

Militant

The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth

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Liverpool council crisis

Fight Tory lockout

LIVERPOOL today is a city fighting for its life. Because of the Tory government's ruthless determination to starve the city, vital services are grinding to a halt.

By John Pickard

The most vulnerable sections of the population, the old, the sick, and the very young are now threatened by the Tory cuts.

The 'initiative' of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities (AMA) offering to bring cash to Liverpool to balance its books has come to nothing. The ball is now firmly back in the government's court.

The council have shown the greatest flexibility and willingness to negotiate. They have discussed with Neil Kinnock, the TUC leaders and the AMA. They have opened their books to anyone who wanted to see the financial position. There is not an expert or academic in the country who does not now believe Liverpool is underfunded.

It is the Tories who have been absolutely intransigent, refusing to see the councillors or even come to Liverpool. They lash out £150 million to their pals in the City to bail out Johnson Matthey Bank but will not consider one-sixth of that figure to let Liverpool build houses and defend jobs, in an area of great need.

In collusion with the government, the banks and lending institutions have put

Liverpool on a financial dripfeed making services grind to halt. Already there are serious shortages. Schools and colleges are running out of vital teaching materials and without heating on, some are now closing. Equipment shortages now affect whole areas of essential services, including establishments for old people and handicapped children.

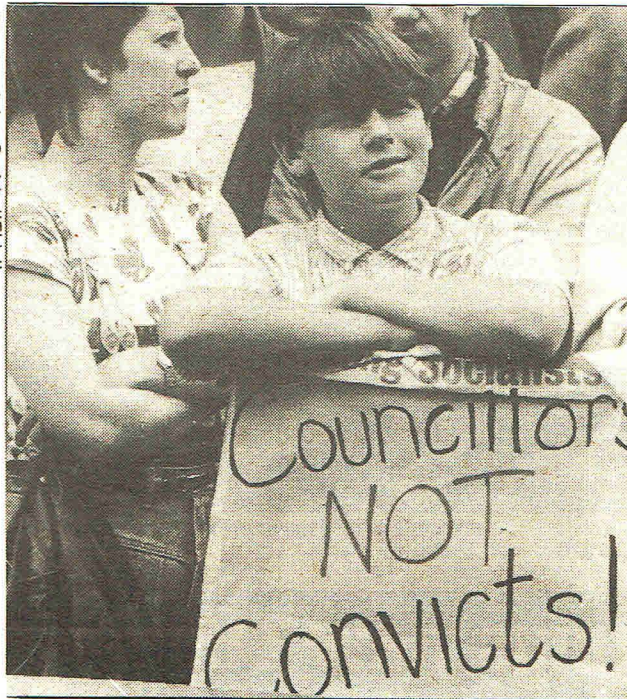
Mass campaign

The Tories are squeezing the city to force the council to carry out cuts and discredit Labour in the process. The more there are protracted and fruitless negotiations with the AMA, the longer the crisis goes on and the more the Tories hope the city slips into chaos. Their friends in the local press—screaming for the local council to sack workers by the thousands—will weep crocodile tears with every children's home that closes.

Now the city council and the Liverpool labour movement cannot allow this situation to go on. What money there is is running out fast.

The council must ensure that resources are diverted to the upkeep of essential ser-

Photo: John Smith (IFL) II



Young workers fight for a future.

vices. The council must make it clear that as a priority they will provide services for the old, the handicapped, the sick, the very young and the bereaved.

The whole labour movement and local authority work in particular must now step up the mass campaign to win more cash from the government: If the council is

unable, because of Tory cuts, to guarantee wages for the workforce, there must be an immediate call for a strike in the whole authority with emergency services run by the unions.

Mass meetings must be held in all council

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One of the massive demonstrations in support of Liverpool council.
Photo: Philip Gordon (Reflex)

Answer attacks—sell Militant

AFTER SIX years of Tory devastation, *Militant* supporters, like workers everywhere, want a Labour victory at the next election, to bring new jobs and new hope.

Unfortunately Labour leader Neil Kinnock has once again delighted the Tory press by publicly attacking the ideas of socialism! He has dismissed the programme of *Militant*, campaigning policies like a guaranteed job for young people, as "impossible."

Labour Party members and trade unionists will actively oppose any attempts to throw out the party's fighting policies. They will also be angry at threats to take action against *Militant* supporters who Kinnock claims have "no place" in the Labour Party.

We call on all our readers to join the fight for socialist policies for Labour.



Neil Kinnock.

Organise public meetings on "Are *Militant's* policies 'impossible'—an answer to Neil Kinnock".

Take *Militant* to every workplace, estate, school and college. Workers need a Labour government, but Labour needs a socialist programme to provide a real alternative to Thatcherism.

See editorial page 4, Jobs for all youth see back page.



Liverpool councillors on the 25 September demonstration.

Photo: John Harris (IFL)

Biggest finance scandal of century

LABOUR MP Brian Sedgemore has been barred from the House of Commons for alleging that Nigel Lawson, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had "attempted to pervert the course of justice" over the Johnson Matthey affair.

Shamefully Neil Kinnock and Roy Hattersley voted for the barring.

Sedgemore has been almost a lone voice in raising awkward questions about the collapse of the bank last year and the Bank of England's apparent willingness to hush up irregularities.

JMB was bailed out by the Bank of England who gave responsibility for the £248 million liabilities to us through nationalising it for £1.

Sedgemore says: "What we are witnessing is the biggest financial

scandal of the 20th century. So far we have only seen the first worms crawl out of the can."

These first worms are certainly juicy enough. Sired by a century old firm of bullion dealers, JMB began expanding its commercial lending in 1981. Three years later loans and overdrafts had leaped up nine times over, though assets in the bank to back the lending had only doubled. Nor was the money spent on re-fitting British industry. If Sedgemore's allegations prove accurate JMB must have sought out cosmopolitan crooks and hurled money at them with the reckless abandon of a drunken sailor.

When things started to go wrong, Ian Fraser, in charge of JMB's loan strategy had to invent a profit. The books are reportedly a shambles from then on. Fraser's 'book-keeping' exposed him to the danger of blackmail, according to

Sedgemore. Certainly JMB's roster of dodgy debtors grew and grew just when they could afford it least.

Abdul Shamji owed JMB £20 million. He is a friend of Norman Lamont, Norman Tebbit and Margaret Thatcher and owner of properties, hotels, leading London theatres and a controlling stake in Wembley Stadium.

Sedgemore alleges Shamji procured a flat for Ian Fraser to entertain his two mistresses.

Brian Sedgemore asks "what I cannot understand is why this luminary of the Conservative Party firmament is not in a remand prison awaiting committal for trial for fraud. I have always understood that Victorian values were about respect for family life and fear of God. According to Mr Abdul Shamji they are about bribery, corruption, fraud and tarts

for bankers."

The biggest debtor of JMB is Mahmud Sipra who is under investigation for fraud in the USA (where a district judge accused him of "old fashioned piracy on the high seas and overwhelming greed"), in Iraq and Iran: Sipra owed JMB some \$70 million.

The Bank of England wanted as much of JMB's money back as they could. Brian Sedgemore believes they resorted to fraud by predating a letter authorising the removal of funds from Sipra's labyrinth of companies.

If Sedgemore is right the highest echelons of the establishment have been sucked into a cesspit of fraud. He quotes another JMB borrower Mr Deswani (who paid Ian Fraser off after his sudden departure from JMB with a job in his finance house) as saying "a couple of call

girls at a night club, a few Christmas presents, don't make bribery, everyone in banking does it."

Brian Sedgemore and Dennis Skinner have battled long to open this scandal out. The powers that be have opposed and obstructed them at every turn, hence Sedgemore's outburst against Lawson.

When a previous scandal, over the Lonrho company broke in 1973, the then Prime Minister, Edward Heath, called it the "unacceptable face of capitalism". If the allegations about JMB are correct, they would be seen as the real face of big finance in today's dying capitalism, with speculation and rip off the quickest way of getting very, very rich.

By Mick Brooks

Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (Report)



Over four thousand marched from Brixton to Hyde Park against police treatment of blacks. Police lined the route and more waited in vans but remained stoney-faced to the angry slogans of 'police murderers' and 'justice for blacks'.

Kilroy-Silk scorns democratic procedure

A BARRAGE of biased media reports have backed up Merseyside MP Robert Kilroy-Silk as he tried to avoid going through the selection process in Knowsley North Labour Party.

Kilroy-Silk has threatened to stand against Liverpool City Councillor Tony Mulhearn should the party choose Mulhearn as their parliamentary candidate. Kilroy-Silk is currently canvassing in the constituency to see if local people would support him. He has also called for the Knowsley North party to be disbanded and wants *Militant* supporters expelled.

The press and Kilroy-Silk have complained about the TGWU delegates to the party's general committee (which selects the parliamentary candidate on 10 December). Yet the new TGWU delegates were already Labour Party members, and were democratically elected to the committee as is their right.

Right-wing

What prompted their involvement was the sudden influx of right wing delegations to the party when the selection process was first announced—20 new delegations appeared, 15 of them from the electricians' union, the EETPU. There was concern that three of the EETPU branches are outside the area. There are delegates from Contract Telecoms and STC Telecoms, based in the south east, and GEC Telecoms, which covers the union's Area 6, the West Midlands.

Knowsley North party members are upset that outsiders are interfering in the party's affairs—in particular Frank Field, MP for Birkenhead, who says he aims to get 50 MPs to canvass for Kilroy-Silk if he stands against the official Labour Party candidate. It is doubtful if he would get this support, as under party rules any Labour Party member who campaigns against the official candidate faces expulsion.



Tony Mulhearn President of Liverpool District Labour Party is standing for nomination as parliamentary candidate for Knowsley North. Sitting MP Robert Kilroy-Silk has threatened to stand as an independent candidate if Mulhearn is selected.

Neil Kinnock has stepped in, describing Kilroy-Silk as "by any standards a first-rate MP". The Knowsley North party think otherwise—they have had major disagreements with Kilroy-Silk over the miners' strike, the struggle by Liverpool City Council, and his failure to back Tony Benn in the deputy leadership elections in 1981.

While Kilroy-Silk and the Tory press talk about a 'Militant plot' in Knowsley North, the party in fact holds a broad spectrum of left wing views. Kilroy-Silk not only says he will stand against a *Militant* supporter if one is selected, but even anyone 'Militant supports'. While there is considerable support for Tony Mulhearn, party members interpret this as meaning Kilroy-Silk would even stand against the third candidate in the selection contest, Keva Combes, leader of Merseyside County Council, should he be chosen.

Whatever the result, party members are infuriated by Kilroy-Silk's attempts to split the party and overturn their democratic right to select the candidate of their choice.

By a Militant reporter

Purge on Militant brings new support

THE TORY Fleet Street press are all agreed that Militant supporters must be expelled from the Labour Party.

The national press are the mouthpiece of British capitalism. Their hysteria displays the real source of the witch-hunt against *Militant*—the Tories and big business.

They know that a divisive purge of *Militant* supporters followed by rest of the left would spoil Labour's chances at the next election. But if Labour does win the next election, the Kinnock leadership will be under enormous pressure from below for change. The socialist policies of *Militant* could be a pole of attraction to the ranks of the labour movement if a Labour government tried to offload the crisis of British capitalism onto the shoulders of the working class.

Outrageous

It is outrageous that the leadership, the right wing and some of the so-called left of the Labour Party are following the capitalists'

lead. They are using organisational measures against *Militant* supporters, and have supported localised witch-hunts in parties where the right wing still retain control.

The attacks against *Militant*, like the attacks on Liverpool City Council and the NUM, are being fiercely resisted by the ranks of the movement. There is a powerful urge for unity within Labour's ranks and for a Labour victory against the Tory, Liberal, and SDP enemy. But there is also a determination to resist any attempt to purge the Marxists from the Labour Party as a prelude to abandoning all the gains on policy and programme which the left has fought for in the past five years.

It is significant that opposition to the witch-hunt is coming mainly from the working class and trade union members of the party.

In Stevenage 10 *Militant* supporters face expulsion. Two local trade unions, APEX and the Metal Mechanics, were the first to protest at the threat, while the convenor of the town's biggest factory and the con-



Part of Militant's rally in the Albert Hall.

venor at the largest hospital have condemned the action. 700 people have signed a petition against the expulsions.

Rather than frightening workers away from *Militant* the witch-hunt in Stevenage has spurred on support for its ideas. Last week a *Militant* supporter was elected convenor at the GW Kings factory while the Metal Mechanics' branch have nominated their delegate—who is one of those facing expulsion—for national president of the union, saying: "If he is to be expelled let them expel the national president".

● In a new witch-hunt in Cheshire, three Labour Party members, Peter Naylor, Karon Murphy and local councillor Winnie Murphy are under 'investigation' by the Eddisbury Labour Party executive. Their crime was to participate in a *Militant* public meeting in support of Liverpool City Council. All three are leading activists from the Winsford Branch of the party, which covers a solid working class overspill town in what is a mainly middle-class constituency.

By a Militant reporter

Photo: John Woulfe



Day of action against privatisation of British Gas in Manchester.

Rich thrive in Tory Britain

THE GULF between the wealthy world of the Tory ministers and their class and the plight of the four million on the dole was summed up last week in the Queen's speech. She did not even mention the word 'unemployment'. It has become a 'non-problem'.

In Thatcher's dream world "production is at an all-time high", "new jobs have been created at a faster rate in Britain over the last two years than at any time since 1973" and "the government has done more to train young people than any other in history".

The real world is very different. The House of Lords Select Committee on Overseas Trade, chaired by the Tory Lord Aldington has exposed the perilous state of the British capitalist economy, especially in manufacturing through which wealth is created.

Production

In contrast to all its competitors, Britain's level of production is still below the level of 1974.

A surplus in trade in manufactured goods of £5 billion has turned into a deficit of £4 billion. Whole industries have been ruined and regions turned into industrial deserts.

It is not only the unemployed and the families who are suffering. Among those working, the distribution of wealth has become even more grossly unequal.

In 1980 the poorest tenth of male workers earned 60 per cent of the average male wage while the richest tenth earned 147 per cent. Now the poorest tenth earn 55 per cent and the richest earn 154 per cent.

Since 1979, while prices have risen by 75 per cent, earnings of the bottom tenth has risen by only 70 per cent and those of the top tenth by 101 per cent.

Meanwhile more profitable morsels of the nationalised industries are to be sold off to speculators. British Gas is to be 'privatised'.

British Airways is due to follow. With the tax cuts these sales are intended to finance, further riches will be poured into the pockets of those already growing fat in Tory Britain.

Thatcher's answer to "the very severe problems of the inner city areas" was "a strengthening of our traditional sources of discipline and authority, the family, the church, the schools, responsible community and civic leadership and support for the police".

Even for the Tories like Lord Stockton, Thatcher's brutal approach was too much to stomach. They look back to the days of capitalist boom when Tory governments could afford to hand out a few crumbs to the workers and pretend that we were all 'one nation'.

But Thatcher did not create class divisions within society. In periods of capitalist crisis they can no longer be disguised by the cosmetic policies advised by Stockton. What Thatcher is doing is merely stating in the most brazen fashion what all her class always say privately.

The Tory 'wets' would not change any of the substance of the policy if they were in control.

It is now up to the Labour leaders to stand up for the working class in just the same way that Thatcher does for hers. Instead of echoing the Tory propaganda on 'law and order' like last week's Labour Party broadcast, and watering down policies of public ownership like Roy Hattersley has been doing, there has never been a greater need to restate the fundamental case for socialism.

Requirements

Capitalism cannot provide even the most modest requirements of working people—a secure job for school leavers, a decent minimum wage for all workers, adequate education and health care for all and a pension which allows a full life for the retired.

The alternative is a democratically planned society, where the big monopolies which dominate the economy and which dictate to the Tories are brought under democratic workers' control and management and the abundant resources of labour, plant and materials are exploited for the needs of the whole of society and not just the profits of a privileged elite.

By Pat Craven

Defend Militant with cash

EARLY IN 1983 this paper publicised the case of low-paid T&GWU members in dispute with Glasgow Car Collections Ltd. Paid on a basic rate of £1.43 an hour, they had to work excessive overtime to make ends meet (and some had to claim Family Income Supplement).

Within days, *Militant* was served with High Court libel writs by the firm's boss—James White, right-wing Labour MP for Glasgow Pollok.

We defended our facts as correct, through lengthy—and expensive—"pleadings", we defended as entirely justified our criticism of White's conduct was that of a hard-line boss, not a representative of working people.

We have not retracted the facts we published. Nor have we apologised to White. Our report was correct and we had a duty to support the workers involved.

Yet as our readers know and as was reported in *The Times* (8 November), we had to settle the case on the basis of a payment to White. Why?

Workers involved were willing to give evidence for us. Our lawyers said we had a very strong case. But we came up against the class bias of the legal

system—rooted in inequalities of wealth.

To put our defence lawyers into court we would have had to put up £20,000 (on top of the £6,000 already spent on preparing our case). Moreover, these sums would only have been a part of the cost of a full trial.

When we could not be sure of winning—our lawyers felt they had to warn us against the likely political bias of the judge!—we had seriously to consider a pre-trial settlement when we were approached by White's solicitors.

Faced with this legal trap, we had little choice but to offer White a payment—legal "blood money"—for a final settlement. As the statement read out in court made quite clear however, we refused to apologise.

White regards our payment as "damages". But the sum involved, which we are not allowed to reveal, will cover only a fraction of his costs.

White has lost heavily on the case. Nevertheless *Militant* has been penalised for printing the truth!

Unless this is to cut into our general income, every penny of which is needed for current campaigns, we have to

collect extra cash to cover the cost of this case.

The issue is not just James White's record as a boss—but *Militant's* right to publish the workers' cause. Wherever the issue has been raised in trade unions, Labour Parties, and other labour movement organisations, this has been readily grasped.

Some excellent examples of support to the *Militant* Defence Fund received this week, with thanks, are TGWU 6/51 Oldham £25, Coventry SE CLP £50, a collection at Hayes CLP £11.60, Kings Ward Hackney South CLP £10, G Taylor £5, collections in Lothian £31.75 and £40 from Sheffield.

Now we have only a month to find the cash to settle outstanding legal costs. We urge all readers who have not already done so to raise the issue in their organisations.

Don't let *Militant's* resources be undermined. Support the paper that supports workers in struggle. Send cash now to: *Militant* Defence Fund, 5 Cremer House, Deptford Church Street, London SE8 4SB.



The South West London Liverpool Support Group was set-up at a joint meeting of Tooting LPYS and Wandsworth council JSSC. It was addressed of Lambeth council leader Ted Knight (left), Mike French (Wandsworth JSSC), Mark Douglas (Tooting LPYS) and Liverpool council shop steward John Dunne (right).

Photo: Mick Carroll

Majority supports council's stand

THE PEOPLE of the West Derby area of Liverpool support the city council's stand. A mass canvass on Sunday showed 84 per cent backing despite all the lies of the local and national press.

From Nottingham, Coventry and all over the Midlands, socialists came up to help in explaining Liverpool's fight to West Derby people. Over the weekend over 2,000 homes were visited. Over 200 *Militants* were sold on the doorstep and on the streets and 70 *Mersey Militants* were sold.

Over 40 people expressed an interest in joining the Labour Party and nine said they wanted to join the LPYS. All through the weekend we heard comments like: "What we need is a revolution, we need it this afternoon, we can't wait any longer!". "The Stonefrost Report, that is a load of rubbish". "We'll support them all the way".

The police were determined not to be left out. Plain clothes police stopped canvassers—and asked to see their Labour Party cards!

The 84 per cent support not only defied the lies of the kept Tory press but the attacks by Neil Kinnock in the *Daily Post* and *Liverpool Echo*. Many people said the council should get more propaganda of its own out to answer the Tory lies. Comrades from outside Liverpool remarked on the people's awareness of the situation and their readiness to discuss politics.

It was a great morale booster convincing everybody that when the crunch comes the support will be there. The Tories can be beaten.

By a Militant reporter

Workers support Liverpool

BRADFORD building workers decided to support Liverpool council at a recent meeting. 136 branch of UCATT passed a resolution saying: "Thousands of Liverpudlians are now working, building houses and improving social conditions in Liverpool much against the wishes of the Tory government who apparently prefer to increase unemployment and misery for the working classes."

"We welcome the information that Liverpool UCATT members actively support the fight against reactionary Tory policies." (T Hare, President Bradford UCATT 136 branch)

pool councillors' fight and the mess left by the previous Tory Liberal council.

Leslie Smirke (Liverpool GMBATU) said that capitalisation was no easy option and would inevitably lead to job losses.

John Dunn (North East Derbyshire councillor and NUM) was himself surcharged and disqualified from office after taking a stand in Clay Cross in the early '70s.

He said too many Labour councils are making cuts for the Tories instead of campaigning among council employees for support for a fightback. The collection raised £136 and further meetings are planned. (Paul Durrant, Chesterfield CLP)

meeting. Out of 60 delegates present, only three voted against. (Alan Walton)

LEICESTER CITY National Union of Teachers, the eighth largest branch in the country, gave its full backing to Liverpool council.

A joint meeting between Mid-Leicestershire and City of Leicester heard Ian Morris of the Liverpool Campaign Unit describe the council's case. Liverpool NUT had been invited to send a speaker but no-one turned up. Not one teacher at the meeting opposed the stand of the council and they were unanimous in their condemnation of the cowardice of Liverpool NUT and the national leadership of the NUT for taking Liverpool council to court. (Don Finlay, Leicester teacher)

One hundred people turned up for the first meeting of the Liverpool Defence Committee in **CHESTERFIELD**. Terry Fields MP described the history of the Liver-

HEMSWORTH Labour Party members passed a resolution backing Liverpool council at their October management committee

Kinnock answered

UNDER THE auspices of the right wing Fabian Society, at a ticket-only meeting from which *Militant* reporters were barred, Neil Kinnock has made another attack on this paper and its supporters. Although this speech was presented as a 'political' answer to Marxist ideas, he made it quite clear that he is fully in favour of organisational moves to expel Marxists from the Labour Party. These attempts will be resisted by the overwhelming majority of the party rank and file, who are determined to concentrate on fighting the Tory enemy and not be diverted into internal witch-hunts.

Party members will welcome however a political debate on the ideas of the Marxists, to establish who has the superior programme to defeat the Tories and eradicate the social evils of capitalist society.

Militant rejects categorically the slur that it is 'dishonest'. For 21 years it has told the truth about the brutal realities of life under capitalism. While always throwing its full support behind the Labour Party in every election, it has never tried to hide from the workers the fact that in a society in which wealth and power in concentrated into the hands of a minority and financial monopolies, lasting reforms are impossible.

For Labour governments to carry out the promises of reform on which they are elected, those monopolies have to be taken over and placed under the democratic control and management of the workers, with compensation based on need. Only that way can the abundant resources of labour, factories, land and materials be used to create

wealth, to finance decent pensions, adequate education and health services and the elimination of poverty.

Labour governments in the past have failed, and socialist governments today in France, Spain and Greece are failing to achieve any of these reforms because they are trying to work within the framework of a capitalist economy which demands the very opposite—lower wages and less public spending on welfare, in order to boost the profits of big business. Even the most minor reforms have provoked a 'strike of capital', through which the monopolies blackmail left-wing governments into reversing their election pledges.

Labour leaders in the past pretended that they could overcome these problems by managing capitalism more efficiently than the capitalists' own political representatives. The Wilson and Callaghan governments believed that through state subsidies and 'planning agreements', private monopolies could be made to serve the interests of the workers. The reality was that millions of pounds of tax-payers' money was swallowed up and then big business made exactly the same investment decisions as they would have in any case, closing factories, laying-off workers, moving to wherever they could make the biggest profit.

Now Kinnock is admitting that since the next Labour government will come to power in a capitalist society, ravaged by the policies of Thatcher, the abolition of unemployment will be impossible. To put forward even the modest proposals of *Militant* for a guaranteed job for those leaving YTS schemes or a 35-hour week is 'impossibilist' because no Labour government could implement them.

Instead of using the problems caused by capitalism to campaign within the party for the implementation of

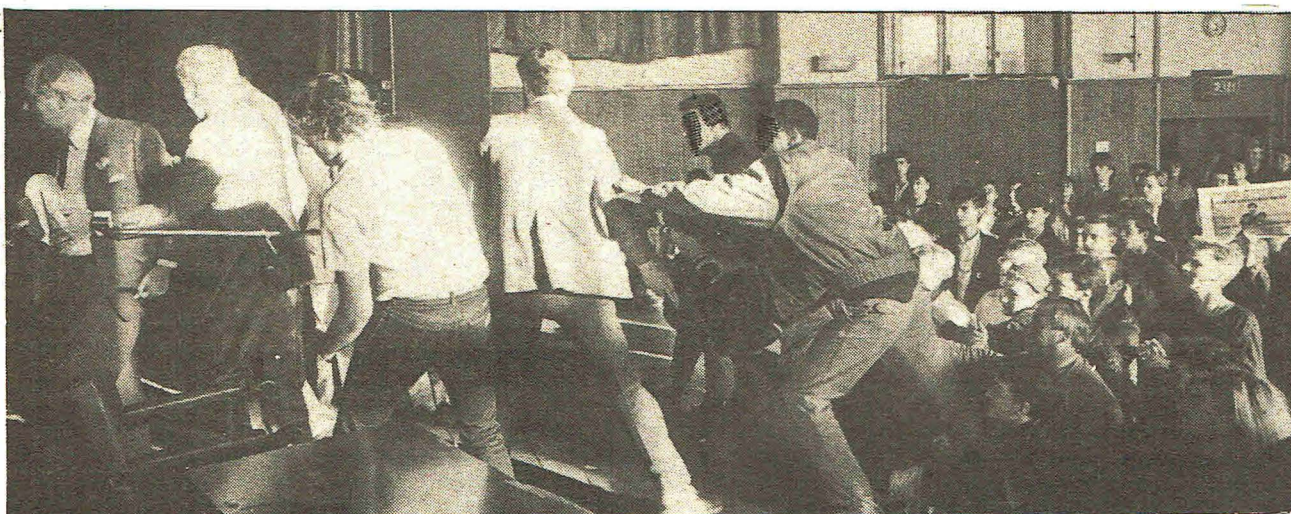
Clause IV, Part 4 of the party constitution, to replace capitalism with a democratically planned socialist society, Kinnock has the 'fantasy' that some abstract form of 'socialism' can be achieved within the confines of crisis-ridden capitalism. But workers are not looking for abstract concepts of 'socialism'. They vote Labour for jobs, better living standards and all the social benefits for which the party stands. If all these are 'unachievable demands', which will be 'impossible' to obtain, then nothing is left. Mass support for Labour is only possible when the party offers concrete improvements. The growing support for Labour in Liverpool, where the city council have built houses and created jobs is proof of this.

Militant's programme for a 35-hour week, a guaranteed job for YTS leavers, a crash programme of public works is perfectly achievable; if campaigned for by the whole party it would inspire workers to turn to Labour in their millions. But it is only achievable on a socialist basis. That has to be spelled out on the doorsteps and the workplaces, so that a mass movement can be built up around this programme to back up a Labour government carrying it out.

Kinnock's attack will lead more workers to inquire about and become supporters of *Militant's* ideas. Any attempts at a purge will be met with the overwhelming opposition of the ranks. But even if some are expelled, as were the five members of the editorial board two years ago, nothing will ever separate Marxism from the Labour Party. Ideas can never be witch-hunted out. As the crisis of capitalist society deepens, the relevance and practicality of Marxist ideas will become evident to wider and wider layers. These ideas will become the programme of the whole labour and trade union movement and armed with that programme, the British working class will proceed to carry through the socialist transformation of society.

MP hits back at Tory race lies

Photo: John Smith (FL)



Angry students react to Tory minister David Waddington's inflammatory views on immigration at a meeting at Manchester University. There must be an organised response by the whole labour movement to defeat racist immigration laws and practices.

LABOUR MP's were outraged by remarks made in parliament by Home Office minister David Waddington. He accused them of "abusing the right to make representations" in cases where visitors to the UK were refused entry by Immigration Officials.

He continued with such inflammatory statements as: "recently, a large number of young men have been arriving at Heathrow from Bangladesh in most suspicious circumstances".

The racist undertones of his remarks have been much appreciated by the extreme right and the gutter press, yet his own Home Office figures prove that they have absolutely no foundation.

In 1984, out of a total of 24,400 visitors from Bangladesh, 432 were refused entry to the UK. The corresponding figures for visitors from Eastern Europe (including the USSR) is 428 refusals out of 91,300. In other words, a Bangladeshi was four times more likely to be refused entry than someone from the Eastern Bloc.

Imagine a British worker paying £800 out of hard earned savings for a short holiday in the Far East, and that on arrival at the port of destination be-

ing asked such questions by officials as: "How did you get the money to travel?" "How many of your family back home are unemployed?" "You say that your cousin here is a dockworker, but he tells us he's an engineer, one of you therefore is not telling the truth".

Even with documentary proof that you are holding down a regular job in your home country, and that you have a family to provide for, entry may still be refused.

Reactionary

Waddington also neglected to mention Tory cuts in the Immigration Service staffing levels—which of course enables drug traffickers to abuse the system with greater ease than ordinary workers and peasants from Asia.

There are increasing incidences of visitors having their passports confiscated at the port of entry.

I am currently dealing with a case in which a visitor, who only wanted to stay in this country for a few months was refused leave to enter but granted temporary admission while my representations of his behalf were considered. Due to the backlog of work that had built up, the Home Of-

fice had not yet considered his case before the visitor wanted to return home at the end of the holiday. However, he couldn't leave because the Home Office were still holding his passport.

Had I not made representations in the first place, this person would have been sent back straight on arrival. The fact that he had been refused would have been recorded on his file, and it would have been very difficult for an entry visa on subsequent occasions. As it actually turned out, he was a genuine visitor who was unable to go home when he wanted to because of delays by the Home Office. Who is abusing the system now?

Coming soon after the riots, Waddington's remarks show that the Tories will stoop to the lowest to foster racialism and division within the working class and to justify further repressive measures against foreign workers wishing to visit their relatives in Britain. The Labour Party must expose the racist nature of the immigration laws and guarantee their abolition when next elected to power.

By Dave Nellist MP

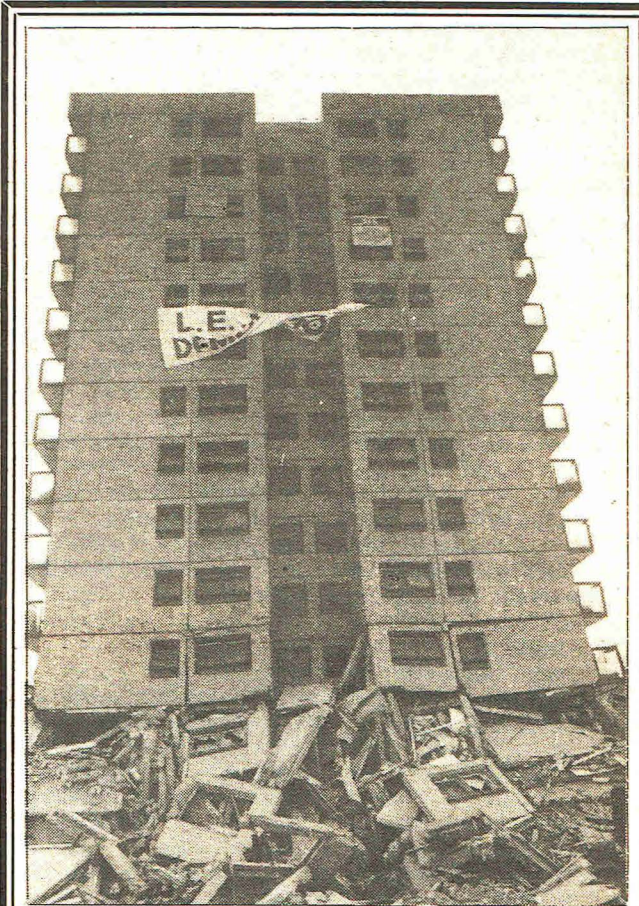


Photo: Dave Sinclair

"THE LEANING tower of Hackney", Northaird Point, was built by private contractors, and knocked down by private contractors, both unsuccessfully. Damp and other problems associated with high-rise blocks caused Hackney Council to pull the flats down, only 18 years after their construction. Now the demolition firm have had to resort to the traditional ball and chain. Unfortunately there are thousands of other Hackney tenants living in high-rise blocks or decaying tenements, many with children, who would welcome their estate being knocked down if new houses or maisonettes were available.

NF march opposed

ELEVEN PEOPLE were arrested at a counter-demonstration against fascists who held a march to the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday. With over 600 fascists present, it was the largest Nazi gathering for some time. However, this

was a joint march by the National Front and the British National Party along with the numerous minuscule Nazi sectlets. Hundreds joined the counter-demonstrations, the first main activity organised by the newly formed Anti Fascist Action.

Police curb anti-fascist protest

THREE LABOUR Party members were arrested and a *Militant* supporter was held for questioning by police while taking part in a peaceful demonstration of 40 against a handful of fascists in Brick Lane, East London.

The *Militant* supporter

was picked up on his way to Brick Lane and was released after questioning at his home so that he could not take part in the demonstration.

Fascists from the NF and the BNP turn up regularly to sell papers in Brick Lane which is a predominately Asian area. Further anti-fascist activities are planned

for the next three Sundays and will start from 10 am onwards. All Labour Party and young socialist members are urged to attend.

8,000 leaflets and 1,000 LPYS posters have been distributed so far in the campaign and have received a good response from young Asians.

attacks.

Donations to the campaign are welcome. Please send to: Bow and Poplar LPYS, c/o Labour Party Rooms, East India Dock Road, London E14.

By Dave Farrar

Fascists allowed to meet

TORIES AND Liberals on Stockport council this week combined to approve a National Front meeting being held on council property. Before the vote a Jewish Tory councillor made an impassioned speech against fascism, receiving applause from the packed public gallery. Yet in the vote this

Tory abstained rather than vote against his fellow members. It will be left to the labour movement to oppose the fascists. A counter-demonstration has been called against the NF meeting, assembling on 16 November at 11am at the Bear Pit, Mersey Square, Stockport.

London NUPE opposes purge

A SECOND National Union of Public Employees divisional conference has voted to oppose the union's national conference decision in favour of a purge of *Militant* supporters.

At the London divisional conference last weekend, two resolutions opposed to the national decision were passed by a majority of two to one, despite moves by the divisional council to keep them

off the agenda.

The Special Health Authority branch resolution called for the London division to disassociate itself from any witch-hunting of working class activists and called upon the National Executive "to concentrate its efforts on a united fightback against privatisation rather than attack its own ranks."

It instructed NUPE delegates to local

Labour Parties to take no action against *Militant* supporters. The other resolution, from the GLC NUPE branch, instructed NUPE's delegates "to concentrate on fighting the Tories and the employers rather than internal purge."

Following a similar vote at the South East divisional conference, the London decision has proved that when the issue of attacks on the rights of *Militant* sup-

porters is taken to the rank and file, there is massive opposition to the leadership's bid to launch a purge. The fightback will be continued throughout the country until the national decision is reversed next year.

By Nick Toms

Tin miners face ruin as market collapses

THOUSANDS OF tin miners throughout the world face unemployment and even starvation following the crisis which has hit the international tin market.

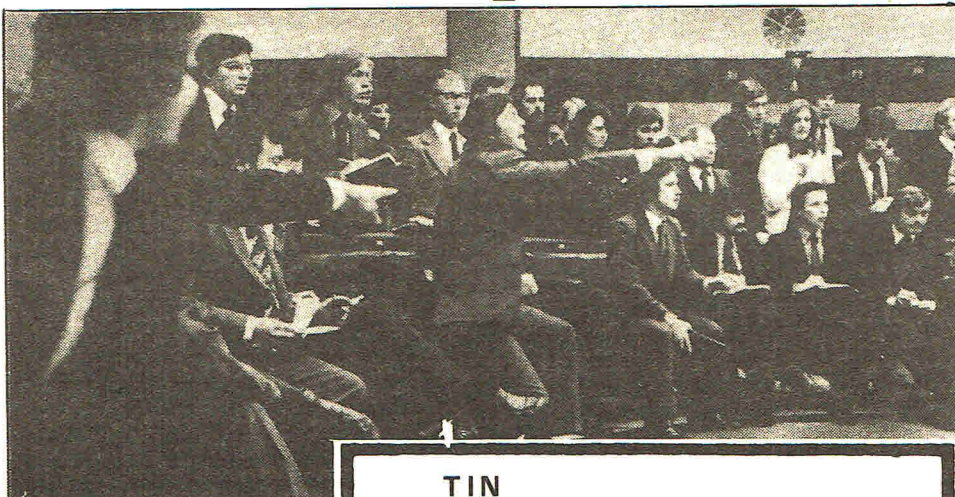
By Pat Craven

Banks stand to lose millions of pounds and other metal industries could be driven into a similar crisis.

The International Tin Council (ITC), run by 23 governments of both tin-producing and tin-consuming countries have been unable to keep up the price on the world market. For thirty years it has kept the price of tin high, to boost the profits of both the producing companies and the dealers who buy and sell 'futures'—tin that has not yet been mined, but which changes hands at a profit.

Since 1981, however, producers outside the ITC, especially Brazil and China, have entered the market, leading to an increase in world production at a faster rate than world demand. Hence the official ITC price was getting further away from the price which would be paid in uncontrolled competition.

Attempts to limit production in the ITC countries, the main ones being Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand were to no avail. The only way the prices could be maintained was by the ITC buying up its own produce and building a 'tin mountain' of 'buffer stocks'. These amount to 62,000 tonnes, at a cost of £600 million. A further 40,000 tonnes are held at mines and smelters. But having already borrowed hundreds of millions from banks and other metal



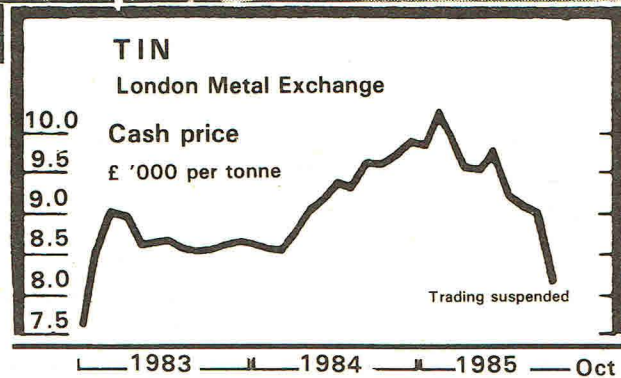
The London Metal Exchange—stopped dealing in tin

brokers on the London Metal Exchanges (LME), the ITC has now run out of money.

With many of its brokers facing bankruptcy as a result, the LME has stopped all further dealing in tin while they try to sort out a solution. But commodity markets cannot stay closed. As *The Economist* puts it: "They are like bicycles: They go forward or fall over". A fall is the more likely. Already the price of tin has dropped from £9,500 per tonne to £8,140 and could now go as low as £4,000. Already tin is being traded unofficially at as low as £6,800 a tonne.

Therefore there is no way that the ITC is likely to find the money to repay its debts which could total £600-1000 million. Only massive injections of money from governments or state banks could save the ITC's creditors from major losses and bankruptcies.

It was to prevent just such a collapse on the LME that the Bank of England bailed out Johnson Matthey Bankers, whose parent company is a major dealer in the gold market. Will the Tory



government, which refuses to pay £30 million to Liverpool City Council, once again hand out many times that amount to save the speculators who have squandered millions?

Whether the governments and banks mount a rescue operation, or whether they let the market collapse, the main victims will be the miners in some of the world's poorest countries.

Closure threat

In Malaysia, 17,000 jobs are threatened; the government has warned that only 22 out of 400 mines could survive a price crash. Tin, however amounts to only three per cent of Malaysia's export earnings.

Much harder hit will be Bolivia, where tin constitutes 40 per cent of its export ear-

nings. President Hernan Siles Zuazo has described the effect of a price crash as 'disastrous'.

British workers will not be unscathed either. The Cornish tin mines could become totally uneconomic and the industry could collapse.

The tin crisis illustrates perfectly the anarchy and brutality of the capitalist system. Millions change hands as dealers gamble on the produce of low-paid miners.

Meanwhile the workers in the tin consuming countries will see negligible benefits from a fall in price. That will go into making bigger profits for the companies which use it in their products. And if the government and the Bank of England do bail out the ITC, it will be the workers who again foot the bill, in higher taxes.

Wolverhampton pupils strike

AT LEAST 15 schools were involved in a student strike movement which swept Wolverhampton.

The strike started when students walked out of two schools, mainly in protest against the teachers' strike. But the intervention of School Student Union members soon convinced the majority of strikers to support the teachers and the programme of the School Students Union.

We walked around the town for two and a half hours explaining the issues behind the teachers' action. Placards were altered from 'CATS—Campaign Against Teachers' Strike' to 'Campaign Against Tories'. The following evening the strike leaders were interviewed on regional television and made it clear they now supported the teachers.

By the second day at least 15 schools in the area had joined the strike, despite attempts to keep them in school. One headmaster even locked the gates to contain pupils.

The police have shown which side they are on. A group of strike supporters were attacked by a gang of pupils from the local grammar school—the one school where the majority remains anti-teacher. The police stood and watched the at-

tack. They then took strikers names and addresses. In another incident police attacked a peaceful demonstration of strike supporters, arbitrarily picking out two black and Asian students and dragging them into police cars.

Although many of the students have now returned to school there is a fighting mood which must be channelled constructively. We have set up an informal steering committee to build branches of the school students' union in every area. Many of the students involved in the committee have agreed to join the Labour Party Young Socialists. We have already produced and distributed thousands of leaflets explaining the need for a union.

We are now running a campaign on the right to organise and will be approaching representatives of the main teaching unions for financial and practical support. We have already held several successful school-gate meetings.

By Dawn Maguire
(SSU National Committee member)

and Hannah Sell
(Chair Wolverhampton SSU steering committee)

College merger means massive job losses

STUDENTS AND workers in Staffordshire are mobilising to prevent the proposed merger between North Staffordshire Polytechnic and Keele University.

Although not yet formally agreed, the merger is believed by trade union officials to be imminent. It would involve the complete shut-down of the Stafford site of the Polytechnic, forcing students to move to the Stoke and Keele sites, which would be known as the University of North Staffordshire.

It would be a huge educational cut by the Tory government, causing a devastating drop in both educational opportunities and the jobs of clerical, manual, catering and lecturing staff. "We are talking of thousands of jobs," said Peter Bruce, secretary of the Stafford and District branch of NUPE and the union's National Committee for the West Midlands.

Many part-time students

would have to quit, with Higher National Diploma courses scrapped, as they are only available at a Polytechnic. The number of students taken on for degree courses would also have to be cut dramatically.

Already the conditions students face in Stafford are diabolical. Many leave their courses because the grants and accommodation are so poor. Many live in condemned or extortionately priced housing. Many become depressed, like the first-year student who committed suicide last Sunday.

The Polytechnic Labour Club took the initiative of organising a demonstration in Stafford which was a huge success, mobilising students who had never been on a demonstration before in their lives. We will not stop campaigning until the merger is dropped completely.

By Gary Davison
(Secretary of North Staffs Polytechnic Labour Club)

Good news for young socialists

RECENTLY THE Labour Party Young Socialists have been getting some useful publicity in the press.

The London LPYS annual debate with the Young Tories and Liberals in Parliament got a very favourable write-up in the *New Musical Express*.

In *Spark* the magazine of International Youth Year, in an article on political parties' youth sections, it stated: "with over 570 branches, the LPYS are one of the largest youth sections...their catchy style has proved very successful. The number of local branches has risen from 341

in 1977 to 573 this year."

Later in the same magazine there is an article by Billy Bragg in which he expresses his view that songs and socialism do mix. He goes on: "I don't want to be an MP. Politics is boring. Labour Party branch meetings are boring".

Dynamic

However he does say that young people coming into the Labour Party will change it. He adds "...I hope that their influx will change attitudes and the way people look at their politics. The

great thing about the Young Socialists is that they are very dynamic. They present their ideas in a way that attracts a lot of people."

The recently formed 'Red Wedge', a collection of pop stars, media people etc, sympathetic to the labour movement is organising a major tour in January.

As well as evening concerts with Paul Weller, Billy Bragg and others, there will be local day-time activity. The idea is to involve local groups and young people, not just the 'big stars' at the evening concerts.

The LPYS National Com-

mittee members are currently fixing up venues and arranging activities. For example the Scottish LPYS are handing in a petition on drugs to the Scottish Office the day the tour comes to Edinburgh. Any young socialists who want to get involved in the tours' daytime activities should contact their National Committee Member.

● RED WEDGE Tour dates: Sat 25 Jan, Manchester; 26 Jan, Cardiff; 27 Jan, Birmingham; 28 Jan, Leicester; 29 Jan, Bradford; 30 Jan, Edinburgh; 31 Jan, Newcastle.

Tories spew out racist myth

THE PAST few months have seen an increasing preparedness of the Tory leadership and their cohorts to use the weapon of racism.

By Linda Douglas

Ray Honeyford, the Bradford headmaster (see article), was invited by Thatcher to No 10 Downing Street. It was seen as a calculated move to give backing to the efforts of this character to sow division between Asian, black and white parents and school students.

Tory minister David Waddington recently in parliament accused Labour MPs of 'helping immigrants enter the country'.

Last week leading Tory MP Nicholas Winterton gave backing to arch racist Enoch Powell and called for voluntary repatriation, saying 'ethnic minorities' were "essentially incompatible" with society and that the inner city riots were "partly due" to this.

On cue, the Tory press have taken their lead, with whole page features resurrecting the old racist myths—'blacks are to blame for unemployment, violence, falling standards in education etc'.

Disaster

As their support continues to evaporate, so the Tories want to divert attention from their disastrous economic policies. Mass unemployment, slum housing and cutbacks are the result of the Tories' profit-first policies; it is not the fault of black and Asian workers who make up just four per cent of the population, facing discrimination and harassment, with little economic or social power.

While the Tories pour out their racist propaganda, it is black and Asian workers who have picked up the tab on the streets. There has been a horrifying increase in racist attacks, stabbings, beatings and fire bombings over the past year.

While the Tories and press have fuelled the fires of racism, a government report on 'race' issued last week answered their own propaganda. The report graphically shows the discrimination suffered by black and Asian workers.

The unemployment rate of white males with O levels is nine per cent, which is appalling enough. Yet amongst black and Asian workers with equal qualifications it is 25 per cent and 18 per cent respectively.

There is a worse situation

in housing. The report explains that a staggering 50 per cent of Asians have experiences of being discriminated against in obtaining accommodation.

The report also shows that the Tory myth that black and Asian workers are at the "bottom of the pile" because they are 'inferior' is nonsense. It shows that of West Indians recruited to come and work in Britain, 50 per cent of males and 25 per cent of women were skilled workers. Yet they were disproportionately forced into low paid, unskilled jobs.

For the capitalist class, immigration has a dual role. In a time of boom immigrant workers are a ready source of cheap labour for the bosses to carry out unpopular low paid jobs. Yet as the system moves into a slump, so immigrant workers are made the scapegoats. The British ruling class have used this trick before against the Jewish immigrants of the 1930's, the Irish workers at the turn of the century, and now against black and Asian workers.

However, the saner elements of the capitalist class are fearful of the consequences of such cheap political propaganda, especially in a country like Britain with a strong trade union movement. If these communities are continually isolated and persecuted they will move rapidly to revolutionary ideas: ideas that will spread amongst all the workers with whom black and Asians share the dole queues, slums and low living standards.

Rather this wing of the capitalist class want to build up a black and Asian middle class—on the US model—to give the illusion there is a way out. The *Financial Times* on October 17 for example, points with alarm that there are only 17 black or Asian Fleet Street journalists, four black headmasters, no black judges, only one black bishop, only 700 non-white policemen out of a force of 115,000 and no black members of the CBI. It derides the recent half hearted call by the government for private industry to employ more blacks by pointing out that of the 600,000 civil servants employed by the government, only one



Photo: Jez Coulson (IFL)

Asian youth demonstrate in Ilford, East London Saturday, to protest at the lack of action over the murder of the Kassam family, killed in an arson attack.

percent are non-white.

Using the example of 'reverse' discrimination used by the US ruling class following the wave of America's inner city riots in the 1960's, they want British capitalism to pursue a similar policy of positive discrimination.

But the creation of a 'black middle class' in the USA was achieved during a boom period. Even then, as the *FT* admits the bottom 40 per cent of black US workers remain where they were—dispossessed, disadvantaged and discriminated against. If that was the best the mighty capitalist society of America could achieve in a boom, there is little chance of the insipid, crisis-ridden economy of Britain matching even this insufficient measure.

The *FT* admits that with the collapse of the manufacturing sector such a policy would have little impact. Instead it calls on the government to exert its influence on the public sector. Such a policy is unfortunately backed by some sections of the labour movement, indeed amongst some left wingers. Yet in many inner cities the public sector employer—local authorities—is the on-

ly major employer. With mass unemployment, positive discrimination does not mean sharing out jobs, but sharing out the misery of unemployment—the dangerous consequences of which can be imagined.

If the labour movement entangles itself in this capitalist 'solution', the capitalist class will then point the finger of blame at them when the resulting tensions break out.

What the labour movement must do is fight against the failure of capitalism to provide employment, decent housing and living standards. It must put forward a socialist strategy that can provide work for all and ensure the advent of a new classless society. It must use this programme to unite black and white workers and struggle against racism, exposing the divide and rule tactics of the ruling class.

The Tories will be playing the card of racism more and more as their economic policies collapse further into a mess. It will be used again to try and undermine the next Labour government. The labour movement must meet this threat head on.

Get Honeyford out



Photo: John Harris (IFL)

School students picket Ray Honeyford's return to work as headmaster at the school in Bradford in September.

BRADFORD HAS seen the decline of racism and fascism over the past decade. Beginning with the 5,000 strong anti-racism march in 1975, the labour movement successfully turned the tide against local racist groups.

However, the climate of racism is beginning to fester again, this time with the Ray Honeyford issue, the headmaster whose reactionary comments in an extreme right-wing Tory magazine provoked uproar at the school he resides over.

Honeyford has the direct backing of the government and the Tory press, who are attempting to divide the working class along racial lines. The local Tory council are also trying to use the issue to regain lost ground—Bradford is reeling under the government's policies. There are 35,000 unemployed, mainly youth, deteriorating housing, while out of 900 school leavers last

year, only 50 have found work.

Honeyford is being billed by the Tory press as having the "bravery to speak his mind". The local labour movement know otherwise. They remember the LPYS Asian Youth Conference last year, attended by 350, where Honeyford was challenged to open debate—he refused. However, the labour movement campaign against Honeyford is well underway. The LPYS Campaign Against Racism in Schools is calling for the local movement to use its muscle to get him out. Bradford Trades Council are calling for his sacking, while the District Labour Party and many party branches have called for a mass national rally against Honeyford.

LPYS CARS can be contacted through Razina Bostan, 9 Reyner House, Manchester Road, Bradford 5.

By Hamid Khayam

Militant public meetings in Tottenham and Brixton
Cherry Groce, Cynthia Jarret:
Justice must be done
See details, page 6

East London teachers fight racism

IN THE face of a growing racist current in East London schools, including violent racist attacks and near riots, a Campaign Against Racism in Schools has been formed.

Based mainly on teachers, it has growing support from parents, school students, community organisations and the local labour movement.

One of the schools most hit by racial tension is Daneford in Bethnal Green. Just across the road from Brick Lane it has a very high intake of Bangladeshi students. But it is also an

area traditionally targetted by organised fascist groups.

Teachers at Daneford have consistently warned the Inner London Education Authority of the need for a firm stand against racialism within the school. A spate of racist attacks led to a public meeting being organised on 10 October which attracted 350 people.

Picket

On 16 October a picket of the ILEA Divisional Office by East London teachers demanding action against racism was attacked by the

police.

The president of the Hackney Teachers Association was dragged along the ground and lost consciousness. People who tried to help were arrested. One had his shirt ripped off his back and another her sari ripped.

On October 17 a lobby of County Hall was called by CARS to try to force some action out of ILEA. Daneford teachers staged a half-day strike with the backing of the NUT Executive. The rally, of about 300 people, also had a big contingent of Daneford

school students. The ILEA leadership refused to come out.

Both the Inner London Teachers' Association and CARS are calling for strike action in London schools on 22 November against racism in schools. The possibility of building a national organisation by linking up with campaigns in other areas such as that against Honeyford in Bradford has been raised.

By Dave Fryatt
(Bethnal Green and Stepney LPYS)

Harvest of death

The politics of famine

THE TV pictures showing millions dying of starvation caused many working class people, especially the young, to participate in 'Live Aid' concerts to raise money, to do something 'practical' to keep starving people alive.

But 'Live Aid' will only have limited and temporary effect. Even while Bob Geldoff was handing over a cheque for £13 million, the EEC announced it was cutting its food aid by over £100 million.

MARGARET CREEAR examines the economics and politics of famine.

HUNGER AND starvation are now the main problems facing the masses of the Third World. A fifth of the world's children are considered malnourished, and eighth of all people are starving and half suffer malnutrition-related diseases. 40 million—more than one per second—die of hunger or related diseases every year.

Starvation in the Third World is rife, but in the USA, the world's richest country, 10-12 million are starving or have diseases related to lack of food.

There is nothing 'natural' about this situation. Ethiopia for example has always experienced cycles of drought. But widespread starvation is a more recent development. Far from it being alleviated by modern technology and aid, the situation is actually being made worse.

A British Tory in the *Oldham Chronicle* has suggested that it would be better to send contraceptives than food to Ethiopia. Starvation however, is not caused by any 'population explosion'. 86 per cent of the world's starving live in countries where food production keeps pace with population.

Food for profit

In Bangladesh, over half the population eat less than the 1,500 calories needed per day for survival. Yet enough is produced to provide 2,300 calories per day. The sole reason for their hunger is that under capitalism food is a commodity produced for profit and the starving don't have the money to buy it.

Lack of food is not a technical problem which some future 'scientific breakthrough' will resolve. Some publicity has recently been given to scientific research into using micro-organisms to produce food from wood shavings or through genetic engineering to produce larger sheep and cattle. But if sheep were to be produced as big as elephants—and capitalism continued—then people would still starve. Enough food can and frequently is produced to feed the world's population.

In 1980, 15 million children starved to death. It would have required 3.6 million tonnes of cereal to feed them that year. The harvest in 1980 of cereals alone was 1,556 million tonnes. In other words two-thousandths of the harvest would have kept the children alive.

The way in which starvation is

manufactured by the search for profit is shown in the background to the famine of the early 1970s. 1972 was referred to by the capitalists as a 'catastrophic' harvest. But it was one of the largest on record and only two per cent down on the previous year.

The shortages which did occur were caused by the conscious policy of big business. In the 1960s there had been 'overproduction'. Surpluses had been built up which threatened to lead to falling prices and profits. Therefore, between 1968 and 1970 four major cereal producing countries took a third of their grain growing areas out of production.

If that policy had not been pursued and grain had been grown at previous levels, 90 million more tonnes of wheat would have been available between 1969 and 1972. The 1972 World Food Conference called for eight to 12 million tonnes of wheat to relieve famine in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Tanzania and the Sahel countries.

In August this year the EEC took steps which could take as much as 10 million acres of grain producing land in Britain out of production by the end of the century—this is one-third of the total cereal producing land. The other side of this policy is the obscene stockpiling for which the EEC has become infamous.

£2,888 a minute is spent in Britain stockpiling food. According to the report, £100 million of beef is stockpiled. Last year 14,000 tonnes of apples and cauliflowers were withdrawn from the market. The year before £800,000 was paid on compensation for the destruction of 70 per cent of cauliflowers produced. There are stockpiles of a wide variety of food: beef 55,600 tonnes; bread wheat 70,000 tonnes; feed wheat 1,130,000 tonnes; barley 892,000 tonnes; butter 164,000 tonnes; skimmed milk 28,000 tonnes.

Not only is there enough food produced to feed the starving, but that food only represents a small proportion of what could be produced if necessary, even on the basis of present technology. It has been estimated that total food production could be increased 25 times. In South America only 15 per cent of cultivatable land is used, 20 per cent in Africa and seven per cent globally. The Ethiopian Highlands alone could feed all of Ethiopia and Western Europe as well.

The main obstacle to using these resources is the private ownership of land. In Latin America, 17 per cent of landowners own 90 per cent

of land. In Asia the top one-fifth control three-fifths of arable land. Yet a third of the rural population in Latin America owns only one per cent of the cropland. In Africa three-quarters have access to only four per cent of the land. According to the World Bank, a third of the agricultural population have no land at all.

One of the ironies of this situation is that the largest estates, whilst being profitable, are least efficient in producing food. In Argentina and Brazil, the smallest family farms can produce eight times per hectare what is produced on the largest estates. In Columbia this is 14 times more.

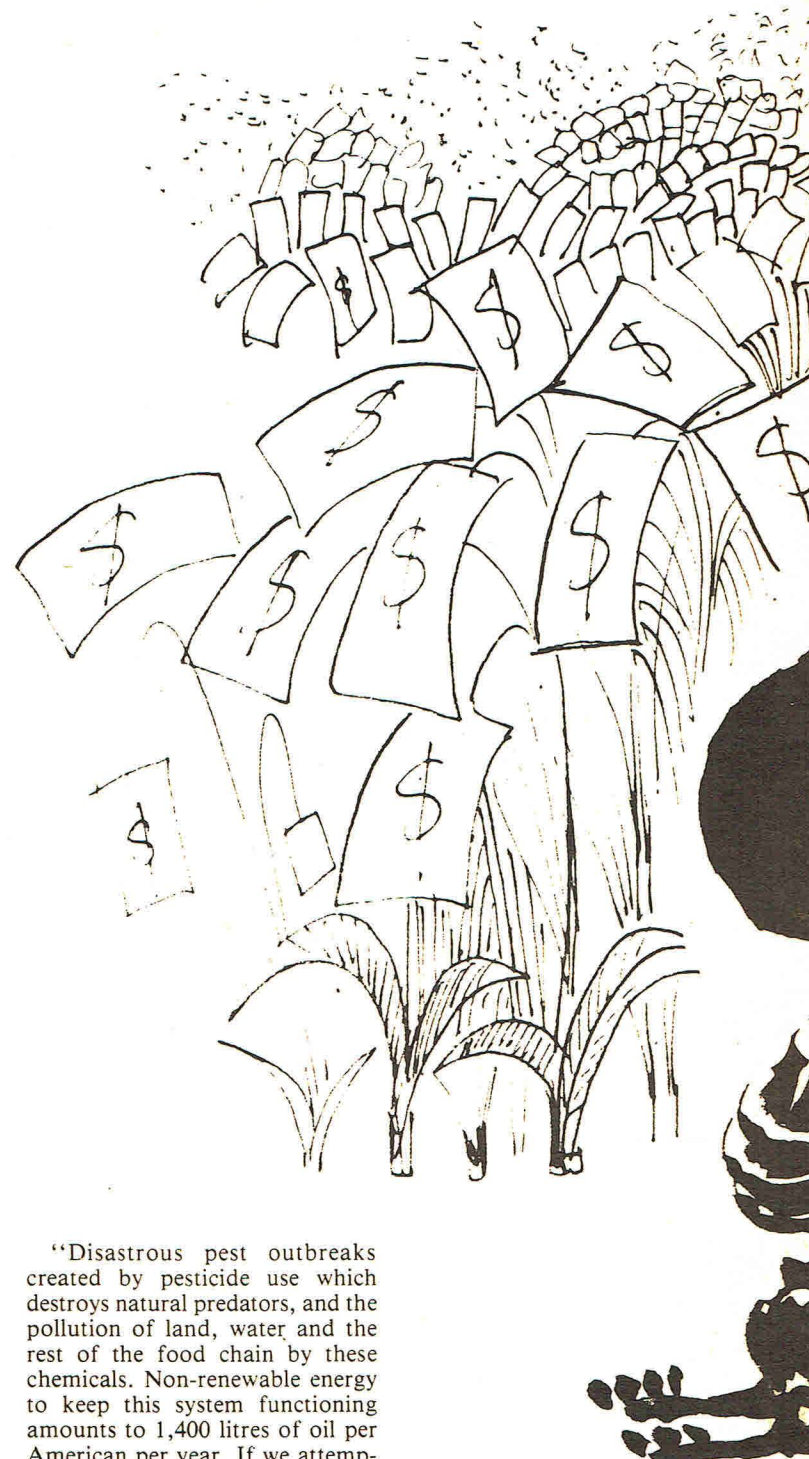
Drudgery

That is not to argue that 'small is beautiful' and that we should go back to a reactionary utopia of peasants working small plots. This represented back-breaking drudgery from the youngest to the oldest in the family. It has now been ruled out by the development of capitalist relations in agriculture. It is not the size of the estates, but production for profit not need which leads to such results.

It is impossible to solve the question of land reform under capitalism. What is needed is the taking over of the land as part of the socialist transformation of

society and the application of scientific technique to agriculture, taking into account ecological needs.

This last point is particularly important. A socialist approach to agriculture does not mean an automatic transfer of US techniques to all areas of the world or its continuation in the US for that matter. US farming techniques sold to the Third World through multinationals and aid agencies actually represents capitalism at its most destructive, sacrificing the well-being and secure future of the working class in the interests of a quick buck now. The effects on US agriculture is summarised in *Ill Fares the Land* by Susan George:



"Disastrous pest outbreaks created by pesticide use which destroys natural predators, and the pollution of land, water and the rest of the food chain by these chemicals. Non-renewable energy to keep this system functioning amounts to 1,400 litres of oil per American per year. If we attempted to feed the world's 4,000 million people an American diet using US techniques all known petroleum reserves would be exhausted within 11 years.

"Underground water reserves are being 'mined' for irrigation to the point that one reservoir currently supplying seven states, will at present rates have disappeared by the year 2,000. A third of US top soil has already been irrevocably lost. Perhaps most alarming of all is the 'narrowing genetic base of North American crops. The devastating US corn blight of 1970 prompted a study by the National Academy of Sciences which concluded that North American crops are 'impressively uniform genetically and impressively vulnerable'. A mere six varieties of corn account for three-quarters of all production, two varieties of peas of 96 per cent, four bread wheats for 75 per cent of all Canadian harvests etc."

The enormous inequality in the ownership of the land and the poverty this led to was one of the motive forces of the colonial revolution. The oppressed people of one country after another moved to end landlordism and capitalism in a desperate attempt to solve their problems. In spite of the deformed nature of many of the resulting states, the example of China where famine has been eliminated demonstrates what an enormous step forward this was.

The capitalist institutions internationally, to stem the tide of the colonial revolution, looked to the introduction of new techniques into the Third World as an alternative to land reform. However, technology is not neutral or abstract but reflects the class society in which it is used. The most famous application of technology was what is known as the 'green revolution'.

Far from easing the situation, the green revolution actually worsened it. It was based on high yield variety seeds which needed more fertiliser and pesticides—

supplied by the multinationals. These could only be bought by bank loans—financed by the advanced capitalist countries, thereby increasing the exploitation of the Third World by companies in the advanced countries.

These loans were only available to big landowners. Despite pious statements to the contrary, 75 per cent of agricultural credit from the World Bank goes to this group. This experiment led to a strengthening of the reactionary class of big landowners and increased landlessness and the drift into day-labouring, or off the land into the shanty towns surrounding the major cities of the Third World.

Women affected

Especially affected were women who worked the land and were not recognised as heads of households for loans. Between 1961 and 1971 two-thirds of all female cultivators in India lost their land whilst the number of female agricultural labourers increased by 50 per cent. The price of land in Pakistan went up by 500 per cent as landlords competed for land after tenants' evictions. In 1969 there were 40,000 evictions in Bihar and 80,000 in Mysore state in India.

As a result of the Green Revolution food production went up, but the poor couldn't afford to buy it. At the same time they were deprived of the land where they formerly produced food for themselves. So there was wider hunger than before.

The Green Revolution gave a great boost to the food and chemical multinationals. Because of declining profitability in manufacturing industry, many multinationals had been looking for new areas and in some Third World countries gained a 30 per



Alan Hadman

cent return on their investment in 'agribusiness'. The effect of their intervention has been to increase the dependency and exploitation of the Third World within the world market.

This exploitation is assured by the terms of trade and the control of the market for cash crops produced in the Third World. The actual volume of exports from the Third World went up by 30 per cent in the early 1970s, but the value only went up by four per cent. For every \$100 spent by a consumer in the West on tropical products only \$15 goes to the producer. The rest is pocketed by the multinationals.

This process is seen in an example from Kerala in India where a Norwegian fisheries' scheme was introduced. The stated aim was to improve the fishing catch in Kerala for the benefit of local people. Before the scheme, fishing took place using primitive methods and the local people had a low living standard. The Norwegians introduced fibreglass and steel boats, electronic fish-finding devices and deep-freeze facilities. But the cost of production went up and the local people could not afford the higher fish prices.

The project then started to look for people who could pay, but the Indian middle and ruling class were not interested in eating the sort of fish which made up the diet of the poor Kerala fishermen. Therefore, the project turned to catching luxury seafoods—shrimps, lobsters, etc.—and turned towards the advanced capitalist countries as a market.

In this way the Kerala fishermen were integrated into the world economy. Who benefited? A local businessman built his own ice factory and bought a fleet of insulated vans. Most of the local population stayed as they were before or were

employed on a casual, extremely low-paid basis in the lobster and shrimp factories.

This example also underlines a trend for Third World countries to produce luxury food for the West, especially out of season fruit and vegetables and even pet foods. 70 per cent of imported vegetables in the US are from the Third World.

This turning over of fertile land in the Third World to the cultivation of 'luxury' food for export is a contributory factor in famine.

Foreign growers

In 1973, for example, the Ethiopian government granted concessions to foreign growers in the Awash river valley for such products as avocado pears and for the building of a sugar mill. The Awash river valley was very important to the Afars, a nomadic people who grazed their herds there in the dry season and on the rain-fed grass lands in the wet season. They were evicted from the land to make way for the multinationals. They then had to graze their herds all the year round on the sparser grasslands, which led to 'overgrazing', the death of the animals and starvation for the Afars.

The sugar mill contributed nothing to the Ethiopian economy. Profits were repatriated and no supply industry was developed. The price of sugar to the Ethiopians went up 30 per cent in ten years, whilst wages stayed the same. The outflow of money was seven to eight times the total paid to Ethiopian workers in wages.

The multinationals contribute further to malnutrition by the wages they pay. Del Monte moved its entire pineapple growing operations from Hawaii when 6,000 workers demanded a wage increase. They then settled in the Phillipines and Thailand. The

workers in agribusiness who produce the world's food are so low paid that most of them suffer from malnutrition!

Aid has been put forward as a solution, but it is used as a political weapon and has little to do with feeding the starving. The US Secretary of Agriculture in the early 1970s described it as "the most powerful weapon in our negotiating kit." 20 years ago, US President Kennedy said: "Foreign aid is a method by which the US maintains a position of influence and power around the world and sustains a good many countries who would definitely collapse or pass into the Communist bloc."

Aid is a tool of foreign policy. It is provided to regimes who take steps to assure a proper climate for investment, ie pursue austerity programmes, encourage 'private enterprise' and ruthlessly suppress opposition.

Furthermore, most aid, 73 per cent of US and 50 per cent of the OECD generally, is dependent on the country receiving it buying from the donor country. The European Development Fund gives over half of its agricultural assistance to cash, rather than food crops, therefore reinforcing the role of the third world as agricultural producers for the advanced capitalist countries.

There are enormous discrepancies in per capita aid. According to

is thus linked to the strategic importance of a country to US interests. If it were not for their borders with China and the USSR, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh would receive even less.

Food aid is also made ineffective by the channelling of it through corrupt ruling elites. This includes emergency food aid. According to the World Bank: "In Bangladesh in 1977, 27 per cent of bulk food aid went to the military, police and civil servants and employees of large enterprises. 40 per cent went to middle class residents in the 50 largest cities. The rural population who needed the food most got 34 per cent."

Private banks

The United Nations acts as a broker for private banks and the multinationals. In 1973 the multinationals, organised into the Industry Co-operation Programme (ICP), were already working within the UN. At the World Food Conference they were given delegate status usually given to governments. The UN has increasingly used private banks and industry for 'development' projects. The Development Department of the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the UN uses private banks to finance its projects at the usual rate of interest.

When projects are identified and

nationally the future for the masses of the third world and the working class of the advanced capitalist countries will be bleak as long as that system continues. The utopian pleas for 'fairer' agreements between multinationals and Third World governments, that the multinationals should temper their appetite for profits in order to feed the starving, will fall on deaf ears.

Of the 100 largest economic powers in the world, 53 are countries, 47 are multi-nationals. The chances of countries in the Third World influencing the policies of companies economically stronger than themselves are nil.

On the other hand, the existence of such companies and their dominance in the world economy underlines the out dated nature of the nation state. An international division of labour as part of a world plan for food production, not a utopian return to self-sufficiency in each little country as some have suggested, could enormously benefit the Third World, provided the resources of the world are brought under the control and management of the working class.

Working class people should not feel helpless in the face of such enormous suffering in the Third World. Whilst we understand the feelings of those who contribute to charity, and that visits by Labour leaders might give publicity to the plight of the starving, the only

In Bangladesh, over half the population eat less than the 1,500 calories needed per day for survival. Yet enough is produced to provide 2,300 calories per day. The sole reason for their hunger is that under capitalism food is a commodity produced for profit and the starving don't have the money to buy it.

a report in *New Internationalist*: "In 1977 India and Pakistan, two of the poorest countries in the world got respectively \$1.60 and \$9.20 per person. Tanzania got \$22.10, Israel \$226.00 and the postage stamp colony of Reunion \$661.00.

"The top US aid clients are Israel, Egypt, India, Bangladesh, Syria and Pakistan. Almost half of US aid goes to Israel, the majority of it as 'security assistance'." Aid

financed, the package used to go to the ICP which then alerted four to five multinationals to the project. Most of these projects do not benefit developing countries, but are export orientated. Although the ICP has been wound up, a new organisation, the ICD, has replaced it and one way or another the same system operates.

Starvation is first and foremost an indictment of the profit system. Given the crisis of capitalism inter-

practical action is to fight for socialism in Britain and to build links with workers internationally for a concerted struggle against capitalism. In the face of the starvation and poverty of millions of people, international socialism is not a sentimental dream but an urgent necessity.

Some of the information for this article came from *How the other half dies* by Susan George.

Australia 1975, Brazil, Chile

When the crown sacked a Labour government

TEN YEARS ago, on 11 November 1975 Gough Whitlam's Labour government in Australia was dismissed from office by the Queen's representative, the Governor-General.

At a stroke, the carefully nurtured image of the Crown's 'impartiality' was blown away and the naked class bias of the parliamentary system exposed.

Whitlam's downfall is a warning to the international labour movement, not least in Britain. The vice-regal 'coup' against Labour was the culmination of a concerted campaign by big business through its puppets in the Liberal and National Parties, in the law courts and a vicious media campaign spearheaded by the Murdoch press. Evidence has subsequently emerged of CIA involvement in the decision.

After 23 years of conservative rule, Labour came to office in 1972. Initial reforms such as the withdrawal of Australian troops from Vietnam, the introduction of the Medibank health service, increases in education spending and pensions met with enormous working class support.

Strike of capital

But with the onset of world recession in 1975, the government faced relentless pressure from big business to abandon its policies. Every major item of Labour's election programme was challenged in the courts or parliament by conservative controlled state governments. The Liberal-National Party majority in the Senate (Upper House) blocked legislation. A virtual strike of capital was organised to bring the government to heel.

In the words of Professor Connell; "if there remained any lingering doubt about the class nature of Australian politics, the events of 1975 must have resolved it. There is hardly a clearer case in the recent history of the 'western democracies' of the way a threatened ruling class is able to mobilise fragments of state power, business connections, financial resources and legitimacy given them by a dominant culture, in a campaign to remove an offending government."

Labour's demand for 'national ownership' of the lucrative mining sector aroused most fury among the capitalist class. This election pledge, like the rest, was eventually diluted as Whitlam sought to reassure the capitalists of his government's 'responsibility'.

Labour began to echo the bosses' calls for 'sacrifice' and 'restraint' from the working class. Far from appeasing big business, this merely served to embolden them. Sensing a mood of disappointment amongst workers and a collapse in Labour support, they pressed home their advantage.

By Laurence Coates

Fraser, the newly elected Liberal leader, announced that his party would block the government's financial supply bills in the Senate, thereby engineering an immediate crisis. This incensed working class opinion. The 'bogus Senate' as Whitlam described it, was sabotaging the programme of an elected government on the basis of a rigged majority.

Two Labour Senators (one had died, the other resigned) had been replaced by anti-Labour nominees by Liberal and National Party state governments—without an election.

Despite a series of catastrophic by-election defeats and enormous dissatisfaction with Labour leaders, an outraged working class began to rally around its beleaguered government. According to historian Brian McKinlay, "there was a rallying of support for Labour without precedent in Australian history."

"On the day of the Senate's rejection of supply, demonstrations and rallies were held across the country. Most were spontaneous outbursts of anger and resent-

Kerr, the Governor-General, to get 'royal assent' for a half-Senate election, but was instead confronted by Kerr with the news that he was sacked and the Liberal leader, Fraser, had been asked to replace him.

Despite later denials, all the cherished 'legal' conventions had been flouted by Kerr, who consulted Fraser before even informing the Prime Minister. Fraser was in an adjoining room, his car parked behind a row of trees so that Whitlam would not notice it.

By the time Whitlam had returned to Parliament House, Fraser had already been sworn in as Prime Minister.

The House immediately carried a vote of no confidence in the new government and called on the Governor-General to reappoint Whitlam. But on such occasions, capitalism can dispense with formalities such as parliamentary majorities. While the speaker was on his way to inform the Governor-General of Parliament's decision, Kerr announced the dissolution of Parliament.

News of the sacking had spread and an angry crowd gathered outside Parliament. As the proclamation of dissolution was read, Whitlam seized the microphone and said to cheers, "Well may we say



Workers protest at Whitlam's sacking

ment by Labour supporters, infuriated by what they saw as the climax of three years of obstruction and sabotage of Labour's programme."

Whitlam decided there was no other recourse than to call a half-Senate election in the hope of breaking the conservative stranglehold. It was precisely at that moment that the 'constitutional' powers of the monarchy, held in reserve under 'normal' conditions were brought into play.

Whitlam went to Sir John

God save the Queen, for nothing will save the Governor-General!"

Within hours a huge crowd had massed on the steps of Parliament. There were mass meetings and walk-outs across Australia. Placards demanded a general strike and scores of blue and white Eureka flags (Australia's flag without the union jack ensign) appeared outside parliament.

The 13 December election was the most turbulent in Australia's history. Labour



Gough Whitlam (centre) listens to Governor-General Kerr announcing his constitutional coup.

leaders addressed mass rallies in every city. 50,000 marched in Melbourne. With a series of spontaneous protest actions and a growing demand for a general strike, Australia's largest union, the 500,000 strong metal workers, called for strike action in the event of a Fraser victory.

Tragically, an historic opportunity was missed by the Labour leadership who appealed for calm and an end to strikes and demonstrations. The Governor-General's action had polarised Australian society and aroused a powerful sense of outrage among wide layers of the working class. But this movement needed to be given a clear expression, a clear programme and demands.

The issue at stake was not the 'personal' crimes of a maverick Governor-General, but the class nature of the state itself. The central question with which Labour had to confront the electorate was "who wields economic and political power?"

Monarchy's role

A handful of unelected millionaires and businessmen had ransacked Labour's reforms, and an unelected relic from Australia's past, working in tandem with a rigged Senate, had brought down a government elected by a massive 49 per cent of the population.

The Labour leadership, resting on the support of the powerful trade union movement, needed to explain that its programme of reforms could only be implemented if the power of big business, and its state—including those of the crown—were decisively broken.

That would require emergency legislation, backed up by the full strength of the labour movement outside Parliament, to abolish the anomalous and undemocratic post of Governor-General, but also to break the vice-like grip of the multi-nationals over the Australian economy.

Labour's confused and vague demand for 'national ownership' should have been resurrected as a clear call for public ownership, not merely of mining, but of all large industry and banking. On that basis alone could the

sabotage of big business be thwarted and the vast riches of the Australian economy be freed to tackle the pressing economic problems that had beset the Labour government.

Such a clear socialist explanation would have completely undercut the smear campaign of Fraser, who sought to equate Labour with unemployment, inflation and economic crisis. Without such a programme, the barrage of propaganda from the conservative parties and their kept press began to take effect. Fraser won the election of December 1975 with a landslide majority.

But the lessons of 11 November were not swept away with Labour's election defeat. Kerr was soon to retire altogether from public life. His last few months as Governor-General were

marked by angry demonstrations wherever he appeared. His action stands as a crushing answer to those who argue that the monarchy is little more than a decorative figure head.

The Australian ruling class must consider themselves extremely fortunate that they were able to ride the storm unleashed by playing the 'royal card'. The gamble paid off, on that occasion, because the Labour leadership squandered its opportunity, shying away from all-out confrontation with capitalism.

As the British bourgeoisie today speculate on an increasing role for the monarchy in political life, particularly in the event of a hung parliament, the lessons must not be lost on the British labour movement.

Strikers brave the bullets



Protesters face the power of the state in Santiago on 30 October

HUNDREDS OF thousands of factory workers started an indefinite strike in Brazil's biggest industrial city, Sao Paulo on 5 November.

The stoppage was called by the two national union federations which have been split in the past. The workers demand the reduction of work hours from 48 to 44 a week, a 20 per cent real wage rise and quarterly pay increases to keep up with 220 per cent inflation. Pickets had to face

police armed with tear gas and truncheons.

In Chile, anti-Pinochet protesters faced armed troops in two days of anti-government action. Six demonstrators were wounded by gunshots, while others braved tear gas, water cannon and riot control pellets in the working class areas and on university campuses.

Militant will have fuller coverage of developments in these two vital Latin American countries in future issues.

Sacked strikers appeal for support

ONE THOUSAND strikers dismissed by British based multinational BTR Sarmcol in the Pietermaritzburg area of South Africa are still fighting after six months.

But they are now appealing to workers throughout the world for aid. Those on strike are finding it increasingly hard to feed their families on the R4 (£1) a week food parcels organised through the union.

Even before the dispute BTR workers' children in the Impophomeni township had an abnormally high malnutrition level due to the exploitative wage rates, which start at R336 (about £80) a month.

BTR are a rich company, their managing director "earns" £142,000 a year. The firm recently created a record with the largest issue of Eurobonds ever. But they are using every repressive possibility of the apartheid state they support so fully to keep every penny and to crush the union.

They are harrasing strikers in the gruesome single sex hostels BTR workers have to live in. They have unsuccessfully tried to evict the workers, but succeeded in cutting off water, firewood and elec-

tricity, vetting visitors to the hostel and using scabs to physically threaten strikers. Knives and spears are being produced in the factory for use against strikers.

The scabs, part of South Africa's huge army of unemployed black labour are being used, they are working for even less than the sacked workforce.

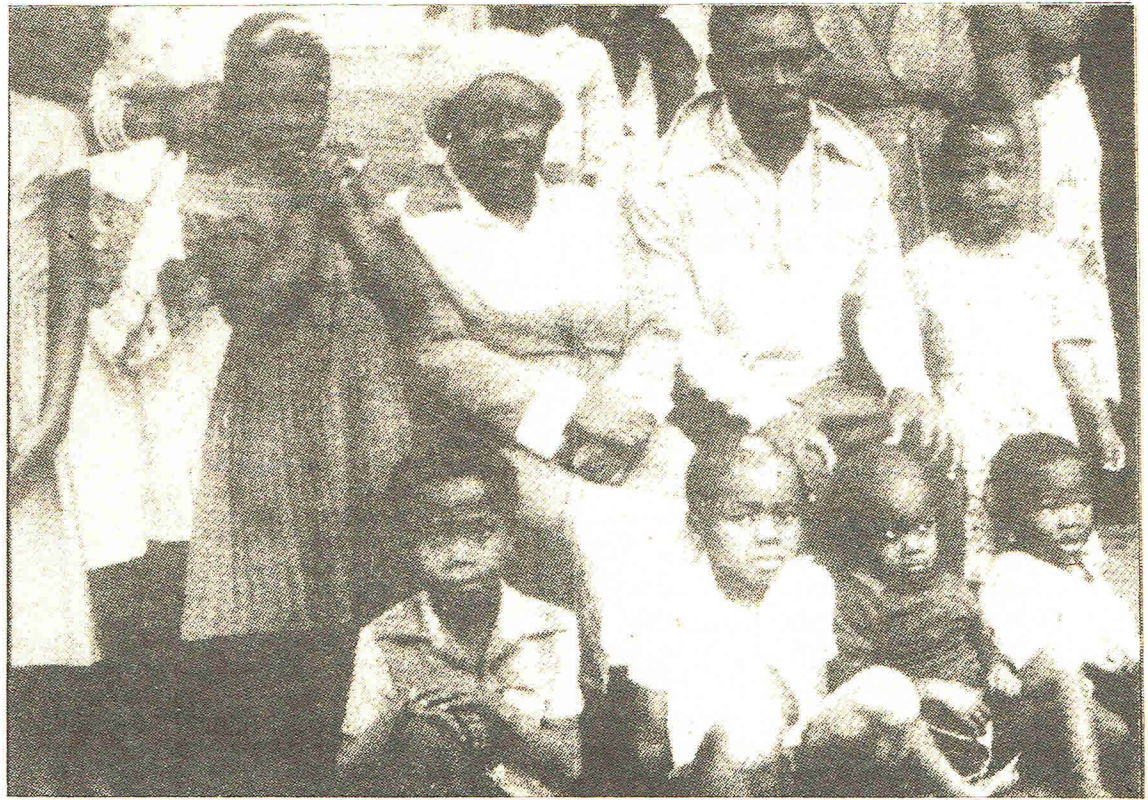
The state machine is used incessantly. A police station has been built in the township. Police vans roam the streets every day looking for union activists and breaking up strike meetings.

Children shot

In September, when word spread of an impending attack by scabs, the township residents prepared to defend themselves. The police arrived instead of the scabs and let fly with bullets and tear gas. Five children were shot, one was killed and one other is still in hospital. Many strikers have been arrested and many charged during the dispute.

BTR have adamantly refused to negotiate over the sackings and the union recognition agreement. This is despite black workers boycotting white businesses in the city of Pietermaritzburg to put pressure on BTR.

The sacked workers have been



One of the strikers' families—surviving on food parcels

refused passports to speak to workers in British BTR firms, but speakers from the union MAWU have toured Britain.

Workers in British BTR concerns

and in the engineering industry should build up support for these courageous class fighters. Force the bosses to negotiate.

Funds and messages of support

to the General Secretary, Metal and Allied Workers' Union, PO Box 9451, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa.

Auto unions missed opportunity

OVER 70,000 car-workers in the USA and 10,000 in Canada shut down the Chrysler Corporation for a total of 12 days last month. UAW members were completely solid.

The mood was to fight for a better contract after all the concessions the company was now making big profits. When Chrysler found themselves faced with bankruptcy in 1979 they demanded that the workers pay for the recovery.

55,000 jobs were lost since then and \$22,000 per worker had been conceded in wages and benefits. This averted Chrysler's collapse due to mismanagement and insufficient investment.

The money was there for a good deal this year. In 1984 profits reached \$2.38 billion and in the first nine months of 1985 \$1.42 billion. The company had vast wealth and \$40.7 million in bonuses had been paid to 1,461 managers.

A claim for a 32 hour week with no loss of pay would have got wide support and brought many of the 55,000 laid off workers back into jobs. Wage increases to

make up for what had been lost should have been demanded, and with it a total ban on out-sourcing.

When the strike was over, the new contract gave increases of around 17.5 per cent in the coming three years—assuming 4 per cent inflation. However much of this is in lump sums which are not added to the basic wage. So many benefits and pensions calculated on the basic do not go up accordingly.

The contracts were overwhelmingly approved by the workers. The large lump sum increases—\$2,100 in the US and \$750 in Canada were attractive. Certainly they compared well with many other contracts signed recently.

But the main reason this contract was accepted was that the UAW leadership did not organise a serious fight to regain what had been lost. When the workers saw this then the contract seemed the best available.

However it will be seen to have been a serious missed

opportunity. The new recession in the coming 6 to 12 months will reduce the market. Lines will be threatened with closure and redundancies demanded. The "job security" pledges will not be worth the paper they are written on.

The UAW leadership portrayed this as a major victory. The reality is that as the *Wall Street Journal* commented this is a "moderate" agreement which the company "can live with". That paper's only criticism was that insufficient progress had been made to reduce job classifications. The contract allowed for experiments on this to be started in four plants. This is the thin edge of the wedge.

When the demands for further concessions are made in the coming recession Chrysler workers will be fighting on less favourable ground than now.

Chrysler's Chief Executive made it clear he will be demanding more cuts when he said: "In the end we have to get competitive. I hope we and the unions can work together to do that". This must be taken as a warning by all Chrysler workers.

A UAW spokesman said: "Concessions will have to wait until Chrysler shows signs of distress". This is holding open the door to Chrysler management to demand new concessions.

UAW activists in Chrysler should begin now to prepare for the coming battles and to commit the UAW leaders to oppose all demands for concessions.

By Robert O'Neil



On a Chrysler picket line, Detroit, 15 October

No visible means of support

"I AM ready to call a snap election" the Philippines' dictator Ferdinand Marcos announced last week. As in the 1984 elections Marcos hopes to use his control over state forces to rig the ballots.

In 1984 votes were bought openly, political opponents were murdered, ballot boxes were stolen. In disgust the mass movement of opposition to the dictator boycotted the elections. Nevertheless opposition groups won 80 out of the 183 seats.

Nobody loves Marcos any more—except his "cronies" whom Marcos has made rich and powerful. The President himself may have accrued a personal fortune of \$5 billion. Marcos' friends have been given sugar and coconut monopolies. The firms owned by his cronies are regularly bailed out if they get into trouble, others are left to go to the wall. The military leaders nearly all come from the same northern region of Luzon as Marcos.

From the capitalists who find no place in the sun to the housewives who organise Chilean style protests of banging pots to the increasingly revolutionary peasants and a working class prepared to fight, Marcos' name stinks. But how far these different sections are prepared to take their opposition varies.

Ronald Reagan is not squeamish about backing rich dictators, but he is edging away from Marcos because of his obvious unpopularity. The Philippines is a large important market and source of wealth for US and Japanese investors, offering Free Trade Zones and other incentives for the rich to expand their wealth without too much risk.

The US want an end to Marcos' "cronyism" and his ostentatious personal greed. It reminds them too much of



what happened to Somoza's Nicaragua.

They have threatened to cut the rent for US bases and they back the IMF's refusal to pay standby credit to the regime. They hope to encourage moves to get a more presentable and stable capitalist regime. But Marcos does not wish to give up power.

At the same time the opposition is getting more powerful. There are at least 20,000 guerillas in the Communist New Peoples Army (NPA) which now controls at least one in five of the islands' villages. There is no shortage of rural grievances. Poverty, the devastation wrought by low commodity prices, and the rape of the islands by multinational agribusinesses, forcing landless peasants into the shanty towns.

American advisors have warned Marcos that if he does not make major reforms in the next few years the NPA could overtake the 200,000 strong army which is corrupt and ill equipped, but extremely vicious.

The ruling class are split. Most want Marcos out, but how can this be done

without arousing the poor, the peasantry and the working class? The new "1st May movement" has reflected the militancy of the industrial workers, despite the difficulties of overcoming state repression, or of organising young women workers kept in apartheid style compounds. Even the supposedly strikeless Free Trade Zones have had a general strike and other major disputes.

So the capitalists, even those ruined by Marcos, are wary. There is no miracle economy in the Philippines now. Trying to squeeze out inflation, the Marcos regime has squeezed life out of the entire economy. Gross National Product declined five per cent last year and is likely to fall another five per cent in 1985. This is in a world boom!

The leading bourgeois oppositionist Benigno Aquino was assassinated by Marcos' men in 1983, sparking off the biggest protests ever. The ruling class may now wish they had a safe and popular alternative like Aquino to stop the people's minds turning to revolution.

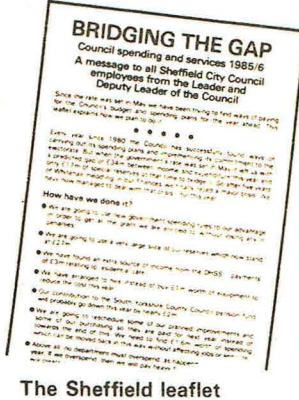
Results of the "Sheffield option"

Dear Comrades,

Local authority workers recently received a leaflet from the leader and deputy leader of Sheffield City Council. The leaflet called for strict control over expenditure and pointed out that there will be a "substantial rate increase" next year. They described this as "not a politically glamorous strategy. It is a politically wise one".

Many workers will ask what is wise about increasing rates not to increase services but just to offset Tory cuts. Unfortunately the "Sheffield option" is not to fight the Tories but to cut the living standards of workers who live in Sheffield.

Yours fraternally
 Dave Milsom
 NALGO shop steward recently expelled from Sheffield Attercliffe Labour Party



The Sheffield leaflet

Going round the twist

Dear Comrades,

Both Kenneth Baker and his predecessor Patrick Jenkin have accused Liverpool City Council of behaving like Oliver Twist by asking for more money for the city.

I have just spent a whole afternoon going through the main public libraries in Liverpool and

have discovered that not only is Liverpool deprived of funds, but you can't get a copy of bloody Oliver Twist for love nor money.

Perhaps we could all behave more like Oliver Twist if the public libraries were funded sufficiently to keep an adequate supply of the book

in store for us to read. Anyway, as it stands, the message from Liverpool to the Tories is: **Sod the gruel! Give us the bloody money!**

Yours fraternally
 Graham Casey
 TGWU 6/643 branch
 Liverpool

Letters

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

Kilroy-Silk finds support

Dear Comrades

I have just watched the BBC's latest hatchet job on the *Militant*. This week, next week. Those of us who support the *Militant* have no illusions about the BBC's famous 'even handedness'. This programme surpassed anything I have seen before. It was a programme of which Stalin would have been proud.

I am sure all Labour Party members will have noted how the BBC attacks *Militant* which campaigns for

Labour candidates whatever their stance in the party; and supports Mr Kilroy-Silk who, if he loses, will oppose the duly selected candidate.

Mr Kilroy-Silk will find that whilst the BBC may support him, the rank and file will consign him to the dustbin where he belongs. Far from damaging us I believe that the hysterical attacks by the right-wing will only hasten their demise.

Yours fraternally
 Neil Bathurst
 Tiverton CLP

Police approve Orgreave tactics

Dear Comrades,

Brass Tacks on BBC 2 (Thursday 31 October) raised some very important facts about the miners strike and the role of the police in future industrial disputes.

All those who were taken in by the biased BBC and ITV news coverage of the miners' picket lines, will have been amazed to discover that the violence at the Orgreave Coking Plant in July '84 was provoked and escalated by the police.

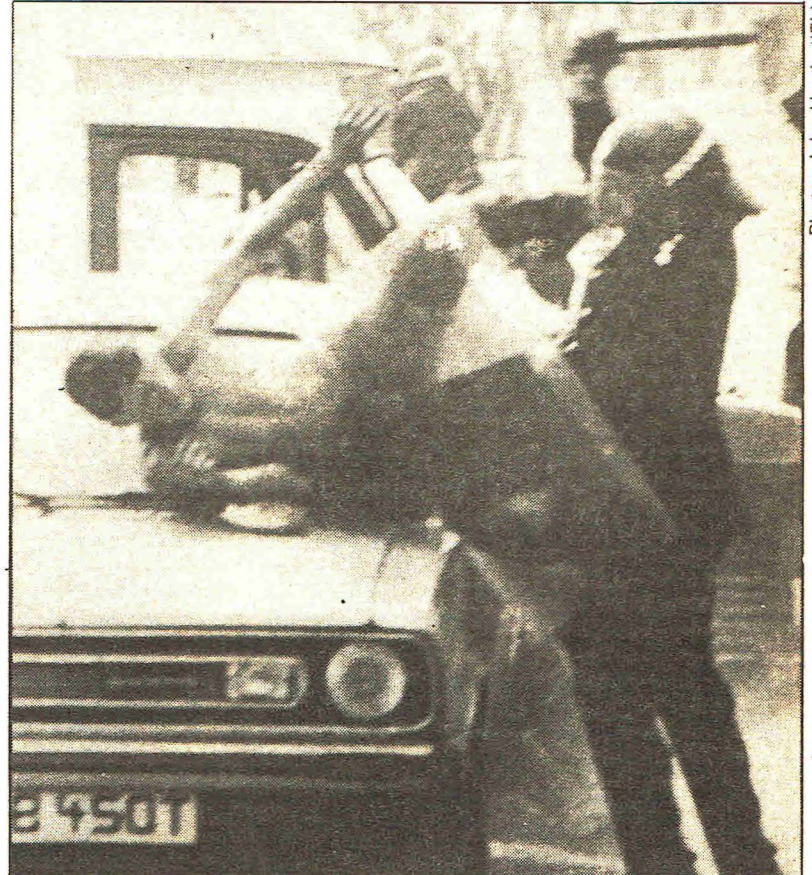
An official police video shows that mounted police were used to disperse and strike fear into the noisy—but otherwise peaceful—crowd. It was only after this act of provocation that several stones and missiles were thrown at police.

Alarming, this official police video is now being used to provide practical lessons to new police recruits on how to deal with 'riots'. This sets a precedent for the use of police in future industrial disputes.

It was admitted in the programme that 'public order' was of more concern to the police chiefs than crime.

The Tories and police chiefs are arming themselves with new laws, methods and machines (CS-gas, plastic bullets etc) to control 'public disorder'. Let there be no doubt about it, these will all be used in full against the labour movement in the future.

Yours fraternally
 Ray Duffill
 North Hull LPYS



Orgreave, 18 June 1984. A picket is beaten by a riot cop.

Photo: John Harris (FL)

From the horse's mouth

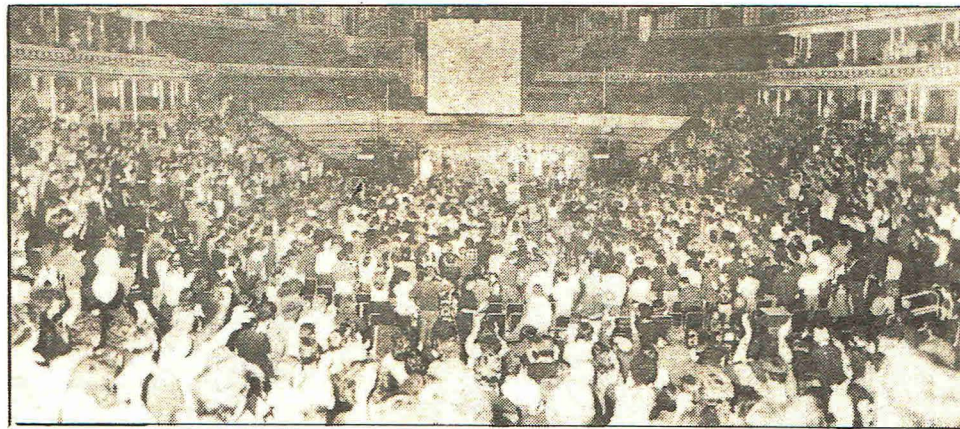
Dear Comrades,

Two recent articles in the *Economist* show that in terms of the government estimates of need then Liverpool "is not being treated like everyone else, but worse." Specifically Manchester and Liverpool, with similar populations, estimates of need and rate levels have different targets, £251 million as opposed to £222 million and different penalties—nil as opposed to £89 million.

The same articles also refer to far more support for Labour in Liverpool than the Tory government; that despite Mr Hatton being a trouble maker "he is not without cause" and coded messages to Mr Baker to come up with some money for the inner cities, particularly Liverpool.

Perhaps if the leaders of the Labour Party and the trade unions could overcome their prejudices and listen to the facts, then they could launch a campaign in defence of Liverpool council this year and of all Labour councils next year.

Yours comradely
 Ronnie Stevenson
 Glasgow



5,000 attended *Militant's* 21st anniversary rally last week. Photo: Militant.

Militant Rally goes with a 'bang'

Dear Comrades,

'Dull,' 'drab' and 'boring' were not the words to describe this year's *Militant* rally. From beginning to end *Militant* did itself proud and should have dispelled all rumours that say that the *Militant* Tendency is dead and buried.

All the speakers at the rally were excellent and each one outlined the plight of the work-

ing class, from the 1934 US truck strike to the present struggle in Liverpool.

And what an ending! Everyone in the hall raised the roof singing the Red Flag and the Internationale, but there was still more to come, flashing lights, indoor fireworks, red balloons from the ceiling, red smoke wafting from the stage and to finish it all a loud bang with streamers and glitter everywhere. What a 21st Birthday Party; and I was there.

But what can top this year's rally? Well, it's quite simple; next year's rally of course!

Yours fraternally
 Tracey Croucher
 Doncaster North LPYS

Bert Heitzmann

MILITANT READERS will be sad to hear of the sudden death of Bert Heitzmann, National Society of Metal Mechanics (NSMM) London organiser. The funeral was attended by family, friends and over a hundred trade unionists.

Bert held the post of London organiser for over 30 years, which in itself is a testimony to his commitment

to the struggle on behalf of metal mechanics and for the working class in general. As a life long socialist Bert, whose parents were German, joined the British army to fight fascism, but after leaving the services Bert's fight was against the bosses. He also fought consistently for left policies in the NSMM which (although not at first) made him the most popular and respected man in our union.

Bert will be particularly remembered by the youth and especially London

youth, to whom he was "jokingly" known as "Dad". But it was his effort and support in setting up and maintaining the youth conference for which we will always owe him a debt.

Bert's death has left a massive vacuum in the metal mechanics which will be difficult to fill. His struggle for socialism however will be continued by friends and comrades in our union.

M. Cotter London DC
 Vice President
 S Glennon Stevenage
 Delegate London DC

LEFT and RIGHT

Working class need not apply

THE LABOUR Party's front bench have brought in Bernard Falk of the BBC to help package party broadcasts. He will train up leading Labour personalities in television camera awareness, and how to put forward policies. He will even be giving tips on how to dress. "Duffle coats can be alright" he told the *Times* (5 November) "but we'll say no to flat caps and *Militant* badges."

The Oxbridge set

OF THE 22 members of Thatcher's cabinet, only three (Peter Walker, Norman Tebbit and Michael Joplin) did not go to either Oxford or Cambridge Universities. In the House of Commons 233 MPs passed through Oxbridge. Of Parliament's female MPs, 30—all Tories—went to Oxford.

Dubious pasts

FORMER MEMBERS of neo-fascist organisations are still cropping up in the Tory Party. The Chairman of Southend East Conservative Party—constituency of right wing MP Teddy Taylor—is Frank Paveley, a former activist in the National Front in the 1970's. Meanwhile new evidence again links Newcastle Central MP Piers Merchant to the National Democratic Party, an extreme right wing organisation of the early 1970's. During the 1983 election Merchant angrily dismissed as a forgery a 1971 NDP election address which named him as election agent. However, *Searchlight*, the anti-fascist magazine, have now discovered an NDP document of 1970 which listed its key regional officials. A 'Piers Merchant' is listed for Nottingham. Now the former vice-chairman of the NDP has also confirmed to *Searchlight* that a 'Piers Merchant' was an activist in the NDP at the time.

What's behind the graffiti strike?

THE 'GRAFFITI' strike of teachers at Poundswick school in the Wythenshawe area of Manchester has now lasted over five weeks. Thousands of Manchester teachers have staged walk outs in support.

The strike started as a solidarity action in support of Poundswick teachers suspended for refusing to teach five fourth-year school students, including two black youths, who were alleged to have daubed obscene racist and sexist graffiti on school walls.

One of the tragedies of this dispute is that it was triggered by a left-wing Labour council attempting to ensure 'natural justice' and protect the rights of school students.

Manchester's Labour Council has stood shoulder to shoulder with the NUT in their fight for improved wages and conditions and against government demands for education cuts.

The Council has expanded education spending and even taken on an extra 70 to 80 teachers. In turn NUT members (with Poundswick to the fore) marched in support of the council's fight against cuts and supported the council's call to strike for the miners.

But without a clear strategy for involving the trade unions, even on day to day problems, Labour councils as 'employers', like Labour governments, end up in collision with their workforces.

The Poundswick dispute has demonstrated how these divisions will be seized on by the enemies of the labour movement.

The strike was a reaction to the high-handedness of the council as 'employer' immediately reacting to the teachers' refusal to teach the students by suspending them.

By Phil Frampton

The councillors, convinced of their case, should have won time to convince the teachers, many of whom were not aware of all the facts. Once the facts were heard and discussed out, there would have been little doubt that the Labour councillors were correct not to heed the headteacher's and governors' call to expel the five. No dispute with the NUT or NAS need have arisen.

No evidence exists to show that the five students were responsible for the most offensive and vile of the racist and sexist insults against the teachers. The worst of the graffiti was daubed by older youths no longer at the school, using a different colour paint.

The graffiti which the five at the school confessed to was hardly grounds for expulsion. The head accepted that older youths may have been involved, but in anger at the vile abuse, much of which was directed at himself, he acted on "guilt by association."

He was, however, aware that four others were involved, two of them girls, all responsible for no greater or lesser 'crimes'. Hardly justice!

What is worse the council were confronted by letters written by the headteacher on 18 June saying that he had confessions from the youths he claimed were responsible. Yet he did not actually interview three of the five till the following day!

On 18 June one of the black youths, was kept on his own in a room for 'interviewing' from 9.30am till 3.30pm. Then, with no con-



Lobby by striking and suspended Poundswick teachers of a City Council Education committee discussing the issue.

fession, he was 'interviewed' for two hours on the following day until he finally confessed to writing, 'Pitty' and 'Wham'.

Another strange part of the story is that when the head was confronted with the obscene graffiti he didn't wait for the Direct Works department or other teachers, but instead used 11 and 12 year-olds to wash it off the school walls.

These issues are only now reaching even the Poundswick teachers. Instead of explaining their case, the councillors fell into the legalistic trap of believing that their deliberations must be kept secret and were in effect 'sub-judice'. The Council's enemies meanwhile have had a feast of a time leaking selected 'evidence'.

Based on a partial understanding of events and angry at the suspensions the teachers at Poundswick dug their heels in.

There is massive sympathy amongst workers and in the labour movement for the plight of teachers faced with abuse and discipline problems at schools like Poundswick. Tory attacks on education spending have imposed enormous pressures on teachers, particularly in poor working class areas.

A recent report from the Parent Teachers Association showed that nationally 58 per cent of secondary school parents are asked to buy classroom essentials. They respond generously.

But the situation is so bad that 82 per cent of secondary school students have to share books. Added to this is the confusion and frustration of a generation of youth condemned to no future but unemployment or poverty wages in dead end jobs.

In the Poundswick area 30 per cent of men are out of work. Over 70 per cent of school students qualify for free school meals, and 40 per cent come from broken homes. There are cases in

IN THIS dispute there are many lessons for the labour movement. One which stands out above all others is that the state machinery at both local and national level has been fashioned to defend capitalism and the status quo.

A million checks and traps are laid to prevent the socialist movement from utilising the state machine, even at local level, for its own purposes.

The 1944 Education Act is known to be a contradictory minefield for local authorities—with Tory judges having their hands on all the detonators. The experiences of the GLC and Liverpool council campaigns demonstrate in their different ways how the law defends the

ideas and interests of capitalism.

The Labour council in Liverpool has demonstrated the only way to use the local state machine in the interests of the working class to the fullest extent is by ensuring the democratic involvement of all wings of the labour movement in council decisions and using the weight of the movement as the main vehicle for change.

Even there the inevitable problems encountered underline even more heavily the need to convince the working class, at every step, of the wisdom of the policies and tactics proposed. Social advances for the working class were not won by decree in parliament or council but by the conscious activity of the class.

Wythenshawe of children going shoeless, begging from door to door, turning up to primary schools needing to be properly clothed and fed before they can begin to be taught.

Faced with this nightmare it is little wonder that abuse and classroom disruption become the lot of many teachers. There is a special unit at Poundswick which the students call the "punishment room". The bars on the windows are a fitting testament to the way teachers are being turned into hapless warders of society's disillusioned youth.

Another element is that the militancy produced by the teachers' pay dispute spilled over into the 'graffiti' strike.

The council's 'legalistic' approach has also been reciprocated by the teachers' unions which have approached the issue as a simple employer/union battle. Unfortunately this lack of clarity has enabled the Tories to use the dispute to divert attention from the pay campaign.

As a result of all this the unions have failed to distinguish themselves from all manner of right wing flotsam and jetsam who have cluttered up the dispute for their own purposes. The slogan of 'Save our stan-

dards' for instance has been used to lay the blame for the education crisis on the Labour council's policies.

Most teachers, however, recognise that had the Tories, or Labour's old right wing, been in control of the town hall, there would have been major cuts in education spending and teachers' lives would have been much worse. And the reactionary policies of the "hang 'em and flog 'em" brigade would only provoke riots in the schools.

Unfortunately many of the parents of Poundswick students have been pushed towards reactionary attitudes and forces.

In an area which have 98 per cent council housing, local Tories have been able to turn the dispute into a frenzied and thuggish attack on local left councillors.

The ultra-reactionary Freedom Association has rushed to aid the parents group with a £1,000 donation to take legal action against the council.

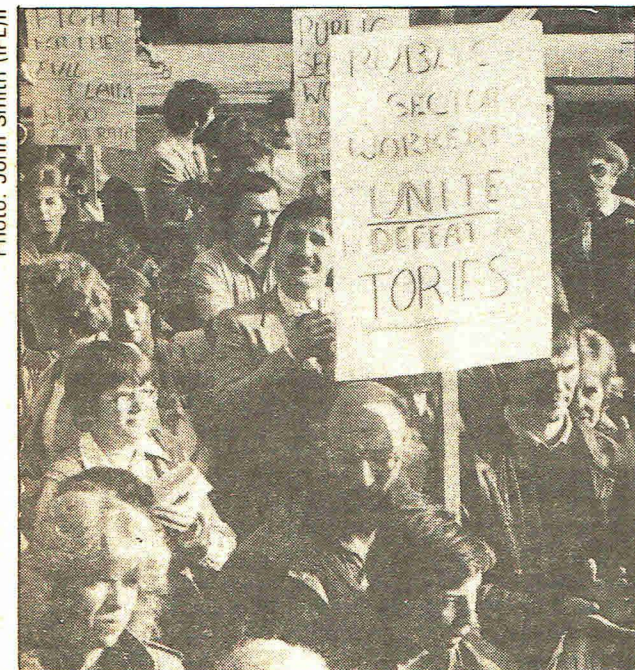
Militant supporters in Manchester have argued for the following steps to be taken to resolve the dispute:

- ★ Lift the suspension of the Poundswick teachers, with full back pay and no prejudicial remarks on their personal files
- ★ While the council refuses to lift the suspensions trade unionists must support the strike
- ★ After lifting of the suspensions the calling of a public inquiry run jointly by the council and the teachers' unions to make all sections fully aware of all the issues involved
- ★ Pending the outcome of the enquiry alternative educational arrangements must be made for the five school students
- ★ Support the right of school students to form their own union to represent them
- ★ Reaffirm the decision to

abolish corporal punishment whilst arguing that councils must provide extra facilities and staff to deal with racism, sexism and maladjustment. The basis must be laid for a new disciplinary and appeals procedure

★ Use the enquiry to show the need to break the destructive hold of capitalist ideas and interests on education, especially through the state

★ The labour movement must fight for education to be run by boards of democratically elected representatives from staff trade unions and local authorities, with minority representation from the school students union, parents associations and the local labour movement



NUT rally in Manchester last October calling for the teachers' full claim to be met.

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

Rally support for Silentnight

STRIKERS FROM the Silentnight Bedding Company, who've been on strike for five months came to London last week to attend the *Militant* rally in the Albert Hall. They were welcomed by *Militant* supporters from all over the country, and sold out of their badges bearing the slogans "our fight is your fight" and "Maggie's hero sacks 500", as well as distributing leaflets and making a bucket collection of £280.

Terry Bennett, chairman of FTAT No 92 branch gave £21 to *Militant's* fighting fund collection out of his strike pay—"a pound for every week on strike and a 21st birthday present to *Militant*" he said. £21 was also donated by other strikers.

Terry made a rousing speech from the platform, and brought cheers and cries of "More!" from the audience after singing his hilarious new version of the carol *Silent Night*.

Silentnight strikers are calling on all trade unionists to lend their support to the strike. Members of the shop

By Linden Stafford
(Skipton Labour Party)

workers' union USDAW are being asked to help in blacking the sale of Silentnight products, and maximum support is required from dockworkers, seamen and drivers in blacking raw materials—particularly timber, wire and foam.

Foam deliveries from Harrison Jones and Vitafoam must be stopped, and the supply of wire and timber to Silentnight must be brought to a complete halt.

In addition, strikers are calling on their leaders in the

Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union to ensure that no other factory in the Silentnight group—such as Perfecta in Wombwell and Lay-e-Zee in Batley—is doing Silentnight work.

After having made a loss of nearly half a million pounds this year, and with production down to an extremely low level, Tom Clarke and his company cannot continue indefinitely to lose money from this strike action. A concerted strategy and clear commitment from the FTAT leadership, will force Tom Clarke to concede victory to the strikers.

Meanwhile the local paper, the *Craven Herald*, has again given extra publicity to the strike and to the ideas of the *Militant*, by publishing in full a recent article in the *Militant* about an attempted witch-hunt in Skipton and Ripon CLP, as well as reprinting part of another article on the effect

of the strike on the company's profits.

Is the *Craven Herald's* editor now regularly buying the *Militant*? The Tory MP for Skipton and Ripon, John Watson, bought a copy on Skipton High Street the other week! Clearly the Tories appreciate which paper will keep them best informed!

A march and rally will take place on Saturday, 30 November, starting from Victory Park, Barnoldswick, Lancashire, at 10.30am. Children's toys and food parcels will be very welcome. *Militant* supporters are urged to attend what will be not just a local but a national event.

Please send messages of support and donations direct to: FTAT Craven/dale no 92 branch strike fund, c/o Ann King, 10 Rainhall Crescent, Barnoldswick, Colne, Lancashire.



Terry Bennett, Silentnight union branch chairman speaking at the *Militant* rally at the Albert Hall.

Photo: Mick Carroll

Birkenhead hospital campaigner demands stronger backing

ALAN WYNN, Chairman of the NUPE health workers on the Wirral, involved in the battle to keep St Catherine's hospital open, spoke to *Militant* about the support for the strike.

"We have been picketing here for over a month. The support has been magnificent from most sections of the movement, but we don't feel we are getting the full back-up of our full-time officials. The message from Area Office seems to be 'Ignore it and it will go away'."

"It took three weeks to get our banner down, only a small thing, but it matters to our members. We even found NUPE recruitment forms for workers who have taken our jobs through privatisation."

"But it is not just with the St Catherine's dispute that we have had problems. For the last two years we have put out a local journal 'NUPE Health Worker'. This has had a good effect in politicising our members."

"Now suddenly the Area Organiser starts to threaten to censor it, by saying it is too political. Incredibly our political voice is threatened at a time when the union is campaigning for a 'yes' vote in the political levy ballot."



St Catherine's strikers on the picket line

Assaults on firefighters play into bosses' hands

ON 14 October 1985 Fireman Roger May of the London Fire Brigade was attacked by youths when he attended a fire in Balham Hill, South London.

The attack was accredited to youths who apparently assaulted him for no other reason than that he was a fireman. Soon after, a fireman was slashed at a Hackney fire station.

Whilst the cause of these attacks aren't actually known, it is clear that firemen have been attacked at all the 'major' civil disturbances in Brixton, Handsworth and Tottenham.

If these actions are motivated by the desire to hit back at one of the arms of the state monster which has created the decay in the inner-city areas, as with the police, then the blows were misdirected.

Firefighters have no police function. At civil disturbances our role is to save life and extinguish fires.

If we face any kind of assault we simply withdraw. The Fire Brigades Union has always endeavoured to ensure this neutrality.

Attacks on firefighters could have two possible results.

Firstly, a wave of reaction throughout the ranks of the firefighters who will see their neutrality being threatened. Secondly, total withdrawal of fire crews from civil disturbances and the introduction of water-cannon—which would not be direct solely at the fires (if at all).

This kind of behaviour, as with all 'adventurism', simply leads to the strengthening of the state and division within the working class.

By Andy Dark
(Woolwich FBU)

For mass campaign against miners split

WARWICKSHIRE strike-breaker, NUM branch secretary Dick Emery, was guzzling champagne on Bonfire Night to celebrate a majority of Daw Mill miners voting to split from the NUM. No doubt the corks were popping at the NCB headquarters too, as MacGregor celebrated 861 more votes for his tame union.

But Emery has not yet won enough votes to form a new UDM area and although only 30 joined the strike at Daw Mill, 276 voted to stay with the NUM. Undoubtedly, the UDM will now start a recruitment drive throughout the South Midlands with the enthusiastic backing of the NCB. Already Coventry Colliery NUM branch has officially complained that UDM material is being circulated, while NUM members are threatened with disciplinary action for giving out NUM leaflets.

"Rumours have been circulated of 4-500 men being prepared to split at Coventry" says Coventry miner Barry Gardner, "but when the news from Daw

Mill came through, the lads were ready to lynch anyone speaking up for the UDM."

Weaker points for the NUM are Anstey workshops and Baddesley Colliery where very few joined the strike. As at Daw Mill, miners who didn't join the strike at Baddesley would support the NUM, but there is no guarantee that this would be a majority.

Baddesley miner Steve Fawcett reports that the Branch Secretary has said he'd have nothing to do with the UDM, "but he also said he'd never cross a picket line so I don't know what his word's worth."

The Baddesley Branch Committee postponed a Union meeting till the week after the Daw Mill ballot. "During the strike, one of them stood with the police at the top of the lane leading to the pit, telling them who he thought was going to work and who he thought was a picket so as they'd know who to stop, so you can see what some of them are like" Steve says.

It's now urgent that the NUM launches



Lynk and Prendergast, leaders of the UDM split at the NUM special conference—totally isolated as Arthur Scargill is given a standing ovation.

a campaign to stop the UDM in the Midlands. Arthur Scargill's recent visit must be the start of a campaign of leafletting and canvassing the pit, and the communities where miners and their families live.

Emery has already provided ammunition by refusing to debate with Scargill, and by the forecasts that the UDM will go for three-year wage deals, split the TUC and the Labour Party, and make more and more of the miners' wage dependent on incentive schemes.

The NUM must expose what this will mean to the long-term interests of all

miners, with the threat of privatisation meaning the prospect of American-style mining in Britain, leading to the sacrifice of safety and lives for the sake of the bonus.

Whatever happens to miners in the future, Dick Emery plans to be alright, Jack! He told the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* that he is considering voluntary redundancy when he becomes eligible in 18 months time.

"If I decided I wanted to stay, I should look for a better position in the UDM. A lot of positions will be coming up" he added.

Photo: Dave Sinclair

CPSA left fights back

Disgusting press attack on strikers

MAIL ON Sunday allegations about "possible misuse" of funds by Militant supporters during the long-running dispute at Newcastle Central DHSS were denounced by branch officers in a press release and an interview with Militant by branch secretary Barry Fuge.

There is no truth whatsoever in these allegations, they are a political attack backed up by right wing general secretary Alistair Graham.

By Ian Ilett

An accountants' report which concluded: "The strike fund appears to have been administered quite efficiently" also raised some questions about the strikers book-keeping. This has been distorted to misrepresent technical questions as suggesting dishonesty.

The real dishonesty—in the Mail's journalistic sharp practice—is evident in its headline *Mystery of Militant's 'missing' money*.

The headline implies that Militant is involved in the issues reported, which the story never pursues, let alone provides evidence of. By use of 'missing' it introduces an ambiguity which could easily be read to imply theft. This is continued in the introductory paragraph's reference to "possible misuse of strike funds."

The deliberate attempt to smear Militant is also clear in the running of an unrelated story alleging vote rigging by Militant supporters in the Knowsley North re-selection battle, in a box with the CPSA story.

Barry Fuge has been assured by the CPSA national treasurer John



Raywood that a press release will be issued by the union making it clear that there is no question of fraud and merely that another audit will be done to clarify technical questions about the books.

The truth of the matter is that the strikers waged a year-long battle under enormous opposition from the government, civil service management, the media, and even the union leadership. The same people are now attempting to smear the leaders of this magnificent struggle.

Difficult conditions

Barry Fuge explained that the origins of minor questions about the strike committee's books lay in their determined efforts to alleviate the hardship of the strikers and to maintain the momentum of picketing and the costs of maximising support for the strike.

Initially two accounts were set up by the strikers, one for the strike pay and the other for the levy which the union collected. Right from the beginning confusion was

caused by the union paying £64,000 strike pay into the levy account by mistake.

Another problem was that strike pay to be paid out on a Thursday often didn't arrive until Friday so an overdraft was run up and when the bank manager bounced cheques it was paid out of the levy fund. Then a hardship fund was started by the union and an account opened, but the NEC never paid the money into that account.

The Mail alleges that "unknown to national officials, including general secretary Alistair Graham, the branch also had a third account which at one time contained more than £14,000." Here, the reporter even manages to confuse the issues to no purpose at all. It should refer to a fourth account set up after the strike.

But the barrage of smears is evident in the fact that the branch never sought 'authorisation' to open any of the accounts. It opened accounts as it saw fit, in order to pursue the strike most effectively.

What the accountants refer to is an account set up after the strike, on the site at

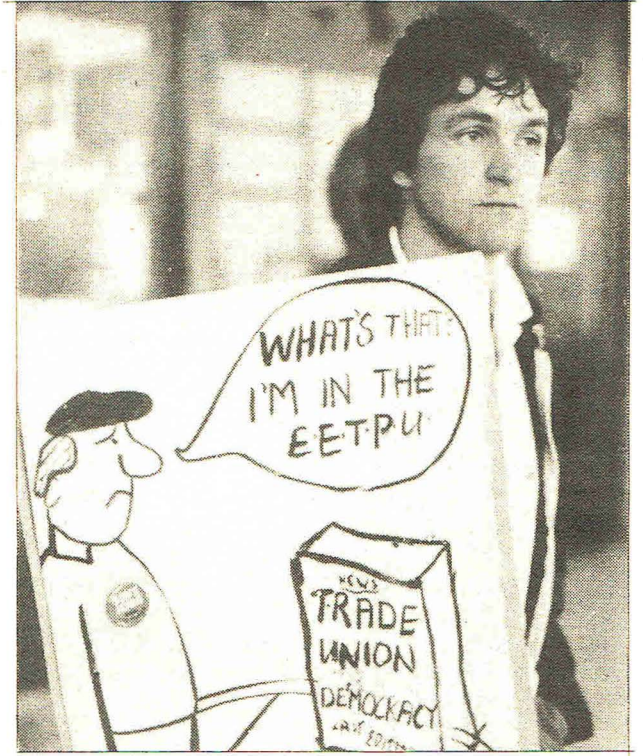
Longbenton, because branch officials, who do not own a car between them, could not get out of work to the bank used during the strike.

The need to have access to money still coming in for the strikers is illustrated by the fact that in May, months after the strike, the union's national executive sent £10,000 Xmas back pay for the strikers. It was put into the bank on site in order to pay out cash to workers in serious financial straits—who wouldn't have appreciated cheques.

Ironically, the strikers actually requested that head office send a qualified official down to help with the book-keeping early in the strike. Their request was rejected.

A union corporate trustee who visited them instead raised no criticisms of their accounts. This disgusting attack on workers who have gone through a long and bitter struggle must be fully repudiated by the CPSA leadership, especially general secretary Alistair Graham who is quoted in the Mail article.

EETPU election legal action



ELECTIONS FOR the Executive Council have recently taken place within the EETPU. In Scotland, Division 3 covering 8,500 members, the Broad Left candidate was a Militant Supporter, Jim Greer.

In an opponent's election address, sent to every member, Hector Barlow, the sitting Executive Councillor, made a libellous statement, "We have faced many problems together over the past ten years, not least of which was the suspension of Edinburgh Lodge after approximately £2,000 of the members' money was stolen."

"It surprises me therefore that my opponent deems himself fit for high office when he was censured by the disciplinary committee in respect of a dereliction of duty as Edinburgh Lodge Secretary." Many members, unaware of the real facts at the time of the election, took it to mean this. But the insinuation was entirely untrue. Jim Greer was in no way responsible for the loss of branch funds. With the backing of the Lodge, he vigorously contested the disciplinary proceedings against him, which were widely seen as an unjustified, politically motivated attack on left-wing officials by the national leadership.

The innuendo is clearly that Jim Greer was involved in stealing the members money. This is untrue.

The statement was a sign of desperation by a right wing under enormous pressure from the rank and file who are looking for change in the union. Greer obtained an interim

interdict (injunction) in the high court, preventing the counting of votes until a full hearing on his claim that the statement was defamatory and misleading members when voting. However, the union's counsel came into court and asked for the interim to be lifted and the action for defamation to be dismissed.

On a technicality the judge lifted the interim; he said that Greer had provisions under the rules to complain to the Executive. The EC subsequently rejected the charge. But the judge refused to dismiss the action for defamation of character. The judge was making the point that counting the votes would settle the issue one way or another.

In the event it was a 40% poll, the highest recorded in the union's history of electing by postal ballot, and Greer needed just 470 votes to win.

However, as the Executive have rejected the claim that the statement is libellous and misleading to members, Greer has no alternative but to pursue the matter in the courts. Legal aid is not available and therefore an appeal has been launched to finance the action.

The appeal has already received a response from EETPU members, and other trade unionists, who are nauseated by the right wing's methods. Please send any donations to: EETPU National Appeal, c/o Edin Trades Council 14 Picardy Pl, Edinburgh.

By an EETPU member

CPSA Broad left set for success

THE CPSA Broad Left conference last Saturday was a big success, showing how quickly the ground has been made up since the Communist Party-backed split-off, the so-called "Broad Left '84", handed the union over to the right wing.

240 attended, representing all areas of the country. 119 motions were submitted, showing the political life and interest which exists.

On pay, conference rejected the Megaw-type settled pay system being proposed by the government and backed by Alistair Graham. It backed a motion proposing a campaign for a minimum wage of £104, abolition of incremental scales, a flat rate increase of £20pw, reduction in hours to 35pw, and six weeks leave.

Motions

Motions were passed proposing blacking of the Fowler plans; that the political fund ballot should be linked to re-affiliation to



By Steve Dunk

the Labour Party.

On GCHQ it called for a 24-hour general strike if any trade unionist there is sacked, with civil servants staying out until the government backed down, with wider support being called upon as necessary.

On union democracy it supported the demand for the five-yearly election of senior officials which the Broad Left has already won be extended to assistant secretaries.

The most controversial

debates were on motions defining the Broad Left's approach to the Labour Party and trade union leaders, and trade union ballots.

Conference rejected very left sounding phraseology which in practice would have aligned it with ultra-left groupings which have isolated themselves from the real struggles to win the members to a fighting leadership and socialist policies.

Ballots

On union ballots it accepted a motion stressing that "reliance on ballots" is no substitute for a fighting campaign, but rejected the blanket demand that all decisions on strike action be taken at mass meetings as impractical and ignoring the sometimes strong feelings of the members on an issue. Given the current position for instance it could mean asking the members, as a matter of principle, to forego strike pay.

The candidacies of John Macreadie for general secretary and Terry Adams for deputy were endorsed. The date of the election will be decided by Alistair Graham but must come in 1986.

A motion censuring the "Broad Left '84" was passed. A united left is understood to be the only way to defeat the right wing but joint slates were rejected in favour of an open door to rank and file Broad Left '84 members who now see the disgraceful role of their leadership.

CPSA Broad Left now has 590 members. 200 have been recruited in the last twelve months. "Broad Left '84" took a maximum of 120 members from the Broad Left when it split. They have declined to well below that now as they have swung right-wards, tailing Alistair Graham and hysterically attacking the Broad Left. This Broad Left conference shows where the real future of CPSA lies.

Council Worker

Issue No 1 Nov. 1985

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Militant

**Johnson-Matthey:
One law for the rich**

Page 2

Jobs for all youth

JOBS FOR youth will be one of the key issues at the next general election.

By Linda Douglas
(LPYS National Committee)

If Labour is to win the loyalty of the thousands of new voters, it will have to convince them it can offer them a future.

The Labour Party Young Socialists have been to the fore in campaigning in support of the demand, passed at Labour Party conferences in 1983 and 1984, for a guaranteed job for every young person finishing a YTS scheme.

At a "Labour listens to youth" rally in London last Saturday, John Hird, National Chairman of the LPYS asked Neil Kinnock why he had spoken out against this demand. A recent survey showed that 93 per cent of YTS trainees thought such a job guarantee would be reasonable.

Kinnock's reply shocked young workers in the audience. "Everyone, including John Hird", he said "knows that a Labour government elected in a capitalist society where manufacturing has collapsed under the Tories and where so much of economic control is not in the government's hands, cannot possibly guarantee a job for all trainees who complete their scheme.

"To put forward such a demand, knowing it to be impossible, is cruelly deceit-



School students on strike in Manchester against YTS slave labour and for real jobs.

ful. It is fantasising. Such demands are 'impossibilist' and intentionally so. People who put such demands forward are exploiting the real fears of young people for their own ends and offering nothing practical."

The LPYS rejects the charge that it is 'fantasising' or 'deceitful'. If all the commitments in Labour's programme are added up—rail

electrification, house-building, restoring the NHS, sewerage renewal—you have a massive programme of useful public works.

Plan of production

A programme big enough to undo the damage of the Thatcher years would require a huge influx of skill-

ed and semi-skilled labour, and the mobilisation of vast amounts of finance. This would not be possible without taking the major banks out of private ownership. Equally a national house-building corporation would need to mobilise the economic resources in the most effective way.

Nationalisation of the banks, financial institutions,

building and building supply industries under the democratic control and management of the workers, would provide the hub for a plan of production to carry out such a programme of public work. On such a basis jobs for the young could be guaranteed.

Lessons

Kinnock says that no Labour government elected under capitalism can guarantee jobs for youth, but we are not committed to maintaining capitalism. If it cannot even guarantee everyone a job, a house, a decent standard of living, we are committed to putting an end to capitalism on the lines of Clause IV, part 4 of the party constitution.

The LPYS insist on telling the truth. We call on all working people to vote Labour into office. But we are concerned to avoid the fate of the Labour governments of Wilson and Callaghan. On Saturday Kinnock answered criticism

of the last Labour government by saying that you would prefer 50 years of Labour government like the last one to another five months of Thatcher's government.

That is pure fantasy! Governments like Wilson's and Callaghan's cannot possibly last for 50 years. By disillusioning millions of Labour voters, such governments open the door to Tory reaction. That is why we lost in 1979.

We want a Labour victory. We want a socialist Labour government which will last for 50, 100 years or more. But that is 'impossibilist' unless we learn the lesson of all past Labour governments. Either Labour sets out to break the undemocratic power of big business, or big business breaks Labour governments.

We want to avoid the fate of Mitterrand in France and Gonzalez in Spain, so that workers in this country can enjoy the benefits of living in a harmonious, democratic socialist society.



Neil Kinnock argues with LPYS members at Saturday's 'Labour listens to youth' rally. Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (Report)

Threat to Young Socialists

THERE IS growing evidence that the Labour Party leadership may attempt to remove Andy Bevan as the party's National Youth Officer.

Under the party's reorganisation plans, there are moves to merge the posts of National Youth Officer and party Student Organiser. This was confirmed to Labour Party Young Socialists national representatives by the party's general secretary Larry Whitty on Tuesday.

In an act of political victimisation, it is clear that the leadership would favour the student organiser for the new post. They would oppose Andy Bevan, a left-winger, and union convenor at Labour Party Headquarters, veteran of the fight to oust right wing MP Reg Prentice—who then defected to the Tories—in Newham North East in the late 1970's.

Andy Bevan opposes the move, as do the LPYS who are insistent that the

undemocratic organisational methods common to Labour's student organisation, NOLS, are not introduced into the LPYS.

The party should be giving more resources to the youth, not scrapping the only paid officer's position. All LPYS and Labour Club branches must inform the party general secretary of their total opposition to any such plans.

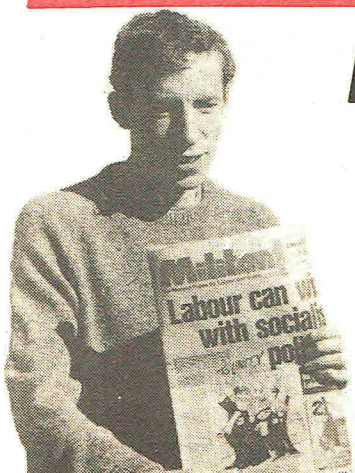
Liverpool

workplaces to explain the council's position and win support for the campaign. The membership of the Labour party and the trade unions must be used in mass canvasses, leafletting and public meetings to take the issues to the mass of the Liverpool working class, and especially to the workforce in the private sector.

The fight should be taken to the Tory government. Their robbery of £350

million from the city in the last six years has caused the dire financial crisis now. A mass lobby of Parliament by council workers, tenants and ratepayers must be organised to demand the government give back a fraction of this to balance the books.

Above all, the city council and council workers must now be given the backing of the labour movement nationally. Liverpool's fight today is not one of their making. It is a city under siege. But Liverpool's fight today is every Labour authority's fight tomorrow.



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