

Miners fight scab union

EVERY ACTIVE miner will be fighting against the formation of scab unions in Notts, Durham and elsewhere. These organisations are fostered by the NCB management and the Tories to weaken the miners, preparing the way for closures and the plundering of profitable pits by private business.

The "super-democrats" of the Notts coalfield, Roy Lynk and David Prendergast have deluded themselves and any mineworkers who may mistakenly follow them. Notts, no matter what promises have been made, cannot in isolation escape the NCB closure programme in the long run, and cannot avoid fighting for jobs.

It was estimated during the national strike that only two Notts pits could be deemed as profitable accor-

By Chris Herriot
(Sacked Monktonhall miner)

ding to the Coal Board's criteria. Massive problems of subsidence and the threat of nuclear power hang over the coalfield. South Notts in particular will be decimated.

Only the unified struggle of British mineworkers as a whole can stop the Tory-inspired onslaught of the NCB.

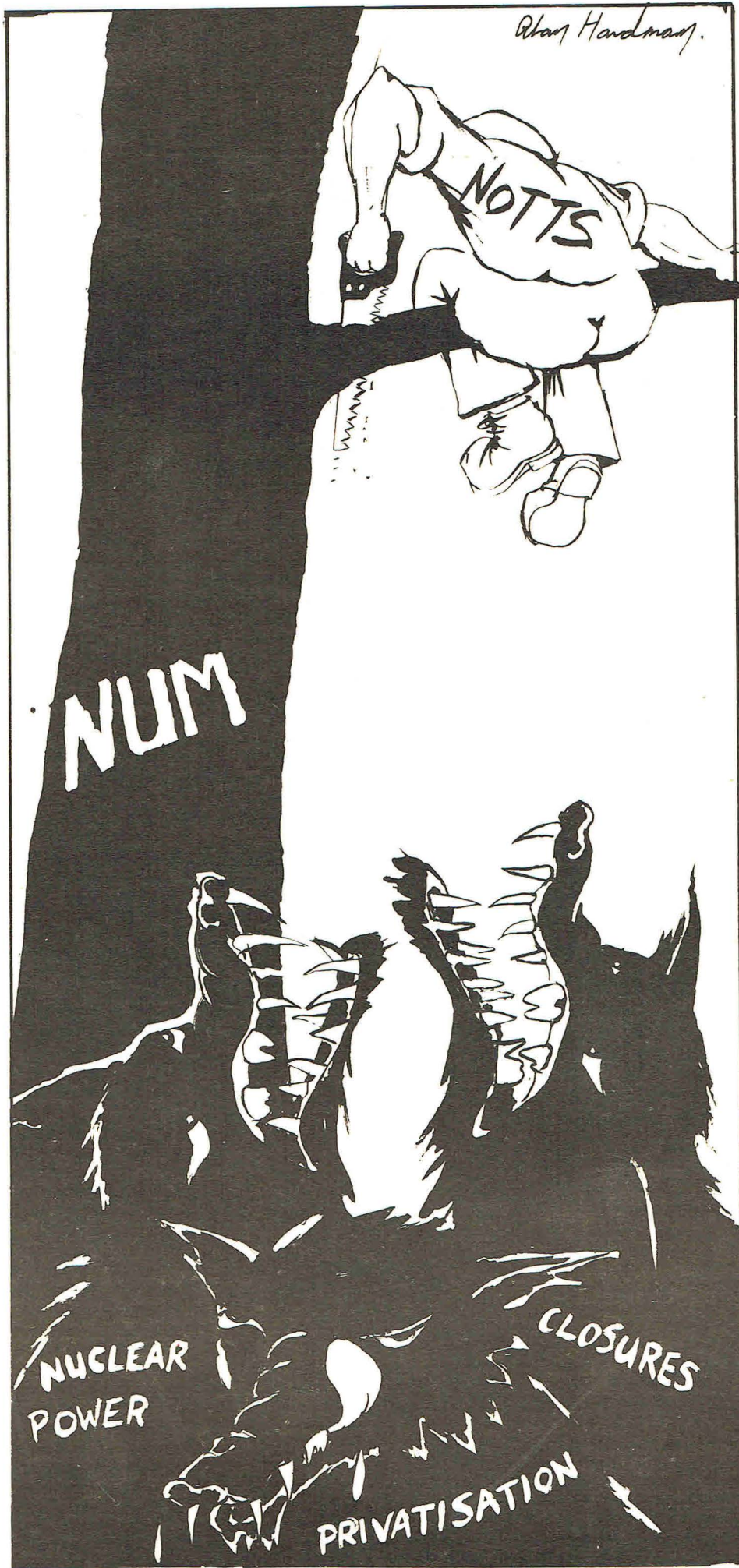
The new NCB 'Plan for

Coal', leaked this week includes the axing of 50 pits and 50,000 jobs. The Board hope to take advantage of divisions in the coalfields.

Lynk and Prendergast and the other scab 'leaders', consciously or not, have allowed themselves to be used as a 'fifth column' in Thatcher's war against the miners.

There is no doubt that these splits have been worked out in detail by the ruling class. Ian McGregor has been in regular contact with scab miners' groups in Nottinghamshire and elsewhere. He has held talks with the leaders of the scab union in Durham.

(Continued on back page)



Notts miners who support National Union speak out

SUPPORTERS of *Militant* in the Notts coalfield stayed loyal to the national union during the historic year-long strike. They will remain loyal and will be fighting tooth and nail against the attempts of right wingers to resurrect Spencerism in the area.

Some of these miners spoke to *Militant*:

Mick Travers from Ollerton: "The overall majority if not all the strikers who stood out in Nottingham will stay with the national union. Unity is strength and that's why I intend to stay.

"Ollerton is the only pit in Nottingham so far where the majority of the new branch leadership are strikers. Many miners are shocked at the suddenness of the break. Maybe it's because the success of strikers regaining positions in the union. Maybe the area leaders felt the ground shifting beneath them."

John Bennet from Hucknall: "Although just over 40 men were out on strike from our pit, I nevertheless feel confident that many more than that will stay with the national union. It's difficult to predict. It's early days

and a lot depends on what the national leaders do and the campaign they conduct, but I think that at least 5,000 Notts men will stay with the union".

A striking miner from Bilsthorpe: "Even though there was a very small minority on strike here, there is a great deal of apprehension about breaking away. Lynk and Prendergast complain about the Arthur Scargill being elected for life, but we've been told that they have both been given contracts for life... in positions, in the new union, for which they were never elected."

Every penny is vital

TO MEET our quarterly target of £70,000 we need to raise a further £39,846 by 31 July. Every single penny is vital.

Liverpool is poised for a massive confrontation with the Tory government. We need your financial support so that *Militant* continues to play a leading role in that battle.

We also have to fight off witch-hunting attacks from the right wing. £235 collected at the EETPU conference

shows that no matter what steps are taken against us our roots are deep in that union as in all the others.

But we need your cash! We can't afford to rest—the Tories and the right wing won't allow it.

Send in your donation today. £20, £10 or more! Ask your workmates and friends to help in our campaign.

Liverpool has shown the way to fight—make sure we can given all the support needed.

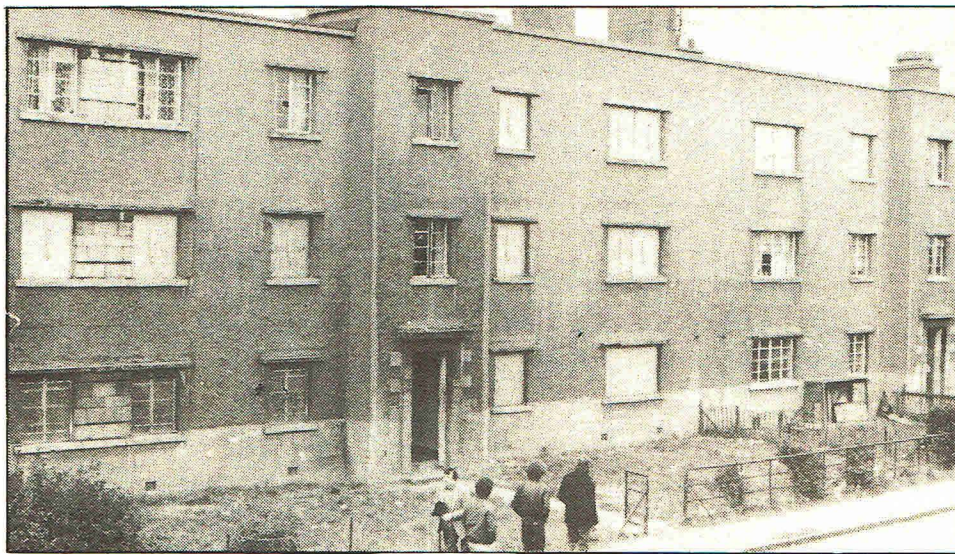
Edinburgh youth get campaign moving

AS THE struggle to defend local authority services continues, the LPYS in Edinburgh packed 300 people into a public meeting organised in support of the District Council.

That was all the more remarkable considering that it took place in the first week of the Edinburgh holiday.

With Alex Wood, leader of Edinburgh District Council and Derek Hatton, Deputy Leader of Liverpool City Council as the two main speakers, it provided an excellent opportunity to explain the case of the local authorities and to build links between Edinburgh and Liverpool in their fight with the Tories.

A concerted campaign took place in the run up to the meeting. All the major local authority workplaces were visited and leaflets distributed. At the housing department the steward explained that already 1,200 out of 1,500 workers had been out on strike in support of the council. If there were any attempts to remove the Labour councillors from office then NALGO would refuse to co-operate with a council which didn't represent working class people from Edinburgh.



Labour inherited serious housing problems in Edinburgh—the product of decades of neglect.

Twelve copies of *Militant* were sold during the first paper sale there.

We also went to the workers in private industry, leafletting outside some of the major factories in Edinburgh like Ferranti's.

The visits to industry were backed up with leafletting in the city centre. We received publicity in the press. Both TV channels held interviews and pointed out that it was the LPYS who had organised the meeting.

The special *Militant* broadsheet on Liverpool City Council has had a very

good response and 50-60 have already been sold. Plans have been made to hold sales outside all the major depots to follow up the campaign for the meeting.

The mood of the meeting itself was one of a willingness to stand firm against Tory attacks and to defend the council.

One of the best contributions came from a 'lollipop man' who asked: "Who are the so-called moderates?" He explained that the Tories who are meant to be moderates on the council were the same people who

before the second world war entertained the Nazis when they visited Edinburgh.

Edinburgh has its first Labour council for around 80 years.

The success of the meeting and the respect which the LPYS has built up is shown by the fact that the branch secretary of Bilston Glen NUM made a donation of £20 to the YS.

By Andy Clachers
(LPYS National Committee)

Lambeth sets legal rate

TWO LAMBETH Labour renegades voted with the Tories and the Alliance to pass a budget allowing the highest possible rate. This leaves the council short of money to safeguard jobs and services.

In a packed town hall deputy leader Graham Norwood said that the Labour group would use its majority on all the major committees to ensure that no cuts would be made.

A local by-election on 1 August should allow Labour to soon regain its majority.

The Joint Trade Unions support this position and pledged at the meeting that if the Tories attempt to make cuts or disqualify any councillor from office, the borough would be brought to a standstill and solidarity

action spread to other local authorities.

However, whilst the mood of the workforce is to fight the Tories, a clear lead still needs to be given in the workplaces and a further campaign of explanation to all trade union members and the local community must be undertaken now if any industrial action is to be fully successful.

A Liverpool councillor, John Lyndon, addressed the 400 people present at the lobby of Lambeth council and he pointed out the need to unite in the struggle. What is required now, he explained, is to take the struggle outside the council chamber and build a mass campaign aimed at industrial action if any councillor is surcharged or any cuts made.

By John Reid
(Norwood CLP)
and Steve Nally
(Vauxhall LPYS)

Live Aid highlights hunger obscenity

THE BIGGEST show in the history of the world will take place on Saturday. In Wembley, Philadelphia and Sydney, bands and singers will be on stage throughout the day. 550 million of the world's 600 million TV sets will be capable of receiving it in every continent.

The Live Aid concert will raise millions for the relief of hunger in Africa.

As a result, thousands of lives can be saved, at least for a few more months. The scandal of mass starvation in a world of plenty will be publicised as never before.

Impressive though it is, however, an event like this cannot begin to solve the underlying problems which cause famine. Unless these are solved, all the horrific scenes of starving children will return to the TV screen within a year or two.

It is the production of food for profit, rather than need, which leads to the obscenity of "surpluses" in the butter and wheat mountains and milk lakes and even

the destruction of fruit and vegetables in the EEC and USA.

In the starving countries of Africa a tiny minority live in luxury, financed by graft and corruption. Much of it comes from "aid" which is syphoned away from those in need to line the pockets of middle-men and officials.

Food demonstrates more vividly than anything else the rottenness of the capitalist system. It has developed the technology to feed the world in abundance, yet has to condemn millions to the premature and agonising death of hunger so that profits can be boosted.

Live Aid could help to convince millions more of the need for a socialist policy on food, in which the big landowners and farmers, the monopolies and the banks are nationalised under democratic workers' control and management. Food could then be produced and distributed around the world to end for ever the famine in Africa, the world's greatest disaster.

By Pat Craven

Unions fight Manchester health cuts



Manchester gala against health service privatisation, 5 July.

SOUTH MANCHESTER District Health Authority is attempting to push through £2.8m cuts in Withington, Wythenshawe and Christies Hospitals.

This includes 300 staff cuts, four chest wards closing at Wythenshawe, two geriatric wards going at Withington, weekend closures of a maternity ward at Withington and two wards closing at weekends at Christies. This is the main hospital for cancer treatment where there is already a backlog of 25,000 smear tests—with a five week delay instead of the normal three days.

These cuts are typical of those taking place all over the country and fly in the face of Tory claims that they are increasing spending on the NHS.

All the unions covering the three hospitals formed the South Manchester NHS Action Committee and launched a campaign. So far they have lobbied the Regional and District Health Authorities and took a train load of health workers down to lobby MPs and Kenneth Clarke, Health Minister.

When delegates told him that two heart patients were dying each week on waiting lists, his only comment was 'anyone can wave a shroud'!

To assist in the campaign Withington Women's Section, along with the LPYS, organised a public meeting in the area to link with the action committee and to raise public support.

We are now helping to contact shop stewards at local workplaces to gain wider support—both financial and for their future activities.

The Action committee aims to link up with other health campaigns in the area such as Booth Hall and Salford, to ensure that the RHA does not play one group off against another, and to mobilise the membership and public support to fight these cuts and to stop privatisation being brought in. They also recognise the need for national action if workers are to win their fight to save NHS services and jobs.

Donations and messages of support to Glyn Humphreys, Works Dept, Withington Hospital, Nell Lane, Manchester 20.

Margaret Manning
(Withington Women's Section and
Regional Women's Committee)

Whitty attacks YS leader

LARRY WHITTY, the Labour Party general secretary, has reprimanded Frances Curran, the Labour Party Young Socialist representative on the National Executive Committee for writing an introductory message in a pamphlet produced by the Southern African Labour Education Project (SALEP). The pamphlet is a reply to the NEC's decision to instruct local parties to have nothing to do with SALEP.

"I am concerned" he writes, "at the association of NEC members with a publication which criticises and names a member of the

Walworth Road staff". This is an attempt to gag party members from arguing against mistaken ideas just because they have been formulated by party research staff.

The pamphlet does not, as Whitty alleges, make a "personal attack", but criticises the NEC for trying to ban a group which is playing a vital part in the struggle to destroy apartheid and build a socialist Southern Africa. Party activists will be more determined than ever to step up their protests against the NEC's proscription of SALEP, and find out more about its policies.

SALEP's
socialist
education
work—

40p



why does the Labour Party NEC want to ban it?

SOUTHERN AFRICAN LABOUR EDUCATION PROJECT

SALEP's socialist education work—why does the Labour Party NEC want to ban it? (60 pages), 40p plus p&p, from World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscott Road, London E9.

Liverpool - Tories may recall parliament

LAST WEEK Environment Minister Patrick Jenkin threatened Liverpool with rate-capping when the council has a £170 million deficit and will run out of cash sometime this year.

Press reports in Liverpool have now raised the possibility that the Tories may recall Parliament in August to pass special legislation to appoint a commissioner to run the city. This follows speculation that the money for the city could run out in August.

On Thursday Thatcher met Banham, the head of the Audit Commission, supposedly to

discuss economies in council spending. Who can doubt, however, that Liverpool and the current action of the District Auditor figure in these discussions? Is Thatcher, as with MacGregor, once again pulling strings?

Risks for Tories

The appointment of commissioners cannot be totally ruled out, but it will carry enormous risks for the Tories. It would not only mean the suspension of all councillors and the establishment of a 'dictatorship'

but also a "cuts" budget with the loss of thousands of jobs, provoking a city-wide general strike and a policy of total non-co-operation.

The city, including even Liberal and Tory voters, would be united in their opposition to the commissioners. The Tory disaster in Brecon will undoubtedly play a role in the consideration of their strategy.

The problem that faces the Tories is that the current action of the District Auditor is so flimsy. Long before it has any affect—if it is proceeded with—the financial crisis facing the city will begin to bite.

Not only will services, wages and grants to voluntary organisations not be paid if the council goes 'bankrupt', but interest debts could not be repaid. The continued press and media blackout of Liverpool is therefore partly explained by the government's fear of a banking crisis.

Bankruptcy would mean that Liverpool would not be able to repay £170 million of interest debts, creating problems and a dangerous precedent for the clearing banks.

In some local authorities 10 per cent of debts can fall due for repayment within a week.

This colossal burden is an indication of the parasitic role of the banks in Tory Britain. If this financial weight was lifted there would be enormous potential in terms of jobs and services.

All that Liverpool is asking for is £30 million to balance the books. It once again highlights the need for the labour movement to campaign for the nationalisation of the banks and insurance companies, with compensation to be paid on the basis of proven need.

By Dave Cotterill

Support group set up by families

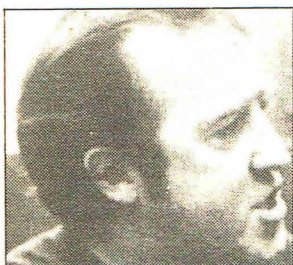
GLENYS KINNOCK has been invited to Liverpool by a new support group set up by the families of threatened councillors.

The support group was established at a meeting called to discuss the implications of legal threats to the 49 councillors.

Over one hundred people attended including wives, husbands, partners, parents and children of councillors.

In the words of Eileen Rimmer, mother of councillor Tony Rimmer: "This council are not the criminals, the ones who were in before who let the city get in its state, they should be the ones who are put in jail." Everyone was a hundred per cent behind the stand of the councillors.

Peter Lennard, GMBATU convenor of 4,000 school caretakers, cleaners and dinner staff told the meeting: "We want to thank the



Peter Lennard, Liverpool GMBATU convenor.

councillors and their families for the stand that they have taken. We will give you our support for following the policies that you were elected on." This was a pledge echoed by Jimmy Hollinhead, secretary of the GMBATU branch Number 5.

The meeting was called so that everyone could be kept informed and no-one left isolated. Lessons have been

Miners face 'riot' charge

THE CASE of 15 miners, charged with riot after the picket at Orgreave Coking plant last year, is being heard at Sheffield Crown Court.

The mass picket at Orgreave was broken up when mounted riot police charged into the crowds wielding batons.

The prosecution's evidence was shown to be false on many accounts. Durham miner Brian Moreland has already been acquitted by the trial judge because the arresting officer's signature on the police statement had been forged by another of-

learned from the magnificent miners' wives support groups and the excellent role that they played during the strike.

Links will be made with these organisations and next Saturday a representative of the Liverpool City Council Families Support Group has been invited to speak at a Women's support group meeting in Liverpool against pit closures.

Family support groups will now meet regularly. Pam Evans, secretary of Liverpool Women's Council and partner of Paul Lucox, one of the Labour Councillors, will co-ordinate the committee, linking up with the Labour Party Women's Sections and the LPYS.

Meetings will take place regularly to keep families informed of developments and newsletters will go out to every family together with legal advice and practical help. A public meeting has been organised for the 21 July and invited speakers include Clay Cross councillors, Anne Scargill, Betty Heathfield and other labour movement speakers.

The special invitation was sent to Glenys Kinnock so that she can see for herself why the Liverpool City Council's campaign is so important, not just for the councillors' families but for every working class family in the city.

A number of activities have also been planned including a benefit concert with top Liverpool groups and a delegation to lobby parliament. Speakers will also be prepared to travel to any part of the country and to attend any meetings to explain the case of Liverpool Labour Council.

By Josie Aitman



Thousands marched in Liverpool, 29 June.

Who audits the auditors?

WHY HAS no action been taken against the members of the Audit Commission and its senior officers?

Besides appointing District Auditors to the local authorities, the Commission has powers to provide various "miscellaneous services" like "studies to improve economy, promote better management" etc. Under the 1982 Act which established the Commission, it has a duty to "charge the body concerned such fees...

as will cover the full cost of providing them."

However, when the Commission's own accounts for the year ending 31 March 1984 came under scrutiny of the Comptroller and Auditor General, it was revealed that the commission had "incurred a deficit of £22,000 in providing miscellaneous services". Surely a clear case of "loss caused by wilful misconduct?" But the commission did increase its fees in November 1983.

Nevertheless, says the

Comptroller, the Commission "did not monitor the costs of miscellaneous services against the fees charged and was therefore unable to ensure that fees were adequate. As a result, the Commission did not comply with the Section 29(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1982."

Surely this amounts to what a District Auditor would call "a failure to bring into account" the necessary fees which should have been collected?

It is under Sections 19 and 20 of the same 1982 Act that District Auditors have draconian powers to surcharge and disqualify councillors guilty, in their opinion, of "failure to bring items into account" and loss or deficiency caused by "wilful misconduct".

So why, for their clear breach of this very same Act, have the Audit Commissioners not been surcharged and disqualified? Who has given them immunity?

Newham trial decision nears

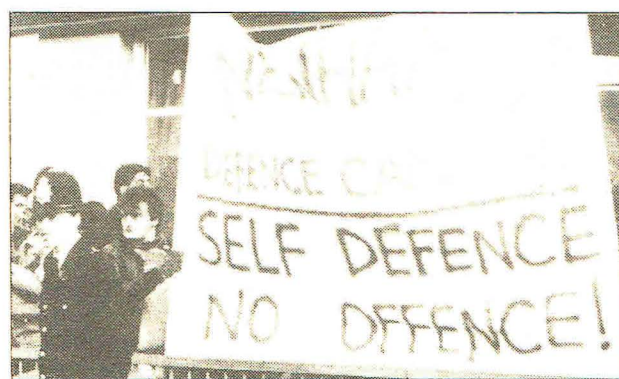
THE OUTCOME of the Newham Seven trial will be announced this week. The decision of the jury will be released on Wednesday 10 July after *Militant* has gone to press.

The Newham Seven Campaign—in support of seven Asians arrested while defending themselves after racist attacks—is keeping up its picket to the last day of the case.

A hundred Newham Seven supporters last week held an all-night vigil outside the Old Bailey in London, where the case is being heard.

The vigil had been agreed with the police. But later in the evening the police arrived and said the vigil should disperse. They said it was "disturbing local residents"—yet no one lives in this commercial and business area of the city!

Police then moved in and arrested 21 people. They



Demo to support Newham 7, 3 November 1984.

have mostly been charged with obstruction, although one was charged with 'criminal damage' to his cell, and another with threatening behaviour. The number arrested throughout the campaign is now edging towards a hundred.

● In the Hoxton area of Hackney, East London, on Saturday over a hundred anti-fascists counter-demonstrated against the fascist British National Party. Whereas the anti-fascists

(organising at two days notice) were mainly local, the BNP were bussed in from Brighton. Only 30 or so BNP turned up so their march was called off. They held a rally behind rows of police. Not only did the BNP führer John Tyndall have to contend with the loud chants of the anti-fascists, he was even heckled in the meeting itself by ten members of the 'rival' National Front. After two hours of this they got on their coach and went home.

LPYS summer camp

WANT A holiday you won't forget but don't have much money? Well don't despair, LPYS summer camp is almost upon us.

All you need is a tent, sleeping bag, toothbrush, and cooking stuff, although you can always risk the food tent.

Last year's summer camp was so unforgettable that I joined the LPYS while I was there. A week with us is always enough to convince anybody that not only do we have solid political knowledge but we also know how to arrange the holiday of a lifetime for next to nothing.

By Laura Kemp
(London LPYS,
Regional Committee)

See advert page six

Labour's 'advisors' fail to clinch Brecon

FOR THE Tories, the Brecon and Radnor by-election was a disaster. No amount of talk about normal mid-term anti-government swings can disguise the fact that not since 1958 in Rochdale has a Tory candidate dropped from first to third place in a by-election.

This result was a verdict on the level of unemployment, the cuts in public spending and the collapse of Thatcher's economic policy. The splits within the Tory party will now inevitably widen as the post-mortem begins.

Nor for the "junior Tories", the Liberal-SDP Alliance, was this the triumph which most press coverage suggests. At a time of Conservative unpopularity, when the media are consciously building up the Alliance as a safe pro-capitalist party for disillusioned Tories, this result was well below some of their earlier mid-term by-election successes.

The nine per cent increase in Labour's share of the vote was the party's best by-election result for 12 years. It nevertheless failed to win, despite the most favourable conditions, with the Tories more unpopular than ever and the Alliance failing to make the spectacular media-inspired impact that it has done previously.

This was the first big test of Neil Kinnock's "new" approach to campaigning, in which socialist policies are left

aside and public relations come to the fore. Pollsters, like Robert Worcester of MORI who, according to *The Observer*, has become a key figure in the party, help to determine policy on the basis of their surveys of what voters are concerned about.

If these MORI surveys are as accurate as their *Mirror* opinion poll the day before this by-election, which claimed a Labour lead of 18 per cent, there is little wonder that they didn't help Labour to win.

Further evidence of this trend within the Labour Party comes with the announcement that Roy Hattersley is being advised on future financial policy by a team which includes Dennis Turner of the Midland Bank and Bill McKenzie of Price Waterhouse, the accountants, together with various academics. Policy formulation is being taken further and further away from the democratically elected bodies of the party, into the hands of "experts" from the ruling class.

While taking advice from pollsters and big business economists, days before the by-election, Kinnock launched an attack on two of the party's leading elected representatives, Arthur Scargill and Tony Benn. He dismissed their calls for an amnesty for sacked and jailed miners as a "fantasy". This must have infuriated many of the miners who make up a large part of the Labour vote in the southern part of the constituency and cannot have helped Labour's chances.

There is nothing "extreme" in demanding that miners victimised by the police, courts and the Coal Board in the course of striking for the future of their industry should be exonerated and reinstated by the next Labour

government. It is a call widely backed by the wider trade union movement as well as in the mining communities.

Eric Heffer, however, has warned that the defeat in Brecon and Radnor must not "be used by some people in the party to open up attacks on individuals or the left wing in particular". As *Militant* has warned, an atmosphere of intolerance is being created within the Labour Party which will not stop at the Marxists who support *Militant*.

The worst aspect of Kinnock's attack on Scargill is that it is the miners' historic battle which has done more than anything to swing support back towards Labour. Their strike revived the finest traditions of class struggle from which the party was built. Set back on the industrial plane, workers are now turning to the political arena to get Thatcher out.

When the Tories, Liberals and the press try to stir up hostility towards the miners and their leaders and manufacture "public opinion" against them, it is the duty of every Labour representative not to join in the abuse, but to spring to their defence and explain the great debt that all workers owe to the miners.

If the Labour leaders fought with the spirit of the miners and harnessed that to a programme of socialist measures which alone can cure the ills of Britain's economy, then by-elections like this would be a walk-over for Labour and the path would be cleared for a massive victory at the general election.

Attack on left broadens

LABOUR MP Martin Flannery this week accused Kinnock and the Labour leadership of waging an "internecine war against the left".

Since 1983 it has been Labour Party *Militant* supporters who have faced the brunt of these attacks, with expulsions firstly of the *Militant* Editorial Board and then local Labour Party members in Blackburn, South Wales, Nottingham and the Midlands. There are further threats to expel *Militant* supporters in Ogmere, South Wales (including six members and officials from St Johns Colliery), Finchley and Faversham.

There have been numerous organisational manoeuvres against *Militant* supporters, especially those in the Labour Party Young Socialists, nationally and locally.

As *Militant* has often warned, Kinnock's attacks last week on Arthur Scargill and Tony Benn shows the anti-*Militant* campaign is part of a generalised attack on the left wing and Labour's socialist policies.

Kinnock and company claim socialist ideas frighten away voters, citing the narrow defeat at Brecon. But how do they explain that Labour won two seats from the Tories in Sheffield council be-elections on the same day—in the very place Arthur Scargill made his speech that is meant to have workers leaving Labour in droves.

The real reason for the leadership's continual attack on *Militant* and the left is because of the predicament they know they will face if and when Labour wins the next election. In the economic chaos left behind by the Tories, Labour will have a choice—either transform society along socialist lines in order to implement progressive policies; or abandon even the mildest of reforms and follow the path of past right wing Labour governments in trying to patch up capitalism in collapse. Recent speeches by Kinnock and Hattersley show they are thinking of the latter.

The leadership want to 'deal with the left' before they get into power. After so many long hard years of Thatcherism workers will not suffer

the abandonment of Labour's programme lightly—the leadership know they would face intense opposition from the labour movement. The left, and *Militant* in particular, would be the focus of that opposition.

The right wing will be severely mistaken if they think they are succeeding in their attacks on *Militant*. Witch-hunting resolutions have often been passed with the help of the 'soft left' who now openly support Kinnock and the right.

This also explains how several sitting right wing MPs have been re-elected, often cited by the press to claim *Militant* is in decline. Yet recent events have seen the largest growth in support of Marxism ever, with mass campaigns led by *Militant* supporters over YTS and Liverpool City Council.

The ranks of the movement do not want a return to disastrous disunity and as in the TGWU will reject any stepping up of purges.

By Bob Wade

TGWU leaders' statement calls for unity

WE print below the statement by the Executive Council of the Transport and General Workers' Union against witch-hunts which was carried at the union's conference.

THE GENERAL Executive Council wishes to state its total opposition to bans, proscriptions and witch-hunts within our ranks against any officer or member because of their connection with organisations or factions with which we happen to disagree. Never again do we want to return to that period in the union's history when individuals were barred from office, not because they lacked ability, but because they were associated with particular political groups.

The Cold War atmosphere was allowed to grip the union with division, strain and suspicion. Those days, thankfully, are well behind us and it would be a tragedy for the union and the whole labour movement if they were allowed to return.

We have our rule book, and within it we have at our disposal all the necessary procedures for dealing with instances of personal misconduct or violation of the union's rules. Disciplinary action may only be taken against an officer or member if they are in breach of the rule book. We are proud of our democratic constitution which allows the full participation of all our members, regardless of their personal political persuasion.

Because of our pride in our rules, the General Executive Council does, of course, view with concern attempts to use unofficial and unconstitutional channels for conducting business within the union and strongly appeals to all members to honour our agreed constitutional and democratic procedures.

It is imperative, in the interests of unity and collective discipline that our constitution is maintained, as agreed by our own membership. It is in the interests of outside organisations that our constitution is subjected to interference by the governments and the law courts, and we must stand united in its defence.

The General Executive Council also views with concern the activity of certain factions within the Labour Party. The Labour Party, of course, has its own



George Wright, Welsh regional secretary, who pushed for a witch-hunt.

constitution and procedures, in which we participate as its largest affiliate. But while the Executive recognises that, from time to time, the party requires to invoke its rules to discipline groups or individuals, it does not believe that bans and proscriptions are in the interests of the party or the movement as a whole.

The General Executive Council would wish conference to endorse its view that the essential principles of natural justice and free debate must be upheld at all times. We cannot use administrative means to fight the battle of ideas. Our weapons must be argument, persuasion and integrity. Our troops must be our own members. We must encourage many more of our members to join the Labour Party, to make their views heard in the local parties, to participate in the party's activities and campaigns and to form the backbone of its organisation.

The Labour Party is more united that it has been for a decade. We must build on that unity and strength, in the party and the union and not be tempted to turn inward on ourselves in the false hope that the banning of individuals will cure any of our difficulties.

Finally, the General Executive Council calls on conference to confirm our collective obligation to uphold the rule book, firm opposition to witch-hunting of individuals or organisations, and a strong belief that only by maintaining maximum unity can we achieve our common purpose to return a Labour government.

Photo: John Smith (IFL II)

Shettleston backs LPYS

● Shettleston Labour Party in Scotland has condemned the Scottish Labour Party executive for their attacks on the LPYS and its part in the school strike. The party reaffirmed its support for the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign.

The party went on to discuss the witch-hunt and an amendment moved by the TGWU calling on the Labour Party National Executive to adopt the same position as the TGWU nationally, was passed unanimously.

Sunderland bans Militant

● Sunderland South Labour Party has banned *Militant* from being sold on Labour Party premises. The right wing claimed this was in line with the 1983 conference decision, which is untrue. The motion was only passed narrowly (27-24), although many miners and left wing delegates were absent.

After the meeting, a *Militant* seller (standing outside the Labour Club) sold out of papers.

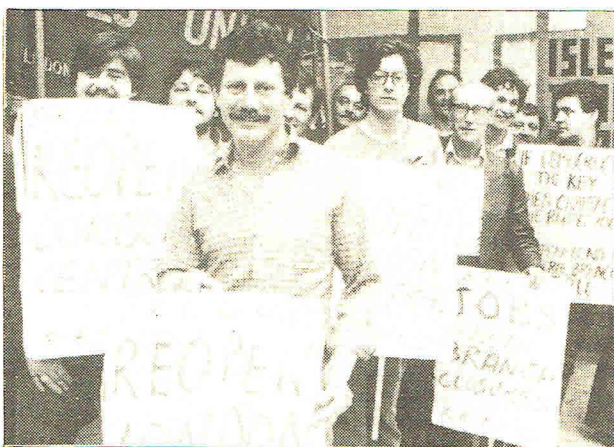
Ban in electricians' union

THE CONFERENCE of the electricians' union (EETPU) has voted to "take the necessary action about *Militant* in both the union and the Labour Party".

This is a new departure which could threaten people's jobs and livelihoods, as members of the union, because of their political beliefs. The EETPU purge resolution is also aimed at stifling opposition to the union's further shift towards becoming a company union.

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the no-strike deals, Wyn Bevan, attacked the *Beacon* the EETPU *Militant* supporters' journal at conference, saying it was "20p worth of drivel". Sales shot up.

Rank and file electricians will soon tell the leaders who's talking drivel, not the Marxists who want a fighting union but the bureaucrats who think they can help their members by playing footsie with the bosses.

Photo: Militant

Liverpool - Tories may recall parliament

LAST WEEK Environment Minister Patrick Jenkin threatened Liverpool with rate-capping when the council has a £170 million deficit and will run out of cash sometime this year.

Press reports in Liverpool have now raised the possibility that the Tories may recall Parliament in August to pass special legislation to appoint a commissioner to run the city. This follows speculation that the money for the city could run out in August.

On Thursday Thatcher met Banham, the head of the Audit Commission, supposedly to

discuss economies in council spending. Who can doubt, however, that Liverpool and the current action of the District Auditor figure in these discussions? Is Thatcher, as with MacGregor, once again pulling strings?

Risks for Tories

The appointment of commissioners cannot be totally ruled out, but it will carry enormous risks for the Tories. It would not only mean the suspension of all councillors and the establishment of a 'dictatorship'

but also a "cuts" budget with the loss of thousands of jobs, provoking a city-wide general strike and a policy of total non-co-operation.

The city, including even Liberal and Tory voters, would be united in their opposition to the commissioners. The Tory disaster in Brecon will undoubtedly play a role in the consideration of their strategy.

The problem that faces the Tories is that the current action of the District Auditor is so flimsy. Long before it has any affect—if it is proceeded with—the financial crisis facing the city will begin to bite.

Not only will services, wages and grants to voluntary organisations not be paid if the council goes 'bankrupt', but interest debts could not be repaid. The continued press and media blackout of Liverpool is therefore partly explained by the government's fear of a banking crisis.

Bankruptcy would mean that Liverpool would not be able to repay £170 million of interest debts, creating problems and a dangerous precedent for the clearing banks.

In some local authorities 10 per cent of debts can fall due for repayment within a week.

This colossal burden is an indication of the parasitic role of the banks in Tory Britain. If this financial weight was lifted there would be enormous potential in terms of jobs and services.

All that Liverpool is asking for is £30 million to balance the books. It once again highlights the need for the labour movement to campaign for the nationalisation of the banks and insurance companies, with compensation to be paid on the basis of proven need.

By Dave Cotterill

Support group set up by families

GLENYS KINNOCK has been invited to Liverpool by a new support group set up by the families of threatened councillors.

The support group was established at a meeting called to discuss the implications of legal threats to the 49 councillors.

Over one hundred people attended including wives, husbands, partners, parents and children of councillors.

In the words of Eileen Rimmer, mother of councillor Tony Rimmer: "This council are not the criminals, the ones who were in before who let the city get in its state, they should be the ones who are put in jail." Everyone was a hundred per cent behind the stand of the councillors.

Peter Lennard, GMBATU convenor of 4,000 school caretakers, cleaners and dinner staff told the meeting: "We want to thank the



Peter Lennard, Liverpool GMBATU convenor.

councillors and their families for the stand that they have taken. We will give you our support for following the policies that you were elected on." This was a pledge echoed by Jimmy Hollinhead, secretary of the GMBATU branch Number 5.

The meeting was called so that everyone could be kept informed and no-one left isolated. Lessons have been

learned from the magnificent miners' wives support groups and the excellent role that they played during the strike.

Links will be made with these organisations and next Saturday a representative of the Liverpool City Council Families Support Group has been invited to speak at a Women's support group meeting in Liverpool against pit closures.

Family support groups will now meet regularly. Pam Evans, secretary of Liverpool Women's Council and partner of Paul Lucox, one of the Labour Councillors, will co-ordinate the committee, linking up with the Labour Party Women's Sections and the LPYS.

Meetings will take place regularly to keep families informed of developments and newsletters will go out to every family together with legal advice and practical help. A public meeting has been organised for the 21 July and invited speakers include Clay Cross councillors, Anne Scargill, Betty Heathfield and other labour movement speakers.

The special invitation was sent to Glenys Kinnock so that she can see for herself why the Liverpool City Council's campaign is so important, not just for the councillors' families but for every working class family in the city.

A number of activities have also been planned including a benefit concert with top Liverpool groups and a delegation to lobby parliament. Speakers will also be prepared to travel to any part of the country and to attend any meetings to explain the case of Liverpool Labour Council.

By Josie Aitman

Miners face 'riot' charge

THE CASE of 15 miners, charged with riot after the picket at Orgreave Coking plant last year, is being heard at Sheffield Crown Court.

The mass picket at Orgreave was broken up when mounted riot police charged into the crowds wielding batons.

The prosecution's evidence was shown to be false on many accounts. Durham miner Brian Moreland has already been acquitted by the trial judge because the arresting officer's signature on the police statement had been forged by another of-

ficer. To explain this the arresting officer said that he had signed the statement on his knee while in a van.

The Doncaster Coalhouse trial is also in progress, where miners are again charged with riot. Support is needed from activists to attend the trial.

A Yorkshire miner's mother appeals to all labour and trade union members to "be with these miners during this time... let's put our actions into practice this week. It is crucial to these miners, they need you."



Thousands marched in Liverpool, 29 June.

Who audits the auditors?

WHY HAS no action been taken against the members of the Audit Commission and its senior officers?

Besides appointing District Auditors to the local authorities, the Commission has powers to provide various "miscellaneous services" like "studies to improve economy, promote better management" etc. Under the 1982 Act which established the Commission, it has a duty to "charge the body concerned such fees... as will cover the full cost of providing them."

However, when the Commission's own accounts for the year ending 31 March 1984 came under scrutiny of the Comptroller and Auditor General, it was revealed that the commission had "incurred a deficit of £22,000 in providing miscellaneous services". Surely a clear case of "loss caused by wilful misconduct?" But the commission did increase its fees in November 1983.

Nevertheless, says the Comptroller, the Commission "did not monitor the costs of miscellaneous services against the fees charged and was therefore unable to ensure that fees were adequate. As a result, the Commission did not comply with the Section 29(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1982."

Surely this amounts to what a District Auditor would call "a failure to bring into account" the necessary fees which should have been collected?

It is under Sections 19 and 20 of the same 1982 Act that District Auditors have draconian powers to surcharge and disqualify councillors guilty, in their opinion, of "failure to bring items into account" and loss or deficiency caused by "wilful misconduct".

So why, for their clear breach of this very same Act, have the Audit Commissioners not been surcharged and disqualified? Who has given them immunity?

Newham trial decision nears

THE OUTCOME of the Newham Seven trial will be announced this week. The decision of the jury will be released on Wednesday 10 July after *Militant* has gone to press.

The Newham Seven Campaign—in support of seven Asians arrested while defending themselves after racist attacks—is keeping up its picket to the last day of the case.

A hundred Newham Seven supporters last week held an all-night vigil outside the Old Bailey in London, where the case is being heard.

The vigil had been agreed with the police. But later in the evening the police arrived and said the vigil should disperse. They said it was "disturbing local residents"—yet no one lives in this commercial and business area of the city!

Police then moved in and arrested 21 people. They



Demo to support Newham 7, 3 November 1984.

have mostly been charged with obstruction, although one was charged with 'criminal damage' to his cell, and another with threatening behaviour. The number arrested throughout the campaign is now edging towards a hundred.

● In the Hoxton area of Hackney, East London, on Saturday over a hundred anti-fascists counter-demonstrated against the fascist British National Party. Whereas the anti-fascists

(organising at two days notice) were mainly local, the BNP were bussed in from Brighton. Only 30 or so BNP turned up so their march was called off. They held a rally behind rows of police. Not only did the BNP führer John Tyndall have to contend with the loud chants of the anti-fascists, he was even heckled in the meeting itself by ten members of the 'rival' National Front. After two hours of this they got on their coach and went home.

LPYS summer camp

WANT A holiday you won't forget but don't have much money? Well don't despair, LPYS summer camp is almost upon us.

All you need is a tent, sleeping bag, toothbrush, and cooking stuff, although you can always risk the food tent.

Last year's summer camp was so unforgettable that I joined the LPYS while I was there. A week with us is always enough to convince anybody that not only do we have solid political knowledge but we also know how to arrange the holiday of a lifetime for next to nothing.

By Laura Kemp
(London LPYS,
Regional Committee)

See advert page six

Militant

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Labour's 'advisors' fail to clinch Brecon

FOR THE Tories, the Brecon and Radnor by-election was a disaster. No amount of talk about normal mid-term anti-government swings can disguise the fact that not since 1958 in Rochdale has a Tory candidate dropped from first to third place in a by-election.

This result was a verdict on the level of unemployment, the cuts in public spending and the collapse of Thatcher's economic policy. The splits within the Tory party will now inevitably widen as the post-mortem begins.

Nor for the "junior Tories", the Liberal-SDP Alliance, was this the triumph which most press coverage suggests. At a time of Conservative unpopularity, when the media are consciously building up the Alliance as a safe pro-capitalist party for disillusioned Tories, this result was well below some of their earlier mid-term by-election successes.

The nine per cent increase in Labour's share of the vote was the party's best by-election result for 12 years. It nevertheless failed to win, despite the most favourable conditions, with the Tories more unpopular than ever and the Alliance failing to make the spectacular media-inspired impact that it has done previously.

This was the first big test of Neil Kinnock's "new" approach to campaigning, in which socialist policies are left

aside and public relations come to the fore. Pollsters, like Robert Worcester of MORI who, according to *The Observer*, has become a key figure in the party, help to determine policy on the basis of their surveys of what voters are concerned about.

If these MORI surveys are as accurate as their *Mirror* opinion poll the day before this by-election, which claimed a Labour lead of 18 per cent, there is little wonder that they didn't help Labour to win.

Further evidence of this trend within the Labour Party comes with the announcement that Roy Hattersley is being advised on future financial policy by a team which includes Dennis Turner of the Midland Bank and Bill McKenzie of Price Waterhouse, the accountants, together with various academics. Policy formulation is being taken further and further away from the democratically elected bodies of the party, into the hands of "experts" from the ruling class.

While taking advice from pollsters and big business economists, days before the by-election, Kinnock launched an attack on two of the party's leading elected representatives, Arthur Scargill and Tony Benn. He dismissed their calls for an amnesty for sacked and jailed miners as a "fantasy". This must have infuriated many of the miners who make up a large part of the Labour vote in the southern part of the constituency and cannot have helped Labour's chances.

There is nothing "extreme" in demanding that miners victimised by the police, courts and the Coal Board in the course of striking for the future of their industry should be exonerated and reinstated by the next Labour

government. It is a call widely backed by the wider trade union movement as well as in the mining communities.

Eric Heffer, however, has warned that the defeat in Brecon and Radnor must not "be used by some people in the party to open up attacks on individuals or the left wing in particular". As *Militant* has warned, an atmosphere of intolerance is being created within the Labour Party which will not stop at the Marxists who support *Militant*.

The worst aspect of Kinnock's attack on Scargill is that it is the miners' historic battle which has done more than anything to swing support back towards Labour. Their strike revived the finest traditions of class struggle from which the party was built. Set back on the industrial plane, workers are now turning to the political arena to get Thatcher out.

When the Tories, Liberals and the press try to stir up hostility towards the miners and their leaders and manufacture "public opinion" against them, it is the duty of every Labour representative not to join in the abuse, but to spring to their defence and explain the great debt that all workers owe to the miners.

If the Labour leaders fought with the spirit of the miners and harnessed that to a programme of socialist measures which alone can cure the ills of Britain's economy, then by-elections like this would be a walk-over for Labour and the path would be cleared for a massive victory at the general election.

Attack on left broadens

LABOUR MP Martin Flannery this week accused Kinnock and the Labour leadership of waging an "internecine war against the left".

Since 1983 it has been Labour Party *Militant* supporters who have faced the brunt of these attacks, with expulsions firstly of the *Militant* Editorial Board and then local Labour Party members in Blackburn, South Wales, Nottingham and the Midlands. There are further threats to expel *Militant* supporters in Ogmere, South Wales (including six members and officials from St Johns Colliery), Finchley and Faversham.

There have been numerous organisational manoeuvres against *Militant* supporters, especially those in the Labour Party Young Socialists, nationally and locally.

As *Militant* has often warned, Kinnock's attacks last week on Arthur Scargill and Tony Benn shows the anti-*Militant* campaign is part of a generalised attack on the left wing and Labour's socialist policies.

Kinnock and company claim socialist ideas frighten away voters, citing the narrow defeat at Brecon. But how do they explain that Labour won two seats from the Tories in Sheffield council by-elections on the same day—in the very place Arthur Scargill made his speech that is meant to have workers leaving Labour in droves.

The real reason for the leadership's continual attack on *Militant* and the left is because of the predicament they know they will face if and when Labour wins the next election. In the economic chaos left behind by the Tories, Labour will have a choice—either transform society along socialist lines in order to implement progressive policies; or abandon even the mildest of reforms and follow the path of past right wing Labour governments in trying to patch up capitalism in collapse. Recent speeches by Kinnock and Hattersley show they are thinking of the latter.

The leadership want to 'deal with the left' before they get into power. After so many long hard years of Thatcherism workers will not suffer

the abandonment of Labour's programme lightly—the leadership know they would face intense opposition from the labour movement. The left, and *Militant* in particular, would be the focus of that opposition.

The right wing will be severely mistaken if they think they are succeeding in their attacks on *Militant*. Witch-hunting resolutions have often been passed with the help of the 'soft left' who now openly support Kinnock and the right.

This also explains how several sitting right wing MPs have been deselected, often cited by the press to claim *Militant* is in decline. Yet recent events have seen the largest growth in support of Marxism ever, with mass campaigns led by *Militant* supporters over YTS and Liverpool City Council.

The ranks of the movement do not want a return to disastrous disunity and as in the TGWU will reject any stepping up of purges.

By Bob Wade

TGWU leaders' statement calls for unity

WE print below the statement by the Executive Council of the Transport and General Workers' Union against witch-hunts which was carried at the union's conference.

THE GENERAL Executive Council wishes to state its total opposition to bans, proscriptions and witch-hunts within our ranks against any officer or member because of their connection with organisations or factions with which we happen to disagree. Never again do we want to return to that period in the union's history when individuals were barred from office, not because they lacked ability, but because they were associated with particular political groups.

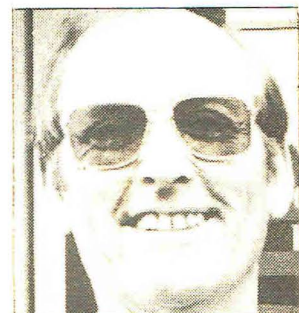
The Cold War atmosphere was allowed to grip the union with division, strain and suspicion. Those days, thankfully, are well behind us and it would be a tragedy for the union and the whole labour movement if they were allowed to return.

We have our rule book, and within it we have at our disposal all the necessary procedures for dealing with instances of personal misconduct or violation of the union's rules. Disciplinary action may only be taken against an officer or member if they are in breach of the rule book. We are proud of our democratic constitution which allows the full participation of all our members, regardless of their personal political persuasion.

Because of our pride in our rules, the General Executive Council does, of course, view with concern attempts to use unofficial and unconstitutional channels for conducting business within the union and strongly appeals to all members to honour our agreed constitutional and democratic procedures.

It is imperative, in the interests of unity and collective discipline that our constitution is maintained, as agreed by our own membership. It is in the interests of outside organisations that our constitution is subjected to interference by the governments and the law courts, and we must stand united in its defence.

The General Executive Council also views with concern the activity of certain factions within the Labour Party. The Labour Party, of course, has its own



George Wright, Welsh regional secretary, who pushed for a witch-hunt.

constitution and procedures, in which we participate as its largest affiliate. But while the Executive recognises that, from time to time, the party requires to invoke its rules to discipline groups or individuals, it does not believe that bans and proscriptions are in the interests of the party or the movement as a whole.

The General Executive Council would wish conference to endorse its view that the essential principles of natural justice and free debate must be upheld at all times. We cannot use administrative means to fight the battle of ideas. Our weapons must be argument, persuasion and integrity. Our troops must be our own members. We must encourage many more of our members to join the Labour Party, to make their views heard in the local parties, to participate in the party's activities and campaigns and to form the backbone of its organisation.

The Labour Party is more united that it has been for a decade. We must build on that unity and strength, in the party and the union and not be tempted to turn inward on ourselves in the false hope that the banning of individuals will cure any of our difficulties.

Finally, the General Executive Council calls on conference to confirm our collective obligation to uphold the rule book, firm opposition to witch-hunting of individuals or organisations, and a strong belief that only by maintaining maximum unity can we achieve our common purpose to return a Labour government.

Photo: John Smith (IFL II)

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Shettleston backs LPYS

● Shettleston Labour Party in Scotland has condemned the Scottish Labour Party executive for their attacks on the LPYS and its part in the school strike. The party reaffirmed its support for the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign.

The party went on to discuss the witch-hunt and an amendment moved by the TGWU calling on the Labour Party National Executive to adopt the same position as the TGWU nationally, was passed unanimously.

Sunderland bans Militant

● Sunderland South Labour Party has banned *Militant* from being sold on Labour Party premises. The right wing claimed this was in line with the 1983 conference decision, which is untrue. The motion was only passed narrowly (27-24), although many miners and left wing delegates were absent.

After the meeting, a *Militant* seller (standing outside the Labour Club) sold out of papers.

Photo: Militant

The eleven councillors who defied Tory laws

When Clay Cross took on the Tories

IN THE early 1970s the village of Clay Cross in Derbyshire, led by a Labour Council, became a symbol of opposition to the Tory government's anti-working-class laws.

There are many similarities, and important differences with the battle now being faced by Liverpool City Council.

In 1972 the Tories introduced the Housing Finance Act, which they mislabelled the 'Fair Rents Act' which put £1 a week on the rent for council tenants. Clay Cross councillors refused to implement this legislation and came into conflict with the government and the law.

The Labour Party had gained control of Clay Cross council in the 1960's. Up to the 1970's they had control of all 11 seats—100% representation. During that time they carried out policies that they were elected upon.

They completed the slum clearance programme and built new houses. Their housing programme emulated on a national scale would have created 800,000 houses. They municipalised 300 houses, gave free TV licenses to pensioners, avoided pay control legislation, and gave above the normal pay rises to their workers.

When 'Thatcher the Milk Snatcher' took away free school milk for juniors, Clay Cross introduced a penny rate, increased the councillors' allowances and then used these monies to provide free school milk.

District auditor

The Tories first tactic in Clay Cross was to use the District Auditor against the council. A Housing Commissioner was sent in to take over the running of the Housing Department. Next they surcharged and banned the councillors from office. Finally the 11 councillors were bankrupted by the court. Even so the Housing Commissioner Mr Skillington failed for over six months to collect a single pound of the increased rent because of the support for the council's stand in the community.

There was enormous sup-

By Dave Cotterill

port in the labour movement for their principled stand. Resolutions passed at Labour Party conference had agreed "That upon the election of a Labour government, all penalties, financial or otherwise, should be removed retrospectively from councillors."

But in power, Harold Wilson, the Prime Minister, openly opposed Labour Party policy, declaring: "The law of the land, however unfair, however oppressive must be obeyed until it is repealed." Anthony Crosland, the Environment Secretary, refused to sack the commissioner and also demanded that the council obey the law as defined under the Tory Housing Finance Act.

In 1972 Robert Carr, Tory Home Secretary had declared that "Moral obligations were more important than legal responsibilities". Both Clay Cross, and now Liverpool councillors based their case precisely on this issue. Democratically elected on clear socialist policies they have a 'moral obligation' to the working class.

But this argument had no effect on the High Court judges who unbelievably turned down an appeal on the basis that the councillors had given electors false pledges they knew they could not carry out. This was a direct political judgement by the court.

Clay Cross councillors were left in the lurch by the leaders of the labour movement. Today all but one councillor are still 'bankrupt' and banned from office. Yet even though the councillors were removed, the by-elections that followed resulted in a 71% turnout and the return of ten Labour councillors.

The Labour Council in Liverpool today faces similar issues to Clay Cross, but the differences are considerable.

Despite the determination of Clay Cross councillors,



Above: Clay Cross councillors demonstrating outside Law Courts during their appeal against surcharge.

Below: Young Socialists support Liverpool City council's battle today on demonstration on 29 June.

this community of 10,000 with a Labour Party of only 120 members, could not hold off the onslaught from the law and government. Liverpool with a population of half a million, is backed by a campaign involving thousands of activists, council and private sector trade unions, and pledges of support from local authority workers in the rest of the country.

The crisis of capitalism is now much more severe. The miners' strike has radicalised large sections of the working class, and Liverpool by its socialist stand will attract support throughout Britain and internationally.

The Tories, confined by the economic straitjacket, are determined to break the will of Liverpool in an attempt to crush all opposition from Labour councils.

David Skinner, one of the leading Clay Cross councillors recently said: "The right decision has been made in Liverpool—as long as local authority workers are fully behind these decisions they just cannot lose."

But equally important will be the backing from workers throughout the country and especially from the trade unions and the Labour Party leaders. A repeat performance by Labour leaders, in dumping Clay Cross councillors, must not be allowed to happen. Any Liverpool councillors surcharged or disqualified must get a full amnesty from the next Labour government.

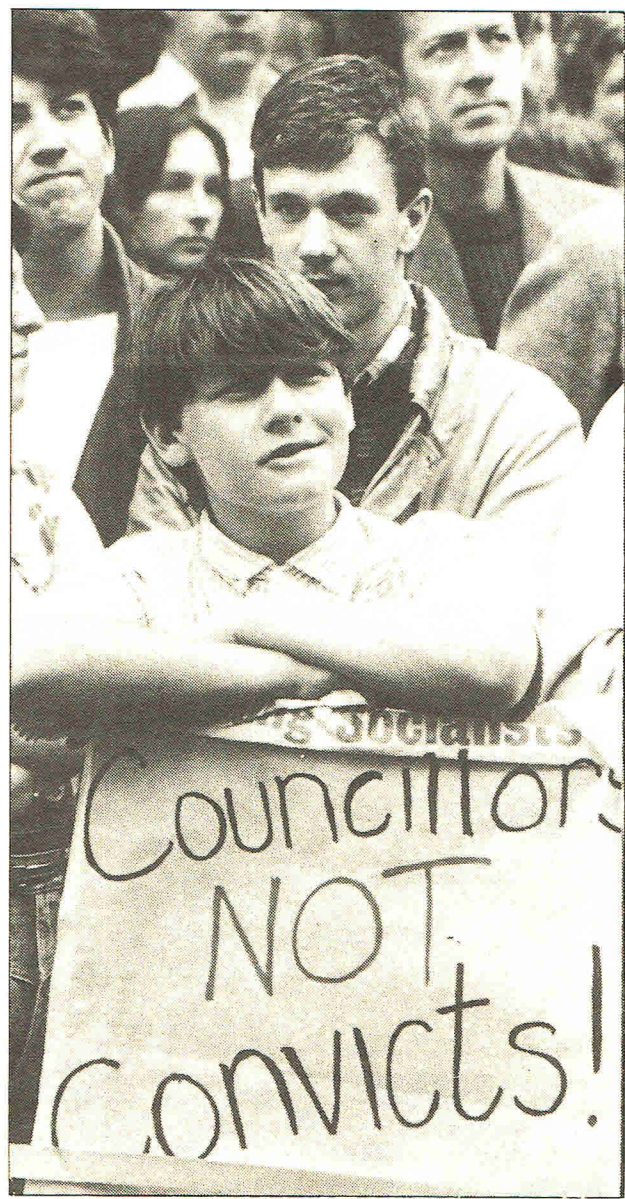


Photo: John Smith (IFL II)

Young homeless organise against lodgings law

NINE YOUNG people in Oxford have occupied an empty house owned by the Ministry of Defence after being made homeless as a result of the new Tory government board and lodgings regulations.

The nine have organised a group known as Homeless against Social Security Lodgings Limits (HASSLL), to win support for their cause.

They occupied the empty house, which is next to DHSS offices, and then contacted the council, the media and their local MP for support.

One of the group's organisers said: "We are prepared to pay rent, bills and keep the house clean and

repaired, but Tory and Labour councillors alike equate homeless youth with trouble. We went to see a Tory councillor but she told us to go back to our mothers and then tried to run us over."

Fight back

Four of the group joined Oxford East Labour Party Young Socialists for the demonstration in Liverpool called by the LPYS and the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign (YTURC) which was demanding 'jobs for youth'.

Any young homeless people who are interested in joining HASSLL should

contact HASSLL, 2 Marston Rd, Oxford.

By Clive Jones and Paul Brunker (Oxford East LPYS)

Eviction leads to suicide

MICHAEL BALL, 24, of Luton was found hanging from a tree after being forced out of his bed and

breakfast home under the new DHSS board and lodgings regulations.

His mother has written to Margaret Thatcher saying the law could cause more tragedies in the town. "I am writing to you as one mother to another" she wrote, "he is dead now and nothing will bring him back. But must other parents suffer my agony in the future? This law treats people as pounds and pence and not as human beings. I am worried that some other youngsters could die."

An inquest heard that Michael had been only occasionally employed in the last five years and had made his home in bed and breakfast hotels. He left his home after

the DHSS warned that his benefit would be cut. He believed that rent payments to his mother, an invalid, would also be cut if he moved in with her.

After spending two weeks with his sister's family, he killed himself on 30 May. The new law affects able-bodied unemployed people under 26 with no dependants; their rent is cut after 28 days unless they find work or make a new home in another area.

20 young jobless invaded Luton Town Hall this week to demonstrate against the new regulations.

By Jim Carroll



Gordon Bennett writes—

TOM KING, the Employment Secretary has been valiantly attempting to score Brownie points with the Leader by pointing to various statistics to prove his 'success' in fighting the 'evils' of industrial action.

Now I wouldn't dream of accusing Mr King of being a stranger to Truth—let's just say that they're not on speaking terms. He's claimed that the figures for the number of strikes in the first five months of this year are the lowest since 1936. Of course if you count the miners' strike as one then he's probably right.

A quick look at the number of days lost through strikes shows that January this year exceeded all the days lost in the period January to May 1983. Even without the miners' strike, the number of days lost in each month from January to May 1985 is still higher than those lost in the same period in 1983. 1984 figures were higher than both this year and 1983.

Tom boasted that the government had done a "pretty good job on the senseless, ill-thought out kind of strikes", which presumably means that the unions will have to concentrate on sensible, well-thought out kinds of strikes.

Anyway, Maggie wasn't impressed and after a good verbal kicking from the Leader, King has come out with all sorts of new ideas for legislation. He wants to ban strikes in essential services, make further attacks on the closed shop and "give greater rights to union members".

The sort of 'rights' that he's talking about are more rights for scabs. Not content with interfering in the internal democracy of the unions, the Tories now want to protect scabs from any disciplinary action that may be taken against them. So even if a ballot on strike action has produced a 99 per cent majority in favour, they want to make sure that the poor little scabs don't lose any pocket money.

Similarly with the closed shop. If a group of workers have complied with the legislation and won against the heavily stacked conditions of the Act, then they still want to give the 'right' to the minority of free-loaders to refuse to belong to the union.

The Tories won't be happy until the funds of every union are in the hands of the Receiver; union leaders are elected every Sunday by the editors of the colour supplements; all scabs get paid by the employer and the union and get on the Birthday Honours List; and closed shops are illegal unless every single worker in a workplace plus their next door neighbours have voted for them.

If you give the Tories an inch they'll take a mile. We can't afford to co-operate with Tory laws.

JUST TWO weeks to go to make sure we reach our target. We need record collections and fund raising in every area.

Many readers have already promised to raise £20 simply by asking everyone they know for a donation. Ask friends in your Labour Party or trade union branch or collect money at work, school or college.

Supporters in Labour Party wards are determined to show their backing through collections like that at Croxford ward party £5 and Wallsend Labour Party day school £8. Tuebrook ward members collected £15 on an appeal sheet. LPYS branches have also sent us money, like the £3 from Stafford (part of a regular collection) and £21.69 from a collection after a Gillingham YS meeting.

All donations represent tremendous sacrifices, from the £100 from Allan and Andrea Stripp of Peckham YS to the 10p from a single parent in Coventry or the pensioner in Uxbridge who gave 85p or Baza (an OAP from Cannock) who gave £2.50.

On the March for Real Jobs in Liverpool, one reader collected £36.06 selling stickers. An Ealing comrade raised £10.35 and a reader in Southwark raised £8.80.

Many areas raised money on coaches to the march,

FIGHTING FUND

This week: **£2,813**
Target date **31 July**

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
Eastern	1026		3200
East Midlands	735		2900
Humberside	454		1900
London East	909		2850
London West	833		2650
London South East	671		1950
London South West	404		1100
Lancashire	426		1100
Manchester	251		2650
Merseyside	1374		6200
Northern	1024		4650
Scotland East	377		3000
Scotland West	933		3800
Southern	1453		5000
South West	364		2150
Wales East	380		2450
Wales West	543		2150
West Midlands	1330		4350
Yorkshire	905		5950
Others	15760		10000
Total received	30152		70000

selling food, (£5 the Potteries) or organising a raffle (£9.61 towards the Northern area's target). Comrades could raise £20 just by selling raffle tickets. So far Staffordshire readers are leading the way with 82 books sold.

This week money has come from a Hammersmith 'Curry' night £33; sponsored typing in Broadgreen £4.15; a Lancashire half marathon £16.10; a Leamington barbecue raised £16.77; a disco in

Blackburn and many others. It's easy raising money for our fund and good fun too! There's no time to waste though, rush your money in now and help us reach the £70,000!

By Ruth Campbell

OTHER DONATIONS INCLUDE

Grimsby Readers' meeting £59.32; Ellen Coady, Kingsbury 94p; British Gas Easington col-

lection £13.87; Security depot, Liverpool £5.38; C Brooke, Hull £3; Karen de Soysa £1.20; £5 from Miss A Wilson; £1.25 Mr Oakham, Leicestershire; A Dabowski 75p Coventry SE CLP; J Shepherd, £1; K Brown, Ashington £1; K Richardson, Ashington NUM £1; Graham Allen sent in £1; Clem Dobson, Wigan TGWU £1; Notts Miners extras £1.50; Steve Collins, Cannock, NUM Power Group £1; Mike Beckett, Ealing 50p; Oliver Craxton, Hayes 47p; Clifton Graham, Lewisham: councillor £2.

GET Militant

AS TEMPERATURES soar, so too can sales of *Militant* on the streets and at all the summer festivals, shows and open air concerts. *Militant* sellers have been covering Bruce Springsteen concerts. Over 30 were sold outside the Leeds concert. In London 100 papers were sold at the GLC's free Jobs for a Change festival.

Edinburgh sellers have just started the first ever door to door sale around Oxfords council housing scheme. Already an engineering worker wants a regular copy, and a newly graduated student wants more discussions about *Militant's* ideas.

In Edinburgh too 12 copies of *Militant's* special Liverpool broadsheet were sold last week outside the housing office. Take this broadsheet down to council depots and union meetings in every area. Council workers will be eager to read about the Liverpool struggle.

Story of the week comes from Richard Finnegan of South London. "We were selling outside a railway depot, when a train that pulled out of the station, full of passengers, stopped. The driver jumped out, ran over, reached over the fence and paid 50p for a *Militant*. He then went back to his cab and pulled off".

A free one month subscription for a (true) selling story to beat that.

Marxist Daily Building Fund

	£	£
Eastern	2781	Scotland East 2238
East Midlands	3204	Scotland West 2546
Humberside	1610	Southern 3917
London NE	3197	South West 867
London NW	3991	Wales East 1916
London SE	2091	Wales West 1453
London SW	2184	West Midlands 1959
Lancashire	561	Yorkshire 1544
Manchester	2552	National 1302
Merseyside	5085	
Northern	3096	Total 48093

ads

CLASSIFIED: 15p per word, minimum 10 words.
SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per column centimetre. Three weeks for the price of two. *Militant* meeting ads free.
All advertisement copy should reach this office by Saturday.

SALEP BADGES: 25p each. 20 or more 18p each. 100 or more 13p each from: "Badges", 1 Park Lodge, Park Avenue, Manchester, M19 2EE. Cheques/POs to 'SALEP'.

WHAT *Militant* stands for: Supplies of *Militant* no 754, with centre-page feature on "What *Militant* Stands For" are still available. For bulk orders contact: Circulation Department, 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB.

WANTED: A copy of Kinnoch's speech: John Mackintosh Memorial Lecture, June 1983. Both versions if possible. Ring: Cullingworth 272436.

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

Now available on cassette: all centre-page articles from issue 730-755. Send either seven blank C-90 cassettes or £6.30 payable to *Militant* Tapes, 18 Blandford Grove, Woodhouse, Leeds 2. Phone: (0532) 455936.

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: 01-241 0434.

"LIVERPOOL MILITANT Labour" badge "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.

Militant Meetings

MILITANT WOMEN'S Weekend schools. South 10-11 August, North 31 August-1 September. Agenda: The family, internationalism (workshops on South America, and Northern Ireland) Transitional Programme and Stalinism. Venue to be announced.

SHEFFIELD: 'Socialists Against the Witch-hunt', Tuesday 16 July, 7.30pm, Frechville Open Door Centre, Birley Moor Road, Frechville.

DEAL socialist discussion group meets on Mondays throughout July at 8.00pm, at the Landmark Centre, High Street, Deal, Kent. Subjects include: "What is socialism" and "History of the Labour Party". For further details ring (0303) 43541.

HARROW *Militant* Marxist Discussion Group. Monday 22 July, The State; Monday 5 August, Northern Ireland; Monday 2 September, The Communist Manifesto.

All at 11am at 172a Kenton Road, Kenton, near Kenton BR station.

BRISTOL EAST Marxist discussion group: 'What *Militant* stands for', 18 July, 7.30pm. Details ring: (0272) 656591.

BRACKNELL: *Militant* public meeting, Monday 22 July, 7.30 pm, Cupids Hill Youth Centre, Bracknell: "Support Liverpool Council". Speaker: Jeremy Birch.

Militant badges—"No victimisation, reinstate the sacked miners". Cost 1p each + 50p post and packing. Sell for donation for fighting fund.

Marxist Weekend School 1985

London 14/15 September

Courses on: Marxist philosophy, Marxist economics, the Russian revolution, Marxism and the state, black workers and the struggle for socialism, the colonial revolution, the trade unions—the 1920s and today, the lessons of popular frontism, women and the struggle for socialism.

Plus a rally/debate on Saturday and disco. Professionally run crèche. Put the date in your diary and make your transport plans now!

Only £7 (£5 unwaged). Book now! Cheques to: "Marxist Weekend School" 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London E9.

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 night(s).

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

Name

Address



POSTERS—Marx, Lenin, Trotsky and Connolly. Cost 50p each. Bulk orders of 10 or more 25p each. Please add 50p p&p.

This week: £421

THIS WEEK donations have come from many areas. M Page in the East Midlands sent £20, the first instalment of a week's income. Chris Todd from Scunthorpe,

despite being unemployed and having a family, has brought his donation up to a total of £52. Other donations include £80 from a Newham comrade, £125 from North Tyneside comrades, £10 from S Kenny and £50 from J Merrill.

Make sure that your area adds to the total next week and send us a donation now.

LPYS Summer Camp 1985

Saturday 27 July – Saturday 3 August
Bracelands Campsite, Christchurch, nr Coleford, (Forest of Dean), Gloucestershire.

A brilliant week of sunshine, politics, sport and lots more.

£30 for a week (half price for children 3-12). All-in "family price" £75. Brochure, leaflets and booking form from, Labour Party Young Socialists, Andy Bevan, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT.

Militant/NSSP public meeting

Sri Lanka—Workers fightback against repression

Speakers:

- Dave Nellist MP
- Vasudeva Nannayakkara, leading member of NSSP, recently released from prison
- Tamil speaker with eye-witness account of events in Jaffna

At: Conway Hall (nearest tube—Holborn)
Friday 26 July, 7.15pm.

South Wales Summer Camp

THIS YEAR'S *Militant* Summer Camp has an international theme, with talks planned on Britain, Chile, South Africa, Northern Ireland and Marxism and the Labour Party.

What better way to spend your August Bank Holiday than at the Gower Peninsula. Price is still £12.50 per adult and £2.50 child (5/15 years). Because of the ever increasing numbers attending the camp, we will be operating on a strict first come, first serve basis. BE SURE to send your bookings early to Roy Davies, 181 Hanover Street, Swansea—Telephone Swansea 463623.

**Amnesty
now!**



Mass picket at Monktonhall colliery, Midlothian, in January.

Photo: Rick Matthews (IFL)

MacGregor 'justice'

BENNY MOOHAN, sacked miner from Monktonhall tells how he was arrested on a picket line and charged with the minor offence of 'breach of the peace'—it cost him his job:

On 19 June 1984, I attended the back-shift picket at Bilston Glen colliery in Midlothian. The police had lined up across the main road, blocking it off to traffic and holding us some distance from the gates.

I was standing in front of the police lines chatting with a fellow picket when the lads decided that they had had enough of being penned in like sheep and that they wanted to undertake their lawful right to approach miners returning to work to explain why they should remain loyal to the strike.

The police, however, were in no mood to budge and tempers began to flare as the lads got more and more frustrated. Without warning some of the lads

at the back began to push forward and I was unlucky enough to be pushed against the line of boys in blue. A constable grabbed me and dragged me through their lines. After 12½ hours in the cells, I was told I had been charged with committing a breach of the peace.

A month later I received a summons to appear in the Sheriff Court in Edinburgh. Minor charges such as breach of the peace are normally dealt with in the local district court before a

Justice of the Peace, rather than a Sheriff. Although I have never been in trouble before in my life and have no previous convictions, I was fined £100.

Later in the dispute, in January 1985, I was approached by a super-scab in the local chip shop. He started swearing at me and accusing me of all kinds of crimes, including intimidating scabs. Before I could offer any verbal defence and without any opportunity for a 5ft 5½ins weed like me to offer any physical resistance, this 6ft-plus man mountain started to punch me up and down the premises.

It is not a particularly

pleasant feeling to be used as a punchbag. I might have suffered serious injury had it not been for the intervention of a bystander who held him back long enough for me to scarper.

He appeared in the District Court on 22 May, pleaded guilty and was fined a mere £10. He is still working at Monktonhall colliery and yet I received a small message from the colliery manager on 14 February (St Valentine's day) informing me I had been sacked for gross industrial misconduct. That's justice MacGregor style.

By Benny Moohan

Songs for the miners

A COLLECTION of songs has been put together on an LP by musicians and entertainers from the North East, including Ewan McColl, and the 'Country Pickets' who performed in support of the miners in their fight to defend the pits.

The record includes a wide variety of styles and the proceeds will go towards the amnesty campaign for sacked miners and women's support groups. All those who took part did so for free. The record can be obtained from 'Which Side Records', 23 Brighton Grove, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE4 5NS and costs £5 including post and packing.

Photo: John Harris (IFL)



Demonstrators wave over wall of Cardiff prison during protest at jailing of Dean Hancock and Russell Shankland, given life sentences after being charged with murder of taxi driver David Wilkie during the strike.

Gutter tactics over suicide case

TRAGICALLY ON Thursday 20 June, Willie Peacock, a miner at Monktonhall was found dead in his home at Newtongrange, near Edinburgh. He had committed suicide by hanging himself.

The National Coal Board and their friends in the media decided to use his death as another tool in the campaign against the miners. The *Daily Record*, Scotland's so-called Labour paper, showed its true colours, commenting: "Willie was always getting phone calls telling him he was a scabbing bastard. Men would urinate in his jacket and piece-box." It attributes the death to a hate campaign conducted because he had returned to work in November before the strike ended.

Because of this article and as a mark of respect to the man, Monktonhall miners staged a 24-hour protest strike on Monday 24 June. The strike was almost solid with under 50 men working, despite the fact that around 500 had returned to work before the end of the year long strike.

Admittedly there is a lot of bitterness towards men who returned to

work during the strike, but there is no organised hate campaign as the media tried to imply.

Worked alone

Willie Peacock worked in the skip pocket, checking the loading of the coal onto the skips. Once he reached his place of work he would see hardly anybody all day.

Apart from this, all the men he would see, and all of those working near him, returned to work before the strike ended as well. He would have his piece on his own at his place of work because the skips go up and down the shaft all day. He is not allowed to leave his workplace.

It might be true that Willie Peacock felt some guilt about returning to work which contributed to his suicide. It is also true that a lot of men would not be speaking to Willie because he returned to work. But the responsibility for this must lie at the feet of the Tories and their system.

The miners' strike was in defence of the basic necessities of life—jobs and

communities. The Tories forced the miners to go on strike for a year in defence of these two basic things.

During that year any miner who returned to work was seen to be deserting their class. The divisions the Tories created will take years to heal. The blame lies with them.

Also, contributing to the miner's death could be the deliberate pressures the management at Monktonhall are putting on the men. There is a conscious attempt to keep the men divided. One shift is all strikers, one all men who returned before the strike ended and the other a mixture.

The NCB have torn up agreements going back 20 years when the pit first opened. Every man has the threat of the sack hanging over his head every moment down the pit. Until about a fortnight ago there were no safety meetings taking place.

What changed this? The death of Gerry Morrison, 24, killed down the pit in an accident. As if that isn't bad enough, when the buses turned up to take the men to Gerry's funeral the manager refused them entry to the pit.

Because of pressure he later reversed that decision.

The one-day protest strike showed that all the men in the pit regret the suicide of Willie Peacock. They united to say to the NCB, the Tories and the horrible gutter press that his death was not our fault but yours.

United action

Although the men who returned and the strikers will never get back together socially for a long time to come there is a growing realisation of the need for united action to defend conditions down the pit.

The NCB and their dictatorial tactics might have the upper hand at the moment, but they are paving the way for a new explosion in the pits and mining communities. This will take the form of united action against Thatcher, the Tories and their puppets within the National Coal Board.

By Alex Shanks
(Monktonhall SCEBTA
Youth Delegate)

Miners angry as MP is fined

WEARMOUTH miners and their families reacted with disgust and anger to a local news bulletin which claimed that Bob Clay, Labour MP for Sunderland North, "led a group of 500 men against a 'twenty' strong police cordon on the day the miners returned to work".

The news bulletin followed a guilty verdict by Sunderland magistrates against the MP who was fined £100 with a further £100 costs.

Mr Clay was one of six people, including two women, who were arrested outside the colliery gates when police attempted to prevent the striking miners returning to work.

In all six cases only one, miner Bob Liddle, has been acquitted even though the defence evidence, which included many witnesses and photographs by onlookers and local press, clearly demolished the police cases against the other five.

Bob Clay, who is considering an appeal, told local reporters afterwards: "The decision is utterly unfair... I have always known I'm innocent. On the basis of the evidence I thought my own account was proved."

Already police chiefs have blocked many calls by Labour councillors and police watch groups for a full inquiry into the whole incident. Many people suspect the reason for this is because video recordings by Channel 4 and private users will not only prove the total innocence of all those arrested but will show that the police were actually the guilty ones.

One of those arrested, *Militant* supporter Bob Harker from Gateshead East, is still refusing to pay a fine of over £100 and, though threatened with a jail sentence after a 21-day period to do so (which has long since passed), has not been re-arrested.

Speaking from his home Bob said that the news bulletin was "out and out lies". He went on: "At the time the media claimed there were 500 on the march altogether, now they say 500 men attacked the police so what about all the women and children?"

"In truth there was well over 1,000 on the march but it just goes to show what the media is like. They halve the figures for propaganda purposes on the day of the return to work and now they double them back to their correct count in order to get away with the claim that 500 men surged against the police!"

Bob wishes to thank all those comrades who sent letters of support from as far away as Hastings and Coleraine in Northern Ireland.

By Kevin Miles

THE DURHAM Miners' Gala meets at a testing time for the union and miners throughout the country. The disclosure of the NCB's draconian new plans for pit closures means that new battles will be inevitable. Already miners in most areas are fighting closures and the NCB's hard-line approach. In this special feature KEVIN MILES talks to miners and their supporters in the Durham Area about the issues and strategy for success in defending jobs and communities.

Strike lessons absorbed

THE LESSONS of the strike are being absorbed in the Durham NUM. The imminent elections following the retirement of the area officials present an opportunity to rebuild the union on the experience of the past 18 months. *Militant* asked Dave Hopper, secretary of Monkwearmouth Lodge and a leading left activist in the Durham NUM his views on the future of the area:

Q: What has been the effect of the strike on activity in the union?

A: Obviously, our strike, by its very length and nature had to have an effect on the union. I've noticed in particular a real politicisation of the younger miners.

We've found that quite a lot have kept attending meetings and have a greater awareness of the union. They are also now looking for more education.

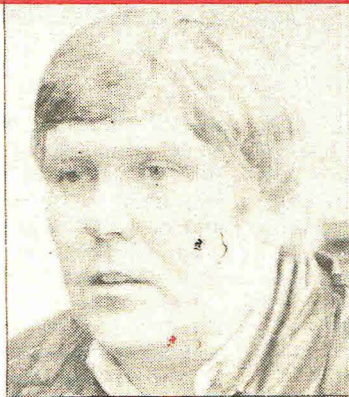
We must make a big effort to channel more resources into the education side of the union—more weekend schools, encouraging applications for day release courses, maintaining our current summer and autumn schools, if possible increasing the finance available for educating and training the younger lads.

We need to have young lads equipped to handle the NCB—they spent enough training management.

Q: What role do you see for youth committees for developing the younger lads' participation?

A: In the past year there have been moves for youth reps, and I think that youth reps and youth committees can only be advantageous to the union.

They would be an excellent method of giving the young lads experience. I would add that youth reps and committees must be given full voting rights and the power to participate in the union. The first



Dave Hopper

priority must be democracy.

Q: What do you see as the most important issues facing the NUM in Durham?

A: The first must be pit closures. That's what the strike was about. Though obviously in the short-term their attack may have been blunted, the Tories will come back for as many pits as possible before the next election, even though they are already alienating people.

I believe that at the next election, they will be replaced by a Labour government, and we must ensure they implement a new plan for coal to defend the mining industry.

We must also strive as hard as possible to improve health and safety conditions, bearing in mind that we are saddled with a divisive incentive scheme which is very detrimental to the health and safety of the membership.

It is also very important to achieve what has been the aim of the NUM since nationalisation—one union for the mining industry.

It's been proved how detrimental fragmentation is, and I think it's vital that we campaign in Durham for one united union through the merger of the Enginemen, the Mechanics and the NUM.

I'm strongly in favour as well of building alliances with the other left led unions. With the pressure we're

under it's almost impossible for one union to take on a government like this one, unless we act together in a co-ordinated manner.

The build-up must come from below. Leaders have a role to play, but the rank and file must have the most input.

Q: After the recent sad death of Jimmy Inkip, and with the coming retirement of Tom Callan and Harry Mitchell, the Durham area has the opportunity to elect a new leadership. What are your views on this?

A: Obviously whoever is elected will have a very difficult job ahead. I'm in favour of five-yearly elections for all officials, full accountability, and also for union officials to be paid the same wage as their members.

I don't want any backhand deals with the NCB—the officials must act openly. They must be honest with the membership, never misinform or mislead.

Durham needs a leadership which knows its aims and objectives and is prepared to lead a fight.

Q: What's your attitude to the Labour Party?

A: More than ever we need a campaigning socialist Labour Party with a leadership prepared to pursue the policies determined by conference.

Too often we've had the Labour Party making promises and then the minute they're in power, giving excuses as to the 'reasons why' they had to drop them.

I especially want a commitment from the Labour Party to introduce democratic control and accountability in the nationalised industries.

It's important that the NUM widens its political campaigning. Our area council passed a resolution to allow wider Lodge affiliations to Labour Parties. 12 months of strike has taught us we're involved in a political fight.

Durham miner

Closure fight goes

Step up reinstatement

THE FATE of the sacked and victimised miners is still a vital issue for the NUM. The men who have been dismissed and even jailed for fighting for jobs must not be forgotten. *Militant* spoke to Frank Duffy, secretary of Murton Lodge, about his own case and how he sees the fight continuing.

"I had been back at work since the end of the strike when on 10 May an incident took place involving several lads and the undermanager. He told us that if we behaved like children, he'd treat us like children and unload us out of the manrider like children.

"Later when we got out of the manrider, he rushed across, grabbed me by my lamp cable, swung me round and told me to get back in the car. I refused, and told him I was going home.

"On the following Sunday the assistant manager (personnel) turn-

ed up at my home with a letter instructing me to see the manager on the Monday. I went to see him, and he asked me if I had disobeyed an instruction from the undermanager. I replied that I had, but that in my opinion the instruction had not been properly administered, he had manhandled me and been very belligerent.

"He then told me I was sacked forthwith, and refused to allow any enquiry into the incident, despite the fact I had many witnesses to confirm that the undermanager had told a pack of lies."

A week later Frank Duffy was elected Lodge Secretary.

"It is my belief that I was sacked because of my commitment to the strike. They knew I had been responsible for organising the picketing, and that I was likely to be elected, and they sacked me because they wouldn't get a compliant secretary. Now they won't recognise me as secretary and have kept me off the premises to stop

International backing continues

THROUGHOUT THE miners' strike, workers outside the industry rallied to support the miners' struggle, organising workplace collections to provide vital financial support.

Workers internationally were inspired by the sacrifices of the British miners and organised to support them. Links with workers abroad are maintained, and the recent miners' rally in Bedlington, Northumberland showed in its attendance the revival of the spirit of international solidarity.

The Northumberland NUM has built particularly close links with workers in Scandinavia. Tommy Enevoldsen, a Danish shop steward for the Lager Og Handel trade union on the newspaper *Berlingske Tidende* spoke to *Militant*:

"I MET Ray Palmer (Bates NUM) in August 1984 when he was collecting money for the strike. I was already involved with the National Committee we had established in Denmark to collect for the miners.

"In the next seven months I put up a total of 15 miners, mainly from Northumberland and South Wales, and helped them raise money. There was a lot of support for the miners—for example at our Tuborg brewery, every worker paid a levy of £2.50 a week for the Nor-



Danish Jockers' wives and children sing at a benefit for British miners during the strike.

thumberland NUM.

"In December I came over myself to go picketing and learn about the conduct of the strike. This time I am here as a guest of the NUM to maintain the links.

"I brought with me 1000 Danish Kroner (£275) from the stage hands at the Copenhagen Royal National Theatre for the sacked miners.

"The British miners' strike has definitely had an effect on workers in Denmark, who see your struggle as their struggle against a common enemy. We have just had a big strike for three weeks and people are becoming more political. The SED trade union federation has just put aside 180 million Danish Kroner for a propaganda campaign to get rid of the government.

"Nationally in Denmark we raised 2½ million Danish Kroner for the NUM—now we're going to do the same for the brewery workers in dispute.

"The strikers have been fined 10 million Danish Kroner, and we expect the union will be fined more, but they have refused to back down.

"I am a member of a shop stewards ring in my union. About 10 to 15 of us meet every week. Sometimes there's not much to discuss, but we always organise to support strikes.

"We are always prepared to organise from the start, to tell workers their rights, to sell stickers, to organise meetings round different factories."

Why miners read M

DEREK CARLIN, Treasurer, Herrington Lodge NUM:

"Unlike the national daily papers, *Militant* tells the truth about the sackings and the intimidation by management. It gives a true reflection of workers in struggle. Most daily papers are full of propaganda against the working class. *Militant* is the paper that puts the working class point of view.

"I'm against the witch-hunt, but I'm not surprised. People who tell the truth are never liked. The Labour Party leaders

are shifting too far right, some of them are more like the Tories. We can't afford people who sit on the fence".

JIMMY KITSON, Secretary Hawthorn Lodge NUM and Durham Area NUM Exec:

"I like *Militant*. It's a good paper, up-to-date politically. It always tells the truth, it's not biased. It gives good coverage".

ALAN MARDGHUM, Financial Secretary, Monkwearmouth Lodge NUM:

"I was first introduced to

s'gala

re

on

nt battle

representing the lads.

"Up to now the men are all behind me, and the activists in the lodge are 100 per cent behind the sacked lads. I see my election as a mandate to keep up the campaign for reinstatement. I think we should impose a national overtime ban immediately, and industrial action will be necessary again to get back to our previous position.

"In Durham, we've decided that the sacked lads can use the Area offices to mount the campaign, to raise the issue in other unions.

"I also think it's vital that the next Labour Party election manifesto contains a pledge to release all jailed miners and to reinstate—not re-employ—all the sacked men. The sacked lads at our pit had never been in trouble before, they are not criminals, they were fighting for jobs. I want to encourage as many lads as possible to get into the Labour Party to fight for this policy."

ilitant

Militant by Stan Pearce seven years ago. It's given me an insight into other industries and what's happening to the working class.

"It's given me a perspective. I'd always thought there were a lot of things wrong with the world—some people had everything some had now—*Militant* explained it all. *Militant* has helped channel my political ideas into fighting for policies, campaigning. It's very well produced as well".



Miners at Horden colliery, Peterlee, under threat from the NCB closure programme.

Photo: Jacob Sutton (Reflex)

Women fight on against pit closures

THE MINERS' strike saw women in the frontline of battle alongside the men. The work of the womens' support groups was vital to the strike. Now as the fight continues, the work of the women is just as important.

Edith Scholick, organiser of the Horden Wives' support group spoke to Kevin Miles about the role of the women in the battle to save the pit immediately under threat.

"When we heard about management's decision to close the pit we were all a bit shocked. At first there was a bit of panic—a lot of men panicked and went to get their transfer forms, nobody wanted to be the ones who were left behind.

"I thought to myself, 'well we can't just sit here, we've got to do

something'. So I got on the 'phone, and got together some of the women on the Saturday afternoon. We discussed what was happening, and decided to organise a picket outside the colliery offices for the Monday morning, to try to stop the men going for transfer forms.

"It's important, because if you transfer to another pit, you don't just close your own pit, you take a job away from the community you are going to. We didn't have much time, we had to move fast—in fact we were quicker off the mark than the union!

"Anyway, the picket was a success. When the blokes saw they had support, they were prepared to make a stand.

"One lad who'd already applied for transfer went up to the lodge secretary and asked him to get his form back for him, because he couldn't stand passing all the women knowing he was letting us down.

"Next we organised another

demo, a bigger one for two weeks later, together with the NUM, and we've all made it clear we're fighting the closure. Our fight certainly hasn't ended. We always thought we'd always have our pit—just like other areas think now.

"Other areas should back us all the way, it could happen to them next.

Rallied around

"In the strike, the whole community rallied around the miners. If the pit closes, the community dies. A lot of shops would close—already the sub-Post Office is threatened. Young people would have to move away—though I don't know where to!

"There'd just be the old folks left, with no post office, no shops—and probably no bus service either. That's why we had such good support in the strike—we got weekly donations from the clubs

and the shops, as well as the Labour Party and the unions.

"I'll never forget one day this family travelled up from Cleveland to the village, and somebody sent them to me. They'd come specially to support the miners and the kids handed me all their pocket money. I'll never forget that.

"I'll never be the same again. I'd never done anything like this before the strike, but I'll not stop now. Our women's groups have weekly meetings at Durham, and we are linked in with the Easington group. We're not going to be kept at the kitchen sink anymore! I've noticed the attitude of the unions changing to us, they are keen to work with us now.

"I hate Magaret Thatcher. She's been the worst Prime Minister ever for women—she's taken us three steps back. We desperately need a Labour government now, one that will look after us the same as the Tories look after theirs".

South African miners

THE RECENT NUM conference voted unanimously to intensify support for the struggle against apartheid in South Africa and to support the South African National Union of Mineworkers.

Awareness in Britain of the struggle of the South African NUM was greatly helped by the tour of British coalfields by Roy Jones, a Staffordshire miner, who had visited South African miners during the strike.

We reprint below extracts from the speech of Stan Pearce, a Durham delegate, in seconding the motion.

"... I am proud to say there's now a trade union in South Africa that we can be proud of. It's called itself the National Union of Mineworkers. It is based on the most exploited section, the black miners.

"Despite the difficulties of the apartheid regime, it has been built from nothing to 130,000 members in two years.

"In the first three months of this year, 80,000 miners were on strike in South Africa. Anglo-Vaal, a mining company, sacked

thousands of miners, which means deporting them back to the homeland, which means unemployment for ever.

"Their conditions of work are so bad that over 600 black miners are killed in the pits ever year. Yet despite this, the union refuses to be crushed—they have nothing to lose but their chains.

"Today, the 1 July, sees the beginning of strike action in the goldmines. In the course of our strike, we saw the role of the police and the state... The South African miners go into this strike knowing that hundreds of their members will be killed by the police and the army...

"No-one can know what the outcome will be, but we have a duty to support our brothers.

"Black South African miners are the poorest miners in the world and yet they sent a donation during our strike to our strike fund. That was the first time ever a black South African union has sent money to workers in Europe.

"That was a magnificent sign of international solidarity, now we have the opportunity to return it. No area... can fail to recognise our responsibility to send moral and financial support..."

A programme for the NUM

- Amnesty for all sacked miners.
- Build a mass, democratic and open Broad Left.
- Establish youth committees at lodge, area and national levels.
- Maintain and link up the women's support groups.
- Regular election of all officials—to be paid the average wage of face workers.
- Open NCB books to trade union inspection.
- Cancellation of NCB debts.
- Immediate programme of full and adequate investment in all pits and workshops as identified by the NUM.
- Maintain every mining job. No redundancies. No selling jobs. No manning losses.
- Share out the work round the pits. A four-day week for all miners with no loss of pay.
- NUM veto on all pit closures—no closure of so-called 'uneconomic' pits.
- A living basic wage for all miners with automatic increases to compensate for all increases in the cost of living.
- Workers' control and management of the NCB. The board should consist of one-third elected by the workers in the industry through the unions, one-third elected through the TUC to represent the working class at large, and one-third to be appointed by the government.
- Nationalisation under workers' control and management of the mining industry suppliers and distributors.
- Integrated fuel policy under workers' control and management.
- An integrated plan for all nationalised industries.
- Drive out the Tories.
- Bring to power at the earliest possible moment a Labour government committed to socialism.
- Nationalisation under democratic workers' control of the top 200 monopolies with compensation based upon proven need.

Lebanon

THE HOSTAGE crisis in Lebanon ended in defeat for US imperialism. Despite demands for vengeance by the American ruling class, Israel were forced to negotiate for the hostages' release. NORMA CRAVEN looks at the roots of the present crisis from the days of French imperialism.

WITH THE defeat of Turkey at the end of the First World War, the imperialist powers carved up the Middle East. As part of the spoils of war, France was given a mandate by the League of Nations to rule Lebanon and create an enclave of capitalism in a vital trading area.

Lebanon did develop as a centre of trade, particularly of banking, but mainly in Beirut. Most people, on the land, found their conditions worsened by imperialist domination.

France left Lebanon with power carved up between the leaders of the Maronite Christians and the Sunni Muslims, the imperialist tactic of divide and rule. It ensured that capitalism's base remained intact, while the opposition were riven by mutual suspicion.

The poorest sections of society, the Shi'ite Muslims and the Druze were virtually excluded from power. The Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims had emerged as two distinct groups from one of Islam's earliest schisms. The Druze are another arm of Islam. The Maronites are the main Christian group, there since the eighth century. All these groups were led by ruling families whose interest was in maintaining their own wealth and positions. Independence meant little to the majority of Lebanese, Christian or Muslim.

The real development of Lebanese capitalism began after its independence from France in 1943, and especially after the Egyptian revolution of 1951. In that year there were five banks in Beirut. In 1966, the number had risen to 93, plus branches of foreign banks.

Lebanon established itself as the dominant capitalist country in the region; the economy grew on average

seven per cent a year in the '50s and only slightly lower in the '60s when there was a boom in property speculation. Developing the richer areas of Beirut was an immensely valuable investment; there was no investment in knocking down Beirut's slums or in low cost housing.

Around the city grew shanty towns, housing the poor from the rural south, mainly forced from the land to seek work in the city.

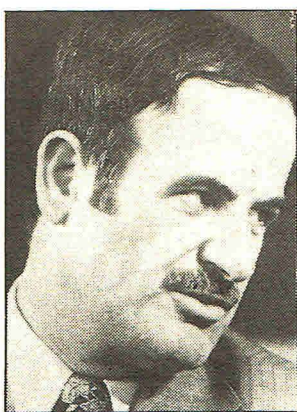
In the shanty towns the poor lived in shacks. Even a modest proposal by Parliament in 1965 to build 4,000 low-cost houses collapsed. Medical care was beyond the reach of most people. In 1971 all but one of 48 recognised hospitals in the Beirut area were privately owned. In some shanty towns the mortality rate was two to three times the national average.

Land problem

As Beirut's bankers and speculators grew richer, the shanty town dwellers grew poorer. Many were Shi'ite Muslims, driven from the land by the failure to solve the land problem after independence, and by government neglect of agriculture. There were large estates, especially in the Bekka Valley and fruit plantations on the coast, but over half Lebanon's farmers owned under an acre.

The Shi'ites were also forced north by the Israeli army's retaliatory action against the Palestinians. These forays were often carried out against Shi'ite peasants who had nothing to do with the original attacks. Many arrived in Beirut seething at the failure of the government to protect them.

Once in Beirut there was little chance of employment. Lebanon's wealth was based on finance capital, not on manufacturing industry. Before 1943, the French saw



President Assad of Syria

Lebanon as a market for their goods and had discouraged industry. By 1972 industry still accounted for less than one seventh of Gross Domestic Product.

The forced migration from the land was so great that by 1975 nearly half the country's population lived in Beirut, mostly in shanty towns, with no faith in the government doing anything for them. The political system was a shambles. Nothing was built, moved or changed unless someone could thereby make a profit.

By 1975, it was widely recognised that the Muslims were in the majority and the Shi'ites the largest single group. Yet power remained in the hands of the Maronite Christians and the Sunni Muslims. MPs were chosen on the basis of their family and wealth; most Christians, most Muslims had no power whatsoever.

On top of this was the Palestinian question. Since their expulsion from Palestine in 1948, there had been a large refugee population in Lebanon. From 1969, under the leadership of the Al Fatah faction of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), they had carried out raids into Israel. They remained largely unscathed by operating out of the refugee camps in and around Beirut, while much of the 'retaliation' was against the peasants of

The splint of Lebanon



Shi'ite militiamen in Beirut/Map showing Lebanon's sectarian divisions

Southern Lebanon.

In 1975, these attacks were used by a section of the Maronites as a pretext to attack the Palestinians. People like the Chamoun family were thus able to divert attention from demands for economic and political reform.

Despite attempts to dress up the conflict as between Lebanese and Palestinians, it was more an attempt by the ruling families to maintain their own positions. They used fear of the Palestinians to keep the support of the poorer Christians whose real interests lay with the poor Muslims.

The civil war became a stage on which leaders of various sects fought to protect their own interests, often against other families of their own religion. The government's impotence

soon became obvious; ministers became just spokesmen for their own sects.

In 1976, the Syrians entered the war. Syria had also been part of the French 'mandate' in 1920, and part of Syria had been incorporated into the Lebanon. In the 1960's, however, Syria went through a social revolution. Capitalism and landlordism were destroyed. 85 per cent of land and 90 per cent of industry was nationalised.

Although these measures were carried out because of the pressure of workers and poor peasants, the movement was led by a section of the armed forces. The country is ruled by a bureaucratic clique modelled on Eastern Europe.

Syria's President Assad began to feel threatened by events in Lebanon. A Palestinian victory would mean a radical Arab state on their doorstep to undermine their position, particularly if it attracted militant Palestinian migrant workers from the Gulf states. On the other hand they feared partition of Lebanon, creating a small Christian enclave dominated by the USA and Israel which would pose a threat to Syria.

Diversion

Hence Assad's military intervention, which also provided a welcome diversion from problems at home, where the regime was threatened by a rebel faction in the army. Assad could turn the eyes of workers and peasants away from their own social and economic conditions.

However the fighting between the factions continued with short intermissions, with increasing assistance to Christian militias in the south by Israel. In 1978 when Israel first invaded Lebanon they linked up with one of the Christian militias. As they withdrew they left

Southern Lebanon in the hands of the South Lebanon Army (SLA) which they paid and supplied.

By the end of the '70s the 'government' had lost control; they had less authority than leaders of the individual sects. As usual it was the poorest sections of society who suffered. Many of the rich simply left the country for the duration.

While capital still flowed in and out of Beirut banks, all public services fell apart. The sectarian militias' atrocities compounded the problems in the shanty towns and refugee camps.

By the time of the second Israeli invasion, the Lebanon government were in control of only a small area of the country. The rest was divided up between the Palestinians, the Christian militias and the Syrians.

The Israeli rulers were also motivated by domestic considerations. In 1981 Menachem Begin's Likud coalition faced a general election they seemed sure to lose, given one of the highest inflation rates in the world, a spiralling foreign debt and strikes in all areas, especially the public sector.

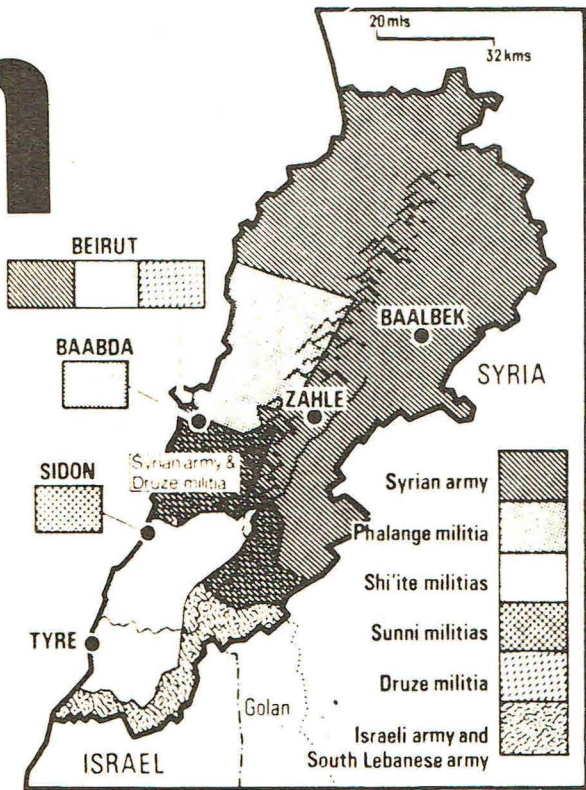
The only hope for Likud was to raise the scaring spectre of attacks by the Palestinians. Likud gained their victory and opened the door to invasion. At first they said they wanted to create a buffer zone to protect their border, but their aim was soon clear—to drive the Palestinians out of Lebanon.

The invasion led to the deaths of thousands of civilians. 2,000 Palestinians were massacred in the worst incident when armed Christian militias under the protection of Israel entered the camps of Sabra and Chatilla. It was claimed that they entered to flush out any remaining guerillas. In fact they set about an orgy of killing lasting two days. Men, women and children



Demonstration against Israeli invasion of Lebanon in July 1982. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

ering



Hezbollah (Party of God) formed around the fundamentalist clergy and adhering to the ideas of the Ayatollah Khomeini. It is this group, reflecting the anger and frustration of the poorest Shi'ites, who have been involved in suicide bombings and hijackings.

Neither group has any answer to Lebanon's problems. Amal's ideas are unworkable. What possible reforms in capitalist Lebanon could satisfy the needs of workers and peasants? Lebanese capitalism could not provide a decent life for most people even before 1975. The rich got richer and the poor got poorer. Now the system lies in ruins and there can be no return to pre-1975.

Neither can there be a solution on the basis of individual terror or an "Iranian" solution. The leadership of the Hezbollah hold up the Iranian model when Iran is facing an economic disaster. As in 1975, the leaders of all these groups are fighting for their own empires, wealth and privileges.

None of these "religious" leaders have any answer to workers' problems. The mass of Christians and Muslims have far more in common with each other than with their own "leaders". The only answer to the national question, the land problem and the economic crisis is the socialist transformation of society.

Even then the problems would be too great to solve on the basis of Lebanon alone. The building of a movement of workers and peasants, with the perspectives and experience of Marxism can cut across sectarian divisions.

Such a movement can lead the way to the unification of the Arab states in a socialist federation, including Israel, as the only way to solve the deep and persistent problems of the region.

The Shi'ites themselves are divided between two main bodies, the Amal, fighting for a unified Lebanon and political reform, and the

died.

This event showed both the bitter divisions capitalism had bequeathed Lebanon, and the unwillingness of Arab leaders to respond. In the Arab states and in Israel, there were demonstrations of revulsion by workers and peasants but no answer was forthcoming from the Arab leaders. In fact the Arab League held a meeting and decided to protest through their ambassadors in Washington!

No success

The invasion however, was not a success for the Israelis. Even the basic object of the invasion was only partially achieved. Although the PLO were defeated, many later returned to the camps of Beirut. More significantly the Israelis faced growing opposition at home, as more young soldiers died and the economic situation worsened.

The Israeli ruling class were forced to withdraw, reluctantly, but with no alternative short of all-out war. As they left, their "iron fist" policy left a trail of death and destruction. The Lebanon they left behind is as fragmented as the one they invaded.

The government of Amin Gemayal, in power by permission of Syria, controls a tiny part of Lebanon. The rest is split between warring factions. The latest upsurge in violence has again split the poorest sections.

Over the past few years, new militias have grown from the most exploited group, the Shi'ites, the poorest economically, attacked by Israel, excluded from power and at the mercy of the "families" who control the warring factions.

The Shi'ites themselves are divided between two main bodies, the Amal, fighting for a unified Lebanon and political reform, and the

Mitterrand's gendarmes smash workers occupation

THE 19 month-long occupation of the SKF ball-bearing factory in Ivry, just outside Paris, (see Militant 22 February and 29 March) has been ended by a government-backed police operation, despite spectacular resistance by the local population.

By Jim Ellen

In the early hours of 28 May some 250 armed riot police invaded the factory and expelled the few workers keeping the night watch. Later, a crowd that had gathered outside the factory to show opposition to the evacuation was charged violently by riot police leaving several people injured.

Scandalously, this whole operation was obviously carried out under direct orders of Francois Mitterrand's "Socialist" government. The SKF workers' determination had long been a thorn in their side. It was the first time ever that riot police had been sent against workers in this part of France and as one worker pointed out, this did not figure amongst Mitterrand's "110 propositions" for France in 1981!

Yet for the workers and their local supporters, this was far from the end. Just a few days later, an extremely well-organised attempt to retake the factory was mounted, supported by CGT and PCF activists in Ivry and neighbouring towns.

150 militants forced their way back into the factory early in the morning, breaking through the factory walls with the help of a bulldozer, while dozens more were creating a diversionary

"fake" break-in on the other side of the factory grounds! Unfortunately, the workers were not able to overcome the riot police, particularly after heavy reinforcements had been rushed in. Many were violently attacked and badly injured.

Meanwhile a fierce battle was developing between demonstrators and police in the streets surrounding the factory. Barricades were set up and faced a frightening display of police armory. Demonstrators defended themselves with paving stones ferried to the scene by lorries belonging to local Communist municipalities! During the fighting, a heavy cloud of tear-gas hung over the streets, even plastic bullets were fired on the demonstrators. Yet somehow the police came out of the fighting worse off—68 injured as opposed to 34 demonstrators!

The riot police eventually took control of the factory again and proceeded to empty out the millions of pounds of machinery the SKF workers had carefully safeguarded during the occupation. The workshops were left as if a bomb had hit

them. A TV news bulletin that night claimed that it was the workers who had left the factory in such a state.

The events at Ivry have shown how far this "Socialist" government has degenerated—from radical speeches in 1981 about the transformation of society, through to counter-reform and austerity, to using the capitalist state forces against trade unionists fighting to save their jobs. Small wonder the Socialist Party is losing support amongst working people, and that the parties of the right seem likely to win next year's elections.

The "Socialist" leaders bear full responsibility also for the enormous rift that has opened up between the PS and the Communist Party (PCF). Ivry is a bastion of the PCF and the events at SKF were like a direct attack on the party itself. Left unity, increasingly in fragments since the PCF broke from government last July, may well have been put back for a long time.

Even before Ivry, the leadership of the Communist Party had become outright hostile to the Socialists' continuing austerity policy. The Communist leaders have completely ruled out any sort of electoral agreement with the PS in 1986 so long as present policies continue.

Yet just over a year ago, the PCF had voted full confidence in the government and its austerity programme

and in the run up to the June 1984 European Georges Marchais had described the balance sheet of the Left government as "very positive", despite rising unemployment and falling living standards.

And if 19 months of struggle have had little concrete results, it is largely because the CGT and PCF leadership have totally failed to link the fight to save jobs at SKF to the numerous other local and national battles over jobs and wages in the last two years, including the biggest movement at Renault since May 1968.

Nationalisation

At no stage did the PCF leaders demand the nationalisation of SKF France, even when the bosses of this Swedish multinational recently threatened to close down all their French interests if the Ivry factory was not evacuated!

At the time of writing, SKF workers are still talking with representatives of SKF France about possible continuation of some industrial activity on the Ivry site to ensure the re-employment of 43 workers who supported the occupation through to the end.

Messages of support can still be sent to: Jacques Tord (SKF), Union Locale CGT Ivry, 6 place Gerard Philippe, 94200 Ivry, France.



French police charge steel workers during 1979 demonstration. Photo: John Sturrock (report)

Hotel staff strike at New York's rich

THE RICH plush hotels of New York City were recently shaken by a three week strike by 14,000 hotel workers. In the richest block in America, where hotels charge \$200 per night, management have attempted to break the strength of the union.

By a New York correspondent

The mood was lively from the beginning. Management adverts for scabs brought workers onto the streets even before the strike began. Vicious struggles occurred as workers tried to stop scabs taking away their jobs. Only the cops allowed management to continue business, as workers were forced to stay in a fenced area and not allowed to approach the scabs.

The main issue was the attacks on work rules and conditions. Management demanded complete flexibility and interchangeability of jobs for cooks, stewards, housekeepers, bellmen and doormen, etc, plus the elimination of time and a quarter for overtime, cuts in medical benefits, increased rights to hire and fire and the

right to employ newly-hired workers at a lower wage. The union was also fighting for a decent wage increase.

Management's unreasonable demands are an attempt to bust the union, 1984 was a bumper profit year with record increases in the daily rates for rooms. Management are encouraged by attacks on unions in other industries and want to win total control of the workplace from the union.

The New York Hotel and Motel Trades Council, were caught by surprise by this hard attitude. For 47 years contracts have been settled without a strike. The leadership put its faith in the reasonableness of the employers; but it is the determination of the rank and file which will determine the outcome.

Shouts of "no contract! no work!" and "scabs go home!" have resounded around the whole area backed up by a clattering of dustbin lids, soda cans and drums alongside an endless scream of whistles and even some horns. Weekly demonstrations have blocked off major avenues and streets.

Inside the hotels, management worked around the clock to meet the

ed by scabs, many with criminal records and no experience. In one hotel the chef quit at the abysmal cleanliness of scabs in the kitchens. In the same hotel a customer recognised a scab as a person who earlier that day had stolen her purse in a railway station.

Management's contempt for the workers, many with 30 years with the company, many recent immigrants of various nationalities, contrasts with the gold necklaces and diamond rings of the rich and famous who saunter past the picket lines. The strike sums up the attitude of big business for workers as they attempt to drive back wages and conditions to the days of the great depression.

Many activists see the need for a more far-sighted and fighting leadership, and many now support the idea of labor party as the only way labor can stop the attacks in the long run.

P.S. On 28 June hotel workers returned to work after management conceded on some demands and offered a larger than expected wage rise.

LETTERS

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

Kinnock on the spot

Dear Comrades,

Tonight (30 June) I saw an episode of the 'Jimmy Young Television Show', the guests included Tom King (Unemployment Secretary), and Neil Kinnock. The audience appeared to be fairly representative, ranging from YTS trainees through to middle-aged businessmen in expensive suits.

Amongst the loudest applause was reserved for a man who asked Kinnock, in the light of his assertion that full employment was no longer achievable, was not the only way to carry out Clause 4 of the Labour Party constitution?

Kinnock, visibly unnerved, spoke in vague generalisations but was unable to avoid admitting

that attempting to solve our economic problems 'within the framework of the current system' is impossible. Excellent! This must mean that we will be seeing the next Labour government nationalising the top 200 monopolies and transferring 85% of the economy into the hands of the workers!

But the most revealing part of the programme was reserved until the end. A YTS trainee pointing to those on the stage said: "I've got to live on £26 a week—how would they do trying to live on that money? What are they on? I bet it's £80, £100 or even more!". Some of the audience laughed. I'm glad they found it funny.

Yours fraternally
Dale Pyatt
Macclesfield LPYS

One in the eye for Roy

Dear Comrades,

Hattersley was in Coventry to present George Hodgkinson with the rare distinction of becoming Coventry North West Labour Party's first ever life President. Mr Hodgkinson is a 90 year old socialist with 70 years as an activist in the labour movement behind him.

Hattersley said that: "On-

ly pride, conceit and ideological obsessions" by Labour could hand Mrs Thatcher victory in the next general election. Labour's duty was to: "govern, not to become a university debating society, a sixth form discussion group, a socialist Sunday School, or a pressure group". This being an obvious continuation of the Kinnock theme of the Marxists in the party using politics as a hobby.

However unfortunately for Roy, Mr Hodgkinson



Neil Kinnock (left)—vague generalisation about the economy; and Roy Hattersley—Labour's 'duty to govern'. Photo: D Sinclair

Crocodile tears for Bradford

Dear Comrades,

Football has been in the news more than ever what with the Bradford fire and the Brussels violence.

Living only a few roads away from the Bradford City ground and knowing people who escaped death, I still feel the numbness, disbelief and shock of the tragedy.

But I also feel anger and bitterness at those who seem so caring and concerned now

but couldn't give a damn about the people of Bradford before.

Mrs Thatcher was last year invited to come to Bradford to see the terrible conditions people in Bradford had to suffer and what more cuts would mean. But of course she didn't want to do that.

And what about Kinnock? So concerned after attacking Pat Wall and *Militant* supporters at the last General Election—an insult to the working people of Bradford who support the Labour

Party through thick and thin.

The real sympathy, care and solidarity has naturally been shown by not only the people of Bradford but workers all over the world.

The Tories and the other riff-raff don't really care otherwise they wouldn't take jobs, services and money away from Bradford, a city with bad unemployment which is now one of the poorest cities in Britain.

Yours fraternally
Helen Atkinson
Bradford North LPYS

Spreading the word

Dear Comrades,

In a few days time I will be returning to France. England will stay in my mind forever because I've learnt so much during these months.

When I left France I was disillusioned because of the

Mitterrand government's betrayals. But, I've become a *Militant* supporter in Hastings and the *Militant* supporters, by their determination, ideas and correct approach have shown me the way to real socialism. It is great to be able to understand and explain the processes of this sick society—all the better to fight its

parasites!

But I am only an example. There are plenty of disillusioned young people, who are looking for answers.

Each comrade should take the opportunity of talking with foreign people and be in possession of, at least, the European Marxist papers, and include them in paper sales, especially at this time

of year! The mere fact of selling foreign papers besides *Militant* would attract them. Let's show our powerful international unity. In this way you can make a great contribution to the building of the international movement.

Yours fraternally
Evelyne Sihon

Double standards

Dear Comrades,

An article in the July *Yorkshire Miner* newspaper demonstrates the hypocrisy of the Tory courts.

Two young South Wales miners were recently convicted of murdering a taxi-driver by dropping concrete on his car.

The article points out: "By contrast, when Widnes Magistrates were told on 17 January about policemen deliberately bombing a passing car with bricks and con-

crete from a motorway bridge, it was not the policemen who were on trial. The occupants of the car were charged with stealing it and were later convicted and imprisoned."

Both the car's occupants have lodged an official complaint. But as the paper comments: "... Can we expect to see one or more policemen in court charged with attempted murder?"

Yours fraternally
Kevin A Gill
Swinton and Rawmarsh
LPYS

Styles of recruitment

Dear Comrades,

During the recent schools strike, a number of students at school joined the LPYS and took up the programme of the *Militant*. However, a certain small group who claim to be a "Workers par-

ty" have different styles of recruiting, offering to buy the school students drinks and fags if they attend their meetings. This is how seriously they take their programme.

Yours fraternally
Ian Thirkill
Derby North LPYS

Tories' drug hypocrisy

Dear Comrades,

I am writing this letter after listening to Simon Bates on Radio One, where he reads out letters from people who have gone or are going through bad times.

The letter he has just read out is about a young girl who comes from a broken home.

She lived with her mother who fell ill. Unfortunately she turned to drugs to escape her problems. She was then 16, her mother did not get any better and consequently died.

The girl is now all alone with no future. She is 17 and a heroin addict. The doctors have given her one year to live if she does not kick the habit.

This is not an isolated case



Few facilities for working class children often means no proper coaching and dangerous play areas.

Superstars or superbrats?

Dear Comrades,

Once again the Wimbledon tennis tournament is with us and once again the same old thing happens. No I don't mean the rain, I mean the tired old question: "Why can't we produce winners?"

The answer's really simple: unlike most other countries, we spend practically nothing on facilities for kids to learn the game. There are

plenty of tennis courts in the wealthy areas of the country, but none to speak of in working class areas.

If we want to breed winners in sport in this country, tennis or whatever, we must spend money on working class kids because they have the tenacity and guts to win. The alternative is watching upper-class Hooray Henry's and Sloane Rangers buckling up as soon as the going gets tough.

Yours fraternally
J Gibbs
GMBATU

but a growing problem. Thatcher has recently announced that she is going to allocate more money to the drugs problem. This money is equivalent to giving one grain of rice to a starving Ethiopian. What Thatcher is really doing is just electioneering. She appears on television with a big sorrowful look on her face pretending to care about the situation when in reality she

could not care less.

In fact she encourages the drug scene. The Tory government has cut back on customs officers that prevent drugs from entering this country in the first place and they have made cuts in the NHS who have to deal with addicts.

Yours fraternally
JT Hall
Lancashire

LEFT and RIGHT

Starting young

LAST WEEK paper boys at GT News in South Yorkshire went on strike, after one boy had £1 docked from his pay because a 50p magazine was undelivered. The paperboys, who earn £5 for doing paper rounds six days a week, set up a picket line outside the shop. The owner called the police, but the picket remained. Some of the boys went on the rounds to explain to householders why there were no papers and to build support for their action. Although some boys have returned to work, the strike continues. The oldest paper boy is aged 14.

A fair society? Of course!

FOLLOWING THE miners' strike, 4,318 miners have been convicted of 'criminal' offences. Of the 1,019 sacked, only 414 have been reinstated. By comparison, there were 549 public complaints against police behaviour during the strike. So far only 135 complaints have been investigated—by the police of course. The result? Not one officer has been disciplined. Four police officers received 'advice'.

Quote of the week

"THE COMBINATION of low growth and increasing taxation has made the average British worker the lowest paid and most highly taxed in Europe."—Sir John Hoskyns, Director General, Institute of the Directors.

USDAW general secretary vote

Election campaign builds Broad Left



George Williamson speaking at the BLOC lobby of the TUC in support of the miners.

USDAW Broad Left chair and Broad Left Organising Committee (BLOC) officer George Williamson analyses the USDAW election result and draws some lessons for Broad Left activists.

RIGHT WING USDAW full-time official, Garfield Davies was elected last week as the next general secretary of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers.

Considerable surprise has been expressed among union activists at the size of the total vote—303,653. This represents an increased vote of 52,000 compared with the presidential election held in February.

Moreover, it is only about 12,000 votes less than the total cast in the election for general secretary held in 1979 when the union had over 80,000 more members.

The percentage poll was 77.62% compared with about 63% in 1979 and in most other national elections.

The result shows how worried the officials were of losing the election, being prepared to go to unprecedented lengths to organise branch meetings to have the votes cast.

Bill Connor's 81,277 votes demonstrate the progress which the USDAW Broad Left continues to make in the union. It is necessary though, to draw a balance sheet and to analyse the implications of the election campaign.

The Broad Left believed that a victory was possible. Although the vast majority of the union officials were supporting Garfield Davies, and to a lesser extent John Flood, the Broad Left felt that given the opportunity to put its policies to the activists and the membership, it would be possible to win support over the heads of the majority of officials. They have a large influence in a centralised union machine with a low level of membership activity in many branches at present.

It is true however, that in parts of the country where the Broad Left is weak, and where the membership did not hear its case, the members voted for Garfield Davies, usually because they wanted to stop the anti-left candidate, John Flood. The result emphasises yet again the necessity of mass rank and file involvement in a campaigning Broad Left.

New votes

A number of factors were involved in the right wing split, not least a major clash of personalities and personal ambitions. But a major factor for many officials was that Flood is an extreme right winger who would like to model USDAW on business-style lines. 'Rationalisation' would have inevitably followed his victory, including likely job losses in the union.

The Broad Left campaign, and Bill himself, made a big impact at the union conference. In many areas of the country headway was made and Bill picked up new votes for the Broad Left. The full voting returns have not been published yet, but the Broad Left is already aware that it succeeded in winning far more support than expected in several divisions.

In Scotland, where previously there had been virtually no Broad Left activity a number of branches were won over, sometimes by the

Voting was as follows:

**Davies—149,892 (46.36%)
Connor—81,277 (26.77%)
Flood—72,484 (23.87%)**

narrowest of margins. Whereas prior to the election only 3,000–4,000 votes could have been expected from the Scottish division, Bill Connor received around 10,500 votes.

Again in the union's North East Division (which extends from South Yorkshire to Carlisle) the Broad Left anticipated receiving perhaps 6,500–7,500 votes. By the close of voting, and after some of the most spectacular gains in the campaign, Bill polled around 14,000 votes.

In the union's Southern Division, despite intense activity from the right wing, Bill received over 16,000 votes—around 60 per cent of the vote.

The Broad Left's greatest degree of support however, came from the union's North Western Division. Based on reports of branch voting during the voting period, the Broad Left believes that Bill received around 80 per cent of all votes cast in the North Western Division. This division includes Northern Ireland where Bill made an unprecedented and highly successful visit which it is hoped will cement close links with the national Broad Left.

The Broad Left conducted one



of its best ever election campaigns. Bill Connor spoke at election meetings all over the country. A regular briefing was circulated throughout the union with information about the Broad Left's policies and how branch votes were going.

One of the weaknesses of the Broad Left's campaign was the lateness in adopting our candidate. Davies was campaigning for several years before Whatley announced his retirement. Bill wasn't declared the official candidate until the USDAW 1984 conference—three weeks before the announcement.

Had more time been available, it would have been possible to mount a more effective campaign in those areas where the Broad Left is weak—South Wales, the South West, Home Counties and the Midlands.

One of the most significant aspects of the election result is the vote for John Flood, the Deputy



General Secretary. He was the candidate of the anti-left Mainstream Labour Group who have effectively controlled the union for the past 35 years. Their declining influence in the union, and especially at the union's annual conference has been quite marked over the past two or three years.

Mainstream's support of multilateralism, their refusal to stand firm against Tory anti-union laws, and their general stance on the far right of the labour movement, has been out of step with the steady shift to the left taking place in the union.

The fact that their candidate has come bottom of the poll has come as a shock to them. This is the first general secretary election that the Mainstream Labour Group have lost in their history.

It would be wrong to say that the right wing are now finished in USDAW. The election of Garfield Davies does indicate the leftward drift of the union, but his main base of support lies with the right wing officials.

The right wing in USDAW has not disappeared, it has merely shifted over a bit to try and get in step with the rest of the labour and trade union movement. It must not be forgotten that Davies competed with Flood for Mainstream backing.

The Broad Left still has the task of showing up the right wing's inadequacies in the face of increasing attacks from the Tories and the employers.

The Broad Left's result cannot be measured merely in terms of votes. It has succeeded in building a whole new layer of supporters, many previously not active in the union. In nearly every division, even the most right wing ones, there are now groups of Broad Left activists becoming involved in building further support for the Broad Left and for socialist policies.

The enthusiasm generated by some of these new activists meant

that some branches which would have ordinarily gone to Flood or Davies, voted for Bill Connor. It is these young and female members, being shop stewards in the workplaces or officers in their branches, who will form the backbone in the Broad Left's future development.

Garfield Davies is the first USDAW general secretary to be elected on a minority of the vote. In 1979 Bill Whatley, the Mainstream candidate, was elected with 59 per cent of the vote and he started out with what was regarded as a relatively weak position because of this.

Right weakened

His control, especially over the Annual Delegate Meeting has steadily diminished in the last two or three years. Davies therefore becomes General Secretary with the most tenuous mandate ever. His intention to serve his full term of office on this basis—fifteen or sixteen years, will be met with growing opposition from the rank and file.

His intention too, to accept the full salary of the general secretary—£24,000+ per year basic, when many of his members have to live on Wage Council wage levels of £60–£65 per week for 39 hours, will not strengthen his position.

Many of the branches who cast their votes did so on the basis of a tiny fraction of the membership. For example, Davies' own branch, Ipswich General which has 713 members, voted for him by three votes to two, with Davies present and voting!

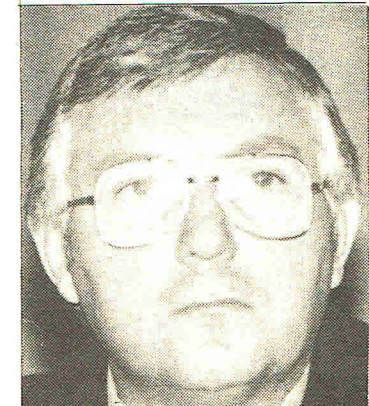
This meant that he received all 713 votes from that branch. This story can be repeated in many other branches. Though on occasions it cuts both ways it is on the basis of a low level of membership involvement that the right wing in USDAW have held sway for 35 years.

The problems facing USDAW members are not going to go away. The Tories wish to scrap the 1950s Shops Act which protects workers' hours and conditions. They also intend to limit the scope and effectiveness of the Wages Councils which maintain some sort of minimum wage. These, together with a whole host of other problems mean that more and more the membership will be looking to their union to provide answers and actively demanding them.

The right wing in USDAW have no idea how to defeat the Tories or solve any of the major problems facing the members. There is tremendous potential for the Broad Left. The dialogue with the membership which this campaign

has opened up will enable us to develop our programme and activity.

By continuing to campaign within the union for Broad Left policies to eradicate low pay, the special problems of women and young workers as well as internal democracy and political direction we will be able to win increasing support. The campaign has widened the input into the Broad Left on all the day to day issues affecting the members.



A message from Bill Connor:

"I would like to thank all supporters and particularly those people who have become involved with the Broad Left for the first time. Our job now is to build and strengthen the Broad Left. The Tory threats to abolish the Wages Councils, and open shops on Sunday means that the role of the Broad Left in developing a fighting strategy will be ever more critical to our union".

Union democracy, particularly the demand for regular election of the general and deputy general secretaries are issues which will gain increasing attention from the members. The Broad Left will continue to fight for these rule changes, clearly linking the need for greater democracy to the urgent issues affecting the members.

Regular election of the general secretary proved to be by far the most popular of all during the campaign. The members will undoubtedly be insisting that Davies re-submit himself for election long before his term of office expires.

The Broad Left must now set its sights on winning a majority on the union's governing body, the Executive Council. The support gained and the lessons learned during the General Secretary election campaign make this essential, and for the first time, possible.

By aiming upwards at the same time as building amongst the activists and the membership, the Broad Left will make itself an invincible force in the union and bring about the kind of fighting, campaigning union which the members have needed for so long.

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

Civil Servants demand union backing

THE DEPARTMENT of Employment (DE) has become the latest target for civil service job cuts.

Official government statistics show jobs in the civil service have been cut from 733,176, in 1979 to 652,534 in 1984. New technology has been responsible for many of these cuts, but disputes are brewing. Currently, in addition to the DE, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Centre in Swansea are involved in dispute.

By Nicola Duckett,
Adrian Williams

The latest attack in the DE involves the introduction of the Terminal Replacement Enquiry Service (TRES), which initially threatens 2,000 jobs, with more cuts to come.

TRES, instead of providing an improved service for claimants and better conditions for staff, will mean a change in job design and will not take into account the issues of health and safety.

Management have refused to give complete assurances over right of transfer from VDU work to non-VDU

work for women who are or may be pregnant, which may be hazardous for the foetus.

The danger of VDUs to eyesight has meant management have offered £24.95 towards any eye correction—an amount which does not cover the total cost of correction. Employees are being forced to pay for the right to work on VDUs. Management are talking to ministers about a proposed no compulsory redundancy agreement; there

are no assurances of redeployment and transfer.

TRES is being introduced to Unemployment Benefit Offices in Reading, Staines and Westminster, prior to introduction at other areas. Last Wednesday (3 July) saw a one-day strike at Westminster UBO which proved highly successful.

Despite a handful of staff going into the building, management was forced to close the office to the public. Later a delegation from Westminster UBO went to CPSA headquarters to lobby the DE Section Executive Committee.

However, the branch can

expect no favours from the BL'84-based DE Executive. This supposedly left leadership is moving rapidly to the right, and is falling more and more into line behind CPSA's ultra-right national leadership. The DE leadership were responsible for the collapse of last year's shift-workers' dispute in the DHSS.

Put pressure on NEC

Already "left wing" section secretary Peter Thomason has postponed strike action originally planned to start at

Westminster on 1 July! The branch is, however, undeterred and has overwhelmingly passed a motion agreeing indefinite strike action from 11 July until a satisfactory national agreement is reached—with or without the backing of the SEC and the National Disputes Committee.

If the Disputes Committee fails to give national backing, the members involved will receive no strike pay. All messages of support and donations should be sent to: Westminster UBO Strike Centre, Westminster Trades Council, 40 Tachbrook Street, London SW1.

Lancs furniture workers

OVER A year ago (see *Militant* 9 March 1984), there was mass recruitment to the Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union (FTAT) at Silentnight bedding manufacturer in Barnoldswick, Lancashire. This was followed by the first strike in Silentnight's 40-year history—and that strike's success brought even more new members to FTAT.

By Joe Greaves
and Linden Stafford
(Skipton Labour Party)

Now once again, things aren't quiet at Silentnight. Since 10 June, workers have been on strike at all three depots, at Barnoldswick and at Sutton in West Yorkshire.

For three years, shop floor workers have received no pay increase, during which time the company's profits have steadily grown, including a reported profit of over £600,000 in 1984-85.

Although bonuses had technically been increasing, the shortening of production schedules has meant that bonus payments actually received by workers have been decreasing.

In January 1985 the union accepted management's proposal of a wage freeze in return for no redundancies. However, in April, 53 redundancies were announced. Workers then began a work-to-rule and imposed an overtime ban.

At the beginning of June, management suspended six workers at Sutton for 'not working to full capacity'.

On 10 June, union members at all three depots came out in sympathy. Official FTAT picket lines were established, with a 24-hour picket.

No deliveries have been made: all lorry drivers have agreed not to cross picket lines, including a West German driver who turned round and drove back to Germany.

Some beds have been taken out by sub-contract drivers, but only two or three Silentnight lorries have removed beds. Only a small number of shop-floor workers have crossed picket lines.

Management, headed by the wealthy, propertied, chairman, Tom Clarke, have refused to negotiate with FTAT and have rejected a call for arbitration by ACAS.

They are now hiring temporary workers, but when one Keighley man turned up at Silentnight and discovered there was a strike on, he immediately joined the picket line!

The bosses have so far pinned their hopes on a wholesale return to work, which shows no signs of materialising. Last year's strike success at Silentnight has shown a particularly exploited group of workers what can be achieved by union solidarity.

Skipton Labour Party and LPYS have already started collections for the Silentnight strikers. We must ensure they are given every support.

Addenbrookes domestics begin privatisation link-up

A WEEK last Tuesday, health workers from all over the Eastern region took part in a mass lobby of Cambridge Regional Health Authority.

The meeting of the Authority was to decide whether to end their contract with OCS for cleaning in the hospital. For the past nine months following the slashing of the workforce, the standards of hygiene and cleanliness have been condemned by doctors, nurses, patients and health workers. Addenbrookes domestics, sacked by OCS are on strike in defence not only of their own jobs but also of standards of health care.

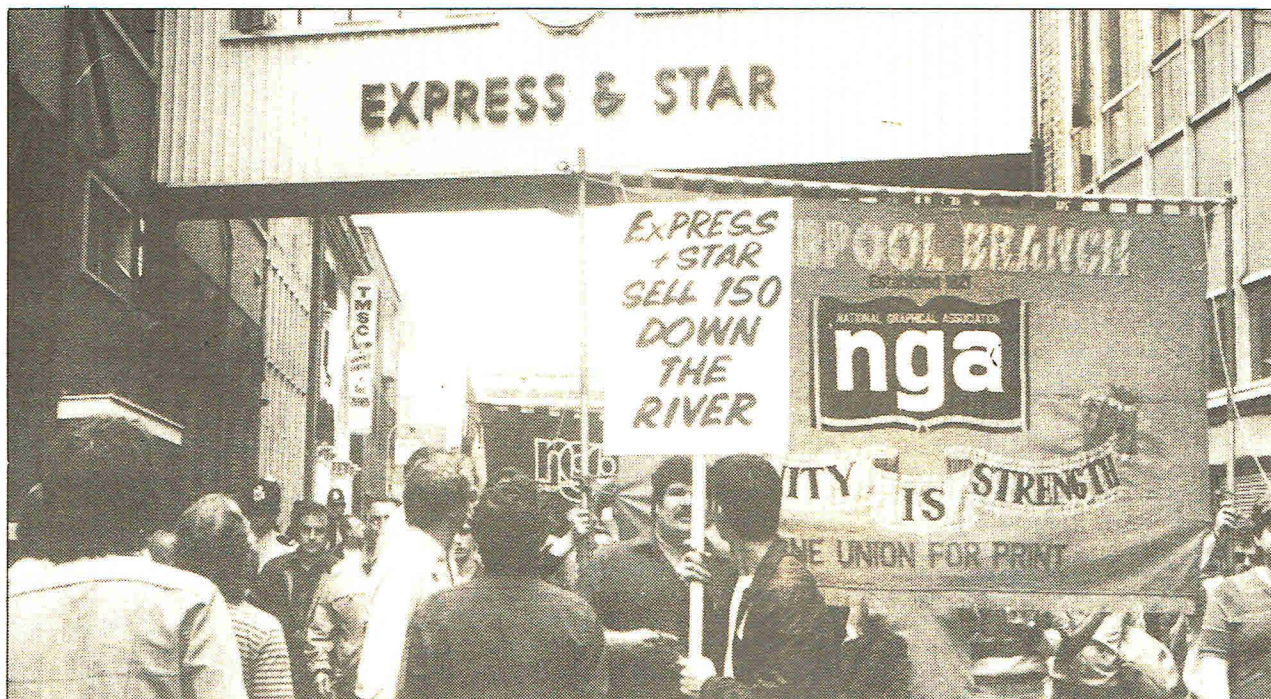
National campaign

The health authority decided to keep OCS on, despite their appalling record. The Tories and their friends will not allow patients' welfare to come between them and their profits.

The health workers in struggle see the need for COHSE and NUPE to take up a national campaign and not allow workers such as those in Addenbrookes remain isolated. The Strike Committee at Addenbrookes has started to forge links with workers in Newcastle, also fighting privatisation.

Rank-and-file activists need to become organised on a national basis within the broad lefts, so that disputes in Cambridge, Hamersmith, Barking and Newcastle don't become isolated.

By Chris Holmes
(Cambridge LPYS)



OVER 2,500 print workers and local trade unionists marched in Wolverhampton last Saturday to show support for sacked NGA members at the *Wolverhampton Express and Star*. The dispute is about the introduction of new technology over the head of NGA members. At the moment SOGAT and NUJ members are crossing the NGA picket line. There have been a series of disputes marred by conflicts between the print unions. The emphasis of speeches by Tony Dubbins, NGA general secretary, and Rodney Bickerstaffe, general secretary of NUPE, was quite rightly on the need for unity. Words must be put into practice by the print union leaders. If no national agreement is reached then unity must be built at local level. The future of trade unionism in the print is at stake. Photo and report: MICK CARROLL

Telecom workers say 'no talk' no 'interim'

FOLLOWING THE decision at the National Communications Union Conference to continue with the blacking of "interim" systems, the union is on a direct path to confrontation with management at District and local level.

Interim systems are a lead up to full implementation of the Customer Services System (Front Office) and is the largest computerisation programme

ever undertaken in Europe.

The effects on jobs will be catastrophic, but BT still refuse to fully discuss it, especially in relation to the NCU's Broad Strategy. The 'Broad Strategy' is the union's claim for a 32 hour 4 day week to avoid the huge job losses which now face our members.

The blacking of these interim systems will severely damage BT's im-

plementation programme and confrontation at a District level is inevitable.

In Northern Ireland the Union Regional Committee has stopped the work starting on one of these systems. The Chief Executive of BT Northern Ireland simply stated that this could lead to interesting developments. As the system involved is a vital part in phase 'A' of the full CSS programme, he will now be forced into a situation of taking the BTNI workers on. In all probability it will be sooner rather than later.

We cannot allow management to pick their targets like this. Following the first worker being suspended, the union should announce a national programme of action.

Senior management have stated that when they were a nationalised company, service came first, but now as a private company, profit comes first. Under capitalism profit not only comes before service, but of the workers and their right to work.

Any attack on a section of the industry must be resisted by national action. With workers uniting in this fight we can and will defeat BT and ultimately the Tory government who are pulling their strings.

By Stephen Tweed
(Coleraine Branch Secretary, NCU)

Skegness' first-time postal strike

POSTMEN IN Skegness, Lincolnshire, forced a management climb-down in only a few hours when they took part in the first strike ever started at their office.

Thursday's strike, which stopped all delivery and collection of mail in the town, was led by 22-year-old Stuart Worth, who reluctantly took on the job of UCW branch secretary only eight weeks ago.

The 33 postmen, all members of the UCW, voted unanimously for strike action after weeks of bitterness over the introduction of "Postal Business Efficiency". The last straw came when a new, part-time postman started work on Thursday, rather than on the following Monday as had been agreed.

"I was amazed when we were in the

meeting and every hand went up," said Stuart: "especially in this day and age, after the miners' strike. The comradeship was just great."

Counter staff in the post office and the union's head office, as well as local people, offered their support to the strikers. But by tea time, it was all over. The men had got what they wanted—fresh talks on the training and introduction of staff. They agreed to go back the next day, and were offered four hours overtime each to clear the backlog of letters.

Stuart was delighted, but said the men would do the same again tomorrow, if it was necessary.

By a Militant correspondent

Miners' conference needs rank and file voice

NUM CONFERENCE saw the hand of every delegate, except those of the scab Notts leaders, raised high in support of the victimised miners.

If any act summed up the utter bankruptcy of the likes of Lynk and Prendergast this was it. Any miners who are tempted to follow them—be warned.

All that the resolution said was: "A special conference will be held during the first half of October 1985 in order to decide upon what action will be taken to bring about the reinstatement".

Arthur Scargill declared this issue: "A basic principle of trade unionism on trial." The Notts scab leaders were guilty of betrayal.

According to the media, much of the rest of the conference centred around the "will they or won't they" saga of the Notts Area leaving the national union. The press waited like vultures hoping to please their owners in the campaign to create a new Spencer union.

For one whole day the conference, in closed session, discussed the fate of Lynk and Prendergast after break-

By Chris Herriot
(Sacked miner,
Monktonhall NUM)

ing union policy while employed by the national union.

At a press conference later Scargill stated that they encouraged and voted for the changes in rules of the Notts Area and campaigned and voted in abandoning the overtime ban.

Wide agenda

Until the time the Area makes a decision, the nationally paid Area agent must support the national position—and only then argue for the local position even if its completely opposed to the national.

This however, was not the only issue facing the delegates, although the media spent their time concentrating on this point.

The recognition of the South African NUM

(reported in last week's *Militant*) must be applauded. Now pits in every area must make approaches to the South African NUM to cement links.

The battle is yet to come on the wages front. The conference called for a "substantial increase". The NCB will try and base any increase on incentive payments, which have fallen by £16 a week since 1978 when they were introduced.

A decent basic wage for all members and abolition of the incentive scheme must be the aim. The NCB would love us to risk further life and limb to enable them to give a glowing report of increased profits to their bosses, the Tory government.

As during the strike the miners' wives made themselves heard. Singing the battle songs they lobbied every delegate demanding they should be linked to the NUM.

Unfortunately, conference rejected the idea of associate membership by one vote. It would have been small enough reward for their loyalty to the union and



Arthur Scargill dominates NUM conference. His resolute stand has won the respect of the activists—now they need to be brought more into the union's decision-making.

Photo: Philip Gordon (Reflex)

sacrifice during the strike.

Much else was discussed at the conference, but one overwhelming desire was for the return of a Labour government at the next election. However, Kinnock's outburst on both the victimised miners and the Brecon by-election result points to the difficulties ahead.

Labour

Unless Labour breaks with the capitalist system the bosses will end up dictating to Kinnock and the promises

of a future for coal will be hollow.

The conference lacked the vitality and enthusiasm of the young miners. It is now clear that there is a need for a national youth conference. Not only would it be an avenue to discuss the problems faced by youth, it would also prepare for the next battle.

The Areas could have youth councils and then could elect delegates to attend the national conference.

Another beneficial change would be to have represen-

tatives from every pit. In today's situation, where it is vital that the decisions and the discussion behind them are relayed back as quickly as possible, an expanded conference is needed. There were only 99 delegates present. This is inadequate to the task facing us today.

'Next time'

But one message was clear from the conference. "We will fight again and next time we will win".

Railworkers face 'driver-only' fight

THE STRUGGLE against implementation of Driver Only Operation (DOO) is now coming to a head at many rail depots around the country.

By Andy Viner
(Kings Cross ASLEF)

Contrary to some pessimists' views it is not too late to defeat the Rail Board's proposals. In fact the time to fight back has arrived.

Strike action is the only way we can stop it. The preparation of such action must begin straight away.

NUR conference policy is total opposition, including training and trials.

ASLE&F, unfortunately don't oppose DOO in principle but have a policy of not co-operating with management as long as the NUR remain opposed—which is a crossed arms approach.

The NUR leadership have issued instructions to union representatives at local and regional level not to talk to management about DOO.

Too much of their argument has emphasised the Board's failure to take their proposals through the machinery rather than explaining in full the case for all-out opposition.

The NUR must initiate a major national campaign of propaganda. A clear appeal to ASLE&F for support must be made.

Full national backing must be given by both unions to the members at Immingham, who were first in the firing line and have set an example to all of us.

But activists in every area

must not wait for the national lead. There should be a barrage of resolutions and messages from branches, to union head office to keep pressure on them. Messages of support should also go to Immingham NUR and ASLE&F branches.

In every area mass meetings at branch, depot and District level must be called. Already Thames Valley, London Midland, Sheffield, and Chesterfield District Councils of the NUR have taken such an initiative, this must be repeated elsewhere.

Local Federation meetings, leaflets and bulletins, must be used to take the message to the membership—especially those depots where implementation of driver only operation is threatened first.

THE British Rail Board's first attempts to ignore NUR and ASLEF representatives and unilaterally impose further trials for Driver Only

Operation of trains (DOO) received a severe blow this week.

Renewed trials were due to start on Monday 8 July, on iron ore trains from Immingham to Santon ore terminal in the South Humber-side area.

In a marvellous show of unity the driver on the first train of the day refused to move without a guard, and the guard refused to undertake alternative duties.

Trains were cancelled as a result. Management sent the two men home without pay.

Union representatives at Immingham are planning to make links with drivers and guards at Kings Cross which is the next place where management are planning DOO, this time on passenger trains.

Immingham train crews faced heavy victimisation for blacking coke and iron ore during the miners' strike and unity between them has been forged in struggle—a great sign for the future.

Price of Golden Wonder



Workers at the Golden Wonder factory at Broxburn near Edinburgh picket for 12½% pay rise. The current wage is £69 per week. Management have offered 6½%. The picket line is supported by Whitburn miners' wives support group.

Photo: Rick Matthews (IFL)

A life on the ocean wages

THE SEAMEN'S union has won the first round of a fight with the P&O shipping line.

By Eileen Short

Union members on the *Canberra* and the *Sea Princess* voted to disrupt holiday cruises from British ports, in protest at P&O's plans to sack 375 NUS members on four ships, re-employing them on a 'concessionaire' basis.

Waiters, cabin and bar staff on four of the seven North American P&O ships were offered a GCHQ-type bribe to buy out their rights.

As concessionaires they would be paid \$150 a month; passengers' tips were supposed to make this up to a living wage!

Job security would be threatened by loss of British Merchant Navy Federation

membership. Staff who lost their job with P&O would be "finished", according to Peter Busson, convenor of the UK-based *Sea Princess*. Loss of Federation membership means "no job on any other British flagged vessel."

The angry response of British and Canadian P&O workers forced the company to retreat. Expensive cruises were disrupted, with passengers leafletted to appeal for support.

The final blow was the two to one vote for action by the crew of the *Royal Princess* in Vancouver, and support from Canadian dockers.

The union's press officer says the dispute is over: "as far as we are concerned, P&O have withdrawn their demands." But he and everyone else recognise that the company will be back.

P&O claim the wide use of concessionaire-staff by rival

fleets puts them at a 'cost-disadvantage'. Union members know this is a smoke-screen: P&O expect to make £14 m profit on their cruise ships this year.

The NUS Executive is negotiating "a fine balance between saving jobs and keeping lines viable", according to their press office.

Union's task

P&O already employ foreign workers on low wages; the union cannot be allowed to countenance any bartering of members' rights to make the line 'competitive'.

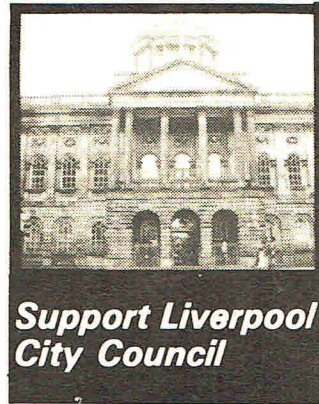
The real task is to organise on the flags of convenience, and ensure union rates and conditions on every ship. The union should seize the initiative, with a renewed onslaught on the cowboy fleets.

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Militant

Liverpool Council
— See page 3

Council workers build solidarity



Support Liverpool City Council

Miners

(From page one)

But the splitters will not find things so easy. Already, there has been a meeting in Sheffield of pro-NUM elements, attended by representatives from each pit in the Notts coalfield.

Well over 5,000 voted to stay with the National Union in the recent ballot over the rule changes and some 7,000 abstained.

Thousands of Notts miners will question how their 'leaders' could storm out of Annual Conference after having taken part in the vote on whether or not to adopt a new rule book.

Nevertheless, the dangers of the breakaway gathering support must not be underestimated. Any threat to the unity of the miners must be answered immediately and resolutely. The Board and the government are attempting to engage in union-busting of the American variety.

The NUM must launch the campaign to win the rank and file Notts miners to the National Union and isolate the 'Spencerite' area 'leadership'. Those in Notts who showed their loyalty in the strike or area ballot should also be mobilised. 'Spencerism' must be strangled at birth. Now the opportunity has arisen to complete the task begun in the 1940s to build a genuine, democratic National Union of Mineworkers.

Representation at conferences should be on the basis of one delegate elected from each colliery in the British coalfield. Clerical workers and tradesmen should be taken into membership of the colliery NUM branch where possible.

Those not employed at collieries should be organised in branches based on their workplace with the same basis of representation as the collieries. This would be a far more democratic system than the present area and sectional representation.

The TUC and Labour leadership must rally to the side of the National Union of Mineworkers.

The whole labour and trade union movement must be prepared to assist the NUM in every way possible to rid the coalfields of this menace. It may be the NUM suffering this attack now, but it will be dockers, engineers or railmen next if the bosses are allowed to succeed.

National combine plans fight

Bosses fear a Liverpool victory

ALONGSIDE LOCAL authority workers nationally, Liverpool City Council will also need the backing of private sector workers in Merseyside itself.

By a Militant reporter

A group of ten local authority workers—dubbing themselves the 'A Team'—have taken on the task of building that support. So far they have concentrated on the industrial estates of Speke and Garston and intend to build links with health service and transport workers. As one of the 'A-Team' put it: "Everything with a worker in it, we'll be there."

The team start off ringing around stewards to explain their campaign, then arrive at factory gates armed with papers, leaflets, posters and collecting buckets. Meetings were held for workers at the Glaxo and Bryant and May factories, and they addressed striking workers at Automotive Products (formerly Lockheed). They have leafleted other plants such as Dista, Ridgeways and Metal Box and approached stewards on the buses and at hospitals.

There has been a good response, the importance of a victory for the council is realised.

But the private sector bosses know where they

stand too; they want Liverpool beaten. If the council did make 10,000 redundancies it would make it easier for the bosses to further attack the conditions and pay of their workers. Not only because it would be yet another batch of mass unemployment with which to frighten workers into line. It would also break the bastion of trade unionism built up amongst the council workforce. On the other hand if Liverpool wins, the bosses know it will raise the morale and confidence of workers throughout Merseyside.

Meetings

This explains their panic whenever the 'A-team' arrive. When a meeting was arranged for Glaxo workers, management spent all their time telling the workforce the meeting had been cancelled. They even used the plant tannoy system to spend half an hour running down the council! At Bryant and May after an 'A-Team' visit, management hurriedly put up hand written posters all round the factory attacking the council's stand.

Private sector workers in Liverpool have an important role to play in the defence of their city council. If your workplace needs leaflets, posters or a speaker from the council campaign, contact the Central Support Unit at Liverpool town hall.

COUNCIL workers' shop stewards will meet in London this Saturday at a conference called by the National Local Authorities Co-ordinating Committee.

By Nick Toms

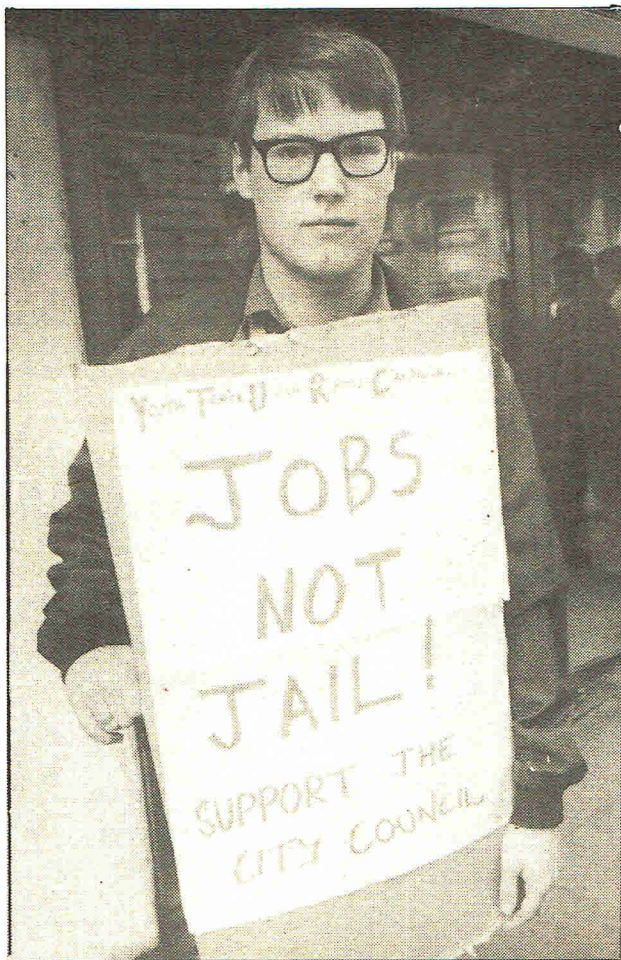
It will form a major part of the preparations to build a national campaign amongst council workers in defence of the Labour councillors in Liverpool, Edinburgh and Lambeth who have put their livelihoods and futures on the line in the fight to defend jobs and services.

This struggle does not only concern workers in the three areas under attack—its outcome will affect every worker in local government. Unless it is successful, the battle to defeat privatisation, spending cuts and rate-capping will be seriously undermined. Thousands of local authority jobs could depend on a victory in Liverpool, Edinburgh and Lambeth.

No authority can fight on their own. This can only result in councils being picked off one at a time. National unity is essential. A common threat must be resisted collectively.

The conference must give a pledge that in the event of local authority workers being forced to take strike action to defend jobs and services or in response to action being taken against councillors, solidarity action must be taken by local authority workers across the country.

A demand must be placed on the leaderships of the trade unions and the TUC that they have a duty to support any of their members who are forced into taking industrial action. The decision of this year's NALGO conference to support any



A Young Socialist pickets the auditor's office in Liverpool, 19 June. Photo: Militant

council forced "to approve deficit budgets or declare that they are unable to make a rate in order to avoid cuts in jobs and services or massive rent and rate rises" must now be translated into action. So must the pledge of support for Liverpool and Lambeth given by Jack Dromey on behalf of the TGWU.

A mass campaign must be launched from the conference to explain the situation to every local authority worker and to win their support for solidarity action. This will need to include

mass meetings of shop stewards and workers in every local authority, while NLACC must be prepared to produce hundreds of thousands of leaflets, stickers and posters publicising this struggle.

The message must be taken to every local authority worker that if Liverpool, Edinburgh and Lambeth fail, your job could be next to go. The time has come for all local authority workers to take a common stand in defence of jobs, services and communities.



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