

Militant

Rate-capping news see page three



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Party time for rich

FOR THE idle rich in this casino economy life's one big party. Not for them the tears of shock when the redundancy notices come round. Not for them the unending treadmill of trying to make ends meet as the bills pile up. They are having a good time.

Monday night saw Viscount Althorp, the Princess of Wales' brother, spend £100,000 on his 21st birthday party. The 300 upperclass revellers got through £20,000 worth of booze in scenes, as the *Daily Star* (May 21) put it, "reminiscent of pre-revolutionary Czarist Russia."

This was not just a one-off binge for the rich. This week the *Financial Times* reported that big business spends £17.4 billion a year on its executives and customers for travel and entertainment. It's more than they pay in corporation tax or on local authority rates.

Making millions

Thanks to the Tories the bosses are getting richer all the time. There's now 8,000 millionaires in this country—the largest number ever.

Meanwhile in the real world, this week saw yet more redundancies—thousands of jobs to go in British Rail and London Transport, and hundreds more in British steel. In the coal fields following the miners' strike, the Tories are enacting their revenge—8,000 mining jobs have already gone with another 13,000 to go.

The Tory economic disaster goes on unabated. The latest report from

the Department of Employment shows the catastrophic collapse of the manufacturing industry, which in the past formed the basis of Britain's wealth. In the 1960s there were nine million employed in manufacturing—now it is less than 5½ million. 27,000 manufacturing jobs have gone this year alone.

Inflation is back

And now inflation is back too, making its biggest jump in four years. Today's inflation of 6.9 per cent is the result of a sharp increase in prices in April. The weak pound meant rising costs of imports. Rates, rents, water and prescription charges all went up. The banks put up mortgages for the third time in less than a year. All these are the direct result of Tory policies. Yet still the Tories try to offload the crisis onto our backs, squeezing wages and living standards to maintain profits.

The Tories' system has nothing to offer but more job losses, more cuts while the rich sit back with money to burn as their profits soar. The Tories must go and a Labour government brought in—not one that tries to tinker with the system like right wing governments of the past, but a government committed to socialist policies. Policies that can overhaul the system and introduce a socialist plan of production, that can ensure a decent job, a decent wage and a decent life for all.

By Bob Wade



we foot the bill

Weller backs youth rights campaign

SUPPORT IS growing for the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign, which was thrown out of its offices last week by the Labour Party National Executive. Money and messages of support have been flooding in.

The best donation so far is £500 from Paul Weller of Style Council. Chris Smith MP, Secretary of the Tribune Group, has sent £20 and said, "I am writing to re-affirm my support for YTURC's work in arguing for proper training and work

opportunities for young people."

Over £50 was raised at the CPSA conference and £20 by staff at the Labour Party HQ at Walworth Road. Merseyside County Council leader Keva Coombes has sent a letter of protest to the NEC.

YTURC was set up in 1981 to fight for trade union rights and better conditions on government schemes. We have organised lobbies of Parliament, 2,500 and 5,000 strong, in 1982 and 1985, and campaigned for proper

health and safety on YTS.

The 1983 Labour Party conference voted to "fully support the aims and objectives of YTURC". The 1984 conference voted to "congratulate the work of the YTURC". At the 28 Feb YTURC lobby of Parliament, Neil Kinnock said, "The YTURC is genuinely committed to mobilising and informing young people, and my view substantially concurs with the view of YTURC".

How urgently YTURC needs backing is shown by

the case of Stuart McEwan, a trainee at a garage in Ayrshire. On 26 February he was crushed to death under a car ramp. His parents have had no help from the Manpower Services Commission. We are helping them to organise a campaign for proper compensation, putting them in touch with local trade unions and other parents whose children have died on YTS.

Without an office and a phone we won't be able to carry on such work.

We have been offered a new office but it will cost

The School Students' Action Committee has called a founding conference for a schools students' union on 15 JUNE in Liverpool. All schools can send representatives. Contact SSAC, 109 Rannoch Road, London W6 for further details.

£350 a month just for rent. We are appealing to all our supporters to take out a standing order or make a donation to our funds.

Plans are still underway for the biggest YTURC rally yet, the Mass March for Real Jobs in Liverpool on 29 June. Arthur Scargill has been invited to speak, Derek Hatton has already agreed to. Music will be provided by China Crisis and Billy Bragg.

Leaflets and posters are now available:

—Special schools leaflets, General leaflet: £4 per 1000, inc post and packing.

—Posters: £2 per 100. —Petitions and leaflets: cost of post only.

Available from YTURC (cash with orders), 109 Rannoch Road, London W6.

By Tony Cox
(Secretary YTURC)

Success provokes attacks

GROWING SUPPORT for the ideas of *Militant*, and the success of campaigns which it has backed, has brought forth an unprecedented wave of attacks.

In Wales and Scotland, in the TGWU and NUPE, calls have been made for action to be taken against *Militant* supporters or the organisers of the outstandingly successful Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign.

Terrified

The more young people are drawn into the labour movement and learn about the ideas of socialism, the more terrified are the right, and formerly left, wing leaders of the Labour Party and the trade unions.

A whole generation is invading the political arena, a generation hardened by the experience of growing

up in Thatcher's Britain. They are a challenge to the traditional leaders of the movement and will certainly not be intimidated by these attempts to curb them by organisational restrictions.

These moves to bring back bans and proscriptions against Marxist activists will provoke a massive counter-attack from within every constituency Labour Party and trade union. There is no way that Marxism will be expelled from the movement.

All activists will be organising to get resolutions and protests flooding in to drive back these attacks. Far from being deterred they will only be more determined than ever to keep up the fight to get rid of the Tories and bring to power a Labour government committed to socialist policies.



Photo: LA Barratt

The explosive growth of support for *Militant* among working class youth has alarmed many labour leaders—they've responded with organisational and bureaucratic attacks

Wakefield success

OVER 120 people packed into the Wakefield Labour Club last Friday to hear Denby Grange NUM member, Nigel Pearce and *Militant* editor Peter Taaffe outlining the case for Marxist policies.

Further emphasis of the growth in our support was provided by the fighting fund collection, which, ably conducted by Gerry Wright, raised £430.77 another record for this part of the world.

By Ann Johnson
Secretary Wakefield West LPYS

Liverpool answers Wright

GEORGE WRIGHT, right-wing candidate for General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union recently spoke at Halewood Labour Club. He said he did not know enough about Liverpool politics to get too involved, but maintained that the way forward for the party was to get the *Militant* tendency out.

If elected said Mr Wright, he would do all in his power to prevent the *Militant* tendency using the union as a means of gaining control in local Labour Parties.

In answer to these attacks, the Liverpool City Council Campaign Committee, issued the following statement:

"We are surprised that George Wright should attack Liverpool council during this critical period in our struggle against the Tory government. If this struggle is lost 6,000 jobs will go. Liverpool council has a proud record of building houses, and creating jobs. The Transport and General Workers Union locally have consistently supported us in implementing those policies.

"In fact at a time when T&G membership in local authorities is on the decline because other councils are carrying out Tory government cuts, Liverpool membership has increased because of the new job opportunities brought about by Liverpool council...

"We can only conclude that somehow he believes that by assisting the Tories in their battle against the people in Liverpool, George Wright thinks he stands a better chance of becoming General Secretary of the TGWU".

"Those of us who are campaigning for an election win for Labour are obviously concerned that such senior members of the Labour Party seem determined to undermine electoral success".

By our Liverpool correspondent

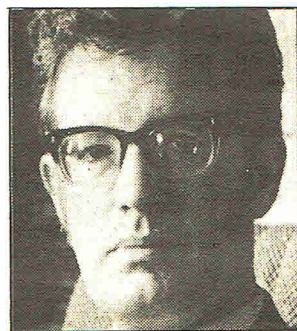
NUPE leaders back call for purge

DELEGATES CAME to the NUPE conference looking for answers to serious challenges. Not only are our members amongst the lowest paid, we are also in the firing line of the Thatcher government's onslaught.

Unfortunately we saw in the first session of conference a vicious attack on *Militant* supporters based on distortions and sheer lies. The leader of this attack said from the rostrum: "What we will see will not be a witch-hunt but a purge, which will make Stalin look like a social worker".

Dismay

At a time when maximum unity is required to defend members' jobs and conditions of services, members will be dismayed to hear that this witch-hunting resolution was passed with the support



Rodney Bickerstaffe, NUPE General Secretary—the 'left' EC supported the witch-hunt resolution.

of a supposedly 'left' EC by about a two-thirds majority.

It is no accident that the debate was taken at the start of the conference before delegates who support the ideas of *Militant* could have a chance to prove themselves on the floor of conference.

NUPE members will be asking: 'why a witch-hunt?' The answer to this question could be found in the course of the debates on low-pay, privatisation and the Health Service. Each time delegates

spoke of the need for a national campaign, each time the EC opposed on the basis that a propaganda campaign was taking place. This is good in itself, but not enough to beat the Tories.

The Bexley/East Kilbride composite on low-pay for example demanded:

a) Calling a national meeting of all full-time officials to enthuse them for the tasks involved in mounting a campaign of this nature.

b) Calling a special Executive Council meeting to discuss the strategy of the campaign.

c) Ensuring that special stewards' briefing conferences are held in every division, open to NUPE stewards in the service or services concerned.

d) Circulating leaflets, posters and stickers to stewards by early September 1985 at the latest.

e) Ensuring that special branch, sectional and workplace meetings have

been organised by early September 1985 at the latest, to take the campaign to the membership.

f) Failing a satisfactory response from the employers, special rallies should be organised on a regional basis within the divisions open to all workers in the service concerned.

g) These rallies should be used to win support for a 24-hour national stoppage.

h) Failing a satisfactory response from the employers the 24-hour stoppage should be used as a springboard for industrial action in support of the claim on a national scale.

No strategy

Unfortunately this was defeated on the basis of an EC recommendation. With no clear national strategy Barking and Addenbrooks workers have been left to fight alone.

An enormous gulf exists between the delegates'

understanding of the scale of the challenge facing their members shown by the many marvellous examples given by delegates on the one hand, and the lack of a strategy for victory on the other. The right-wing were unfortunately helped in a number of debates by the childish antics of certain ultra-left delegates.

But throughout the conference the intervention of delegates who support the ideas of the Broad Left and of *Militant* led to many delegates approaching us to get involved.

Two alternatives now face the NUPE leadership; a continuation of present policy which will mean NHS workers, local authority workers and others being left to fight alone, or the mobilisation of the membership in preparation for national action.

By a NUPE delegate

Welsh Labour ranks move to left

AT THIS year's Labour Party Wales conference at Llandudno Chris Peace, a *Militant* supporter from Cardiff North topped the poll in the CLP section for the EC in almost a clean sweep to the left. More *Militants* were sold than ever before and a record collection of £108 took place at the *Militant* readers' meeting.

The debate on party unity was one of the best of conference. Richard Morgan of Bridgend LPYS stressed the importance of Labour's youth and how any attacks on the Young Socialists would divert them from their path of winning youth to Labour. The motion was passed overwhelmingly.

Roy Hattersley, Neil Kinnock and Larry Whitty all stressed the need for party unity at a time when the Tories were deeply divided and tensions were mounting

in the SDP/Liberal Alliance.

It was therefore ironic that George Wright should then move a resolution calling on CLPs to take action against the *Militant* supporters and for the EC to investigate the LPYS. He was backed by Aberavon CLP. The GMBATU then moved a card vote and called for the removal of this "cancer in the party".

Six speakers spoke for and three against—Alex Thraves of Swansea District Labour Party, Derek Gregory of NUPE and Terry Thomas of the NUM. Alex slammed in to the resolution, accusing the right wing of destroying party unity and trying to start civil war in the party. The motion was passed by 350,000 to 131,000. A small number of big block votes was decisive, constituency parties were overwhelmingly opposed as was proved by their votes for the executive.

Northern Ireland election results

IN THE Northern Ireland local elections, the Tories scored a major victory. Out of 565 seats, the Orange Tories (Democratic and Official Unionists) won 332, the Green Tories (SDLP) won 101, and the Yellow Tories (Alliance Party) won 34. Provisional Sinn Fein won 59 seats.

Only seven out of 1,000 candidates were Labour, including three fielded by the Labour and Trade Union Group, who held successful canvassing campaigns in all the main working class areas of Pottinger, in East Belfast, Lagan Bank in South Belfast and Upper Falls in West Belfast.

About 30-40 people indicated that they wished to join, and hundreds of *Militants* were sold. We received 100 votes in Lagan

Bank, where a candidate of the old NILP received 79, 218 in Pottinger and 238 in Upper Falls.

The lesson to be drawn is that activists must redouble their efforts to construct a mass Labour Party in Northern Ireland. In Britain, Labour Party and trade union members must push to implement the 1981 LP conference policy to support the convening of a conference of Labour in Northern Ireland to begin the process of setting up a Labour Party (full report next week).

By Manus McGuire
(NI Labour and Trade Union Group)

Scots executive condemns YTURC

THE SCOTTISH Executive of the Labour Party has deplored the school strike organised by the West of Scotland Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign (YTURC). It has also censured the Chair of the LPYS in Scotland for her involvement in supporting the strike of 21 March and subsequent demonstration in Glasgow on 27 April.

The SEC meeting of 11

May called for a national enquiry into YTURC with a view to "reforming its structure".

The colossus of the "hard lefts", so-called, in Scotland has looked into the eyes of thousands of school students screaming protest at Toryism and instead of welcoming them to the labour movement with open arms, they joined hands with the right wing and issued a stinging

castigation.

Instead of praise, there has been pillory, a fact which will surely mean hundreds of messages, resolutions and letters being sent to the Scottish Labour Party secretary supporting the work of YTURC and asking the Scottish Executive to think again.

By Bob Wylie

USDAW election



Bill Connor

Vote for Bill Connor

THE ELECTION for the next General Secretary of USDAW is now well underway. The first results are beginning to come in and the indications are very good for BILL CONNOR. The Broad Left is increasingly confident that if all Broad Left supporters make the necessary effort, that victory can be won.

Good news is that Bradford (S) branch, which nominated one of the right wing candidates voted for Bill despite intense opposition from the right-wing.

This could be repeated all across the country. Attend your USDAW branch meeting between now and Monday, 24 June and vote for BILL CONNOR.

Deputies spur campaign to stop closures

By a NACODS member

THE DECISION of NACODS to implement an overtime ban has to be welcomed.

It represents a shift in the mood of even NACODS leaders and a welcome realisation that the Coal Board are not willing to listen to 'reasoned argument' but merely carry out the dictates of Thatcher and her cronies.

Worthless

Procedures and agreements, including the concession of an "independent element" in the colliery review procedure, are just worthless scraps of paper to McGregor unless backed up by industrial force.

However, the overtime ban has met with a mixed response from NUM members. Some miners feel that this action represents 'too little, too late'. But any bitterness towards the deputies' union for their failure to rally to the aid of the NUM during their dispute should not be allowed to cloud the issue.

Besides, many individual NACODS members played an excellent supportive role

in the miners' strike. The stand NACODS is taking now is at least an attempt to continue the fight to save jobs and defend the mining industry.

The NCB and the government have completely miscalculated the mood in the coal industry as can be seen from the number of local disputes. Around 25% of the Yorkshire coalfield have been involved in strike action at one stage or another in the last four weeks. Limited strike action could also possibly develop in Yorkshire over the closure announcements (particularly Darfield Main) The NACODS overtime ban should be supported as a part of this overall struggle.

The NUM should take advantage of current circumstances to raise the question of closer co-operation between themselves and NACODS as a first step to amalgamating the two unions. One union for the entire industry would be in the best interests of all mineworkers. Closer co-operation now will also prepare the ground for unity in action at a later stage when the membership again find it necessary to move in to struggle.

Class war prisoners

DENNIS Pennington's letter of dismissal was sent to his home immediately he was sentenced to three months imprisonment. He was sentenced at 4pm on 19 February and the letter arrived at his house on the morning of 20 February.

The fight to reinstate him to his job at Bold colliery in Lancashire is one part of the nationwide campaign for a general amnesty.

His treatment in prison highlights the fact that the jailed miners are not criminals but class war prisoners. As Dennis told me:

"While I was in jail it became official policy to keep miners separate. The screws tried to undermine your loyalty to your

union—suggesting that we were merely pawns of Arthur Scargill. They couldn't or wouldn't understand that the rank and file were fighting for our jobs and communities. . . . near the end of my time at Kirkham Prison I heard there was a young Yorkshire miner doing 18 months. I managed to make contact with him at the week-end. He told me of another miner who had been sacked as soon as he was imprisoned, but after his father had gone to his pit to protest that he had been sentenced for burglary rather than picketing, he was told his job would be kept open for him.

"Since I got out I've been given the run around by the NCB and the DHSS. My P45 showed me having

received my back holiday pay so the SS wanted to take that into account. On checking I found that the money was sent to the pit while I was inside who then sent it back. I've got to write off for it. The DHSS wanted to know how much redundancy I'd received although the reason given for my dismissal was 'term of imprisonment'. All this petty harassment is an attempt to break your spirit".

Dennis is determined to continue his fight for full reinstatement and remains absolutely convinced that the strike was justified. The labour movement must give 100% backing to the fight.

★ Amnesty for all sacked miners.

No rate set in Lambeth

LAMBETH COUNCIL has still not set a rate, but only by default.

A no-rate resolution was put to a meeting of the council last Wednesday, 15 May, but was defeated by 32 votes to 31. Two Labour councillors, Janet Boston and Stuart Capebread voted with the Tories and a third, Vince Leon, abstained despite having supported the no-rate amendment two minutes earlier.

As no other budget resolution was on the table, the previous no-rate position of the council still stands. It is thought another budget proposal will be put at a special council meeting called for by the Tories on 29 May.

Heckling

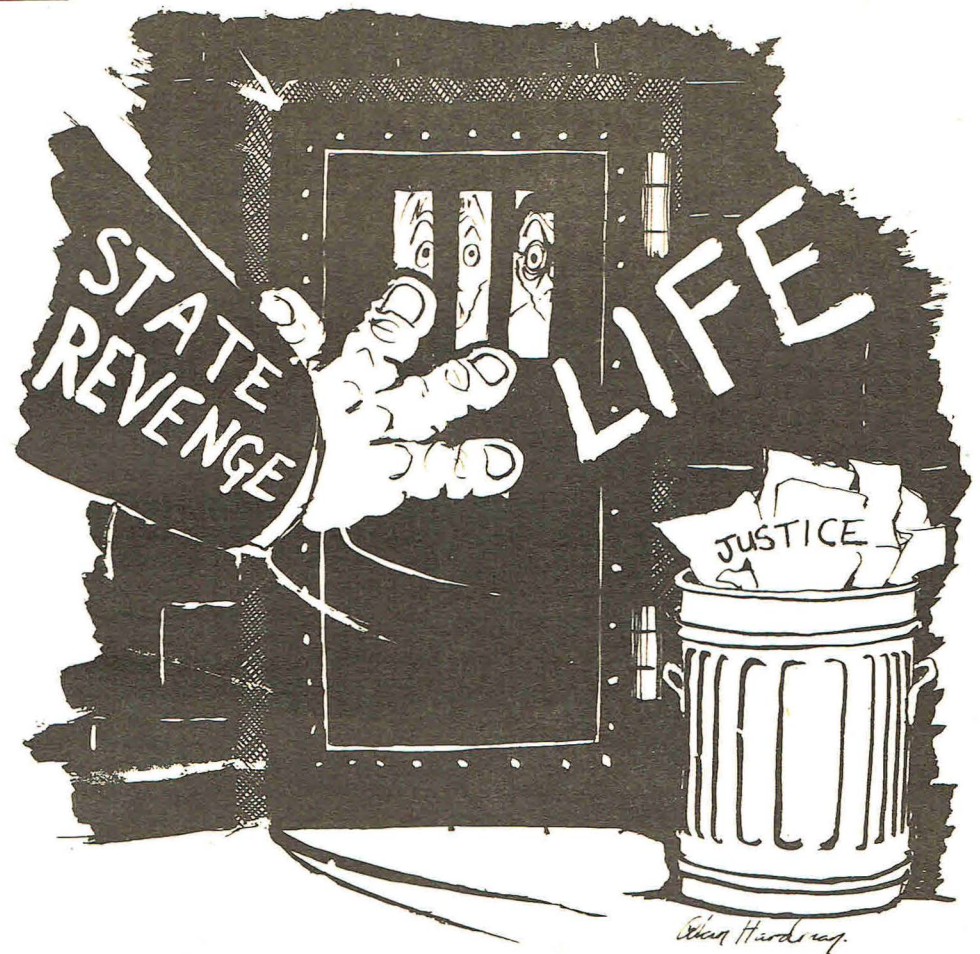
Fifty people watched the meeting from the gallery, while another 300 people watched the meeting on videos in other rooms in Lambeth town hall. The meeting was punctuated by constant heckling from the gallery, and the Mayor, Pat Williams, repeatedly asked noisy Tory councillors who mainly abused Ted Knight, to "sit down and shut up".

Renegade councillor Janet Boston said a rate within the government limit was enough to maintain the 1984 level of services. The gallery shouted "What about next year?". She said that implementing the budget would need a lot of hard work; "and cuts" shouted the gallery.

Councillor Hazel Smith spoke for many when she answered the renegades, saying the Tories wanted money for their priorities—in the city, in Fortress Falklands and in US bases. It came at the same time as punitive cuts in Housing Benefit, hospital closures and the suggested privatisation of British Gas.

Staying within the government guidelines would not just mean cuts but rents up by £4 a week and she said no Labour councillors could vote for that.

By Steve Nally
(Vauxhall LPYS)



Hackney workers stall right's budget

LAST WEEK the Hackney council Joint Shop Stewards' Committee occupied the town hall after right-wing Labour councillors attempted to set a rate and push through cuts.

In response to a call by the JSSC, town hall staff went home early, locking up the building, and the few right-wing councillors who turned up got the door slammed in their face.

Earlier, the right wing in the Labour Group defied the decision of the borough conference of Hackney Labour Party and voted left wingers off all the committees, preparing to push through a cuts budget.

Southwark

SOUTHWARK labour movement organisations are moving quickly to censure backstabbing Labour councillors who have attempted to set a rate.

Demands for their immediate resignation have already come from a number of Labour Party branches across the three constituencies which form the borough.

The borough-wide Local Government Committee has

The action of the JSSC stopped the right-wing in their tracks. However, on Monday night the Labour Group, on the casting vote of the chairman, adopted the budget, against the opposition of the left-wing.

The right-wing's budget, which they admit is a "sophisticated version of the Liberals' budget", would mean £6 million's worth of cuts, over half achieved through not filling vacancies. The situation is already dire. Where I work at a day centre for mentally handicapped people, unfilled vacancies are already affecting the service we can offer—to make that situation permanent

also called for the immediate resignation of those councillors who do not "feel able" to face possible surcharge and disqualification.

The renegades' panic at the first inkling of legal action towards the end of April has been shown to be particularly spineless with the arrival of another District Auditor's letter again threatening action unless councillors make a lawful rate "at the earliest opportunity and in any event before the end of May".

Newly elected council deputy leader John Bryan

would be intolerable.

The unions are already fighting back though. There was a strike last week in the housing department over non-filling of vacancies!

If the right-wing do succeed and push through their budget, the trade unions have pledged to fight every cut with a no-cover policy and strike action.

STOP PRESS

HACKNEY COUNCIL'S latest budget meeting was adjourned on 21 May, with no rate being set, after workers occupied the Town Hall for the second time.

By Maureen Wade
(NALGO steward)

told *Militant*: "The policy of the party, the LGC, and the Labour group remains one of deferring setting a rate. There is another Tory requisitioned council meeting on 22 May. Those of us who remain committed to that policy will do everything in our power to fight for it and defend council jobs and services—not just this year, but for the future."

By Paul Traynor
(Peckham CLP, personal capacity)

Amnesty now!

★ No pit closures without full agreement of the NUM.
★ Workers control and management of the NCB.

By Gerry Lerner

Sentence of revenge

TRADE UNIONISTS everywhere will be appalled by the barbarity of the life sentences imposed on two 21 year old Welsh miners, Dean Hancock and Russell Shankland. Their own NUM lodges have already been back out on strike in disgust at the sentences, and protest demonstrations have taken place.

Any worker would have been moved by the reported scenes in the court room. One of the young miners wept uncontrollably when the sentence was announced. The other held his head in horror. In the public gallery there were scenes of unrestrained grief and hysteria among their relatives and friends.

The killing of the taxi driver, while transporting a scab to work can in no respect be condoned. The methods of the labour movement are based on mass activity, on appeals for workers' solidarity and assistance, not on individual acts of violence. At the time his death only served to make it more difficult for the miners to get active support from other trade unionists.

But this desperate action came after six months on strike, when the capitalist class, its government, its press and its forces of law and order declared war

on the NUM. Thousands of miners had been arrested, hundreds injured and miners' pickets killed. Yet no one had been charged with assaulting strikers.

A few individual strike breakers were being used by the NCB with massive police protection and media approval to try to weaken a justified battle, supported by the overwhelming majority of miners.

How can a well-heeled Tory judge, completely removed from the experiences of working class life, have any conception of the pressures of months of struggle without pay, relying on cash donated by other trade unionists and on food parcels? Capitalist justice means that workers are tried and judged by people so remote and ignorant of the conditions and circumstances of everyday life that they may as well have come from another planet.

The judge's vindictiveness and the miners' experiences during the strike cannot have left many NUM members with much faith in the myth of the "impartiality" of the law. There is a feeling that the punishment meted out, two months after the end of the strike, is an act of revenge by the capitalist state, against a union that dared to stand up to the Tory government.

The two Welsh miners are not criminals. They were participating in a fight for jobs, communities and the preservation of the NUM. They did not act for personal gain. It is clear that they had no intention to

kill the working miner, and least of all the taxi driver. In no way can they be compared, for example to the army gun instructor sentenced to life a day after them, who cold-bloodedly shot three other soldiers in order to seize a payroll.

These young miners were misguided, but acted out of frustration and despair, unable to see how this gruelling strike could quickly be brought to a successful conclusion. Had they been given a clear strategy to win the practical support of other workers—the key to securing a victory—they, along with thousands of other ordinary miners, could have been mobilised to that end. The tragedy would not then have occurred.

Dean Hancock and Russel Shankland are victims of the class war. As their former workmates made clear, they must not be forgotten or deserted now. The whole labour movement has a duty to vigorously take up the miners' amnesty campaign.

Labour must give a clear commitment that on returning to office it will release those miners imprisoned as a result of their historic strike, and guarantee them their jobs back.

In fighting for socialist change Labour must also include in its programme measures for the replacement of the public-school and upper class judicial system by one in which working people are genuinely judged before their social equals.

Jail for not paying fine

LABOUR PARTY member and Militant supporter Bob Harker from Gateshead East is set to face a prison sentence after refusing to pay a fine on trumped charges of 'threatening behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace'. (See last week's Militant)

The charges arose from an incident at Wearmouth colliery on 5 March when police attempted to prevent striking miners returning to work at the end of the year long strike.

The prosecution also claimed that Bob (all ten stones of him) pulled two burly police officers to the ground, injuring one, the inspector, who is well over six feet, in what was described as a 'fit of violent struggle'.

Nothing could be so far from the truth! On the day in question Bob, who had been invited to participate in the march by the Gateshead Miners' Dependents Support Group, in which he's been actively involved since week one of the strike, was seen at the rallying point organising the Gateshead children to sing songs for the benefit of a Channel 4 documentary team.

For a good part of the march he stayed with the support group near the back, continuing to boost the morale of the miners' wives by laughing and joking with them and singing with their children.

Bob's only 'crime' it seems was his decision to go to the front of the march as it approached the pit gates with the sole intention to clap hands as they walked on through. Unknown to him and hundreds of others, the police had decided to stop the procession only yards before it reached its destiny.

The three policemen's evidence, which on a number of occasions contradicted one another, was basically as follows:

Police 'evidence'

"The accused, on clearly seeing a police sergeant indicating to the marchers to head away from the gates, hesitated and then along with others deliberately charged the police lines... At first he was pushed back but again came forward waving his fists in air and this time pulling two constables to the

ground... He was then arrested and taken to Sunderland police station along with miner Bob Liddle (who has since not been found not guilty) in a police van".

Bob then explained exactly what happened immediately before and during his arrest:

"Just before the pit gates I was at the front of the march when suddenly the policemen lined up across the road only yards in front of us. It is true that I hesitated along with those in the band for we knew nothing of what was happening. I saw a policeman who I thought was signalling to a lodge official to come forward and see what the problem was. The crowd behind the banner and around the corner, who obviously could see nothing of all this, kept on marching and singing.

It was at this point the police surged forward and I found myself, still with my hands in my pockets, squashed up against the policemen. I was grabbed from behind and thrown to the ground by a policeman and my cap fell off. On the ground I reached out my hand to grab my cap and as I did so a policeman knelt on my back and twisted both my arms up and dragged me away... I did not speak at all!"

Witness

This evidence was supported by a witness, a school-teacher, who produced a photograph which she had taken only seconds before Bob's arrest. The photo clearly shows Bob standing with his hands in his pockets near to the band and causing no trouble what-so-ever! The magistrates however, found Bob guilty and ordered him to be bound over on the sum of £200 for two years along with a fine.

Bob refused point blank to accept the magistrates' verdict. He was then given an even greater fine which he once again refused to pay. Speaking in a polite voice he said "With respect sir, if I had deliberately set out to cause trouble on the day the miners were going back to work and where there were many women and children present I would plead guilty and expect the book thrown at me. But I am not guilty and therefore I can-



School students on strike on 25 April outside St Georges Hall, Liverpool.

Photo: Dave Sinclair.

Kirkby students fight charges

AS MILITANT goes to press, a number of students from comprehensive schools in Kirkby are appearing in court facing various civil disorder charges, following their arrest during the nationwide school strike on 25 April.

They are appearing in Kirkby Magistrates court on 23 May. But this victimisation is being fought; a Kirkby Students Defence Committee has been set up, consisting of students, parents, sympathetic teachers and LPYS members.

The committee was formed on 7

May, and community worker Alan Kelly was elected chairman, with LPYS member George Beech as secretary.

The committee aims to defend all those students who were arrested or suspended and expelled from school, following the half-day strike. At the group's second meeting on 16 May, the meeting was addressed by John Mallon, one of those arrested.

The arrests took place in Kirkby Town centre as students assembled for the demonstration against

YTS conscription. John says he was sitting on a wall eating his dinner when he was arrested. He was locked in a police cell for six hours and was not allowed to see his parents.

Meanwhile union committees are being set up in Kirkby's four comprehensive schools. At present each school has a representative on the newly formed School Students Union in Merseyside.

By Steve O'Brian
 (Kirkby LPYS)

not and will not pay this court one single penny. I am sorry but that is the way I'm made".

This clearly shook the magistrate who did not expect this reaction. They gave Bob 21 days to begin paying the fine or go to prison.

Speaking afterwards about the court's decision the bitterness in Bob's eyes was clear for all to see, "this they call VE day", he said "they economically conscript me into their armies, send me to Ireland to fight their wars, throw me onto the dole for five years and now sentence me for standing with those who defend their jobs and communities. This Tory system is rotten through and through, it must be smashed!"

By a Militant Reporter

Life after school...

SCHOOL STUDENT Karina Jackson was arrested during the national school students' strike on 25 April in Nottingham where 300 demonstrators were assembled in the town's market square.

Karina, now a leading member in the Nottingham School Students Union, was arrested for obstructing the highway when police tried to scare demonstrators away.

While she was in the police station she was treated in a patronising manner by the police, who told her the strike was irresponsible.

Undaunted by this political intimidation Karina later spoke at the May Day rally in Nottingham and explained why she thought that her actions and the actions of thousands of other school students was not irresponsible.

"School students are now taking it into their own hands to fight for a future. We are the ones who bear the brunt of this government's economic policies. They have no right to take away our freedom of choice. We all know YTS is a sham. It's cheap labour, it has inadequate training and there's no union to protect you from exploitation.

"The campaign against YTS is the main cause for which we are fighting, but students' unions are being set up in the schools around the country to take up other issues such as grants for 16 to 18 year olds, a fair representation on school governors, a say in what subjects are taught in school and the need for more relevant subjects to life after school.



Gordon Bennet

YOU'VE GOT to feel sorry for Ronnie Reagan. His recent European tour was about as successful as the maiden voyage of the *Titanic*. Not only did he get himself into a huge row over the last war, face walkouts in two parliaments and see hundreds of thousands of Spaniards demonstrate against him, but even his autocue went on strike.

No sooner was Ronnie back in the Land of the Bland than he was hit with another political scandal.

With the backing of his pathological pal George Schultz, Reagan's trigger-happy playmates in the CIA began a 'counter-terrorist' training programme in the Lebanon as part of their policy of 'pre-emptive self-defence'. In plain English this means terrorism and the result of the 'training' was 80 people dead and 200 injured in a car bomb attack in Beirut.

In US imperialism's dictionary, car bombers are only terrorists if they're on the other side.

Jeanne Kirkpatrick (until recently the US representative to the United Nations) has built an entire career on this kind of doublethink. She performs a series of stunning intellectual acrobatics to 'prove' that authoritarian regimes are preferable to totalitarian regimes (whatever that means).

The politically semiliterate semantics cannot hide the fact that what she's really saying is that it doesn't matter how many people are butchered by a particular dictator; so long as the capitalist system is maintained then they're OK with Jeanne.

Reagan and Kirkpatrick represent ruling class America. They represent the America that mocks the regimented mass parades that take place in Red Square every May Day and then puts on such nauseating spectacles as the Olympic opening and the closing ceremonies—which looked like Tinseltown meets the Nazi party.

Like most great nations, America is a parcel of contradictions. 'Official' America as personified by prime slime like Reagan is only one-half of the equation. The other half is represented by the rich democratic and revolutionary traditions of the States.

Today the American working people are only at the beginning of a rediscovery of their own heritage but the results of the 'don't care, won't care' policies of both Democrat and Republican variants of capitalism have been to create a huge constituency of the oppressed. Marching together with organised labour behind a socialist banner, such an alliance would cause as many cardiac arrests in the Kremlin as in the White House.



DO YOU know what it's like to be homeless? Stuck in bed and breakfast and not a chance of getting anywhere decent.

By Lynne Faulkes
(Hackney South CLP)

You should see what they dig up for homeless families round here. You might be lucky and get somewhere, but your troubles are still not over.

Have you ever queued up all day (and be told to come back the next) just to get some advice on how to apply for benefit?

Do you wait anxiously each week for the cheque and wonder how you can manage if the post's late, and if the landlord will understand?

Life's hard, and it's getting worse. All the props we depend on to make things half decent are being brutally kicked away—the NHS, supplementary benefits, pensions, council housing, rebates. There's not many more straws to clutch at, but what we need more than anything is a roof over our heads.

The Tories are now threatening that too—with cuts in housing benefit. Twelve million people get this help. They are mainly pensioners, young families and single parents. The Tories' plans will also include cuts in council spending, curbs on the use of council house sales cash (amounting to £5 billion in unspent receipts) and plans to end rent controls and force councils to raise rents. For many it will be catastrophic. Could you find another £20 a week?

Mortgages

They have even planned to stop a quarter of a million on supplementary benefit from receiving money for mortgage repayments despite the fact that mortgage arrears have quadrupled in five years and 11,000 houses were re-possessed by building societies last year, helping to push the homeless figures up by 50 per cent. That's an awful lot of misery. Even building industry bosses are concerned! They forecast a slump in house prices on top of the recent big decline in all building, public and private. Repairs and maintenance work also went down last year.

Yet one-quarter of houses in England need major repairs and more than four million people live in poor housing. £19 billion is needed to right council house defects alone. At current rates of replacement, every house in the country would have to last for 1,000 years.

Councils that can't afford to build are being forced to sell off the best they have and watch the waiting list for emergency accommodation growing. Bed and breakfast hostels in London get over £1 million a month as a result of homelessness—the latest leeches to flourish in this rotten system.

If you want to do up your own place, that will cost more as the Tories plan to axe grants for all but the poorest (earning under £80 a week). They also want to limit grants to pre-war houses so if you live in one built by 'modern' methods, hard luck, (about 1 million houses built like this need repairs costing £5,000 million). The Tories go on about subsidies, but they are amongst the lowest in Europe already.

They are so shortsighted they can't even see that moves to end rent controls and force councils to raise rents

would bring in a revival of Rachmanism and exorbitant rents, which in turn would mean even more being forced to apply for benefits or join the homeless queue.

But what's Labour's response? A U-turn on council house sales to buy votes. They say it's a fact of life people want their own home. Maybe they do, if it's a good one, without the headaches of major repairs, etc. But what choice do most of us have?

Socialist policy

Without a socialist housing policy of building what's needed and the funds to do it properly it's all eyewash. Liverpool is attempting to show what can be done with a determined attitude, but even they are limited without a national plan and a socialist economic system.

So many of our leaders have big comfortable houses (or even two or three). Maybe if they suffered the same squalor so many of us have to endure, we would soon see a radical change of policy and a determination to see it through.

Latter day nomads

THE NEW Tory DHSS legislation means unemployed young people will become latter-day nomads, either moving from area to area, or constantly shifting between friends' homes. Or they will be forced into organising squats.

Squatting in the past was mainly the prerogative of middle-class youth dabbling in the 'rough-end' before settling down to a good job and suburbia. But now squatting is increasingly becoming the only alternative for homeless unemployed working class people.

Unfortunately this is an area that has not been taken up sufficiently by the labour movement, leaving all campaigns on the issue to charitable pressure groups. Yet the mood of the young homeless is to fight back against the new regulations. Last week in Bristol, a meeting of over 200 took place, in response to a few voluntary organisations just leafletting the dole queues for a couple of mornings. Political organisations were

noticeably absent from the meeting. The atmosphere there was so angry that a DHSS representative was lucky to come out alive.

The following day a demonstration was held and many youth staying in bed and breakfast accommodation turned up, many on their first-ever political activity.

Change

The overwhelming majority of them said they wanted more than just short-term solutions—they wanted a fight against the Tories, a change in the Labour leadership and were inspired by the miners' strike.

The labour movement has a duty to win these youth to fight against the Tories; in particular the Young Socialists should spearhead a campaign against homelessness.

By Jasmin Barry
(Bristol NUPE)

Star—line rejected

THE BITTER divisions within the British Communist Party dominated the 39th Congress last weekend, taking the party a stage closer to a dramatic split. This comes at a time when membership has fallen by 3,000 in 10 months and is now officially 11,500.

The leadership, and the *Marxism Today* faction had the support of about two-thirds of the delegates on nearly every resolution.

The main opposition composite motion of the supporters of the *Morning Star* faction was defeated by 158 votes to 73. It aimed to delete all but a few lines of the executive's resolution which had been circulated to the branches.

Morning Star editor, Tony Chater had his appeal against expulsion turned down by the congress in a closed session which also rejected the appeals of 41 others who faced expulsion or disciplinary action.

In his opening speech general secretary Gordon McLennan appealed to delegates to be loyal to the elected party leadership, and made a vitriolic attack on the *Morning Star's* editors. He

said they had used their position to try and create an alternative leadership for the party. This was received with applause from the majority of delegates.

But some delegates accused the leadership of waging a war against the opposition in the lead-up to the congress.

Derek Robinson, sacked Longbridge convenor, and supporter of the *Morning Star* faction said that it wasn't true that there had been a democratic debate in the party before the congress, and that he had been "the victim of a character assassination in the most vicious way."

The growing differences between the two factions became clear during the debates, especially on the miners' strike. The leadership and the *Marxism Today* supporters emphasised the policy of broad alliances and winning popular support of those from "all social and religious backgrounds". They said that the absence of such alliances was a major factor in the defeat of the miners.

The idea that the women's liberation movement and groups like CND could be measured alongside the in-

dustrial working class was countered by the minority 'hard-line' faction who emphasised the leading role of the working class in the fight against the Tories.

But although the 'hard-liners' criticised the right-wing they could offer no perspective for achieving socialism beyond electing a Labour government with a few Communist MPs.

Having firmly taken hold at the party's congress the right wing Eurocommunists will now undoubtedly move against the *Morning Star*, which could eventually precipitate a splitting away of the 'hard line' faction.

The congress was overwhelmingly dominated by middle-aged and elderly delegates with very few black and youth delegates.

One delegate, speaking for the YCL, despaired at the party's lack of involvement in youth issues and pointed in envy to the school students' strikes saying: "Imagine would would happen if we captured that for the Party".

Overall, the congress marked a further shift to the right in the Communist Party. The lack of any Marxist analysis from either faction will ensure that the party is doomed to decline still further.

By Militant reporters

ads **Militant**

CLASSIFIED: 15p per word, minimum 10 words.
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All advertisement copy should reach this office by Saturday.

PLASTIC PAPER sleeves, 20p, bookmarks 40p, sew-on badges 50p, address books 60p plus post. Ten or more half price for resale. FF cheques to Mike King, 10 Rodney Court, Anson Drive, Sholing, Southampton SO2 8RU. Phone: (0703) 432480.

Leeds Miners Defence Group. Please send us up to date information on suspended, sacked and imprisoned miners. Can offer help and hospitality for wives and children of jailed miners in Yorkshire. Contact: Mrs A Jones, 245 Winrose Drive, Belle Isle, Leeds 10 LS10 3HA. Telephone: 715520.

"LIVERPOOL MILITANT Labour" badge with Labour logo, "Black and white youth unite" badge with red Militant logo, 25p each plus 25p minimum p&p. FF cheques payable to P Cooper, 31 Balmoral Road, Fairfield, Liverpool, L6 8NB.

MAKE some Fighting Fund for your Area! Militant "No Slave Labour On YTS" stickers now available. Price: £1.50 for 100—but they must be sold for a donation! Send order to **Militant**, 3-13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9. Cheques/Po's made payable to **Militant**.

Marxist Mega Mix. "Funk Thatcher out of office" As sold at LPYS conference. Price including postage and packing £2.25. All proceeds to Fighting Fund From 20A, Blenheim Avenue, Leeds LS2 9AX.

NATIONAL meeting of rank and file members of UCATT. Saturday 8 June 11.00am-3pm. Manchester Town Hall Conference Hall (Lloyd St entrance). This meeting will discuss the most effective way to fight back against the Tories' 1984 anti-trade union legislation and attacks on DLO. All UCATT members welcome.

Marxist Weekend School 1985

London 14/15 September

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I would like to register for the course on ... at the Marxist weekend school (Reading guides will be sent out from July)

I will need accommodation (Bring a sleeping bag) for Friday/Saturday nights.

I will require the crèche for the following children (name and age)

I enclose ... booking fee.

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Meetings

DOVER: Marxist Discussion Group meets on Wednesday evenings at 8.00 pm at 36 Priory Hill, Dover. Subjects and dates as follows:
29 May: Can we stop the arms race?

5 June: The future for the Stalinist States.

12 June: The state, the media and the party.

19 June: Trade unions and leadership.

For further details ring (0303) 43541.

SOUTHAMPTON: Marxist Discussion Group meets every Sunday, 7.30pm, 206 Honeysuckle Road, Bassett, Southampton. Tel: 551420 for details of subjects or any further information.

GATESHEAD MILITANT Public Meeting, Fight the Cuts/A future for youth, Tuesday 28 May 7.30pm. Trinity Community Centre, High St, Gateshead. Speakers: Terry Fields MP, Liverpool Broadgreen, Teresa Carey SSAC.

NEWCASTLE-Under-Lyme (Staffordshire) **Militant** Readers Meeting Tuesday 28 May, under-Lyme. Speakers Derek Hatton, deputy leader Liverpool council

TGWU BIENNIAL Delegate Conference **Militant** Meeting, Tuesday 25 June, 7.30pm. Speakers: Dave Nellist MP and Christine McVicar (delegate to Conference, personal capacity). Wessex Hotel, West Cliff Road, Bournemouth.

FALKIRK: Marxist Discussion Group. Monday 27 May—Racism and the labour movement.

All meetings at 7.30 in Bainsford Community Centre, David's Loan, Falkirk.

Dear Comrades,
Find enclosed a cheque for £1.90 for the Fighting Fund, from Havant LPYS as a gesture of solidarity with the ideas of Marxism. Our branch is suspended by the EC of Havant LP due to our involvement in the school students' strike. They will try to silence our ideas and strength by whatever means but we will fight on.

Yours fraternally
Craig Wilson,
Secretary

THERE COULD be no better way of fighting back against bureaucratic attacks on the LPYS than by donating to the only paper that consistently champions the cause of Labour's Youth.

The ideas of **Militant** have built the LPYS into a fighting working class youth movement and will continue to do so. This donation is an example which all LPYS branches should follow. We could raise a fortune if every branch sent us even a small donation every week.

Workplace cash

Have you organised your parties, sponsored events and jumble sales yet? Just to show what can be done; a May Day social in Birmingham raised £21.48, a house warming in Northumberland raised £26.20 and Jimmy Hall from Lancashire has sent in £22 from doing a sponsored

FIGHTING FUND

This week: £1,310

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
Eastern	227		3200
East Midlands	94		2900
Humberside	108		1900
London East	88		2850
London West	168		2650
London South East	155		1950
London South West	7		1100
Lancashire	85		1100
Manchester	26		2650
Merseyside	188		6200
Northern	112		4650
Scotland East	10		3000
Scotland West	76		3800
Southern	259		5000
South West	46		2150
Wales East	201		2450
Wales West	195		2150
West Midlands	279		4350
Yorkshire	71		5950
Others	171		10000
Total received	2565		70000

marathon.

Workplace collections are going well. UCW workers in Islington gave £1.88. A special thanks to striking bakery workers in Brighton who gave £1.50.

Ours is the only paper that gives a clear analysis and programme for the labour movement. Why not send us a contribution? We rely on ordinary workers to fund our fight; no rich backers or big business friends will come to our aid.

THIS WEEK our special thanks should go to the construction workers at British Gas, Easington who over the past two years have raised thousands of pounds for **Militant**.

The construction job is now almost complete and only a small squad remains, yet this week a further £10.80 comes in. One scaffolder, Graham Jarvis, had only been reading **Militant** for six weeks but when he bought his copy last week he insisted on donating £5 saying: "This is because I see the need for a daily workers' paper". As the weekly collections

for **Militant** on this site come to an end, the example set by these workers must be taken up in every workplace where there is a **Militant** supporter. In this way the plans for a daily **Militant** would rapidly become a reality.

Donations this week include: FE&HE students £54, Steve Thorogood Southend CPSA £16.25, National Communications Union Clerical Group 42, Karen Parnell Broadgreen NUS £10, Bob Bailey Catford £5, Paul Massey Belvedere unemployed £5, NUJ branch Birmingham £20.

GET **Militant**

DURING THE sales campaign, **Militant** sellers were out on the doorsteps, taking the idea of socialism to people in their homes. Many areas started off new estate sales. Now they are determined to keep them up.

Sellers in Harlow used the new sales leaflet. They went out on a Friday night posting it through 100 letter boxes on the Nicholls Field estate. On the Sunday morning they went back, and sold 20 papers.

In just two nights, 40 papers were sold on the Lions Farm estate in Warley West constituency during canvassing for a public meeting to protest against the expulsion from the Labour Party of Bill Mullins.

In Dundee, 20 were sold in

Hilltown multi-storey flats, while one Sittingbourne seller sold 12 papers in just one street.

Mark Newman and Trili Patel from Streatham, went out on the Mount Earl Gardens estate. "This is the first time we have ever done a paper sale in the area, supposedly a Tory-Liberal stronghold. The first door we knocked at was answered by a Guyanese woman. We told her that we were the Marxists in the Labour Party, and we were trying to change it into a socialist party that really fights for working class people. We explained we were trying to build a regular paper round. She said: 'I will read your paper, I respect your cause, but I am not convinced that you will ever have Marxist leadership in Britain'.

Marxist Daily Building Fund

THE ILLUSION that the ruling class and their political party, the Tories, are united has been shattered by the news of Pym's Centre Forward group.

These ex-cabinet ministers don't oppose Thatcher's aims of smashing the unions and forcing down living standards. They oppose the irreversible effect Thatcher is having on the attitude of the labour movement and on their chance of winning the next election.

Trying to turn the clock back, these Tory wets are trying to recreate the illusion of a classless society, but capitalism will not be able to grant benevolent reforms again because the profits are no longer there. And things are getting worse.

Later on, the Tory press will try to convince us that Pym has a "moderate" alternative to Thatcherism. So, more than ever, we need a daily Marxist paper that clearly puts the *socialist* alternative and demonstrates in practice that it is determined to carry out the socialist transformation of society.

Our readers are still showing their support for such an alternative in hard cash. Two students from Leyton, Jen-



Photo: Rick Matthews (JFL)

"But the very next door when we told the man who we were, he straight away said: 'I am on your side, I will buy the paper', and he gave us 50p for it.

"We sold several more on this estate and now we are going to mobilise other sellers to swamp the area and get the basis for a mass regular paper sale."

At the trade union and Labour conferences workers are also buying **Militant**. 200 were sold of one issue, and 250 of another during the week of the CPSA conference, including over 100

papers being sold in 15 minutes on the Thursday morning. Add to this the 72 sales at FBU conference, 60 at IRSF and 55 at SCPS conference.

Around 70 papers were sold at the Welsh Labour Party conference, especially after the witch-hunt debate, when sympathetic delegates made a special point of buying the paper. Over 30 were sold at the Northern Regional Labour Party conference.

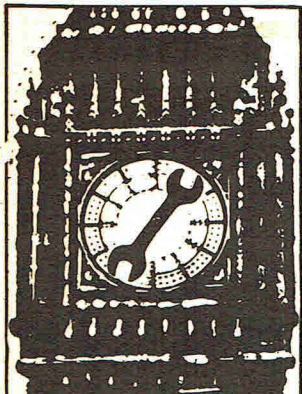
By Jeremy Birch

This week: £604

	£		£
Eastern	2626	Scotland E	2249
East Midlands	2767	Scotland W	2442
Humberside	1595	Southern	3374
London NE	3063	South West	720
London NW	3905	Wales East	1820
London SE	1908	Wales West	1453
London SW	1757	West Midlands	1786
Lancashire	524	Yorkshire	1250
Manchester	1817	National	1292
Merseyside	4407		
Northern	2527		
		Total	43283

nie Thomson and Frank Wood sent us £50 and £26 respectively. Steve Whittle from Haringey sent us £90. We've had £60 from supporters in Hertfordshire and a further £82 from Merseyside. Comrades

should not let up on the week's income campaign yet. We still have some way to go to clear all our debts—when we have done that we can move all the closer towards a daily paper.



Out of order

I GOT hold of an obnoxious little 'songbook' last week. Produced by Warwick University Tories it was dished out, complete with official Tory party logo, at the recent riotous Federation of Conservative Students conference. Amid the National Anthem, the Star Spangled Banner and Ulster Loyalist songs are crude refrains of reaction. What the middle class drips of the FCS lack in physical build they try to make up for in violent language; what they lack in intellect they make up with swear words.

There are songs about killing Greenham Peace Women, killing Iranians, killing Vietnamese, while one song tells Gerry Adams they are going to "blow your f...ing head away." There's a particularly sick little ditty about the 450 Argentinian sailors drowned when the Belgrano was sunk.

Demented

Of the striking miners they sing: "We all think it's f...ing funny, they've got bugger all to eat." Hilarious eh? There's also anti-Catholic and anti-gay songs which by comparison are fairly mild, but still pretty demented.

I sent a copy to the Prime Minister. Even allowing for the fact that "students are high spirited," she said, she "deplored" it. I'm raising a motion in parliament so all the Tories can show they disassociate themselves from the Tory students (dubbed the "Waffen FCS" by the anti-fascist magazine, *Searchlight*).

You won't see this nauseating 'songbook' pilloried in the Tory press. Rather it will be hidden away and forgotten. Of course, if the Young Socialists or YTURC produced such a publication (which they wouldn't) you'd still be hearing about it next Christmas. Instead they get attacked in the press for organising school students to campaign for jobs and oppose YTS conscription. While the Tory students are ignored when they display their low educational level, Labour's youth are hysterically abused for raising students' political level.

By Dave Nellist MP

Now MPs told: 'You're giving too much to party funds'

LABOUR PARTY members will be amazed that the leadership are actually trying to enforce the 52 year old 'Hastings Agreement' and stop left wing MPs giving money back to the party.

There has been widespread support for MPs like Dave Nellist and Terry Fields who only take a worker's wage, or NUM sponsored MP Dennis Skinner who gave all of his salary to the miners for the duration of the strike.

The 'Hastings Agreement' passed by Labour Party conference in 1933 said no MP could give their constituency more than £200 a year, a bid to stop rich MPs buying the favour of the membership. Of course £200 was a lot of money then, while the democratic selection procedures won by the left-wing have since gone a long way to combat this sort of careerism.

Right-wing Labour MP Michael Cocks first raised the issue a month ago, claiming that MPs such as Dave Nellist and Terry Fields were using their donations to influence their CLPs.

His statements clearly represented the fear of the right wing; that the idea of Labour MPs living on a worker's wage and donating large parts of their salaries back to the movement is catching on amongst the rank and file.

Yet following Michael Cocks moaning to the press, National Agent David Hughes wrote to Dave Nellist complaining that by donating £80 a month back to the party, he was exceeding the £200 limit by £760. He added; "...I am sure you would not wish to continue breaking your agreement..."

MP replies

In a reply, Dave Nellist raised the following points:

Before I was selected as PPC for Coventry (SE) I made it clear that, if elected, I intended to represent my constituency in Parliament on a worker's wage, donating the rest, after expenses, to the labour movement.

Since being elected I have kept to this pledge. I presently draw approximately £115 to live on and have regularly presented the CLP with a statement accounting for my expenses and the donations which I have made to various sections of the labour movement. This statement also includes the fees that I have received from TV, radio and journalism.

My stand is fully supported by Coventry (SE) CLP and the call for "workers' MPs on a worker's wage" has widespread and growing support throughout the



Dave Nellist joins a YTURC demonstration through Birmingham last year.

Photo: John Harris (IFL)II.

ranks of the trade unions and the Labour Party. Ordinary Labour Party members are increasingly disturbed by the enormous gap in income, lifestyle and outlook between many Labour MPs and the working class people they should be representing.



Terry Fields MP

In the last thirty years, when a high proportion of Labour MPs have been drawn from the ranks of professional groups, academics, lawyers, doctors and even financiers, some Labour MPs have amassed conspicuous personal wealth during their parliamentary careers. To a significant extent this has been due to their prominence as public representatives of the Labour Party and personal contacts developed during office as Labour Ministers. Some Labour MPs, by virtue of their prominence as Labour Party representatives, have a big income from fees from TV, journalism, etc. Workers rightly feel that MPs who enjoy the lifestyle of the wealthy cannot understand the problems of working people or be relied on to defend working class interests.

You refer to the Hastings Agreement, but I do not think that I have breached either the letter or the spirit of the agreement.

Under the Agreement as amended at the 1979 Labour Party Conference, a candidate or MP undertakes not to "...pay to the funds of a Constituency Labour Party for organisation and registration expenses an annual sum in excess of £200." The wording of the Agree-

ment makes it quite clear that it refers to general election organisation. However, my contributions over £200 have not been used for organisation and registration expenses, but for special political campaigning purposes.

In order to formalise this, long-standing members of the Coventry (SE) CLP are now taking steps to set up a separate fund that will be administered autonomously by trustees to assist labour movement campaigns locally.

At the same time, I must say that the present Hastings limit is ridiculously low. The limit, which was £250 when it was first fixed, was introduced when the MP's salary was £360—which also had to cover all parliamentary expenses.

The limit for candidates' or MPs' personal expenses was, as I understand it, an attempt to prevent wealthy careerists "buying" influence with a CLP.

Sacrifice

The financial position is completely different now. The MP's current salary is £16,903 (excluding expenses and secretarial allowance, etc.), far in excess of average earnings. Today, it is not a limit on MPs' financial contributions but the requirement of a minimal level of personal financial sacrifice which will deter wealthy individuals from trying to use the Labour Party for their own careers.

The original Hastings limit of £250, after allowing for inflation, is £5,875 in 1985 values. The 1933 MP's salary of £360 (excluding expenses, etc) would be £8,400 (about the level of today's average earnings), whereas the present MP's salary is nearly double that, i.e. £16,903 excluding expenses. The Agreement should be scrapped and replaced by a new Rule to require all successfully elected Labour candidates and all sitting MPs to make a

minimum contribution of £1,000 to their CLPs (to be increased in line with salary increases). This would be a very realistic level of financial contribution under present conditions.

In fact, I was surprised that you should be writing to me at all about my high level of contribution to the Party, in view of the Party's financial problems. Appealing for more funds last year, Jim Mortimer rightly said that "Unless this additional money is raised further cuts will have to be made. The Party's capacity for effective campaigning will be impaired. Raising money is not an administrative routine; it is a major political task." (*Labour Weekly*, 3 February 1984).

In view of the Party's desperate need for extra cash, I would like to raise the following questions:

How many Labour MPs have actually paid £200 to their CLP per annum since the June 1983 general election?

minimal contribution is made by all members of the PLP?

Have all members of the PLP paid their £80 contribution to the Labour Party headquarters for literature etc.? If not, how many have not paid so far this year, and what steps are being taken to make sure that they pay up?

Furthermore, I believe that it is time that the NEC set up a special enquiry, composed of NEC members and rank-and-file representatives of the CLPs, to study the business, financial, and media interests of all members of the PLP. The official parliamentary register of MPs' interests is clearly totally inadequate, and I think such an enquiry is necessary to make clear to Labour Party members the interests of their parliamentary representatives.

By Militant reporters

Scab told to go

THE SCAB who instigated the inquiry into Coventry South East CLP, Fred Davies, has now shown his true colours. On April 18 he resigned his membership of the Union of Communication Workers, taking to it's logical conclusion his hate-campaign against the labour movement and our CLP in particular.

If the NEC Appeals and Mediation Committee ever had a 'case' for investigating the 1983 General Election Campaign in Coventry South-East, it has now utterly collapsed.

This individual had urged workers to vote for the SDP/Liberal Alliance rather than see the victory of a genuine socialist. It was on his complaints that the NEC

ordered an enquiry into our campaign. The enquiry treated his allegations as the gospel truth, and the CLP were even instructed to allow him back into the Labour Party.

After the enquiry our CLP were reminded by the NEC of the need to protect the Party's rules. We have of course always done so, and we will do so in this case. The rule requires Party members to be members of the appropriate trade union and to pay the political levy. No longer fulfilling these requirements, Davies ceases to be a Party member!

By Pete McNally
(Press Officer, Coventry South-East CLP)

Northern Ireland of class struggle

DESPITE THE good votes for the Labour and Trade Union Group candidates in the recent local elections (see page three), the voice of labour in Northern Ireland is small compared to that of both orange and green sectarians. No doubt this fact will be used to add weight to the arguments of those who deny that labour and socialist ideas can take root in the North.

This is the view of the enemies of the working class and of the present right wing trade union leaders alike. It is a view which in fact displays a profound ignorance of the real history of the working class movement. The true history of Labour in the North, a history rich in struggle, has never been told. Instead popularised myths have become accepted as unquestionable fact. So with the myth propagated by the trade union leadership that it is impossible for their union to be involved in politics.

Yet it is exactly one hundred years since the first labour candidate, Alexander Bowman, stood in Belfast. The trade unions in the North, from their earliest times, were forced to turn to political action. As early as 1903, the Irish Trade Union Congress called for a Labour Party. In 1914 flesh was put on this call when a proposal that such a party be established was

successfully moved by James Connolly, representing the Belfast Trades Council, at the ICTU Congress in Clonmel.

1919 strike

In the years following the first world war the Irish working class moved into struggle. This was a period of unprecedented revolutionary upheaval marked by strikes, land seizures, factory occupations, the setting up of soviets in certain areas, and by limited general strikes. The working class in the North was infected by the militancy. In 1919 engineering workers in Belfast struck for four weeks demanding shorter hours. Through this dispute the working class of the city was drawn into confrontation with the employers and the state.

As with the miners today in Britain, the working class draws

political lessons from such struggles. In Ireland workers tried to develop a political as well as an industrial arm. The 1920 local government elections saw Labour win 25% of the vote nationally. In Belfast 13 out of 38 Labour candidates were returned to the corinnately and fatally prey to sectarianism, but because the leaders of the Irish TUC and the Labour Party in the years after 1918 failed to give a class lead and place the working class at the head of the struggle against imperialism. Partition has given a further twist to the argument of the sceptics and cynics who write off Labour.

While admitting that workers poration. Leaders of the 1919 strike topped the poll as in St Annes (Sandy Row).

Quarter of votes

It was primarily in order to cut across this movement and stave off the prospects of revolution that the British ruling class resorted to partition. By dividing the country they succeeded partially and temporarily in dividing and derailing the working class movement.

Partition was a major defeat for the working class. It was possible, not because workers in Ireland are

may have united in struggle before 1921, the most common argument of such people is that the existence of the border since then has been an insurmountable barrier to class unity and socialism. Hence the position of Sinn Fein and other petty bourgeois nationalists that the Northern State must be destroyed before a socialist movement can be built.

It is true that partition ushered in fifty years of continuous Unionist rule. The first Prime Minister, Craigavon died in office in 1940. Four of his six cabinet ministers had served throughout this period.

This apparent stability disguises the reality. Within this state there was massive discontent which at times spilled over into enormous movements of opposition. A survey carried out in 1938-9 found that 36% of the population lived in conditions of absolute poverty. The Unionist majority was maintained not through popular support but by the whip of repression, by discrimination against the Catholic minority and through manipulation of sectarian division.

Contrary to the established myths, these methods did not succeed in stifling all class opposition. What stands out from the history of the working class, especially in its political history, is the ability of workers to absorb defeats and setbacks, overcome difficulties and resume the offensive.

It is a testimony to the strength of the labour and socialist tradition even then established that the working class very quickly began to recover from the blow of partition. In 1925, only four years after the division of the country, the newly reconstituted Northern Ireland Labour Party won three Stormont seats. One candidate, Jack Beattie, topped the poll in East Belfast with 9,000 votes. Much has been said about the monolith of 'Unionism'. In fact this so-called 'monolith' began to crumble as soon as it was erected. Between 1921 and 1925 the total Unionist vote fell by 130,000.

The Unionists responded by abolishing PR for Stormont elections with the effect that in 1929, only one of the three Labour seats was held. This fact is loudly advertised in all the history books as proof of the ease with which the Unionists held off the Labour challenge. In fact it is no more than parliamentary trickery to dissolve a movement of social discontent such as was reflected in the Labour support. In any case Labour's vote held up in 1929. The five NILP candidates polled a combined vote of 23,334 against 30,771 for their Unionist opponents.

Class discontent

Meanwhile in the 1929 local government elections Labour seats in Belfast were doubled to six. Four were in Newtownards and the party ended up holding the balance of power in Newry.

Partially checked on the political

plane the class discontent soon found an even more forceful expression. Agitation over unemployment and outdoor relief culminated in the outdoor relief strike of 1932 and the mighty display of working class unity to which this gave rise. But for the fact that the official trade union leaders refused to organise a general strike the Unionist administration could have been brought to its knees on this issue. Within months of the outdoor relief strike the working class again took action, this time in the form of a four month long and extremely bitter railway strike at the beginning of 1933

New confidence

During and after the second world war the working class again moved from struggle in the industrial arena to political struggle. An upswing in the economy due to war production, strengthened the labour movement. Trade union membership rose from 85,000 in 1938 to 145,000 in 1945. The new confidence felt by workers prompted the two most important strikes of the war years anywhere in these islands. In 1942 and again in 1944 engineering workers in Belfast went on strike, the second dispute at one stage involving most of the city's 70,000 engineering workforce.

Industrial revival boosted the Labour Party. 1943 saw the first ever Labour candidate returned to Westminster when Jack Beattie won a by-election in West Belfast. He got 19,936 votes while a republican candidate polled a miserable 1,250, confirming the socialist and labour tradition of West Belfast.

Immediately after the war the Labour Party, standing on its most radical ever programme, was swept to power in Britain. The same post war militancy was reflected in an historic surge in Labour's support in the North.

It was not that Labour in the North was being carried forward on the back of the success in Britain. A Stormont election was held before the Westminster election. It was an election dominated by class issues.

So much so that in his pre-election address Prime Minister Basil Brooke tried to deflect Labour's support by the usual scaremongering tactics: "Many socialists and communists are equally hostile to the preservation of Ulster's place within the UK. On this issue they are as much the enemies of Ulster as the Nationalists and Republicans".

Brooke's appeal fell flat. Despite its weak right wing leadership and its lack of a clear programme, Labour polled well, winning two seats, Oldpark and Dock while Beattie as unofficial Labour won Pottinger (East). His vote, plus that of the official Labour candidate, was almost double the Unionist vote.

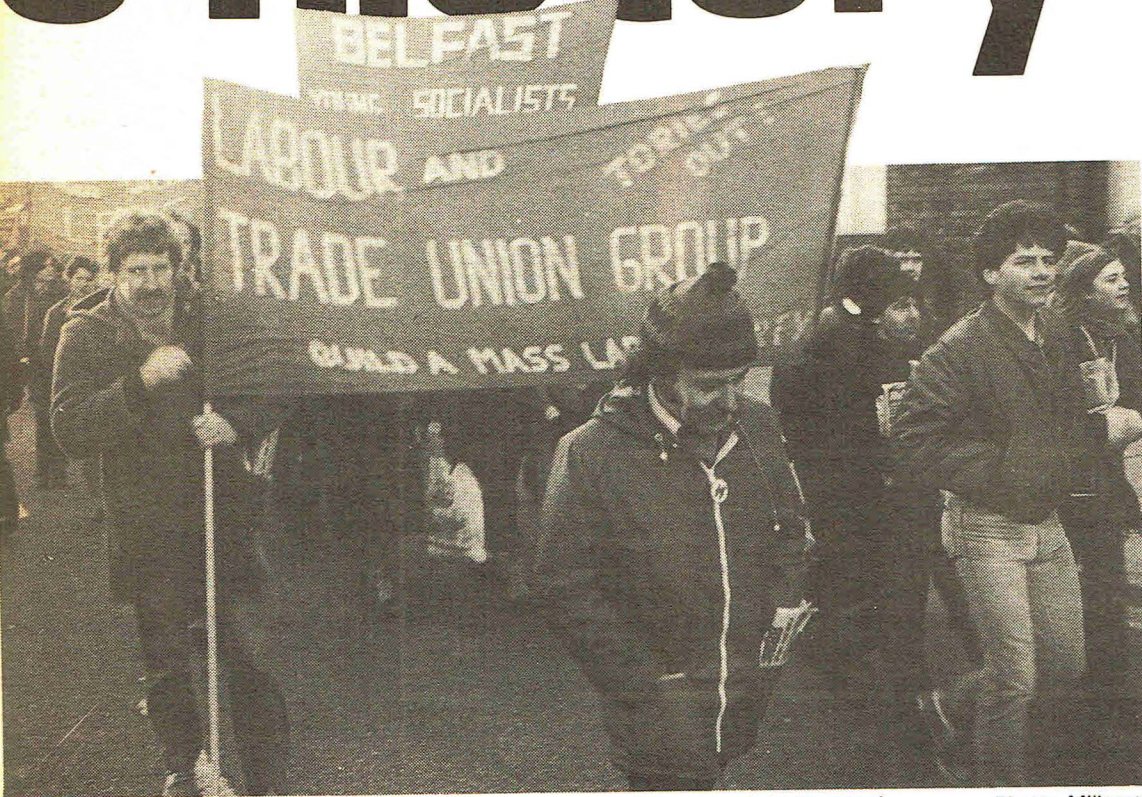
The three Communist Party can-



Photo: Eamonn O'Dwyer (IFL) II

Trade unions march through Belfast on 1981 TUC Week of Action demonstration.

's history



Members of the Labour and Trade Union Group and Young Socialists march in Liverpool. Photo: Militant

didates again despite the right wing semi-Unionist propaganda of their party, polled magnificently, winning 12,456 votes.

In the subsequent Westminster elections Labour won 65,000 votes. One year later dramatic gains were made at local government level. Labour seats in Belfast were doubled to eight, plus a number of independent Labour. Seats were gained in areas which in some cases had never before been contested, let alone won—Bangor, Ballycastle, Ballyclare, Armagh, Ballymoney. Warrenpoint council ended up with a two seat Labour majority. Newry also was under Labour control.

Once again in the late 1950s and the 1960s, against a background of world economic upswing and relative lull in the class struggle internationally, there was an upsurge in class militancy in the North.

Unemployment became a central issue as the world boom largely bypassed the North. In 1961 10,000 workers were laid off by Harland and Wolfe. In 1961, 1962 and again in 1966 massive demonstrations were organised against unemployment. As class issues came to the fore the NILP benefited. In 1958 it won four Stormont seats, all in Belfast. These were held in 1962 and in the 1964 general election Labour's ten candidates drew a record 103,000 votes.

At the top the NILP was dominated by a right wing who held a semi-unionist position. But at base it was becoming filled out by trade union activists and radical youth who were seeking a socialist vehicle.

By the late 1960's, on the eve of the first civil rights agitation, Labour was poised to develop into a formidable force. Where local Labour Parties stood on the left they, in some cases, were filled out by hundreds of workers and youth. The potential was unmistakable.

NILP collapse

From a position of strength we now have a position where Labour does not even exist. From 100,000 votes for Westminster in 1970 NILP support crumbled to 4,411 in 1979. Surely this confirms the most commonly repeated argument of the sceptics—that Labour and class unity always disintegrate when sectarian issues like the border are raised? Not so! In fact the reverse could

be more forcefully stated—whenever the working class move into action the old sectarian forces and parties are paralysed. Thus no strike has ever been broken by sectarianism, not for lack of effort on the part of the bigots. Thus also Labour's repeated electoral gains, as in 1945, have been won in the teeth of sectarian vitriol and against the denunciations of orange and green bigots.

It is true that each upsurge in political and industrial solidarity has ultimately been checked and that the sectarian and right wing parties have in the end come out on top. But sectarianism has not been the main factor. Rather, the movement has each time found itself halted by the role of this own leadership. Again and again it has been the mistakes and failings of both the Labour and trade union leaders which have given the opportunity to the bigots to go on the offensive.

Rather than withstand sectarianism the right wing leaders of the labour movement have tended to capitulate to it. Challenged on the issue of the border they have abandoned an independent class position and fallen into the camps of their enemies. The dominant outlook among these leaders has been "Walkerism", after William Walker, an early advocate of Labour Unionism whose "loyalty" to the crown proved greater than his loyalty to the working class.

Commonwealth Labour

Walker ultimately deserted the labour movement and in 1912 accepted a government position under Lloyd George. His tradition was maintained in the NILP by the likes of Harry Midgley who split from official Labour to form Commonwealth Labour during the war and who in 1947 joined the Unionist Party and also the Orange Order. It was also upheld by David Bleakley whose first outings as a Labour candidate in 1949 saw him canvassing wearing red, white and blue rosettes and who in 1971 was a token member of the Unionist cabinet which introduced internment. On the other hand there have been those who, rejecting a socialist viewpoint, fell in the trap of tailending the nationalists.

Two examples illustrate the disastrous consequences for the working class of the abandonment by its leaders of socialist ideas and

class solutions. In 1949 the Unionists used the pretext of the declaration of a Republic by the South to call a snap "border" election. The issue was posed by them as—for or against. They were assisted by a sectarian campaign by anti-partition candidates whose tactics earned the campaign the nickname the chapel gate election.



Lord Craigavon, Prime Minister from 1921 to 1940.

Labour, rather than holding to its own socialist principles of unity only on a socialist basis, tried to outplay the sectarians at their own game. The official party tried to out-Unionise the Unionists, even professing their loyalty. It was a tactic from which the bigots always emerge on top. One symbolic incident sums up their efforts. When a loyalist crowd tried to disrupt a Labour election rally in Belfast by singing the national anthem, the speaker responded by joining in the singing. His enemies were not impressed and the meeting was broken up.

On the other side candidates standing as Anti-Partition Labour did an electoral deal with the nationalist Anti-Partition League and were seen as its left face. Nor was the movement in the North assisted by the fact that the Irish Labour



Muriel Tang, LTUG candidate, canvassing in 1983 general election campaign.

Party was a partner in the capitalist government which introduced the change in the constitution of the Southern state, and was participating in a joint campaign with Fianna Fail and Fine Gael on the question. In the end the Labour vote was 26,831—a fall from nearly 80,000 in 1945.

Again in 1968-69 it was the failure of the right wing trade union and Labour leaders which opened the way for sectarian reaction. As soon as the civil rights campaign took on flesh they ran for cover, leaving it mainly in the hands of the nationalists, green Tories and assorted opportunists who were to become the SDLP. The trade union leaders seized the opportunity to pull back from political involvement. It is really from this period that the idea of non-political trade unionism, now held sacrosanct by the leaders of the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, stem.

Tailending

The NILP leaders distanced themselves from the civil rights agitation by exorcising and eventually expelling those of their members and branches who were involved in it. Through the early 1970s the NILP leaders either said nothing or else supported the repressive methods of the British government. As membership and support fell away the party moved further to the right, ultimately falling into the embrace of the loyalist paramilitaries. In 1974 its leadership disgraced itself entirely when leading spokesmen gave support to the reactionary Ulster Workers Council stoppage. One executive member was actually an advisor to the UWC during the strike.

On the other side a section of the party, including some of its left wing, fell under the spell of right wing nationalism. Stormont MP, Paddy Devlin deserted to help form the SDLP in 1970. A number of others on the left, like Michael Farrell and Eamonn McCann, chose to write off Labour as a force and ended up tailending the republican paramilitary groups.

The NILP disintegrated because its leadership chose to bend under pressure from either sectarian camp. If the Labour Party in 1949 or over the past twenty years had stood its ground fighting for a socialist solution, the course of history would have been very dif-

ferent. Against the green and orange bigots Labour should have fought for class unity, and for a united class struggle for jobs, houses, decent wages, against discrimination and repression.

To the capitalist alternatives of either partition or capitalist reunification, neither of which is a real alternative or a solution, Labour should have counterposed the struggle for socialism, North and South, leading to socialist reunification. In place of the capitalist link with Britain, Labour should have advanced the position of socialist internationalism—for a socialist federation of Britain and Ireland.

That the labour and trade union leaders have failed to stand firm and resolutely fight for such a programme is the main explanation of the dominance of the Paisleys, Humes and Co. today. Yet the history of the working class shows the true potential for the building of a mighty socialist movement. Again and again the working class have moved to struggle. Even under the most difficult circumstances, the tendency to class unity, to industrial and also political struggle has never been broken. From its lowest points, after partition, and in 1949, Labour has always revived as economic hardship moved workers into action.

By Peter Hadden

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Iran, West Germany

Iran: challenge to 'holy dictator'

A RECENT strike by the steel workers in Iran at the Esfahan plant was the biggest and the most successful dispute since Khomeini's 'Holy dictatorship' came to power in 1979.

Despite the brutality of the police and security forces the strike forced the government to withdraw its plans for the privatisation of the plant and give it to the workers on strike.

The dispute showed the workers' feelings towards the regime. There have been a number of strikes, lasting from a few hours to a year in Iran recently. It was also a lesson to those who seek to struggle against Khomeini and other tyrants by concentrating on the countryside and through bombings and shooting of individuals. The real force for changing society are the industrial working class.

Solidarity

The united action by the workforce at Esfahan with workers at refineries, factories, cement works etc across Iran was the key to success, along with the international solidarity from unions in France, West Germany, Sweden and other countries.

The government's proposed "Co-operative plan" was a system of privatisation.

By Hamid Khayam

The idea is to sack the workers and sell profitable plants to private owners, similar to what the Tories have in mind for Britain's coal industry. This means lower wages, shorter or no holidays, no insurance cover, no safety regulations and no pensions at the end. Job losses were on the cards for some 5,000 workers, as demonstrated in 1981 at the Avhaz steel plant where in similar plans the regime sacked some 7,900 workers.

The Islamic government proudly compares itself with the Tories in Britain. In his speech at the anniversary of the 1979 "Betrayed Revolution", Khomeini replied to critics of his economic strategies: "Even in Britain the situation is not better than the Islamic republic, over there they have inflation and strikes all over the country".

In Iran, wages have been frozen since 1981, the minimum wage is 635 rials (less than £1) per day. But prices have gone up by 200%

in the last five years. Some workers are earning only 30% of the required living wage. A report by the Iranian Statistical Centre says that the expenditure of a low income family for food alone is 20,000 rials (approximately £900); most workers can't even hope to raise that in a month.

Even a spokesman for the Ministry of Labour admitted: "The workers are faced with three fundamental problems; low wages, health and housing". Millions of people are living on or below the poverty line, with the lowest wages and the highest unemployment since the modernisation began in the late 1950s. About 70% of the people are still illiterate and above all the mass misery of the five year long war with Iraq is boosting military spending to a crippling 41% of the national budget.

Poverty

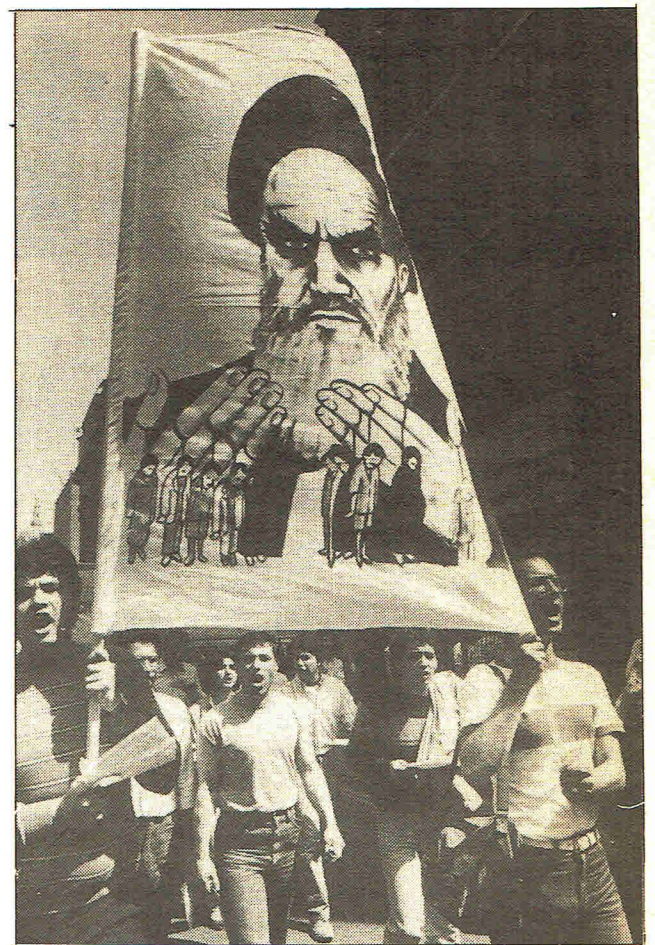
Iran is one of the richest, most industrialised countries in the Middle East and Asia. It has the world's fourth largest oil reserves, second largest of natural gas, highly advanced petro-chemicals, a car and tractor industry supplying goods to other countries in the region and vast amounts of uranium, tin and other minerals.

But most households have no gas, electricity or fresh water supplies. Child labour has been brought back after 60 years. There are no proper health, education and welfare facilities for most of the population and shanty towns encircle almost every major town or city.

Most of Iran's industry has either been destroyed by the war or been reduced to non-competitive levels. Abadan's refinery which used to be the biggest in the world, employing many thousands, has been reduced to bricks and rat holes.

Thousands of young Iranians and Iraqis have been slaughtered in the 'bloody war' which has claimed more lives than all the major Middle East wars put together. Even away from the trenches, arrest, torture and execution of political opponents of the regime is part of daily life. Suppression and exploitation is the only reward for the heroic women of Iran who stood against the Shah's tanks and bullets during the revolution.

These and other factors are turning thousands of workers against the regime every year. Workers and peasants fed up with the regime but disillusioned with the opposition groups are searching for a way out as the Esfahan strike proved.



A London protest against the Ayatollah's rule.

Workers and youth who not very long ago kicked out the 'King of Kings' are looking for a socialist alternative.

Revolution

The regime who came to power in 1979 with the slogan of "No East—No West" and promised to get rid of American and British imperialism to create a more free and just society are doing exactly the opposite.

The revolution of 1979 had a massive effect on all countries of the world, the Middle East in particular, but since the war started and the counter revolutionary

role of the Islamic revolution became clearer its impact has gone. Another revolution but this time with workers taking power into their own hands would have an effect a hundred times stronger than in 1979. Workers and peasants in the region would use that as an example to overthrow their own barbaric regimes.

The victory of the steel workers will be an encouragement to all Iranian workers to step up the struggle for a Marxist leadership worthy of the masses, which can lead the fight for socialism and workers democracy.

THE REGIONAL election in the West German state of North Rhine/Westphalia on 12 May saw a bitter defeat for the Conservative Christian Democrats (CDU). Two years after the CDU federal government victory, Helmut Kohl's anti-working class policies got the thumbs down from a state with one third of the national electorate.

For the first time, over 50% of the votes cast were for the mass working class based party the SPD, who won 125 out of 150 directly elected seats. Around a quarter of a million former SPD votes won by the CDU in 1983 due to disap-

pointment with the SDP right wing government were won back.

The linking of environmental issues with unemployment won votes from the Greens who failed to win any seats. But there was not enormous enthusiasm for the SPD's policies, many workers doubt whether they are far reaching enough to solve the colossal problems.

Activists are discussing and questioning, drawing on the experience of the SPD in power and the lessons of struggles like the IG Metall 35 hour week dispute last year.

German steel workers want nationalisation

THIS MARCH, a shop stewards' conference in the German steel industry demanded the nationalisation of their industry.

Stewards in the IG Metall union at Thyssen steel in Duisburg were amongst the first to put forward this demand and get it accepted. Willi Segerath, a Thyssen worker since 1972, a steward since 1979 and a member of the Works Council for the last two years told the German Marxist paper *Voran* why they gave their support.

Job losses

"The steel strike in 1978/79 over the 35 hour week made me get active. On the picket line I realised we would only enforce our demands by mobilising for them. Together we could bring a lot of pressure to bear. I was very impressed that our stewards held out in opposition to the union leaders' compromise with the bosses.

"Since then we have seen a huge reduction in steel capacity. Here at Thyssen, 'Concept

900' planned to decrease monthly production from 1.2 million tonnes to 900,000, getting rid of 6500 jobs. At Arbed-Saarstahl, a Luxembourg owned steel works in Southern Germany there is pressure to halve workers' extra months pay.

"Steel jobs have shrunk from 290,000 in 1979 to 220,000 by the middle of last year and they are still declining. State funds of 3bn DM (about £750m) go to subsidising steel, half for rationalisation and half for redundancy.

Workers must have control

"The union's old demands for public ownership are coming back but not just for the rundown sections, the profitable sections like further processing of steel must be included. The union's support for the resolution gives us the opportunity to convince workmates who are doubtful.

"Some look at nationalised industries in Britain, we answer that workers in the factories and in society as a whole must have the control. We must take the demand for socialisation of steel, the banks and the major companies into the SPD.

"Private capitalists are not prepared to pay for the unemployment and environmental damage they cause. Last year unemployment cost taxpayers £18 billion. We demand that work should be shared equally and all measures taken to ensure shorter hours. Statutory working time dates from 1938 and still provides for a 48-hour week. This must be 35 hours. We should get adequate pay for a normal working week to cut out overtime.

"If the bosses blame declining orders we say we need overall economic planning at the political and industrial level in the workers' interests. There are plenty of new outlets for steel such as an environmental needs like rails for public transport, ships to help clean the oceans etc.

Creative ideas

"Workers already give the bosses hundreds of ideas through suggestion boxes. They get very little reward, only a fraction of what the bosses save. We, the workers, have built up steel through our creative ideas, which are stolen by capitalism. Now our ideas must be used to benefit workers".



The IG Metall strike in 1984 sought a working class solution to unemployment.

Chile, USA, Zimbabwe, South Africa,

As Thatcher aids Pinochet...

Workers must back Chilean socialists

THE REPRESSIVE Pinochet regime has been unleashed on a horrific scale against the working class movement in Chile over the past few months.

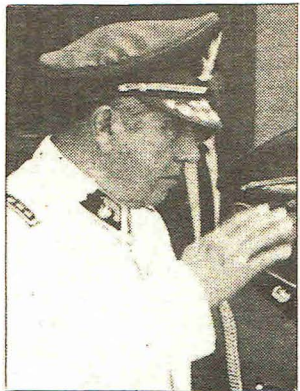
Every week, gruesome reports appear in the Chilean press of mass detentions, murders, disappearances, and torture against union activists, and anyone else the dictatorship regard as opposing the regime. They are usually labelled as terrorists. On 29 March, 4 members of the teachers union were found with their throats cut in a suburb of Santiago.

On 10 April, a student was shot in the back after riot police dispersed school students distributing leaflets

outside a secondary school. On 12 April 26 people were injured by riot police in a protest, one of them shot in the stomach from an unmarked car. Then on 29 April 242 men, women and children were arrested after attending a concert in commemoration of the 52nd anniversary of the Chilean Socialist Party.

Human rights

What was the response of the British government to these blatant human rights abuses and attacks upon basic democratic rights? The Thatcher government always boasts of its so-called respect for the "rights of the individual" and individual liberties. We might have ex-

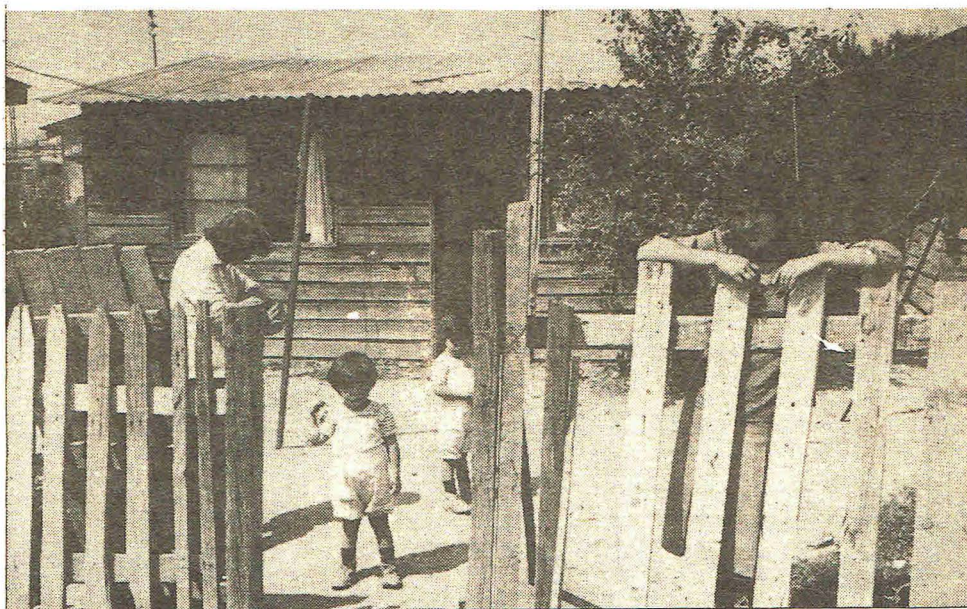


Pinochet

pected a condemnation of the Chilean regime's actions in the United Nations or the International Court of Human Rights.

But, Thatcher's impulse to earn a quick buck for the British bosses was again too strong to let mere repression and torture of "colonials" get in the way.

At the end of April, *New Statesmen* revealed that the Trade and Industry Depart-



Life in a Santiago shanty town

Photo: Jacob Sutton (Reflex)

ment had guaranteed export licenses to 300 "Centaur", an armed, half-tracked multi-role vehicle that can be used in riots and crowd disturbances and also for a nuclear reactor operated under military direction.

Political links

The Thatcher government's friends are those who can offer markets for British companies no matter what repressive measures are used against the population. What are a few murders and torture incidents weighed in the balance against £6 million?

The political and trade

links of international capitalism must be exposed, but more crucially, the labour movement must set up international and political links of their own to strengthen the struggle that workers are undertaking.

The Labour Party Young Socialists' campaign on Chile, the Chile Socialist Defence Campaign should be supported by workers around the country. Its aim is to send direct financial and political aid to the workers and youth in Chile. Their new bulletin carries all the latest information and news about the unfolding revolution. Orders and donations to: CSDC, PO Box 448, Em-

ma Street, London E2. Price of bulletin 40p (including postage)

CHILE SOLIDARITY Night. Southampton Labour Club, Queensway, Southampton. Thursday 30 May 7.30pm Food and Music £1.50 (waged), £1.00 (unwaged)

CHILEAN DAY School organised by the Labour Party Young Socialists for the Chilean Socialist Defence Campaign, Saturday 25 May, 10.30am-5.00pm. Morning: The Latin American Revolution. Afternoon: Chile and role of LPYS in CSDC. In the evening Latin American Band & Disco. YMCA Hall Woolwich Dockyard, Woolwich Church Street, SE 18. £1.50-75p students + UB40. Nearest trains: Woolwich Dockyard

Labour and small farmers unite

BETTY TRAUN from New York sent us the following letter, which shows the growing pressures for a workers party to represent labour in the USA and oppose the Republican and Democrat big business machines.

ON 23 MARCH in St Louis, Missouri a joint farmer-labour conference attracted regional and national leaders from 18 states. They included leaders of the AFL-CIO, United Auto Workers, Teamsters, North American Farm Alliance and many other farmers movements together with Afro-American leaders.

They are trying to block forced sales. They also agreed joint support for action to save workers jobs.

Ten days later Jesse Jackson and his supporters joined UAW members from General Motors and Ford

and hundreds of farmers in a motorcade through Plattsburg, Missouri protesting at the sale of 73 year old Perry Wilson's last acres.

Several weeks before, the sheriff ignored the pleas of a thousand farmers and workers as he auctioned off 700 acres of Wilson's land to Kearney Trust Company for a fraction of the real value, ensuring the bank a fat profit.

Jackson was cheered when he called for a united fightback. "Let us stand together and choose farms not arms" he said. A similar attempt to save a Minnesota farm led to a caravan drive to the state capital of St Paul in an unsuccessful bid to get a moratorium on forced sales.

Mike Hanse, president of the North American Farm Alliance pointed out that labour, farmers, Afro-Americans and other national minorities as well as

the peace movement were "natural allies". Mat Snell, a UAW worker from Kansas City says "We auto workers have laid the basis for a farmer labour coalition. There is room here for all other groups that want to fight for justice for both urban and rural people."

He said the UAW supports farmers demands for parity prices to cover the cost of production plus a decent return on investment. He debunked the Reaganite "divide and conquer" line that union wages are the cause of high farm equipment prices and that farmers cause high supermarket prices.

"Labour costs for producing a \$100,000 harvester are only \$14,000 while a wheat farmer's share of a dollar loaf was less than four cents". The profits, he said are "raked off by the giant monopolies".



SOCIALISTS organised a lobby of the London offices of the Anglo American Corporation on 15 May protesting at the multinational's sacking earlier this month of nearly 15,000 miners at Vaal Reefs South Mine. They also showed their support of the SA National Union of Mineworkers' 40 per cent wage claim against the Chamber of Mines.

Although most workers have been reinstated, the union activists in the SA NUM are to remain sacked. This is an attempt to deprive miners of their leaders at the beginning of this year's wage negotiations.

The SA NUM are demanding an end to racial job reservation. Wages for black miners are extremely low, on average £96 a month compared to £600 a month for white miners. The real boss of Anglo American, Harry Oppenheimer, recently declared his opposition to apartheid. Yet his company ruthlessly exploits the apartheid laws to intimidate and victimise his workers. He not only sacked his workers but put them on buses back to their so-called "homelands", and in some cases out of the country.

The lobby organisers, Socialist Links with South African Youth (SOLSAY) aims to build direct links between trade unions in this country and South Africa. For more information on the campaign contact SOLSAY on (01) 540 1295 or (01) 241 0434.

Photo: Linda Douglas

Tories' "guarded optimism"

IN A May Day speech in Harare, Zimbabwe's Prime Minister Robert Mugabe denounced the two South African socialists he had held in detention for seven weeks without charges, and then deported.

He accused them of being "subversives", "infiltrated" into the country by the "Militant Tendency" of the British Labour Party.

The Zimbabwe Trade Unionist Defence Campaign issued a press statement reminding Mr Mugabe that David Hemson, Darcy du

Toit and his wife, and the eleven black Zimbabwean trade unionists detained with them were involved in campaigning for democratic trade unions and organising a socialist workers' education—aims for which the ruling ZANU(PF) claims to stand.

Smith supporter

"On 3 May, the right wing *Daily Telegraph*, published an editorial headlined One up for Mugabe. This newspaper was an active supporter of Smith's racist

Rhodesian regime, and a vitriolic critic of socialist policies around the world.

"In the past it has been a bitter opponent of Mugabe's government, taking at face value his professions of 'Marxism-Leninism' and 'socialism'.

"Now, however, it finds some grounds for "guarded optimism" in the detention and deportation of Hemson and du Toit. 'The expulsion of these men...hints too that in many ways he (Mugabe) is not a man of the far-left himself.

" 'Hemson and du Toit

were evidently made unhappy by the absence of real socialism in Zimbabwe. They found only the apertenances. Perhaps they could not easily bear the prosperity of the country's thriving white farmers and of white-owned businesses.'

Socialist promises

"The workers and poor peasants of Zimbabwe, suffering still from poverty wages, increasing lack of jobs, and landlessness, cannot easily bear the profit-grabbing of the same white farmers and white bosses who oppressed and exploited them under Smith—and are demanding that the government they elected at in-

dependence should carry out the socialist promises it then made.

"The problems of the masses, and the stalling of the Zimbabwean revolution, are the consequences of the ZANU(PF) government's compromise with capitalism. To enforce this compromise, and sustain the prosperity of a minority, Mugabe is moving to impose a one-party dictatorship—not only by attacking trade unionists and socialists in his own party, but by an indiscriminate rule of terror in Matabeleland.

"Workers and peasants throughout Southern Africa, struggling against the nightmare of starvation, no jobs, and lack of land—which are the only future

that capitalism can offer—will draw their own conclusions as to who are their friends in Europe and who are not."

More and more, the links will be forged among workers internationally to build mass democratic workers' organisations which can lead and win the fight for democracy and socialism.

Defend SALEP against Labour Party proscription! Buy a SALEP T-shirt! £3 & postage. Also still available: SALEP bulletin with NUM member Roy Jones report on his visit to SA NUM. 20p & 13p postage. Available from Southern African Labour Education Project (SALEP) 28, Martello Street, London E8. Phone: 241-0434

LETTERS

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

Dead-end on YTS

Dear *Militant*,

As a 19 year old youth who has experienced the YTS scheme, I would like to say that I feel it has been of no use to me whatsoever. I was on YTS for a year after leaving school, training to be a gardener and I was more or less guaranteed a job at the end of it. I am now 19 and three years after the scheme

I still don't have a job, though this is not through lack of trying.

If you find yourself in the same position as me, I feel it is time to fight and stand up for our rights.

I feel as long as we have a Conservative government, the fight for jobs is not going to be an easy one.

Yours faithfully
Leslie Preece
West Yorkshire

American involvement in WW2

Dear Comrades,

I was delighted to see that the most recent issue of *Militant* (748) carried an article on the political background to World War Two, with the promise of more to come. The history of the war is portrayed entirely in military and patriotic terms by the media and in schools, with little reference to the class issues and events involved.

Nevertheless, the article worried me, particularly the statement that the US 'stage managed' Pearl Harbour in order to enter the war. This statement being supported by a four line quote by the US secretary of state for war which only partially supported the claim.

Since I suspect that there are readers, particularly older readers, who were at the very least mystified by the statement and given that an increasing number of school students are reading the paper who may have got into debates with teachers and parents about this, the following may be of interest:

It should be borne in mind

that the US secret service had broken the code being used by the Japanese military. The obvious question is how could the US navy at Pearl Harbour be caught almost entirely by surprise by the attack, resulting in considerable losses in men and equipment, if they knew that the Japanese intended to attack as an act of commencing the war!

The answer is given by a prominent US naval officer of the time, Rear Admiral RA Theobald. It was, he writes: "Because President Roosevelt and his advisors (principally General Marshall and Admiral Stark) had made up their minds that the fleet should play the part of the goat that is left tethered to the post as bait for the Japanese Tiger and the risk to which it was thereby exposed was the only means of provoking the attack which would bring the US irrevocably into the war".

The cynicism of capitalism seemingly knows no bounds.
Yours Fraternally
Clive Bomford
Southampton Labour Party

Building links

Dear Comrades,

Whilst the campaign for the amnesty for miners sacked continues would it not be a good thing if those sacked men were taken on to the payroll of the NUM or the various areas and given work to do?

Reaching miners who have returned to work is not easy with shifts and travelling distances etc. Many lodge officials are now given little facilities by their pit managers and the number of tasks presently being left undone must be enormous. The sacked men could fill a vacuum by visiting other workers at their factories and offices, building links

International solidarity

Dear Comrades,

Together with all active trade unionists we have been watching the British miners' strike. We have admired the miners' obstinacy, endurance and braveness to keep up the strike for one year. This enthusiasm grew after, together with trade unionists from Nürnberg, we visited striking miners and could see how the British miners and their families were organising their daily lives, in spite of financial needs and the attacks of the British government, (especially with laws against trade unions).

We became even more enthusiastic when, after the strike was broken off, the

miners returned to work, heads up, following the miners' bands, the miners and their families went back into the pits although none of their demands had been realised. Only workers who had been fighting and trying everything to win the fight can return to work in this way.

I saw workers going back to work after they were locked out at MAN, depressed and disappointed. But what was the consequence?

The capitalists started a counter attack, forced us to work overtime, raised prices for food and so on. That's the way workers who give up the fight against the capitalists and for their demands are treated.

Comrades, the British miners proved that it is possible to cancel laws passed against workers by ignoring them. This is in contrast to the German IGM leaders who recently stated that occupying factories is illegal, and therefore not a tactic of IGM. This means that they were declaring the struggle of our Heckel colleagues and the occupation of AGWeser and Videocolor illegal. Where would it lead to if workers occupied factories and expropriated Flick and other capitalists?

We have to state clearly that West German scab-coal undermined your strike and that we did not succeed in stopping these scab activities. You showed us that workers are able to do a lot as soon as they have started fighting. Still, the minds of West German workers are plastered with the ideology of social partnership, of partnership with the capitalists under which the



Buying furs at Harrods, not usually a pastime of the working class. Photo: Militant.

Animals have rights too

Dear Comrades,

I am writing about an issue which I feel has not received sufficient attention in *Militant* or in the labour movement as a whole—that of animal rights.

As we oppose the exploitation of the workers by the bosses we should also oppose the exploitation of animals

by man. Both have a profit motive. It is my belief that a difference in species alone does not justify wanton exploitation as oppression in the name of science, sport, or for use as food, commercial profit or any other human gain. If we want freedom for people, there is no reason why the non-

human animals should be excluded.

There are tens of thousands of animal rights campaigners in this country and far from having a 'middle-class' outlook, most are Labour voters and many believe in the ideas of socialism.

I would appeal to all

socialists not to contribute to animal suffering by fishing, eating meat, buying fur etc. Also we should campaign for animal rights to be included in the programmes of *Militant*, the LPYS and ultimately the Labour Party, so animal oppression may one day become a thing of the past.

Yours Sincerely
Nathan Roche
Birkenhead LPYS

Can't afford to work

Dear Comrades,

I am of the firm belief that I am a 'scrounger'. Thatcher is right the unemployed don't want to work.

Last week, after a two hour session at the DHSS, I happened to go into the 'Job' Centre. They were advertising for temporary labourers, I was told to go straight to the firm. When I arrived having had to cross the Thames and walk three miles, I was told I would be paid £80 gross for a 40 hour week, plus at least five hours a week compulsory overtime.

I was told to start that day. Great! I thought, then it dawned on me—I couldn't afford to!

The DHSS haven't paid me a heating allowance (I am entitled to on health grounds) for a six month

period, consequently I am six months in arrears with the gas and electricity bills. I have been threatened with disconnection and the only way to avoid this is going on what the DHSS call 'fuel direct', which means £10 a week will be taken away from my benefit to pay the bills (Until the DHSS pay me the six months money they owe). 'Fuel direct' only works if you are receiving Supplementary Benefit. As soon as you start working you have to pay up the whole amount straightaway or your gas and electricity are cut off immediately.

So the moral of this story is if you are on the dole and ever hope to get a job, (that isn't meant to be a joke) don't use heating or lighting, freeze and starve or else you won't be able to afford to work!

Yours Fraternally
David Wallace
Woolwich Labour Party

stand-point of the working class is buried.

In spite of this, class consciousness breaks through again and again in some colleagues and crews.

The colleagues in Heckel, Videocolor, and AGWeser fought an excellent fight. But they couldn't win as it is impossible for isolated workers of one factory, for only one part of the working class, to change the distribution of possession.

Only Marxist-Leninism can win the hearts and minds of those workers whose thoughts today are social-democratic.

Long live International solidarity!

Yours Fraternally
Herbert Scheibiuger
Nürnberg, West Germany
Member of metal workers union

LEFT and RIGHT

India's grisly price war

INDIAN multi-millionaire Narayan Sen is outraged that his former minions, the harijans or 'untouchables', are now undercutting him in the skeleton business. Previously they supplied him with skeletons for export to the west. They prey on the downtrodden masses of Bihar, who can't even afford firewood for a funeral pyre. The bodies are bought for a few rupees, buried to decompose and then bleached and boiled. The skeletons are ferried to Calcutta at \$30 a time, and then sold at up to \$200 each. A neat profit. But the untouchables have gone into business on their own, and the outraged Sen now faces competition from 12 different firms. Not only that, they are mixing up bones of different castes. Sen said "... These scoundrels, they're shipping anything they can get their hands on. They have no taste or class." (*Sunday Times* 5 May). Unlike Mr Sen of course, who was making over \$1 million a year from this grisly business.

Tory joke

WHEN JARROW'S Labour MP Don Dixon appealed to Thatcher during parliamentary question time for more aid for his stricken area, one Tory back bencher displayed all the sensitivity and compassion now expected from his party. Hampshire MP Michael Colvin chortled that the government should "send a load of bikes to Jarrow". Tee hee hee. Mr Colvin by the way is a landowner and 'farmer' owning Colvin Farms in Essex, Tangley Estates and Cricketers Arms in Hampshire, Crimmond and Harthill estates in Scotland, and is a company director.

The rate for the job

FORD WORKERS should put in for a pay rise—the going rate is 67 per cent. At least that's what the chairman for Ford UK, Sam Toy, has just been awarded. This is a £1,200 a week rise, taking him to £157,000 a year. And this at a time when Ford UK is having its worst sales performance since the 1970s. What would he get if he was successful?

Ford women's victory

KATHY McGOVERN, retired sewing machinist shop steward at Ford, Halewood, along with Frances Kerwin a current shop steward, Lea Berry, Sheila Grant and other sewing room workers talked to Anne Bannister about their successful claim for upgrading—after a seventeen year campaign. Since this article was written it appears that some of the women in the sewing room not operating sewing machines may not be upgraded and there is a possibility of further industrial action.

SEWING MACHINISTS at Ford Halewood were dancing on the tables and singing, 'Here we go' when they heard the news that the ACAS tribunal had come out in their favour. They had won the recognition that they have been fighting for over the last 17 years, to be classified as skilled "C grade" workers.

This decision, and the battle the women have fought over the years, should be a beacon to other women workers who are discriminated against in their jobs. Where women predominate, in jobs such as sewing machinists, typists, secretaries or cooks, they are not classed as skilled, despite the training and experience that is required. These can be compared to skilled male jobs such as a joiner or plumber, yet they are relatively lower paid.

Training

Sewing machinists in general need six to twelve months' training to do the job, and yet are poorly paid everywhere. At Fords the sewing machinists have to have two years' experience and take a trade test before they can be taken on. The company offer no training except for YTS, but none of the trainees can be offered a job at the end because they do not have enough experience. Ford have even

tried to train men for the job through redeployment—but this has proved impossible. Yet the Ford evaluators have insisted over the years that the sewing machinists' job should be grade B—the same as janitors.

The sewing machinists at Fords went on strike 17 years ago over upgrading, which was instrumental in the introduction of the Equal Pay Act by the Labour government. The women won equal pay with the men on grade B, but not the upgrading they wanted.

"When we first went on strike for upgrading", said Kathy McGovern, "the union made the strike official. Out of a court of enquiry, a committee was set up to investigate the grading. Six committees followed, each took about 18 months—everybody passed the buck. Everybody thought we had a good case, but the mighty Ford Company had a hold on people.

"We started putting the pressure on again about 1978, and every year we went to the Grading Grievance Panel—but it was the same faces every year, made up of Ford management and personnel. We were dropping points on physical effort compared to men's jobs, but some of our retired workers are on disability pension after problems with their wrists.

"Last year we decided to

go in for a fight come what may. We went to an Industrial Tribunal in London, to take the case up under the new equal value clauses in the Equal Pay Act".

Strike

The union lost the case; the tribunal ruled in favour of Ford's job evaluators. The women at Halewood and Dagenham decided to go on strike, laying off 10,000 other Ford workers, and only went back to work when

they were offered independent arbitration.

The ACAS tribunal not only ruled that the sewing machinists were C-grade workers, but that they were only four points below D-grade (the next grade up—the same as mechanics). Frances Kerwin explained that this was the first time that anybody had actually looked at the job they did.

When Angela Bowie, the tribunal chairperson, came to look at their work, she had been told that there was a guard on the sewing machines. She was under the impression that all the girls did was feed the material through the machine and the guard guided it. She had no idea what the job involved—that the women had to push and pull the material around, and that over the years the job had got more difficult as fancy-seat covers have been introduced. Every time a seat is changed, they have to just

get on and do the job.

The women are all jubilant that they have proved their point after all these years—that they do have a skill. The result of the tribunal questions Ford's whole structure, grading scheme and method of job evaluation. Grading schemes are used by management at Ford and other large companies to divide the workforce, to ensure that workers are fighting amongst themselves as women workers against men workers or just one grade against another, rather than workers fighting united against the bosses.

Evaluation exploded

Women workers in particular find themselves the worst off at the bottom of any grading scheme.

The victory of the sewing machinists at Fords should be welcomed by male Ford

workers and should give encouragement to them for any future negotiations. The Ford job evaluation has been proved wrong once and it can be proved wrong again.

The women at Dagenham and Halewood have set a tremendous example. Their victory is a victory for all women workers in demonstrating that a woman's job can be classified as skilled. They have also shown that reliance on the Equal Pay Act and Industrial Tribunals is not enough. Without industrial action they would not have won the right to an independent tribunal.

The Ford sewing machinists have shown their strength and are now only angry—as one woman said: "we have been robbed for the last 17 years, we have been soft for too long". But they have learnt their lesson and are determined to carry on fighting—and hope to win D-grade before long.



Photo: Carlos Guarita (Reflex)

Ford machinists lobby annual pay negotiations last year over their upgrading claim.

Left step forward in AUEW elections

THE AUEW election results brought very encouraging news for all those AUEW members who are campaigning for a fighting leadership after the disasters of the last few years.

John Dougherty, from the Manchester area and the Broad Left's choice of candidate for the Regional Officer in EC Division 4 won the seat by 16,705 to the right-wing candidate, J Alan's 14,171 in the second ballot.

This is a particularly significant result, because EC Division 4 includes the important West Midlands area, traditionally the right-wing stronghold, the home of Duffy and of Bill Jordan one of the right wing candidates in the forthcoming Presidential election.

Right wriggle

There were victories for the left elsewhere too. In EC Division 5 in the North East, left candidate Bill Pritchard won by 13,309 to T Butler's 10,172 on the second ballot, whilst also on the second round of balloting for Divisional Organiser for Division

No 4 left candidate Bill Scott won with 2,093 to S Patter-son's 1,193.

The biggest shock to the right-wing came in the elections to the Final Appeals Court. Here the left swept the board, taking ten out of the eleven places and thus reducing the right-wing's representation to a single individual.

Once again however, the right-wing leadership revealed their contempt for the AUEW membership and the union's constitution. They must have been aware of the result of the ballot sometime before it was announced, because at the Rules Revision Conference, they attempted to shift heaven and earth in an unsuccessful bid to change the method of election of the Final Appeals Court.

The right wing have never been able to capture control of this body. It continued to

be elected on a branch rather than postal balloting basis after all the other positions had been changed to the postal method. Eventually the right wing succeeded in bringing elections to this body into line with the rest of the union. But still the left maintained a majority—of just one.

One set-back

Faced with this latest humiliation; the right wing leadership, who have spent so much time extolling the virtues of the postal ballot, attempted to secure a rule change giving the National Committee the power to appoint the Final Appeals Court. To their credit, the National Committee, despite its inbuilt right wing majority, rejected this hypocrisy and threw out the proposal.

There was, however, one major setback in the recent ballots. In the election for a successor to the retiring Assistant General Secretary Bob Wright, the left candidate Graham Merry came bottom of the poll in the first

round of balloting and will not therefore be able to take part in the next round.

Despite that blow, much encouragement and optimism can be drawn from these results, if certain serious lessons also. The election of John Dougherty to an area that includes the right wing's West Midlands power base shows the potential for change. Indeed this result could prove to be a barometer for the mood of engineering workers generally.

With the EC position in that area, at present held by the right wing Ken Cure, up for election in a couple of years the Broad Left need to build upon this success and seriously prepare to take it in the near future.

But of more immediate significance is the potential which this reveals in the battle for the most important position—the Presidency. Over the past few years the left have been making steady gains at local District, Divisional, Regional and even in one case at EC level.

However the defeat of the



left candidate in the AGS election emphasises the need for an open, campaigning approach in order to repeat the local successes at national level. That is the immediate task that confronts the Broad Left. John Tocher, the left candidate has made clear his serious determination to campaign amongst the AUEW membership to win the Presidency.

The Broad Left at every level and in every region has a responsibility to ensure that this candidate is invited to every area, to speak at meetings, to discuss with members and to meet as many of the membership as possible in order to win their support and backing.

By Martin Elvin



Industrial Reports

Broad Left in CPSA rebuilding fast

DESPITE THE election of a right wing NEC as a result of the Communist Party-inspired split from the Broad Left, CPSA conference showed that the union activists remain overwhelmingly in support of Broad Left policies.

Conference passed Broad Left motions on hours and leave, casuals, future pay policy and staff inspections whilst rejecting virtually all of the attempts by the right wing/"Broad Left '84" coalition to shift the union's policy rightwards.

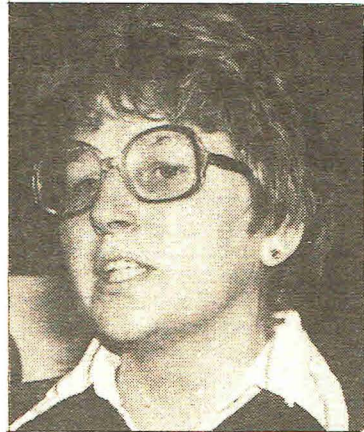
The debates showed the membership's determination to struggle—a quality unfortunately not shared by the outgoing NEC, whose "BL 84" members mirrored Alistair Graham's 'New Realism' in debate after debate.

The influence of the CPSA Broad Left has not been significantly damaged by the split. The Broad Left rally at the beginning of conference attracted an audience of 300. The "BL 84" rally was only slightly smaller but by the end of the week many delegates had made up their minds—the Thursday "BL 84" meeting attracted only five delegates! And that included the top table.

By Bill Boyle

The Broad Left end of conference rally at lunch-time on Friday which was called at very short notice and could have been three times as large if advertised was attended by 250 delegates and observers. They were angry about the NEC results, not demoralised. They pledged to build the membership and influence of the Broad Left in 1985.

Hundreds of delegates joined the Broad Left during the week. They were inspired by the performance and policies of the Broad Left. On the other hand many were repelled by the desperation of "BL 84" and the personal abuse which many of its members hurled at delegates opposing their right wing policy



Dawn Castle.

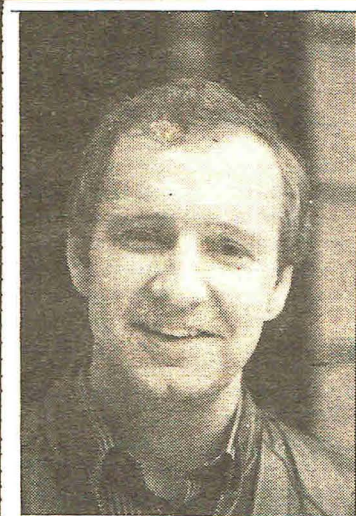
fringe meeting of conference. £3,000 was collected for the fighting fund (and another £1,000 during the week).

The *Militant* meeting even dwarfed the meeting called by the senior officers of the union to drum up support for a bureaucratic merger with the Society of Civil and Public Servants (SCPS). Significantly this was supported by "BL 84" leaders Mick Duggan and Stewart McLennan. The Communist Party fringe meeting was cancelled due to lack of support.

The influence of the Broad Left grew in all sections of the union. Even in the Department of Employment which was regarded by "BL 84" as their stronghold, "BL 84" national secretary Jonathon Baume lost his position as London Regional Secretary to a Broad Left supporter. More than thirty DE members joined the Broad Left during the conference.

In the massive DHSS section the Broad Left swept the board with the exception of one right winger and an independent. "BL

All photos: Mick Carroll.



Kevin Roddy.



Ray Alderson.

Right-wing presidential candidate Kate Losinska received 28,395 votes. Kevin Roddy, the Broad Left candidate and ex-president got 15,418. The Broad Left split-off "BL 84's" candidate, Communist Party member Ray Alderson took 13,096. A united vote left vote would have beaten Losinska's total.

Kevin was elected to the NEC but displaced by the rule which does not allow two members of the same branch seats on the NEC. This was because the right wing swing on the NEC elections was so large.

Rule by referendum

The year ahead is a grim one for CPSA members. The Tories will use the right wing majority's lack of fight as an excuse to push ahead with the introduction of new technology and job cuts. Alistair Graham will attempt to introduce a "settled pay system" into the civil service. Only the passage of a Broad Left motion demanding a special pay conference will save the membership from Graham's excesses. The NEC will rule this year by referendum—any conference policy it does not like it will ignore and go over the heads of the members in cahoots with the government and media.

The conference voted not to oppose Tory anti-trade union laws. This was a blow, but delegates were seriously concerned that without a strong leadership it was pointless to vote for empty 'fighting talk'. The membership quite simply has no confidence in this leadership.

Remarks like this from "BL 84" and NEC member Steve Cardownie: "You pick and choose your battles. As far as we are concerned we were there to get pay. We were not going to use our members as a political battering ram against the trade union laws, particularly when we knew that was going to fail. Vote against this motion—vote for sanity" illustrate just how far to the right these so-called lefts have travelled. This speech from an ex-SWP member, showed the same lack of confidence in the membership as any bureaucrat. It decided many delegates. If this was the view of the left on the NEC what would the right do.

Delegates showed no willingness to accept the Tories' legal attacks on the unions. Hatred of this government was shown in the passage of a motion calling for the setting up of a political fund. *Militant* supporters Dawn Castle, Robyn Mitchell, Larry O'Callaghan and Alistair Nicholson all hammered home the point that CPSA must campaign for Labour Party affiliation. The right wing will find it difficult to

shift-workers' dispute. Newcastle branch secretary and *Militant* supporter, Doreen Purvis, received tumultuous applause on moving the motion. Ian Leedham, "BL 84" and DE section chair disgracefully opposed the censure, exposing his own role in the dispute and his section leadership's anti-Newcastle attitude.

The role of the ordinary DE member was in contrast to their leaders' betrayals. Stuart McLennan, for the NEC, rambled on until he ran out of time and was shouted at by delegates. Doreen Purvis, replying, said: "Newcastle Central Office branch have heard today about the 'difficult decisions' of the NEC. Conference—they came out of the NEC where they made this decision, laughing. If anyone deserves this censure motion they do." And they got it.

Enthusiasm

The Newcastle pamphlet on the strike sold like hot cakes, as did a similar pamphlet from DNS Glasgow *Bank Broadside* detailing how the Broad Left took control of DNS Glasgow from "BL 84", inflicting a heavy blow to the Communist Party in the West of Scotland.

The enthusiasm and mood of the Broad Left was extraordinary considering the events of the past year. It seems that rid of its careerist rump the Broad Left has taken on a new lease of life. Organised as never before by Martyn Jenkins, John Ship and Kevin Roddy, the Broad Left came out of conference the clear political victor. As Ray Alderson said: "This has not been a good week for me" (he will shortly be replaced on the TUC by Alisatir Graham). Just before, in



Doreen Purvis.

his 'vote of thanks', he viciously attacked fellow "BL 84" member Ian Leedham!

"BL 84's" habit of personal abuse, rooted in their lack of political arguments, turned away many of their existing and potential supporters. The serious political attitude of the Broad Left won it greatly increased support. After a year of sabotage by the right wing, inactivity from "BL 84" and massive political campaign by the Broad Left on policies not personalities, CPSA members will be looking for a fighting, socialist leadership.

If the Broad Left builds on the solid base of support shown amongst the active layers of the union during this conference it can win a majority on the NEC. That task must be actively taken up if the union is to be armed with a leadership as well as policies to defend the members against Tory attacks and capitalist crisis.

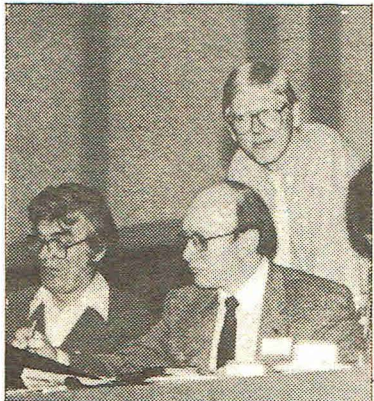
Debate goes on

The attempts by the standing orders committee during this debate to pose the question as "merge now or never" were sunk without trace by the chair of standing orders, *Militant* supporter Steve Appleton. He insisted that the merger proposals open for debate were only this year's proposals and that the debate would go on. His attempt to get the amendments to the merger heard by conference were met with apoplectic rage by Cynthia Oughton (Communist Party and "BL 84" member of Standing Orders Committee) and the bureaucracy. Deputy general secretary John Ellis demanded that they immediately sack him!

The NEC were censured for their failure to fully back the Newcastle



Alistair Graham (left) could well have been waving his thanks to leading BL '84 members Coltman, Coutas and Baume following the NEC election results.



stances. During one debate a delegate was even moved to take the rostrum on a point of order to protest at the abuse thrown at *Militant* supporter Dawn Castle by "BL 84" members on the platform.

The gutter tactics, the sustained and personalised attacks made by "BL 84" members on *Militant* supporters backfired on them. Many of their activists have applied to re-join the Broad Left in disgust at their "leadership's" behaviour. Any active left wing trade unionist would have been astounded by the sight of Communist Party member Peter Coltman opposing the call for the resignation of leading right-winger Alistair Graham.

His answer to the censure motion from DHSS Liverpool branch was: "If the NEC can't control Graham, get rid of the NEC." That was just what the membership had done last year—but they were still saddled with Graham thanks to the political cowardice of Coltman and his friends. Worse still, Graham will shortly be back on the TUC General Council—courtesy of "BL 84".

This year's conference was the most political ever. One indication of that was the record number of fringe meetings. The *Militant* Readers' Meeting was the biggest

84" members Stuart McLennan Mickey Duggan and David McNab were all kicked off the DHSS section executive by Broad Left members. With the DHSS remaining as its power base the Broad Left is set to recover its position in next year's NEC elections.

The only reason for the election of three "BL 84" members to an NEC dominated 26—3 by the right wing was the decision of the Socialist Caucus, SLG and others in the Broad Left to withdraw their members from the Broad Left slate—leaving Broad Left votes to go to some "BL 84" members.

Combined with some right wing votes tossed in their direction as reward for the damage they have done to the left, this was just enough to get "BL 84" members Mickey Duggan, Ray Alderson and Jim Caldwell elected this year.

The NEC election results are a disaster for CPSA members. And "BL 84" must take the blame. The total left wing vote exceeded the right in both the presidential and vice presidential elections. Kevin Roddy came first runner up in both contests, beating Communist Party and "BL 84" leaders Ray Alderson, Mickey Duggan and Norman Jacobs—a very good indication of the political and electoral decline of "BL 84" even at this early stage.

Industrial Reports

London Transport building redundancies?

THE TORY-controlled management of London Transport Building Department gave a mass meeting of workers a 'choice' in a survival plan on 8 May. Either 300 to 370 people should take voluntary redundancy by October or they would consider closure.

Management also had information available on how much redundancy money was on offer. The Joint Convenors' Committee held a mass meeting on 15 May which completely rejected management's proposals, and agreed to a 50p levy to mount a campaign. Members were given a pamphlet *Thinking of taking redundancies? Beware* which explained the perils of taking redundancies.

The mass meeting also called for a special delegate meeting of the London Transport Trade Union Group to fight all attacks on LT workers.

By Jim McGuinness
(Deputy Convenor,
Section 1, shop steward,
UCATT)

Private steel take-over leads to job loss

ON FRIDAY 17 May the workforce of 300 at Bidston steel on the Wirral were informed by letter by the company 'Allied Steel and Wire' of Cardiff that they had taken over Manchester Steel (owned by Elten, Norway) and that Bidston would be closed and the workforce sacked.

On Sunday 19 May a well attended mass meeting called by the Fighting Committee made up of stewards from the ISTC, AUEW (Engineering), AUEW (Construction) and the EETPU was addressed by union officials, local Labour councillors and the Birkenhead MP Frank Field.

Link fight

The Fighting Committee which has already linked up with two plants in Manchester where 400 jobs are under threat has organised a second lobby of MPs at Parliament and has been offered aid and support from Wirral Labour Council Group, Frank Field MP and the Bishop of Chester.

Management are meeting the convenors on Monday 20 May where the 90 day notice is expected. Further mass meetings will be called when more information is available. With local unemployment exceeding 40 per cent a growing mood is developing to fight against the closure.

By A Taylor
(Bidston Ward LP,
Birkenhead)

Teachers oppose 7% -step up campaign

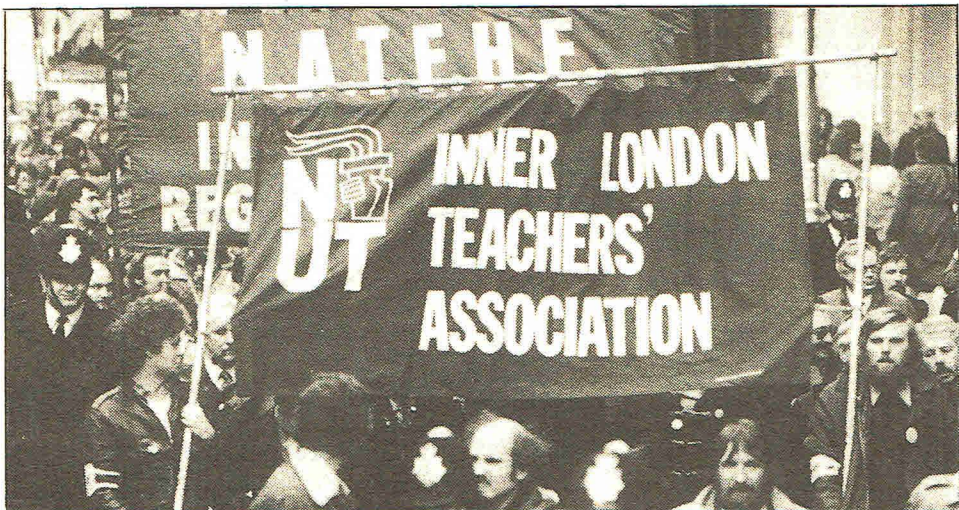


Photo: Andrew Ward (Report)

SEVEN PER cent or thereabouts—and even that possibly phased. This is the contemptible settlement the teachers' union leadership seem to be thinking about.

This will do very little indeed to solve the plight of the mainly young, scale 1 and scale 2 teachers. Teachers will rightly feel let down.

It is disgraceful that the union executive, which has promised so much, can crumble so easily into considering accepting with such an offer.

Nothing has happened to change the justification for a basic £1,200 flat-rate claim. Nothing has happened to change the need for a decisive

breakthrough on pay this year, between the shambles of rigged arbitration last year.

The fight on conditions of service is about to begin. Such a settlement as offered should not be ratified.

Whatever happens, questions will need to be asked of national officers, who have stumped the country, persuading members that despite the miners' defeat they did have a credible strategy to win a breakthrough on pay—long term action in key centres, supported by a levy elsewhere—yet have so blatantly failed to deliver that strategy in practice.

Now, when the crunch has come, they try gathering crumbs which brow-beaten local

authorities, themselves in desperate financial straits, try to sweep together. And how many of those authorities with even crumbs being paid for out of other budgets, will get further cuts?

It is still not too late to launch the sort of campaign and strategy to put the pressure back where it should be, and to mobilise members uncompromisingly against the educational policies of this government.

By Ian Hunter
(Durham, Chester-le-
Street NUT)

Rail unions must re-organise

THE NUR strike on London Transport was one of the worst organised strikes I've been involved in. At almost every depot men went past the pickets. At best one-third of the membership supported the strike.

The lack of communication from the union was criminal, with many members claiming they only knew about the strike from the media.

Unity vital

ASLEF's decision not to strike was crucial as it helped sow the seeds of despondency. Police curtailed picketing, with three pickets accused of harassing workers at the Elephant and Castle before any one turned up. They also removed pickets from LT property.

Various threatening letters from management were sent out and had an effect in the absence of union literature



Photo: Carlos Guerra (Reflex)

Last of the guards at New Cross?

—apparently stacks of it were locked up in union offices on the Sunday night.

But it was not all negative. The young pickets were quickly drawn into activity. If the strike had not been

called off the situation would have been turned round.

By Bob Law
(East Ham NUR, personal
capacity)

Brighton bakers defy ABF

OVER ONE hundred bakers at Sunblest in Brighton have been on strike since 10 May. The dispute surrounds the sacking of a young baker, Stephen Lee, 19, for the 'terrible crime' of stealing a few obsolete plastic bags.

It is clear the strike was provoked by the ABF group as a test of the union. Management were thoroughly prepared, bringing in 'flying managers' to continue production within 24 hours.

The mood amongst the strikers is determined. As in the miners' strike the youth and women have been noticeably active. The dispute has been taken beyond Brighton with a leaflet produced by local *Militant* sup-

porters being taken to other bakeries and receiving a good response.

The strike was made official on Monday 20 May and resulted in an immediate response from management who are now threatening the Bakers union (BFAWU) with court action using the Tories' trade union laws.

Malcolm Chisolm the branch secretary of the BFAWU 181 branch told me that: "Every branch where managers are known to be in Brighton must recall them immediately. The union is being put to the test. The National Executive must campaign now for all-out national strike action if we are fined or our funds threatened. We

have had three votes for strike already. We need no lessons in democracy from management. No way are we going back down until this lad is reinstated".

The possibility of wider strike action is now on the cards. Approaches are being made to broaden support for the strike, finance is absolutely vital. Messages of support and donations should be sent to: Malcolm Chisolm, BFAWU Brighton 181, Flat 4, 48 Devonshire Place, Brighton.

By Mick Gowler
(Brighton LPYS)

Coal board sabotage at Cwm

ON 9 and 10 May, Cwm Colliery in Beddau, Mid Glamorgan went on strike over the allegations by the General Manager of machinery sabotage in the washery. Billy Liddon, Lodge Secretary, told *Militant* that the allegations were ludicrous and explained events leading up to the strike as part of the NCB's plans to close the pit:

"Lodge officers were told that all standing agreements with special regard to the washery were being scrapped. The General Manager (installed since the coal dispute finished) readily accepted the 20 year agreements were legally binding and signed by the NUM and NCB at area level, but after the 12 month strike it was a different ball game. After a union meeting we agreed that if men weren't paid for certain jobs, they wouldn't do those jobs. The through-put dropped dramatically. This was in evitable, but the men continued to work honestly and diligently.

"The General Manager said I've offered this new deal (less pay, more work) and if the men aren't prepared to accept it, they'll be sent home for not producing enough. He said washery personnel will be sent home at 10 am tomorrow if things don't

improve. These are the lowest paid men in the industry—some claim Family Income Supplement, wages are that low.

"At 9.15 am the General Manager said the men had sabotaged a gearbox. I said he'd threatened to send people home at 10.00am, ie. in 45 minutes. Had he now got cold feet? Was he afraid he couldn't justify sending them home?"

Billy explained that before the coal dispute the five foot seam had only one shift, the coal was that inferior. Now they are ONLY excavating the five foot seam, ignoring the six foot high quality seam.

It's clear that the life of the pit is being deliberately reduced. Cwm was one of the most militant pits in South Wales, only five scabs worked during the 12 months—even in the last few days of the strike the men remained loyal. Now the Lodge are threatened because of their support for the NUM.

Billy Liddon is adamant that the NCB's plans must be put across to the rank and file quickly. The Lodge is preparing leaflets, weekly if necessary, to spell out the implications and the need for a campaign of action.

Liverpool GEC

GEC LIVERPOOL are at present involved in a lock-out by management after a row over 98 job losses and no pay offer.

Trouble started after management asked people to work overtime on the last bank holiday weekend.

On the Tuesday morning 28 people were informed that from the end of that shift they'd be suspended for three days for not working overtime.

That resulted in a mass meeting later that afternoon where workers decided that they would not return to work the following day, but go in on the Friday and implement an immediate overtime ban and a four-day week.

Management's response was to ask four senior stewards to sign an agreement on behalf of the workers that no further action would be taken against the company. They refused to sign it and were told that as of the end of the shift all 795 shop

floor workers would be suspended—so they signed what effectively was a 'no strike' agreement.

At the following mass meeting of the workers it was unanimously decided that they would not return under this threat until all the no-strike agreements were withdrawn and negotiations took place.

Management intended to split the workers but it has had the opposite effect—we are more united than ever before.

We are at present trying to forge links between other GEC companies throughout the country to try and gain support and experience throughout the GEC combine.

Messages of support and donations should be sent to: Ronnie Brown, 4 Holborn Hill, Ormskirk, Lancashire.

By Kenny Rooney
(GEC shop steward,
EETPU)

USDAW Broad Left

Bill Connor for General Secretary



Fighting to end low pay

THE TORIES and their friends complain that those who work in retail distribution are paid too much. Their proposal to abolish the Wage Councils will lead to a further erosion of the already an...

To order leaflets for information on the Broad Left election campaign, contact Mick Wainwright, 14 Johnson Road, Blackpool, Lancashire FY4 4DD, or phone (0253) 693516.

Militant

Amnesty now!

See page three

Free these miners!

Below are the details, charges and sentences of Kent miners in Prison. They are pictured on a march in London at the start of the strike last year.

Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (Report)



Mark Best, 26, married. Conspiracy: first offence. **THREE YEARS**

Gary Hewell, 29, married, two children. Conspiracy: first offence. **THREE YEARS**

Jimmy Waddell, married with two children. Conspiracy: first offence. **THREE YEARS**

Chris Tacey, 21. Aiding and abetting assault on a police officer: first offence. **THREE YEARS.**

John O'Conner, 26, wife expecting. Threatening behaviour: first offence. **TWO MONTHS**

Emlyn Davis, 33, married, two children. Conspiracy: first offence. **THREE YEARS**

Brian Day, 28, married with one child. Conspiracy. **THREE YEARS.**

Terry French, 34, married. Assaulting a police officer. **FIVE YEARS.**

A STAGGERING 9,808 miners and their supporters were arrested during their year long strike. Many have since lost their jobs while others were thrown into jail following harsh sentences. The picture above shows the fate of leading rank and file militants from Kent.

Meanwhile the brutal life sentences imposed on Dean Hancock and Russell Shankland have been met with horror and revulsion throughout the British coalfields and the entire labour movement.

Immediately Taff Merthyr followed by Oakdale Colliery struck for 24 hours in protest and a demonstration is organised for Saturday 25 May in Cardiff.

In the eyes of the movement, two young miners have been sacrificed as part of an overall build-up to pave the way for the Tory proposals on so-called 'public order'.

The Tories have used the distorted media view of the miners' strike and the mass of unjustified arrests to justify even greater repressive measures against the trade union movement.

The excessive confidence of Thatcher and other Tory 'hawks' comes from a misguided belief that the movement has been demoralised and 'softened-up' as a result of the miners' dispute. But the NACODS ballot result shows that even in the mining industry a willingness to struggle still exists.

Leadership

If the necessary leadership and direction is given to the movement the Tory onslaught can be thwarted. However, the top brass of the unions have clearly indicated that, with a few notable exceptions, they are deeply entrenched in the unreal world of 'New Realism'.

Only internal pressure from the rank and file will force them to oppose the Tories.

With this background, the Miners' Amnesty Campaign takes on an ever greater significance for the wider labour movement. The campaign represents an opportunity to highlight the question of trade union repression and each success, each re-instatement will represent an enormous boost to the confidence of workers generally. Undoubtedly, as the campaign expands so will the campaign against all repressive legislation and Thatcherism in general.

Already, a whole number of organisations have affiliated to the Miners' Amnesty Campaign (MAC) including branches of the NUM, GMBATU, USDAW, NUPE, COHSE, TGWU, ASTMS, UCATT, AUEW, ACTSS, as well as Labour Parties. Public meetings have been

organised in the mining areas and throughout the rest of Britain. Initiatives such as petitions are being implemented in various localities. Fringe meetings are being organised at national and regional union conferences with the co-operation of the Broad Left. But much more needs to be done.

Many miners are still currently held in jail. The battle for these men and for each and every miner victimised must continue with increased fervour.

The battle for an amnesty is a battle for the whole movement to protect hard-won trade union rights and conditions.

By Chris Herriot
(Sacked miner and treasurer of the Miners' Amnesty Campaign)

THE GOVERNMENT'S new proposals for 'public order' announced by Home Secretary Leon Brittan last week, include:

- ★ Power to control the size, location and duration of demonstrations and pickets.
- ★ Extension of powers to ban marches.
- ★ Three months in prison and a £1,000 fine for organisers who break the new conditions.
- ★ Seven days notice to be given before demonstrations.
- ★ New maximum jail sentences for 'riot' offences; 10 years for 'rioting', five years for 'violent disorder', three years for 'affray'.
- ★ Powers of arrest for 'watching and besetting' or taking part in banned marches.



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