones, removed from politics. But for socialists these issues raise fundamental questions about the system under which we live—a system in which medical experiments designed to save lives take second place to research into the most effective method of killing and a society in which great scientific advance is only used to solve the problem of infertility if a profit can be made.

By Fiona Winders (Newham South Labour Party)

Crashing pound - symbol of crisis

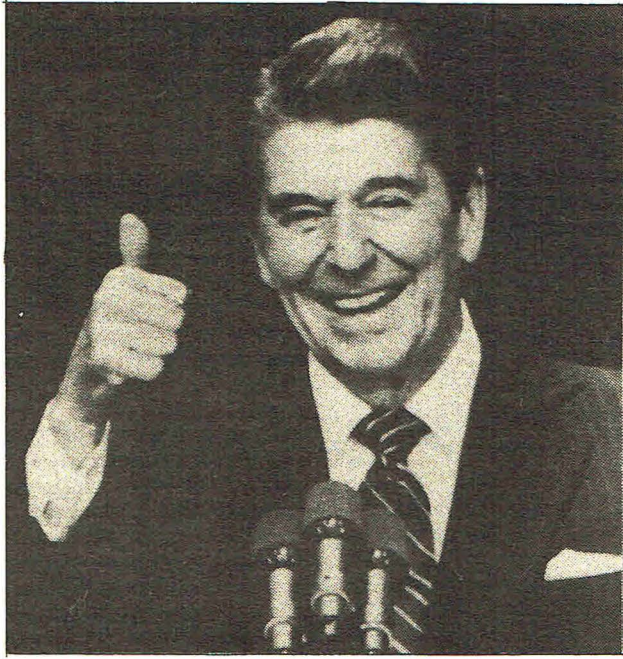
THE SLIDE in sterling opens up the frightening prospect for the ruling class of 'parity'—£1 sterling being worth only \$1 on international money markets. Before 1948 a pound bought \$4; only four years ago it stood at \$2.45.

Is the Thatcher government just taking fright at the prospective loss of an international 'virility symbol'? The Stock Exchange certainly takes it more seriously than that—£4.5 billion was wiped off the value of shares in a single day last week.

Chancellor Lawson claims that it's all due to factors outside his control. It certainly is the case that the pounds is measured against a soaring dollar. The dollar in turn gains its strength from the influx of money sucked in by record interest rates which the US Treasury has to offer in order to subsidise its monster budget deficit of over \$200 billion.

However sterling is also nose-diving against most other currencies. The panic has been triggered by the threatened fall in oil prices, which have become vital in maintaining Britain's balance of payments position. Underlying the crisis is the continuing decline of British capitalism and the additional pressures of the miners' strike.

Generally speaking the position of a national currency on world markets reflects that country's balance of payments with other countries, its profit



Reagan presiding over record deficit.



Speculators cash in on Chicago stock exchange.

and loss account on world trade. A surplus of exports over imports in Japan for instance will tend to make the yen more attractive to speculators and drive up its exchange rate.

The USA is running a massive trade deficit of \$130 billion, but makes up the difference by borrowing at a record rate of interest. How long it can get away with this is anyone's guess but for the time being the influx of funds keeps the dollar in demand.

The Tories have been arguing that cheap sterling lets foreigners buy British goods on the cheap and so helps the competitiveness of British exports. The most famous example of this is Jaguar cars. Since the pound

THE FUNDS of the National Union of Mineworkers, safe in the bank in Luxembourg, have increased in value by £850,000. When transferred, they were changed into dollars at \$1.30 to the pound; now the rate is \$1.12 to the pound.

If the NUM can make nearly a million pounds profit by accident, how many millions are being made by speculators who cash in on currency fluctuations deliberately?

has halved its value in dollar terms they have been able to sell twice as many Jags in the states as four years ago. In fact they haven't cut their dollar price at all—just pocketed the windfall profit.

This, together with putting their workforce under the hammer is the reason for the turnaround to profit-taking by the privatised Jaguar con-

cern. Management haven't cut the stateside price because then they couldn't meet the demand, and they haven't bothered to bump up productive capacity at Coventry. No long-term revival of British capitalism will come from this policy.

Secondly a devaluation of the pound boosts import prices, feeding through the

economy as inflation. Raw materials are already going up by 9% a year. The government's inflation target will be blown to bits.

The alternative strategy is to try to keep sterling riding high. This would at least keep import prices down. The best way to face-lift the pound is to 'do a Reagan' and jack up interest rates to attract hot money into the City.

But the last rise in interest rates will cost British industry an extra £700 million a year in higher bank charges. Higher mortgage repayments will also hit the retail price index and the government's 'counter inflation strategy'.

The real problem of British capitalism is the

chronic lack of investment over a long period of time. The way to sell goods cheaper on world markets is to make them cheaper, by raising the productivity of labour. Tinkering with the currency on its own will not stop the downward drift of British capitalism, which the pound's slide reflects.

The government's real fear is that the panic could become unstoppable. Speculation feeds on itself. A run on sterling dries up trade as nobody knows what they'll be invoiced for from day to day. To stop a slide out of control, Denis Healey as Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer had to go cap-in-hand to the IMF in 1976, and impose cuts on social spending so as to get a loan. Hundreds of millions of this loan were spent by the Bank of England on exchange markets buying sterling to hold up the price.

If interest rates have to rise again, not only would the extra charge to manufacturing capitalists choke off their feeble recovery, but also more would have to be shelled out in interest payments to the parasites who live by lending money. This 'giveaway' to the rich will mean less money for tax cuts in the Budget which Lawson has set his heart on.

The sterling crisis throws into sharp relief the strains on the economy imposed by the miners strike on top of the long term decline of British capitalism. Capitalism has failed. It must go.

Oil masks the decline, but mask is slipping

AS WE see, sterling is shaky because the price of oil is shaky. What a humiliation for the former workshop of the world that the pound now responds like the Kuwaiti dinar or some other obscure "petrocurrency".

There is at present a glut of oil on the world market. OPEC, the price-fixing ring, which was able to do so well for itself when oil was in short supply, is now struggling to hold up its marker price.

Revenues fall

As revenues of oil producing nations fall with the sagging price, member nations like Libya, Kuwait, Venezuela and Indonesia respond by cheating on their quotas. By pumping out more oil they make the glut worse and drive the price down further.

Britain is not a member of OPEC, but has a common interest with other oil-producing nations in keeping its price up. The Tories however are pumping out North Sea Oil, which after all took 300 million years to form under the seabed, like there's no tomorrow. At this rate the oil boom will be down to a trickle in twenty years.

We are told that it's "our oil". The problem is that it's not ours and the government has no direct say over its rate of extraction. North Sea fields are owned and operated by private capitalist



Lawson blames factors outside his control. Budget tax cuts now less likely.

consortia. The only handle the government has is the British National Oil Corporation which buys 51% of North Sea oil.

The downward drift of oil prices means that 'spot' prices of oil knocking around in tankers quoted at Rotterdam are \$2.50 cheaper than the fixed OPEC contract prices. To hold up the prices, BNOC buys oil at a fixed price of about \$28.50 and has nowhere else to sell it except in Rotterdam at about \$26. This is costing us up to £1 million a day!

The Tories are in a dilemma. They are being advised to let North Sea oil prices slip. Since the pound is largely tied to the price of oil, this will mean a further slide in sterling prices which they hope, will make British

manufacturers more competitive.

As we have argued, British capitalism is too far gone to respond to this stimulus, and the sterling slide is getting out of control. They will lose oil revenues on the roundabouts and gain nothing on the swings.

OPEC retaliation

If the Tories abandon oil price support they are threatened with retaliation by OPEC countries. This could mean losing contracts worth hundreds of millions in the gulf states. That this is no idle prospect is shown by the rage a few years ago against the film 'Death of a Princess' in Saudi ruling circles. British companies lost contracts and diplomat-

ic relations came under great strain, because the film showed the barbarism of Saudi society.

For the time being the cold snap has bumped up the demand for oil and firmed petroleum prices. But as long as the production and marketing of fuel is left to capitalists and competing nation states, then so long will anarchy reign. This anarchy can be very expensive for working people.

Britain is likely to run a trade deficit of £10 billion for 1984. That deficit has been masked by the £9 billion we get from oil exports. With the fall in the price of oil the mask which covers the decrepitude of British capitalism is bound to slip.

*Financial feature by
Mick Brooks*

Miners' strike costing £ millions

THE TORY war on the miners is costing us a fortune. This is not just the cost of lost coal production. The loss is knocked on through the economy.

British Rail for instance has lost £200 million in freight rates. The government is doing its best to conceal the astronomical cost of police overtime. Meanwhile they are losing the tax revenues while miners are on strike and paying out (inadequate) social security to their families with the other hand.

The struggle has also had its effect on the balance of payments and hence on sterling. Since the oil price shock of 1973, the CEEB has been phasing out oil-fired power stations. No wonder—it's at least a 50% dearer way to generate electricity.

Exports hit

Since the strike started, oil firing is suddenly back in style. Coal consumption has been halved and, despite the desperate attempts to move stocks, the general trend is still

down. That means that oil, destined to save the bacon of British capitalism, chronically incapable of selling its manufactures abroad, is diverted back to British power stations.

Oil consumption is now 42.7% higher than before the strike. Despite the Tories' pumping out North Sea oil at a faster and faster rate, this is bound to hit exports.

Imports rise

Coal imports are up 82%—dragged in by fly-by-night operators into tiny non-union ports at exorbitant prices. Oil imports are up 90%.

Six or seven times as much fuel is being burnt to produce electricity as before the strike, despite the alarming cost.

Speculators may be sheep-like characters but they seldom get shorn. They are not fooled by the glib announcements of the Tories that the miners' strike is having no effect. They know it is hurting and by betting against sterling they make it hurt even harder.



Desperation in Dole City

TO BE young in 1985 is a crime: the sentence is the dole or a YTS scheme.

From a young age people quickly learn that life is tough under the Tories.

Last year there were over one million young children living in absolute poverty; not in Ethiopia or another third world country but here in Britain. Eleven and a half million people in seven million families are living only 40% above the poverty line.

Hardest hit

The youth are amongst the hardest hit in a country which has one of the lowest standards of living of any industrialised country. In 'dole cities' up and down the country, when the cinemas, dance halls and leisure facilities close, it is the youth who turn to vandalism and drugs out of frustration, boredom and hopelessness.

"50% of young people between the ages 14 and 25 in Merseyside are regular users of drugs." (BBC Radio Merseyside)

"1 in 3 of all secondary pupils are now affected by drug addiction". (British Medical Association)
 "The number of new addicts has jumped by 352% since 1978." (West Midlands Regional Health Authority)

"We estimate that there are likely to be as many as 100,000 addicts and the number is growing rapidly". (The Guardian)

The Tories' cynical attitude towards heroin addiction amongst the youth is sickening. They cry out for harsher sentences for the pushers but cut the customs staff which allows more heroin into the country. Because of these cuts drug smugglers now have a less than 1% chance of being caught at British customs.

The Tories boast about recruiting an extra 60 staff to deal with the drugs problem, (they actually transferred them from other customs duties). Yet compared to the number of police deployed during the miners' strike their priorities become clear.

Photo: John Woulfe



Hundreds of Young Socialists descended on Pontypridd to defend South Wales miners threatened with sequestration of funds.

Young workers look to socialism

WITHIN THE Labour Party Young Socialists are school and college students, unemployed and YTS trainees, but the heart of our movement are the young workers. Since the early seventies the LPYS has produced a Young Workers' Charter, which formulated demands and explained their important role in working class struggles and in changing society.

The miners' strike, and the role of the young miners has confirmed the perspectives of the Marxist leadership of the LPYS.

It is clear that the young miners are acting as a catalyst to the rest of our class and especially other young workers.

The polarisation of young miners taking place, will be seen in every section of young

workers in the future. As the Tories attack shipbuilding, engineering and the civil service they will get their response from the youth. All sections of young people are being radicalised, waiting to hear socialist ideas.

In this international year of youth, millions of the world's young are starving. In Europe millions are unemployed. Youth have most to gain from a new socialist world. Join the fight against unemployment, slave labour and for the establishment of a socialist Britain: fight with the LPYS.

By John Hird
 (LPYS National Chairman)

Get your LPYS membership card

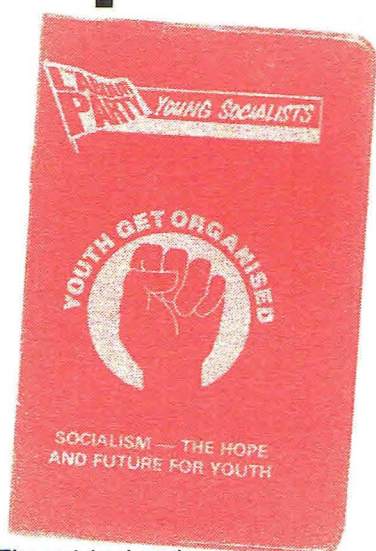
EVERY YOUNG Socialist should make sure they get their LPYS 'Activists Card', available (price 25p) from your LPYS branch secretary or from the LPYS, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

The card is invaluable for building big LPYS branches in every town. There's a branch campaign fund column to help your branch save up to buy a megaphone, a new banner or for bigger branches, perhaps a duplicator. Workers should give 50p a week and unwaged 20p, some of which should go to the national LPYS Campaign Fund to assist the LPYS's national work.

To stop last minute panic to raise cash for LPYS Conference and Summer Camp, a 'conference/camp savings scheme column' has been included. Every branch should elect a conference/camp organiser to collect money each week from people and sign their cards.

Finally, there is a *Socialist Youth* sales card to help branches tighten up on payments and boost sales.

As an added incentive the branch which sells (and pays for) the most cards will receive the new 'recruit-



The activists' card.

ment award', to be presented annually at LPYS conference.

Start your membership drive now and build a mass LPYS in your town.

New YTURC leaflets advertising the march on Parliament, 28 February are now available. Write to YTURC, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT. Leaflets free, but £4 per thousand for postage.

Further education threat to split students.

THE NEW Tory move to force youth onto YTS schemes will directly affect students at Further Education colleges.

Lesleigh Woodburn, FE Labour Students' member on the National Union of Students' FE National Committee, told *Militant* what the new proposals will mean:

"The Tories' proposals are an unprecedented attack on the right to an education, and preparation for a general attack on the wages of young workers, by expanding Youth Training Schemes.

90% of FE students do not receive any form of grant. In order to further their education many working class youth are forced onto the dole dropping subjects they want to take, to comply with the Tories 'Under 21 Hours Rule'. Now the Tories even want to stop that option. The new proposals will stop working class youth from attending FE colleges to study, instead they will be forced onto YTS schemes.

This 'clear out' of part time students is in line with the Tories' White Paper on training for jobs. The Bill proposes that 25% of the colleges in Britain are to be taken out of the hands of the local authorities and placed under the control of the MSC. The proposals to stop supplementary benefit for 16 and 17 year olds will empty the colleges of part time students in this age group to make room for YTS trainees from the MSC.

If these proposals are implemented divisions will be sown in the FE colleges between YTS and full-time students. Already we have seen what effect this can have. In Glasgow in 1983 a riot broke out between YTS and full time students.

Lobby Parliament

Because of the seriousness of this attack on school leavers Further Education Labour Students are launching a National Campaign against these proposals. Part of this campaign will be to mobilise FE students to join the lobby of Parliament called for by Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign on February 28. FELS, which is also

sponsoring the lobby, must take up this campaign to ensure that FE students are organised and united to fight these attacks."

Lesleigh's views were backed up by students at the Woolwich FE college in London. Jackie Miles, Labour candidate in the college's student union presidential elections, said:

"The conditions that students in our college have to put up with are already appalling. We have many part time students who can't afford to attend full time. The Tories' proposals would affect many here.

"I think we have to take action now whilst the Tories are split—the university students won a compromise over 'minimum grants' because the Tories didn't want a split in their ranks while they're still taking on the miners.

"I think FELS will get a massive response from FE students, when we explain the Tories can be defeated if we unite with YTS trainees, the unemployed and school leavers, and most important, build solidarity with the trade unions, who are facing attack from the government."



Over 3,000 attended the YOPs lobby of Parliament in 1982.

*Photo: Militant

What we demand

- ★ No to YTS conscription
- ★ Trade union rights and union rates of pay for all YTS trainees.
- ★ A £30 a week minimum grant for all 16 and 17 year olds at school or college.
- ★ A guaranteed job for all trainees, school and college leavers.
- ★ No to pit closures. Defend the NUM, for a 24 hour general strike to support the miners.
- ★ Immediate reversal of all Tory cuts. For a massive programme of useful public works building new schools, houses and hospitals.
- ★ A £100 a week minimum wage for all at 18.
- ★ A 35 hour week without loss of pay.
- ★ Opposition to Tory anti-union laws and a reversal of all attacks on the unions.
- ★ Opposition to racism and fascism and all racist immigration laws, especially the Tory nationality act.
- ★ Opposition to discrimination on the basis of sex.
- ★ Massive cuts in arms spending. Support for unilateral nuclear disarmament, but with the recognition that only a socialist change of society in

- Britain and internationally can eliminate the danger of a nuclear holocaust.
- ★ Opposition to the dictatorship of Fleet Street. For the nationalisation of newspaper printing plant facilities, TV and radio. Access to these facilities to be given to political parties, in proportion to their votes at elections.
- ★ Abolition of the monarchy and House of Lords.
- ★ Nationalisation of top 200 companies including the banks and insurance companies who control the economy, under workers control and management, with compensation on the basis of proven need.
- ★ A socialist plan of production to be democratically drawn up and implemented by committees involving trade unionists, housewives and small businessmen.
- ★ Campaign of industrial action to bring down the Tories and return a Labour government on a socialist programme.
- ★ For a socialist united states of Europe as a step towards a world socialist Federation.



No sunrise in Silicon Glen

THE COLOURFUL posters cry "Make it in Livingston". Despite the dubious nature of this slogan, it clearly advertises a rosy future in Livingston for those skilled and interested in the supposedly developing micro-chip industries.

But what prospects and benefits have the so-called 'sunrise' industries brought to Livingston, the 'Silicon Glen' of West Lothian. Looking behind the glamorous exterior of technical development, reality is rather different. In Silicon Glen youth are on the dole or in the dead end of Youth Training Schemes. The Japanese and American multinationals who own the factories want young, cheap, non-union labour; easy to exploit and then cast aside when no longer required.

In Silicon Glen you're told "too old at 18, over the hill at 20". In West Lothian, home of the sunrise industries there is well over 20% unemployment. Only a few miles from Livingston is one of the most deprived areas of Britain, Blackburn. Youth have taken to drugs and the glue as they are

Photo: John Harris (IFL)



Picket outside Kellingley pit in South Yorkshire. Young miners have inspired young workers in other industries, white-collar jobs or on YTS schemes to fight back.

robbed more and more each day of the hope of ever finding a job and future. The sun has never risen for the working class in Silicon Glen. The development of these space-age techniques has never been put to help the unemployed and the poor.

A report last year from a committee headed by a former chief scientist in Thatcher's cabinet, said that Britain was heading for third world status, because of 'lack of investment in information technology.' Tell that to the poor. There are

no limitations for developing the means of interstellar warfare, yet it has taken over a year to get food to the starving children of Ethiopia.

The truth of the matter is that the sunrise has been eclipsed by the disease of the bosses system, the system that can no longer provide the basic necessities. That system has no right to exist. Youth must fight back and change it.

By Joe Owens
(Polkemet NUM youth delegate)

Youth Training conscription

YTS schemes pay out a pittance, take other peoples' jobs away and have no satisfactory training or prospect of work.

On one scheme at a Coventry community centre, YTS trainees were taken on, supposedly to help run the centre. But instead they do the shopping for the person who runs the centre (who is,

incidentally, a right wing member of the Labour Party!).

In Coventry unemployment amongst school leavers is running at 40%. But even against this background half the city's YTS placements remain unfilled. The attitude of school leavers is they don't want any part of slave labour schemes, they want real jobs with real pay.

Now there is the threat that if we refuse to go on YTS, we'll get no supplementary benefit—a form of economic conscription.

We must fight this threat. We call on all school students to join the Labour Party Young Socialists and join our demonstration against YTS on February 28.

By David Mutton
(Binley and Willenhall LPYS)

Shift worker's fight

Civil service shift-workers at Newcastle and Washington in the North East, especially the young CPSA members, have shown their will to fight the Tories' wage cuts.

Forcing their membership back to work the CPSA

'leadership' of Alistair Graham and the so-called 'Broad Left '84' group may be satisfied to book themselves a place on Thatcher's next honours list. But the only honour the strikers gave them was a unanimous vote of censure, when Graham dared to show his face at the strike meeting.

Far from giving up the fight, a proud, defiant 'back-to-work' party for the shift-workers will be followed by a picket of Blyth Power Station in support of the miners, with regular collections for the NUM at DHSS offices throughout the North East.

In addition clerical workers at Longbenton—forced into overtime because of low wages—are becoming more and more disaffected by the way management uses them to beat the shift workers, and then turns on clerical workers with new technology as a weapon to cut jobs with vengeance.

Just as in the NUM, the present shift workers' strike marks only the start of an upheaval which will transform CPSA into a fighting, democratic, and socialist union.

By Tim Wall
(Youth Committee, CPSA Longbenton)

Sri Lanka, Jamaica, USSR, Poland

Tamils in Sri Lanka

The dictator's dilemma

IN *MILITANT*, 11 January, N Moorthy showed the recent intensification of the Tamil national question in Sri Lanka. In the second article he looks at possible future developments.

THE SRI Lankan ruling class is split as to a "military solution" or a compromise with the Tamil TULF.

Senior ex-military commanders, such as Captain P Ambalavana have recently warned: "There is no military solution. We urgently need a political initiative or this country will be given over to terrorism. The militants on both sides will take over... The masses are being stirred up".

The Sri Lankan army is thoroughly indisciplined and demoralised and incapable of winning a long drawn out guerrilla war.

The chauvinist gangs around Cyril Mathew and prime minister Premadasa though will furiously oppose any concessions. This bigoted Buddhist caucus have previously broken all attempts at Federalism and autonomy. A short-term political agreement would almost inevitably create a split in the ruling UNP.

However the alternative is continuing chaos, a devastated economy as tourism and foreign investment slumps (and worse to come when the present high world tea prices decline), the development of a full guerrilla war, possible foreign invasions and the ultimate carving up of the island.

The only viable alternative is the NSSP's socialist perspective. In place of isolated guerrilla actions they argue for a united mass strug-

CAPITALISM can provide no solution to the Tamil national question. The All-Party Conference met 36 times in 1984 although none of the bourgeois politicians were capable of coming to any form of agreement.

President Jayawardene's latest limited proposals for a form of autonomy to the island's 25 districts, grouped into nine provinces are rejected by all capitalist parties and seen by many Tamils as too little too late.

However, US imperialism, Jayawardene's main backer has given him a sharp warning via General Vernon Walters that military aid will be stepped up significantly only given increased political concessions to the Tamils. India is also pressuring

for a political compromise.

Jayawardene may then be forced to renew autonomy concessions to the TULF and seek support from the bourgeois opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), even in the form of a national coalition. He has privately already threatened to appeal over the heads of the racist UNP MPs in a referendum. The recent cabinet sacking of arch-racist Cyril Mathew was a gesture of compromise and a warning to the chauvinist wing of the UNP.

The Bonapartist Jayawardene has the power to threaten all UNP MPs through resignation letters he obtained from them in 1982. All he has to do is pencil in the date of resignation!

gle of workers and peasantry of all races. The decisive power even in this mainly agricultural society lies with the working class.

In addition to the 1.1 million (out of a total labour force of 4.1 million) production, transport and manual workers there are 700,000 semi-proletarian Tamil plantation workers. These together make up over 40% of the total labour force of Sri Lanka. The working class potential to bring down Jayawardene was demonstrated in April 1983 when a plantation strike forced the government to concede most of the workers' demands.

This achieved more for Tamil workers and had a greater effect on the government than seven years of guerrilla struggle.

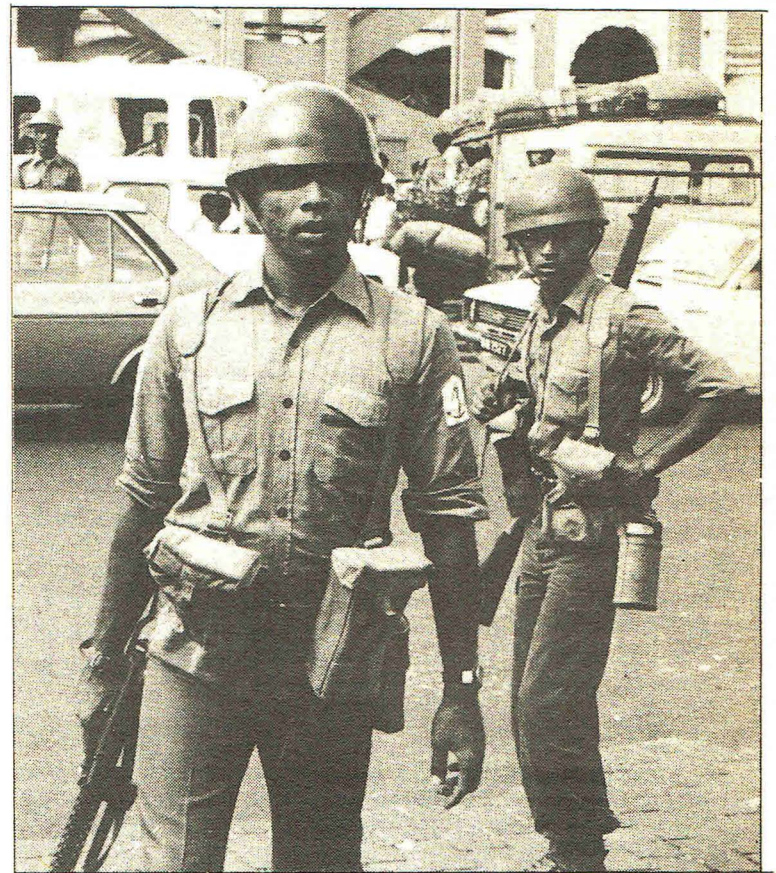
The way forward lies in a mass industrial struggle in the towns combined with a struggle of peasants in the villages and Tamils in the north and east, for wage rises, democratic rights and immediate general elections.

The root of the persecution of Tamils, the disenfranchisement of plantation workers and the pauperisation of all Sri Lankan workers is the rotting system of capitalism. The NSSP has urged a general strike movement of the workers and peasant 'hartals' in the villages throughout the island to build a movement against this capitalist government, and fight for the establishment of socialism.

Indian revolution

However, a revolution confined just to Sri Lanka, although a giant step forward, would be incapable of fully developing an advanced industrial economy unless it was spread to the rest of the Indian sub-continent and the world.

A separate capitalist state of Tamil Eelam, totally dependent on Indian and world capitalism, could not provide jobs, houses and living standards for the Tamil masses. But while we stand for workers'



The ruling-class is split on the question of a military solution to the Tamil question.

unity and a united socialist Sri Lanka based on a government of workers and peasants, the NSSP has always campaigned in the south on behalf of the Tamil masses for an end to repression, for full autonomous rights and the right of self-determination.

However, if the irrevocable desire of the Tamil people were to favour separation then the NSSP would firmly stand by their right of secession.

The Tamil people's heroic struggles could have provided a tremendous inspiration to Sri Lanka's oppressed masses. But the methods of assassination and bombings have repulsed the Sinhala masses. Marxists oppose guerrilla methods because they relegate the masses to, at best, passive observers of the struggle.

A conscious movement of the masses themselves through demonstrations, strikes, hartals etc. can raise the political understanding of the masses, challenge the

power of the military and put forward an alternative democratic socialist form of society based on elected committees of workers, peasants, housewives, unemployed, small-businessmen etc.

The splits in the government will raise workers' morale to fight back. But the biggest obstacle, are the reformist leaders of the other workers and Left parties who have not even met to discuss the present situation.

A clear call for action from these parties would cut across all racist and communal barriers and prepare the downfall of the regime.

A nightmare for all the island can be averted by fighting for the establishment of a planned economy which alone can guarantee democratic rights and living standards for all. With an appeal to the workers and peasants of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka, a socialist federation would then be able to free the entire sub-continent.

Riots in Kingston

SEVEN PEOPLE were killed in riots in the Jamaican capital Kingston on 15-16 January in two days of protest at a 25% rise in petrol prices. Demonstrators made roadblocks from burning tyres, trees, rubbish and abandoned cars.

The government had previously said there would be no petrol rises (which would increase many other prices) but now claim the huge devaluation of the Jamaican dollar relative to US dollar made it inevitable.

The right-wing Jamaican Labour Party government has become very unpopular since 'winning' a boycotted election in 1983, though the Prime Minister Edward Seaga is confident there will be no more elections for nearly four years. Massive inflation in food prices and 27% official unemployment are some of the results of his attempts through monetarist policies to produce a "Caribbean Singapore".

The foreign earnings for Jamaica's main exports bauxite and sugar, have both fallen dramatically. In the last boom year only a 1% growth rate was achieved. Seaga's main growth industry is problems.

A Marxist view of Stalinism

THE NEW edition of *Militant International Review* is published next week. A number of articles show the developments in Stalinist states in recent decades.

One article puts Stalinism in its historical context. A review of a biography of British children's novelist Arthur Ransome tells of Ransome's experiences of Russia during the years of the revolution.

After the overthrow of the Tsarist regime Ransome wrote of the "creative effort of the revolution" and the power and enthusiasm of the working class. In May 1917 he wrote of the elected and recallable workers soviets, "the Council of Soldiers and Workers deputies enjoys practically decisive power in all questions which depend on the working class".

After the October revolution Ransome returned to Russia and became a supporter of Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks, who were fighting for a worldwide workers' revolution.

The usurping of power by Stalin and the bureaucratic



Secret policemen and state officials on trial for murdering pro-Solidarity priest Popieluszko.

caste from the mid-twenties on was a tragedy not just for the USSR but for the working class of the world.

The extent of degeneration in Russia can be seen from the review of the memoirs of General Grigorenko. The Red Army hero exposes the myths of Stalin the great war leader. He also shows the furor he caused in the years after Krushchev's "secret speech" when he pointed out that the "cult of the individual" which Krushchev blamed for Stalin's crimes was still inherent in the very nature of

the society, the lack of democratic control, and the high salaries and irreplaceability of officials.

Workers' hostility

These trenchant criticisms of Stalinism from a high ranking member of the bureaucracy reflected the hostility of the working class in particular to the power and privileges of this elite. Grigorenko's barbaric treatment in the psychiatric prisons for his defence of na-

tional minorities and attacks on bureaucratism eventually soured him against even the remaining advance of the revolution, the planned economy.

But, as the review shows, the demands Grigorenko raised in the past echo Lenin's pre-requisites for a healthy workers state, the election and recallability of officials, for all officials to receive skilled workers' wages and for popular participation in administration with control and management by the elected soviets.

That these demands plus

the end of the one party state will get an echo was shown in the evolving ideas of many Solidarity activists in 1980-1. An article in the *MIR* looks at the implications of the trial of the murderers of the pro-Solidarity priest Popieluszko. Another review looks at life in China in the years of the "cultural revolution".

Militant International Review is obtainable from *MIR*, 3-13 Hepscoot Road, London E9. Price 75p plus 15p post and packing. Order now.

Argentina, USA, Brazil

Mafia tactics from Peronist bosses

In October 1983 the pressure of the Argentinian working class forced elections and ousted the hated military dictatorship from power.

The elections were won by the Radicals, a capitalist party who made demagogic promises to take action against some of the junta's torturers. The Peronist movement which had had an enormous basis in the working class was defeated. The Peronists were not socialists but they had gained popularity through the concessions they had been able to force out of the ruling class in the country's beef boom decade after World War Two.

Many of the Peronist leaders had shown their real nature when that boom ended, particularly by collaborating with the junta in 1976-83. The shock of defeat, as expected caused big splits in the Peronists. ANA MUNOZ writes on recent developments.

IN DECEMBER, the Peronist Party held its first Congress since the elections.

In 1983 the leaders presented an electoral programme to the right of the Radicals while, on the other hand a section of its leaders are well known as fascists, collaborating with the military dictators even to the point of handing over the names of left wing trade unionists to the Army. These bureaucrats have life styles like the upper classes and gangster methods similar to the Mafia.

According to reports in the Spanish capitalist press the Peronist Party has split into two factions and the extreme right has won control. The division is so far merely formal, so it was impossible to discuss any ideological issues. The struggle could atomise the movement into provincial groups in the Argentine tradition of local political bosses.

The event was stage-managed by the "field marshals of defeat", metal workers' union leader Lorenzo Miguel and extreme right-winger Hermino Iglesias.

Miguel, the first vice-president of the Party (in practise Number One because Isabelita Perón is in Spain) resigned his position some days before the Congress after securing his "election" as secretary of his union. José María Vernet, unknown nationally, and under a lot of political criticism from his own province was promoted as the most pliable candidate. The position of "general secretary" unknown in the past was invented for Hermino Iglesias.

Lorenzo Miguel took the second vice presidency thereby avoiding another union leader taking the leadership. As he is the secretary of the Metal Workers and of 62 organisations—the different branches of Peronism—he keeps hold of the reins of power.

Before the congress his partner, Iglesias, went on an official trip to the Vatican to dig up more information about the agreement with Chile over the Beagle Strait, and to make unofficial contacts with international fascist organisations.

The Congress opened on 15 December. Delegates noticed straight away that the Press had been prohibited, while Iglesias' armed gunmen spread throughout the theatre balconies.

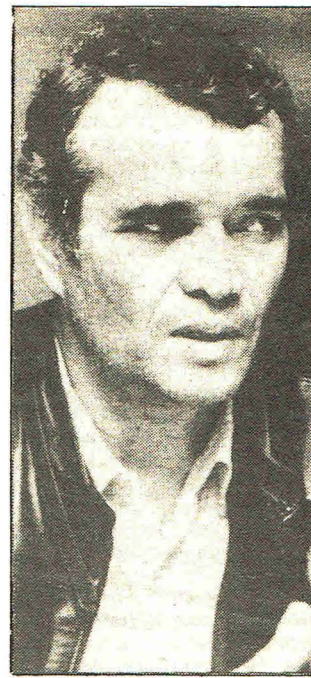
Peronist leaders like Carlos Menem, governor of La Rioja, who one year ago defended Isabelita Perón but now hates her, were insulted and kicked, and needed police protection.

The delegates called "Reformistas"—the majority—raised the idea of reforming the structure of the movement with the possibility of the rank and file electing all responsible posts. To check the composition of Congress, they also proposed a commission to

control delegates' credentials. Iglesias' gunmen started chanting, banging drums and making threats.

From the platform, Miguel and Iglesias pretended to have a show of hands between shouts and death threats from the balconies. The "Reformistas" abandoned the platform and the Congress President was about to do the same when a pistol was brandished at him from under the table and he wisely reconsidered. At least 345 delegates out of 670 walked out among them all the senators, 70 MPs and nearly all the Governors, practically all those successful in the 1983 elections.

In flagrant violation of the rules, applauded by the bodyguards, the inquisite



Hermino Iglesias, new far right general secretary of the Peronists, and Isabel Peron, re-elected leader.



Congress re-elected Isabelita, Governor Vernet, Miguel and Iglesias to their posts.

The "reformists" went to a hotel where they elected a commission of 48 members and convened a meeting for February in the north of the country, far away from the gunmen.

The "official" Congress agreed to oppose in Parlia-

ment the agreement with Chile recently accepted by the electorate.

This is only the beginning of an explosive period of a fight between left and right in the Peronist movement. In the bankrupt state of Argentinian capitalism the collaboration between the Peronist right, and corrupt trade-union 'leaders' with Alfonsín's Radical government will anger workers and inevitably cause a massive swing to the left in the union rank and file.

A graphic example already was the 12 day general strike, called by campus workers in the Buenos Aires University last year where workers struck for 10 days against Alfonsín and 2 days against the union bureaucracy. Capitalism even in its Peronist form, has no more answers for Argentina's workers, and a polarisation is clearly developing.

The Peronists may win the next election but the leaders will be in a far more difficult situation from the first hour than the Radicals are now both economically and politically. The basis will be laid for the growth of a genuine mass Marxist tendency capable of leading the powerful working class to power.



Peronist election meeting in Buenos Aires 1983.

Hungry and cold in New York

AFTER THE illusion of November's Presidential election comes the reality of Reagan's America. Huge cuts are on the cards in welfare, wages for Federal government employees and public services.

BETTY TRAU from New York writes on a TV programme showing the hunger in the richest country in the world.

A RECENT TV film showed America's aged and poor picking through garbage at the back of supermarkets at night.

In New York City alone, over 200,000 people a month go to the food pantries and soup kitchens for meals from voluntary charity groups and churches.

The Citizens' committee investigating this found 20 million went hungry nationwide. In 1967 they found ten million. For people who have held jobs and led "respectable" lives the soup kitchen is the last resort. But meagre welfare aid in food stamps only comes to 48 cents a meal. When that runs out at

the end of the month the soup kitchen is all there is left.

The film showed a homeless family with small children who slept and lived in Central Park before the welfare bureaucracy finally put them all in one room with no cooking facilities in a seedy run down hotel charging the city \$1,680 a month.

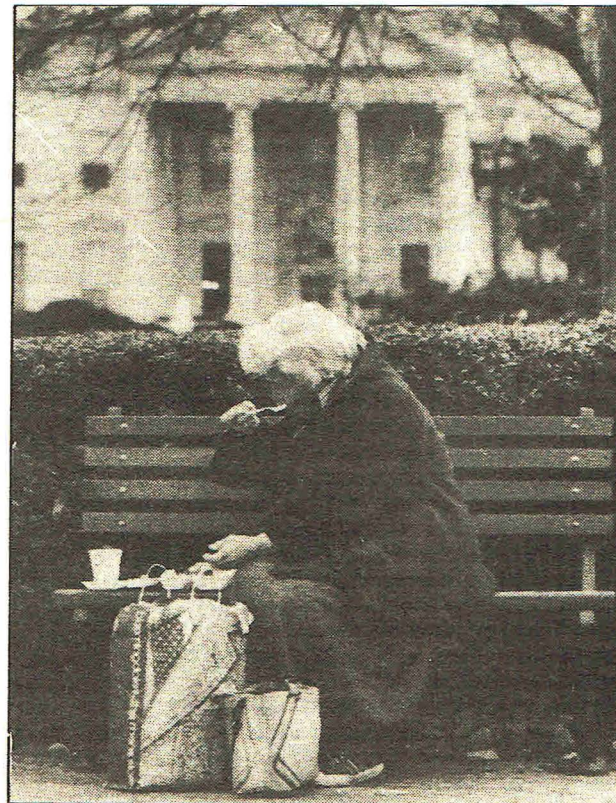
The head of the welfare department has denied charges of malnutrition of children in the welfare hotels. Malnourished children's hair turns red, he says, and these children's hair has not turned red! Incidentally the city owns thousands of abandoned flats usable for homeless New Yorkers but the landlords want them pulled down for luxury apartments.

Welfare money for rent, food, clothing utilities for the old and infirm has only gone up 28% since 1969, but inflation since then has been 185%; even the welfare admit this is due to spending cuts.

Another way to cut spending is by "churning", one of the remarkable gobbledegook expressions added to our lexicon under Reagan to hide his evil deeds. Churning means the welfare officialdom cut off welfare checks for no reason, cut-off reaching 24% in 1982 saving Mayor Koch \$84 million.

Hunger and cold now even hits the suburbs for many recently unemployed people may not be eligible for aid as house owners. The scandal is that 20% of food raised in the USA is marked "not for sale" and is dumped.

Old Jimmy who helps out in a soup kitchen, wipes tears from his eyes. There has been no improvement in these last two years. It's getting worse, he sees no hope in the faces. It is like the '30s without the New Deal. "If these people today grow more hungry the fighting will start. "Somebody had better listen" he says, "somebody had better listen".



A destitute woman sitting on a bench outside the White House. The welfare system has collapsed.

Brazil elections

TANCREDO NEVES the opposition candidate, will become president of Brazil in March. He was the candidate seen as representing a clear break with the 21 years of military rule.

The elections were by electoral college which enormously favoured the rural areas but nonetheless Neves gained a huge majority over the other candidate Paulo Maluf who was backed by the military. Hundreds of government employees were reported to be posting up pro-Maluf posters on the morning of the poll but to no avail.

Tancredo was the slightly more radical of the capitalist candidates who were allowed to stand and was backed by the Communist Party. The government coalition Neves forms will face a massive debt crisis, an inflation rate of over 220% and high unemployment. The working class will expect a closing of the huge gap between the rich and poor, but Tancredo is reported to be considering a "social contract" deal based on the Spanish Moncloa pact to stop wages rising.

A fuller analysis will appear in a future issue.

LETTERS

Militant welcomes letters from readers. Send us your views, comments or criticism. Write to *Militant*, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London. E9 5HB

Tories hypocrisy on health

Comrades,

The shocking decision to end kidney dialysis treatment for Derek Sage, in effect to allow him to die, because his life was judged not to be of sufficient quality is a glaring example of the implications for the working class of the Tory run-down of the NHS.

Kidney dialysis, being particularly expensive, is only one area where doctors face the dilemma of coping with far more patients than the funds starved NHS has facilities to treat. At present the NHS can only provide for about half the people needing dialysis. This means that people who could be saved are not treated and die. Inevitably under capitalism, a person's position in society can determine whether they are treated or not. Derek Sage is a homeless, unemployed man with a history of mental illness.

Many kidney patients who are denied treatment are unaware that their lives could be saved. Elizabeth Ward, of the British Kidney



Patients at the London Hospital, Whitechapel. Who decides which has a better "quality of life"?

Patients Association, said in the *Sunday Times*: "Usually the patient does not understand that he could have been treated and goes away to quietly die".

Not only do the wealthy have the ability to jump NHS waiting lists by buying private treatment but having generally a better "quality of life" and more avenues of protest and influence are far less likely to be denied treatment by the NHS in such

cases.

BUPA member and Tory MP, Michael Mc Nair-Wilson, had dialysis treatment on the NHS last year. So moved was he by this that in praising the NHS in the Commons he sounded almost like a socialist saying how he was treated without having to show he could pay. "It operated on supply and need, not on supply and demand". He enthused: "This will always remain true of

the NHS".

This as the experience of Derek Sage shows, is rank hypocrisy. Thatcher's election claim that: "The NHS is safe with us" has again been shown to be a lie. A more honest statement would have been: "We (the rich) are safe with the NHS—and BUPA"!

Yours fraternally,
Dave Backwith
Bristol

Photo: Militant

Redundant leadership

Dear Comrades,

On Friday 14 December I was made redundant, (working at the British Gas plant—Easington). It was a case of going in on the Friday morning, handing in your security pass, locker keys, sign up and on your way. I stayed 'til the tea break to collect the miners' levy and say good-bye to the lads (miners' levy collected now around £7,000 at Easington).

A security guard gave me a lift into Hull. He told me he had just finished a 14-hour shift and picked up £101.44 for an 88-hour week.

Intimidation

Dear Comrades,

We too, like Comrades in Salford (Militant 730) have suffered police harassment while collecting for the miners.

Myself and a fellow YS comrade were collecting in Middlesbrough Bus station when two policemen asked us for our credentials. I presented them with a letter from the county council, and they left.

About half an hour later they returned, saying that we were in contravention of the Street Collections Act by collecting with open buckets, and would we please accompany them to the station to sort things out. When we got to the station we were questioned on our support group's activities and whether we planned to col-

lect again. Our money was counted and our names and addresses taken down, we were told to expect to be hearing from them.

We recounted our experience to a local councillor, (a fellow support group member) who met the assistant Chief Constable to demand an explanation. The Chief Constable told him that the two policemen had no right to stop us collecting, as the bus station was council property and therefore the street collection laws do not apply.

This episode shows the lengths to which the police will go to stop aid reaching the miners. Far from being intimidated I am more determined than ever to collect and ensure that no miner goes hungry.

Yours fraternally,
Andy Walker
Redcar LPYS

Need for nurseries

Dear Comrades,

A woman I know was expecting her second child. She began to haemorrhage and was ordered to rest in bed by her doctor.

But how can you stay in bed if you have a pre-school child to look after? The

woman is no longer pregnant. She miscarried and lost five pints of blood. No doubt a rich woman would've employed a nanny.

Militant's demand for 24 hour free nurseries and communal restaurant and laundry facilities might have saved the baby.

Comradely
Heather Rawling
Leicester

Police raid

Dear Militant,

Gay men in Manchester have hit out in protest against a police raid which took place early on Saturday morning at the Napoleons Club, one of the cities best known gay nightspots. The cause of the police raid was alleged infringements of the club's licencing regulations. Twenty police, mostly in plain clothes burst into the

club and forced everyone to provide names and addresses and other information before leaving the club. The club was forced to close for the rest of the evening. I write in support of gay rights and against the police state under which all workers, blacks and gays are under attack from this Tory government.

Richard Brodowski
LPYS
West Yorkshire

The civil servant on £18,000 a week

Dear Militant,

The last time I signed on, just before the Xmas break, I received a leaflet on rates of social security payments, an easy and accessible guide to the weekly income and spending of 4.5 million workers on the dole.

However, things are not that open and accessible when it comes to the income of the Tories, but sometimes you get a glimpse. One such eye-opener as to whose interests the Tory society operates was given when it was announced that Peter Leverne, Thatcher's appointee who buys arms and equipment for the MOD, gets £95,000 per year. Peter Leverne, when you sit down and work it out gets more in one week than most single people get in one year.

Fraternally,
Phill Umpleby
Stockton



Community policing in action on Leicester demonstration.

Photo: Mark Salmon

No let-up for Maggie

Dear Militant,

Leicester has never been known as a particularly militant area, response to the miners' strike in Leicester has not been on a scale witnessed in other areas, but people can only take so

much before they are forced to stand up and be counted. The Tories are forcing upon Leicester council rate-capping of a staggering 57% one of, if not, the worst attacks on local democracy in the country.

At such a sensitive time Margaret Thatcher decided to visit the city. A highly provocative action.

It is a tribute to the work-

ing people of Leicester that with only two days notice, seven to eight hundred turned out on a bitterly cold, working day, to picket her visit, including youth from local LPYS branches, local striking miners and council workers.

Yours fraternally,
Carl Dwyer
Leicester South LPYS

LEFT and RIGHT

Shurley shome mishtake?

The editorial in the *Sun* (16 January) joined the rest of Fleet Street in wringing its hands at the mess the Tories have got the economy into. It indignantly proclaimed: "The government has been rightly lambasted for its bungling over the sterling crisis". It accused Chancellor Nigel Lawson of "crass incompetence". Yet on the very same page, in the column written by the ever-so-intellectual John Vincent, this professor of modern history cheerfully told us: "A cheap pound is the best boost the economy could have." If the *Sun* can't make up its mind up about what it's talking about, what chance do the readers have?

Falling pound, rising wage

Someone who won't be moaning about the falling pound is Britain's highest paid director, Richard Giordano. Giordano, chief executive of British Oxygen Company, received a 48% wage rise last year, taking his annual salary to £521,500. The pay rise

he actually received was £150,000, or an extra £2,900 a week. But given that he spends most of his time in the USA, the strength of the dollar against the pound earned him an extra £100,000. With the current sterling crisis, Mr Giordano will be raking it in even more.

Enthusiastic non-voting

Thatcher is trying to blame the sterling crisis all on the Americans. To be more precise, on the Reagan administration—American workers certainly cannot be blamed. An analysis of the November US election shows that only 53.3% of the electorate bothered to vote. This represents not so much a mandate for the policies of Ronnie Reagan but more, as the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate commented, "a simple and sad pattern of growing alienation, disillusionment and inaction."

Wish you were there

Are your feet like blocks of ice as you wait for that bus that never comes? Are you looking at the meter full of dread as the dial creeps towards '0' and there's no more 50p's left? Well, stop moaning and spare a thought for our poor royalty. Princess Michael of Kent is having a hard time on the ski slopes of Switzerland. She told the *Daily Star* (14 January): "If people in England think it's cold, they should be here in Gstaad." Oh we'll be on the next flight, your Grace.

Hello Mr Kinnock

Hello Mr Kinnock Sir, and how are you today Looking good in the opinion polls, I should say. Oh Sir, aren't we looking grand, Off to make a video with Tracey Ullman's band. I know you don't like violence Sir, and won't think much of me I attacked a policeman, slamming my groin in his knee, And as I doubled over Sir I really went to town, Bringing up my head as his truncheon came crashing down. Christmas wasn't bad Sir, not bad at all, The kids had their sausage rolls in the Miners hall, Its the ones that died Sir, whilst digging for coal, Embankment collapsed Sir, and crushed their very soul, But still Sir we shouldn't trouble you, There's no real hardship Sir and we shall see it through, New Year is here Sir, and we'll be fighting on, But you shall be remembered for your role in the year just gone.

By Jim Bond. Neath

FIGHTING FUND

This week: £6384

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
Eastern	1332		2900
East Midlands	1220		3550
Humberside	1390		1850
London East	1679		3200
London West	1593		2150
London South East	1052		1950
London South West	1119		1650
Lancashire	506		1950
Manchester	995		2200
Merseyside	525		6100
Northern	2009		4400
Scotland East	641		2950
Scotland West	1330		3650
Southern	1767		5100
South West	807		2150
Wales East	598		2550
Wales West	928		2050
West Midlands	1776		4300
Yorkshire	1849		5350
Others	4868		5000
Total received	27986		65000

Your paper depends on you

EVERY READER, every supporter must pull out all the stops. This week we raised £6,384 leaving us with £37,000 still needed to reach our 31 January target.

We can still do it but the time to get the money in is the day you read this article. Get your LPYS branch to donate something to our fund or ask every one of your sales to give that bit extra for *Militant*.

Ask every reader for the fivers, tenners and even the fifty and hundred pounds that will make us fly over the target.

With only one week to go every area must organise a social event. Sponsored events and jumble sales are easy to organise and can raise a lot of money. Make fighting fund your number one priority this week and get the money rolling in to us by next Thursday.

Our readers are never short of ideas for raising money. One comrade in Dulwich has sent in £95 from mending clocks and watches, but I think the supporters in Stoke-on-Trent must be 'crackers' to place bets on eating two cream crackers in one minute!

Special thanks

Special thanks goes to all readers who sent in extra money and in particular to some Ayrshire miners for sending in £13; Dan Taylor from Gosport promised £20 every month; B Elliot of Coventry 75p; from Milton Keynes, £1 came from Chris Poole who is unemployed and 75p from Rob Wyndham an EETPU member. J Maxwell-Taylor from Coventry returned the form on the back of the paper promising us a regular £2.

Our thanks also to members of Oldham and Rochdale YS for £15; a

Cowley shop steward 75p; J Thompson (Leyton YS) £5. A Winslade (Leyton CLP) £5, Caroline Halpin also from Leyton LP who is unemployed, £4.85; Liverpool NGA/SOGAT £18 and Pete Gibbons £4.

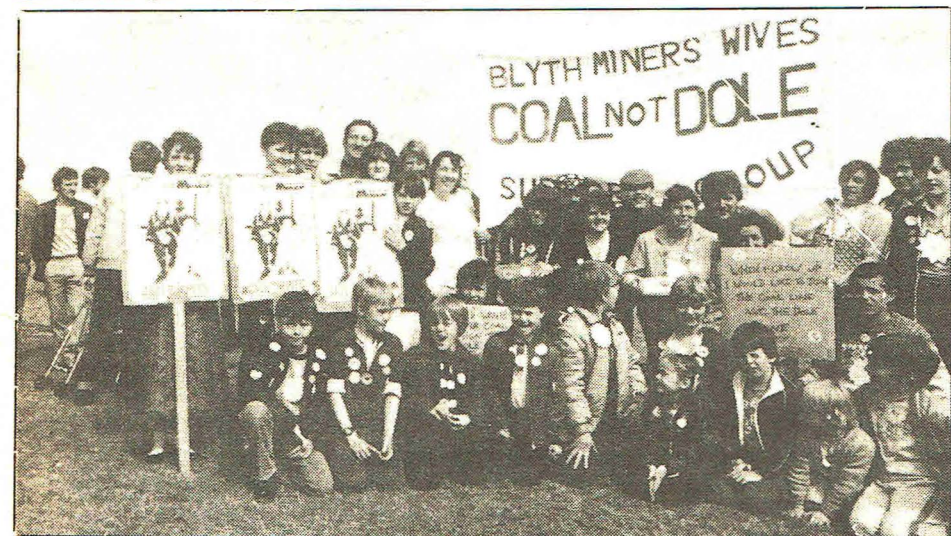
Every week our readers make huge sacrifices to make sure our paper gets bigger and better. This week a retired miner from South Normanton gave 50p while a reader in South East London is prepared to sell his bike for £500 to help *Militant* grow!

With that kind of enthusiasm, we can't go wrong but it's all up to YOU. Don't leave it to somebody else. Make your contribution to building socialism.

P.S. To those readers organising an end of quarter 'Toga Party'. For an extra £10 to the fighting fund, we won't mention your names!

By Ruth Campbell

Build for the future



Only socialism can guarantee a decent future for the working class. Photo: Dave Pearson.

THIS WEEK we received the following letter from a reader which shows the support for a Marxist Daily.

"Dear Comrades, Please find enclosed a cheque for £39.85 towards the Building Fund. Two years ago I received 27 shares on the privatisation of Britoil from BNOC. I have just received the receipts (to be tax free I had to retain them for 7 years so it is minus tax) selling them at the earliest date allowable.

Never has there been a greater need for a Daily Marxist paper to combat the

capitalist garbage by Maxwell and his 'comrades' in Fleet Street. Hopefully, this will go some small way towards this objective. Bill Blackstock, (APEX Britoil Glasgow)

No doubt many other workers echo Bill's words and would be willing to follow his lead. From Melanie Horridge in Blackpool came a further £150 promised at last year's Wembley Rally. Are there any more promises to be redeemed?

An important aspect of our campaign is getting donations from labour movement organisations.

Send one of our special appeal letters to your trade union branch, Labour Party ward, YS and womens section. Every labour movement organisation must be approached with a full explanation of our needs and how much their work will benefit from having a paper which supports their struggles.

Before we can produce a daily paper we have to have the cash to pay off our debts. Ask your branch to help us out and show the bosses and the right wing in the movement that workers support the voice of socialism.

ads

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

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 Hepscoot Rd, London E9.

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 Hepscoot Rd London E9. (Make Cheques Payable to *Militant*)

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

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

CATHERINE and Bob Rice announce the birth of Jane Elizabeth on 3rd December 1984.

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

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?' and the 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.

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.

ADDRESS BOOKS 60p, plastic paper sleeves 20p, bookmarks 40p, sew on badges 50p. 10 plus half price for resale. FF cheques to M King, 10 Rodney Ct, Anson Drive, Sholing, Soton SO2 8RU

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

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: 24 Jan: British capitalism in crisis. 31 Jan: Socialism and peace. 7 Feb: Northern Ireland. 14 Feb: Victory to the miners. All at 8 pm, Lionel Road Community Centre, Westhorpe Avenue, Eltham.

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.

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.

DAGENHAM Trades Council Miners Support Group Public Meeting. Wednesday 30 January 2.00 pm, Barking Town Hall, Small Hall. Speakers: Terry Fields MP, J. Moyle Bettshanger NUM, Liz Fitzpatrick Kent Miners wives support group, Jo Richardson MP, Cllr. Blackburn, Sue Smith Barking Hospital NUPE striker.

OUT NOW!



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

SEE THE *Militant* 20th Anniversary rally! VHS Video—1 hour highlights, plus all the main speeches in full!—3hours total. Only £10—buy someone a present! (post included). Please send cheques to *Militant* 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB.

LIVEN UP your benefit disco; it's 'The Miners Strike Rap' by Michael Rosen. A record for the miners 'aint no such thing as a pit that loses money while the bees do the work and the boss gets the honey.' Buy this record now, all profits to the miners families. Cost £1.50 each plus p&pp 25p per record. Cheques payable to MIS address: 22 Madeira Grove, Woodford, Essex 1GB

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, Johnnie 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

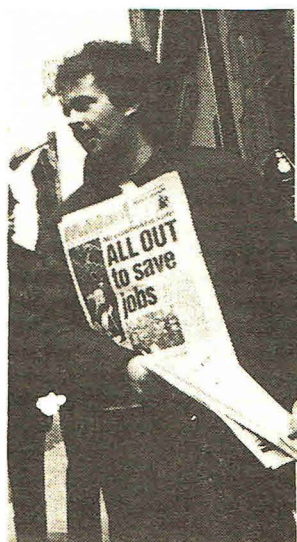
Address

TU/Organisation

No. Delegates

BLOC Conference. 23rd March 1985.

Manchester Free Trade Hall. Speakers include K Livingstone, D Hatton, Johnnie 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.



The super-sellers

OUR SELLERS in Halifax have had a great time. Two of them sold 109 of one issue, (they would have sold more but they ran out of papers). They did nothing spectacular but sold to the Xmas shoppers, on the streets and at the local tech. On the mining front, our sellers in Notts sold 46 at an Arthur Scargill meeting in Worksop, out of a meeting of 90 or so.

In Birkenhead our sellers have set up a methodical estate sale whereby local student supporters deliver an old copy with an introduc-

tory leaflet and then follow this up the same evening. They are finding ten per cent buy the paper and half of these turn out to be regular sales. Not only that but one of the sales has become a paper seller and this housewife now has a regular round of half a dozen.

All our sellers should follow this example; new orders include Carmarthen and Selby, both due to the work of our sellers during the miners strike.

Dave Farrar

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

Speculators by air and sea

British Aerospace

THIS WEEK's events do not look good for the future of British Aerospace and its workers.

On Monday, management gave their answer to the manual workers' pay claim for 1985—a 15% rise in wages, two days extra holiday and a reduction in the working week. They responded with a take it or leave it offer of 4.25% wage rise (£6.50 for skilled and £4.00 for unskilled workers), no extra holidays and no reduction in the working week.

This offer came with the standard management answer of: 'No way can the company afford any more!' But on Wednesday in an article in the financial section of the *Guardian* the management seem to have been caught out.

The article covers the government's sale of its 48.4% share in British Aerospace. It says: "At the moment the company is cash-rich. It has some £300 million of spare funds, and virtually no borrowings."

So much for 'No way can the company afford any



Strikers at the Preston BAe factory last year.

more'. As for the £6.50 and £4.00 offer; after you deduct tax, NI and pension you are left with £3.40 and £2.09 respectively. What an insult to the workers of Aerospace who have helped make the £300 million.

On the question of the government's sale of its shares. This is just another rip off, lining the pockets of

its friends. The reason for the sale is the combination of the delay in the sale of British Airways, need to fund its programme of mass unemployment and to keep to its targets of asset sales for 1985-6 of £2.5 billion.

Who will make the big killing on the Stock Market when the shares go on sale? It won't be the ordinary

Aerospace workers with their large pay offer. How many more profitable assets has our country left? I thought a good business person always kept their profitable assets and sold their non-profitable ones?

**By A Warton Division
Aerospace Worker**

Bristol Shiprepairers

A TANZANIAN game reserve, a Maltese hotel, a fleet of luxury yachts and a "Chinese" railway from Dar-es-Salaam to Kampala don't sound much like branches of the ship-repairing industry. But they are all owned by CH Bailey—parent company of Bristol Channel Ship Repairers—whose chairman, Christopher Bailey, ran a campaign against the nationalisation of ship-repairing ten years ago.

He seems to have persuaded the then Labour government that he and his ilk deserved the stewardship of the industry. The campaign was successful and ship-repairing remained privately owned. What this has meant is summed up by the *Financial Times*' comments on CH Bailey: "What was once a ship-repair business with a clean balance sheet has become more like an investment trust with some low-key exposure to ship-repair thrown in. Capital spending in the dockyard is a memory".

These gangsters fought to keep hold of the industry so as to destroy it and make millions out of stock exchange speculations. One of their last links with ship-repair—the world's largest floating dock—is moored off Hawaii waiting for a buyer.

They are not even particularly scrupulous with their own class! When some of Bailey's shareholders advocated at least a little industrial investment, they found that due to a

By Tony Cross

the Bailey family had 47% of the votes, although they only owned 8% of the shares! To encourage amicable discussions, no doubt, the company's Annual General Meeting was held on New Year's eve! What a splendid example the bosses set to our "undemocratic" unions!

CH Bailey is of course in the advanced stages of what all the British capitalist class are doing—taking their money out of wealth-creating industry and putting it into speculation and low-wage countries. As *Militant* has often explained, they are not in business to make goods but to make money.

What this means for the working class today is explained by Christopher Bailey: "The fewer men you employ, the safer you are." But only the labour power of the working class creates real wealth. Bailey blindly boasts of a process which rots the very foundations of British capitalism.

Scottish BLOC success

TRADE UNION delegates from all over Scotland, from the NUS in Aberdeen to the TGWU in Galashiels, attended a very successful conference of the Broad Left Organising Committee last Saturday. In all there were over 200 delegates and 50 visitors, from every major trade union.

Miners featured prominently of course. Ian Isaac, from the South Wales NUM Executive, put the case for solidarity action by all trade unionists to force

the NCB and the government to back down and save the coal industry. He was backed up by Joe Owens, from Polkemmet colliery, who expressed the fiery determination of the young miners to win a future for their generation.

Back miners

Support from the railwaymen came via John Milligan, president of the NUR in the West of Scotland. He assured the conference that solidarity ac-

tion would continue despite the harassment by BR management. Jeff Price, USDAW Broad Left presidential candidate, moved a statement demanding a 24-hour general strike and appealed to the NUM to go over the heads of the TUC leaders if they were not prepared to give a lead.

Vivien Seal from Manchester Labour Party gave a report on the effects of the strike on coal stocks for the power industry, Jackie Galbraith conveyed greetings to the conference from the Labour Party Young

Socialists and Terry Fields MP answered Neil Kinno's criticisms of these MPs who were demanding a debate on the miners' strike.

£480 was collected, divided between the NUM and BLOC, and it was agreed to organise a mass picket of Cockenzie power station, in East Lothian, and to lobby the next meeting of the General Council of the Scottish TUC.

**By Gordon McKinley
(GMBATU Scottish Council, in personal capacity)**

Rhondda right attack workers and socialists

ON MONDAY 21 January, non-union private contractors were brought in to break the strike of Rhondda council workers. Rhondda Borough Council is a Labour-controlled authority with one of the biggest majorities in the country.

They intend to introduce a restructuring scheme which would mean the loss of 25 white collar posts on the council staff. As hundreds of tons of rubbish accumulated outside the refuse incinerator at Dinas, the council attempted to move the rubbish over 25 miles to a private tip at Bedlinog in the Rhymney valley.

On Monday morning road blocks were set up at Porth and Penygraig in a co-ordinated police operation to prevent NALGO members attending the picket line. NALGO met the council on Sunday 20 January and it was agreed that private contractors would not be used

Brychan Davies spoke to Gareth Childs, NALGO branch secretary.

until talks resumed on the Tuesday.

The council broke this agreement and non-union contractors were brought in on Monday morning. In an appalling campaign to break the strike, councillors have taken out private adverts in the local press blaming the inconvenience caused to the public on the union branch. This follows the tactics employed by MacGregor and the NCB to break the miners' strike.

The NALGO branch have made it clear that they are willing to sit down and discuss staffing levels with the council but the use of non-union contractors to break picket lines has put the talks in jeopardy. The union will continue to struggle to maintain staffing levels.

LAST YEAR at a special meeting of Rhondda Labour Party *Militant* supporters and LPYS members argued that the only way to fight Tory cuts and rate-capping was to follow the lead of Liverpool City Council in standing up to the Tory government. LPYS members argued that any other course of action would mean the people of Rhondda would suffer.

Right-wing Labour councillors responded to this proposition with a witch-hunt of *Militant* supporters.

However, no amount of witch-hunting will hide the bankrupt policies of the right-wing. Rhondda LPYS have called a public meeting on the dispute. Speakers include Gareth Childs, NALGO branch secretary, Mike Walker, Lady Windsor NUM and Rhondda LPYS. Date and venue to be arranged.

By Steve Watkins, Porth Ward Labour Party, Abercynon NUM.

Girobank resist management

HAVING TASTED blood with the defeat of the Newcastle Central office who were betrayed by the so called "Lefts" on the CPSA executive committee, the Tories have wasted no time in taking the initiative. As

the following report from the CPSA Branch organiser at National Girobank shows, weakness on the part of the union only invites Tory aggression. The only way to defeat this new assault is with the speed and

decisiveness shown at Girobank. FRANK DOYLE reports:

On the 16 January members of the CPSA had their first ever one day strike at National Girobank. The strike, which was magnificently supported by the vast majority of members throughout the UK, was called in response to management's attack on myself, the branch organiser.

I have been suspended from work without pay, had pay deducted for the time spent on union work and had a "serious offence" recorded for five years and told that "future offences" could lead to dismissal. More importantly it should be the start of a campaign to defend our trade union rights.

Management, alarmed by our audacity in making a stand for pay and conditions during 1984 are attempting to shackle the union. They

have taken disciplinary action against union officials for carrying out trade union work which has been done on site since the CPSA branch was formed in 1968. This is not just a one-off individual case, but the start of a serious campaign by management to turn us into a humble Staff Association.

At very short notice the vast majority of CPSA members of the Girobank responded to this attack despite management preventing union officials speaking to members and senior union officials being threatened with legal action.

This day's strike, the first in the bank's history, must be used as a spring-board to campaign amongst the members to support the overtime ban on site and further action if necessary to defend union rights—which have now become a "serious offence".

London DHSS stop

ON 17 January, DHSS offices in London were closed as approximately 1800 staff walked out in a one-day strike in support of a six week stoppage at the West End National Insurance office.

The CPSA and SCPS members at the West End office have been on strike to stop the closure of the office, which is one of the busiest in Britain, and the compulsory transfer of 3 CPSA members (non-mobile grade) to other offices in London.

The solidarity action by London's DHSS offices will hopefully stop management's proposals of compulsory transfer of CPSA members to different offices/departments throughout Britain.

**By Michael Dolphin
CPSA DHSS Enfield/Haringey Branch**

North East shipyard battle?

THE SUNDERLAND shipbuilding yard of Austin & Pickersgill, British Shipbuilders' premier merchant marine plant, is facing imminent closure.

By Tony Carty
(Chairman A&P JSSC, GMBATU, personal capacity)

Our yard, the most modern in Europe, which once turned out the world-beating SD14 every 8 weeks, has been starved of work by BS on the insistence of the Tories. They want to make it an attractive proposition for big business to move in with a new or pared-down workforce and be drip-fed with orders directed to it by the government.

We know there is work available but management insist that everything is up in the air. We have completed two vessels for Ethiopia and their government is after another couple. All that needs to be arranged is the financial package, but the Tories are playing dumb.

Funds are available from the EEC Shipbuilding In-

tervention Fund and/or the ECGB. The Tories, of course, detest the present Ethiopian regime. The Ethiopian minister responsible for shipbuilding orders has stated publicly that he is pleased with A&P work and would have no hesitation in placing the new orders with our yard... if the financial package is right.

The 2,000 men at the yard have given us a mandate to occupy the plant unless guarantees can be given concerning compulsory lay-offs or compulsory redundancies which management will not or cannot give.

We've got to be ready for every stunt BS might pull. Don't forget, Graham Day (Chairman of BS) is on a two year contract at £80,000 p.a. with bonuses. There are extra bonuses, I understand, for having the naval yards ready for privatisation by 1985 and the merchant sector by 1986. That's not a good basis for mutual trust.

Without being parochial, Sunderland cannot afford to lose the A&P jobs. The town has just been recognised as the unemployment blackspot of Europe. 85% of the materials used in A&P come

from the North-east region—itsself an area of extremely high unemployment. The knock-on effect of 3 jobs lost for every 1 in the yard cannot be tolerated.

Day's predecessor, Sir Robert Atkinson, (who I don't think was a regular contributor to the *Militant* Fighting Fund) remarked on TV before Christmas that when he spoke with the Tories on capital investment there was a negative response. However, when he spoke of yard closures: "that was the only time a shining, faraway look came into their eyes". We'd like to produce a dazed look in the Tory eyes as well but for a different reason.

Occupation

Clearly there is no point in completing the orders, letting them leave, and then, with an empty yard, saying: "We're not going to let A&P close!" There's £25 million worth of vessels in the yard at the present and that's our economic lever—we have no other choice. If we were to act as Consett Steelworks did and go by the book—to "play fair" (ie give manage-



Tony Carty

ment the whip-hand)—we'll end up like Consett: with nothing.

The JSSC is 100% in favour of acting upon our mandate. Regrettably, this applies only to the manual workers. The white-collar

unions, APEX, TASS etc, have shown no inclination to join in the the fight to save A&P. I have informed our district official of the possibility of occupation and fully expect action to be forthcoming as agreed in mo-

tions one and two at the delegate conference in Tynemouth last December: in other words a national strike in support of A&P and the industry nationally. The only proviso is that A&P workers endorse that action and it is unthinkable that they would not do so, given the situation we are in.

Voluntary redundancy seekers have always been a problem to trade unionists, but even allowing for the government's intention to terminate the scheme by 1986, we have only 430 volunteers.

It's true they represent a fifth column to us but the mood of the rest of the men (the vast majority) is defiant. They are not prepared to give any credibility to management's claim of around 20 notional orders. We are forced to fight for the same things as the miners this is a mining—under threat as well:

- ★ Save jobs.
- ★ Save our community.
- ★ Save the industry nationally.

Manchester pay claim

IT IS'NT such a happy new year for the workers at the Manchester based firm William Timpson Ltd.

USDAW members in the distribution centre have been given two alternatives on a pay deal. Alternative A will mean an increase from £86.15 per week to £91.15 per week which would be back dated from the 31 December 1984. Alternative B will mean an increase from £81.15 to £90.45 per week which would be back dated from 31 December 1984, and then from 1 July 1985 a further increase of £1.40 to take their weekly wage to £91.85 per week.

When the two offers were put to the workers with a

recommendation from the area official to accept one of the offers, they overwhelmingly rejected them both. Now management are trying to blackmail them by threatening lay-offs and redundancies.

At this stage in the talks the workers are undecided what more to make next. It is clear management are not going to increase the present offer. The only road open is industrial action.

They are very unhappy at the role played by their full-time official during the pay talks. The whole situation shows the need for a fighting leadership on a local and national level.

Stoke Labour council victimisation beaten

EIGHTY PLUMBERS working for Stoke City Council came out on immediate strike last week following the disciplining of EETPU shop steward Dave Furze.

Dave, a well known *Militant* supporter, was suspended on half pay pending a disciplinary hearing into his case, scheduled for two weeks away. It was expected Dave would then be sacked. Normal procedure for the offence he was charged is a warning, so it was a clear case of victimisation.

All the plumbers who heard about the suspension downed tools on the Wednesday afternoon and met outside the main depot on Thursday morning. Management brought forward the disciplinary hearing to Friday morning and the plumbers agreed to work to rule in the meantime.

Management were caught completely unawares by the solidarity shown by the plumbers. They backed down on Friday morning, serving Dave with a written final warning and reinstating him on full pay for the time he had been suspended.

What is most significant about this dispute is that Stoke is probably the strongest Labour Council in the country (57 out of 60 councillors) yet hardly any of the councillors are prepared to talk to the workforce. In fact on Friday morning, in the presence of a councillor, management threatened to use the Tory employment legislation against the union for not calling a ballot.

By Dave Campbell

Shopworkers elections

Broad Left organises

THE USDAW 1985 elections commence on Monday 28 January. Members will begin voting on our entire leadership for the next two years. Sixteen seats on the Executive Council, eight Divisional Councils (each with ten members), the TUC delegations, the Labour Party Annual Conference delegation, the Conference Standing Orders Committee and the USDAW Substitute Parliamentary Panel are all up for election. The most important is the Presidency.

The USDAW Broad Left's candidate for President is Jeff Price of Newcastle branch, contesting the election for the second time and going all out to increase his previous 61,000 votes and win. Jeff is opposing the incumbent President—Syd Tierney, a National Officer in USDAW, who has held the position since 1977. Syd Tierney is well known for his involvement with the right wing on the Labour Party NEC. He has consistently supported the expulsion of socialists from the Labour Party. The right wing voted him chair of the Home Policy committee last year as part of their attempt to break the influence of national conference on the formation of policy and the election manifesto.

Jeff Price aims to equip USDAW with a fighting leadership. He has called for a campaign throughout the union to mobilise the membership to win a minimum wage of £100 for 35 hours. USDAW members are in a calamitous situation. They face attacks on all fronts. The bosses and the

By Mick Wainwright
(North Western Divisional Councillor & Broad Left candidate for Executive Council in North West Division)

Tory government are determined to force down their living standards still further—on top of the systematic fall in standards which has already taken place over the last six years. It is imperative that USDAW members have a leadership which is equally determined and able to stand up to this onslaught.

Slate

USDAW members can do this by voting Jeff Price for President and Broad Left candidates for the Executive and Divisional Councils. Moreover, they can vote for the Broad left candidates standing for the various delegations to conferences to ensure that their interests are properly represented at these important conferences.

In a few months time the whole union will be electing

a new general secretary. Therefore all these elections should be seen as of the utmost importance. The general secretary is the most important position in the union and a good result for the Broad Left in these elections would auger well for the Broad Left candidate for general secretary, national officer, Bill Connor.


Attend your USDAW branch meeting in the course

of the next six weeks and make sure that it casts its votes for the Broad Left candidates. The need for a fighting leadership has never been more urgent. Vote Broad Left! Vote Jeff Price!

For further information about the USDAW Broad Left contact Mick Wainwright on 0253 693516 or Jeff Price 0632 367000.

USDAW Presidential Elections
28th January to 4th March 1985

VOTE JEFF PRICE



As President **JEFF PRICE** will fight for:—

- £100 for a 35-hour week
- A fightback against redundancies and closures
- A better deal for part-time workers
- Vigorous opposition to the abolition of the 1950 Shops Act
- A united trade union campaign against low pay—equal pay and conditions for women workers
- The return of a Labour government committed to socialist policies
- A fightback against Tory trade union laws
- A fighting union leadership that stands by its members...

FOR A FIGHTING USDAW LEADERSHIP

Militant

Give youth a future

Pages 8-9

USDAW election

Page 15

THE government's proposal to bar 16 and 17 year olds from supplementary benefit if they refuse places on the Youth Training Scheme will meet a massive show of opposition.

By Tony Cox
YTURC Secretary

The Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign (YTURC) and the Labour Party Young Socialists campaign on YTS are building for the march on parliament on 28 February. All signs are that it will be even more successful than the 3,000 strong lobby of parliament in February 1982.

That lobby showed the Tories the opposition to their plans to introduce some kind of industrial conscription for school leavers then and forced them to back down.

The march on 28 February will be an ideal opportunity for young workers to show the Tories what they think of their latest bright scheme.

No choice for youth

Mrs Thatcher thinks it's an excellent idea adding "unemployment ought not to be a choice, young people ought not to be idle, it is very bad for them". Reading this and other gems she has asounded us with before, you wonder whether she comes from another planet.

To suggest that young people in the inner cities for example have a "choice"

Stop industrial conscription

whether to remain idle is like saying you have a choice what colour hair you're born with. West Midlands County Council reported recently that in 1983/4 they had a total of 13,422 school leavers chasing 567 jobs.

Profits for the bosses

Approximately 19% of school leavers opted for YTS during 1984. Anyone thinking it would give them a better chance of finding proper employment at the end of their "training" would have been disappointed. MSC figures show that 116,000 trainees left the schemes in 1983/4 and went straight on the dole.

The only people who seem to benefit from YTS are the bosses like the Sainsbury family, chain store owners, who snapped up the opportunity of taking YTS trainees. Their complex training programme has a demanding course on price marking, a difficult science requiring heavy mental concentration marking prices on tinned goods and other produce.

If living in poverty to be charitable to the Sainsbury millionaires doesn't cheer you up, if you don't want to



be forced on to YTS or have your benefit stopped, if you want a decent future with a decent job—join us. Come along to the march on 28 February and throw a

spanner in Tory plans to introduce industrial conscription. Tell your friends to come along too. Fight back with YTURC now.

Miners

From page one

falls to the NUM. The special delegate conference on 30 January must launch a call to action. Already 11 February has been proclaimed by both the South East and Yorkshire Regions of the TUC as a day of action. The miners' union must appeal to all workers to make it a nationwide one-day general strike.

If this call is vigorously campaigned for, then 11 February can be the blow to send Thatcher reeling and force her to back down.

A perfect example of what is needed was the demonstration on Wednesday at Cockenzie power station in East Lothian. On the initiative of the Scottish Broad Left Co-ordinating Committee, 300-350 trade unionists, from the EETPU, TGWU, GMBATU, CPSA, NUPE and the FBU joined

striking miners to leaflet the power workers.

They appealed to them not to use scab oil and showed them that they would not be isolated if they took action. We did more in this demonstration than in the whole strike so far to organise solidarity action. This initiative must be followed at national level.

Any failure to turn this into strike action could be paid for dearly. Hesitation will provoke the Tories to even more aggression. There must be no retreats. The striking miners need above all a strategy to involve them in the fight for victory.

The still small numbers returning to work do so mainly because they see no clear initiative to break the deadlock. It is up to the union leaders to break it decisively in the workers' favour. That is the challenge of 11 February.

What needs to be done:

Miners:—

- ★ NUM Conference to appeal for all-out general strike on 11 February.
- ★ Leaflets, visits and NUM speakers at every workplace, especially power stations, oil terminals and transport depots.
- ★ Call shop stewards' conference in every major city.
- ★ Appeal to every trade unionist.

Shop stewards and union activists:—

- ★ Invite miners to speak at shop stewards committees, mass meetings and factory gate meetings.
- ★ Block all movement of coal and supplies of oil and oxygen to power stations.
- ★ All out on 11 February.

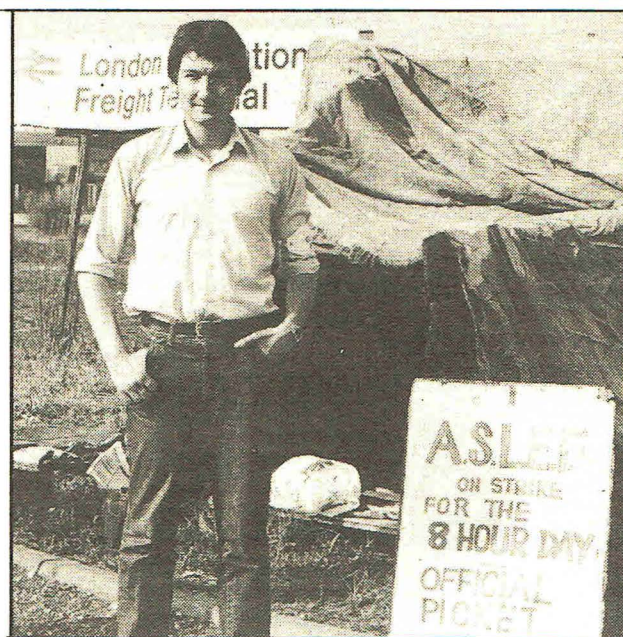
Brychan Davies

From page one

witch-hunts.

Brychan Davies will continue to fight the attempt to exclude him from the party, which failed the first time it came to the NEC because of the ludicrous nature of the allegations and the glaring inconsistencies in the flimsy "evidence" against him.

In the light of the forgery placed before the NEC, Brychan is taking further legal advice and intends to take action to win reinstatement. Every section of the party and trade union movement needs to flood the NEC with resolutions and letters of protest at this outrageous act.



ASLEF and NUR members will fight to defend their jobs.

Rail unions

From page one

The BRB and government are in any case planning a deluge of cuts and closures plus the cancellation of electrification plans and of new locos and rolling stock. They are playing a cynical double game, using cuts to frighten union leaders and using lost traffic due to the strike as an excuse for cuts they intend to introduce anyway. The Serpell Report and the corporate plan were drawn up long before the coal dispute.

Now the BRB are keeping the threat of legal action hanging over us while talking of hitting pay rises.

The rail union leaderships must fight these threats with

the same urgency as the rank and file.

A meeting of ASLEF members in London has called for national strike action now. Kings Cross ASLEF have called a meeting on 24 January open to other ASLEF and NUR members, to co-ordinate strike action while Sheffield and Chesterfield NUR district council are now constituted as a permanent strike committee ready for action.

Our unions must step up support for the miners to halt the movement of all coal, oil, etc, bring pressure on TGWU to enforce blacking and stamp out scabbing. We must directly approach power station workers to withdraw co-operation from those who undermine our action and steal our work.

The national rail union leadership must respond immediately to the latest news of further job losses and cuts. They should call all-out, indefinite strike action by the entire membership to halt victimisation; to defeat the attacks on the industry; and to give full backing for the miners, whose defeat or victory will directly affect all railworkers.

It is essential that ASLEF and NUR branches conduct a vigorous campaign to demand that the national leadership call such action. At the same time every effort should be made at local level to ensure maximum strike action on 11 February.

By Andy Viner
(Kings Cross ASLEF)



BECOME A Send to Militant, 3/13 Hepscoott Road, London E9 5HB.

Militant SUPPORTER!

Name

Address

SUBSCRIBE!

BRITAIN & IRELAND	EUROPE (by air)	REST OF WORLD (by air)
13 issues . . . £5.00	26 issues . . . £11.00	25 issues . . . £16.00
26 issues . . . £10.00	52 issues . . . £22.00	52 issues . . . £32.00

Name

Address

Make cheques payable to Militant, and to return to the Circulation Department, Militant, 3/13 Hepscoott Road, London E9 5HB.

Donate

I would like to donate £ . . . p each week /month to the fighting fund.

Sell

I would like to sell papers per week (minimum 5) on a sale or return basis.