

Tories refuse talks

LIVERPOOL LABOUR MP's have accused Kenneth Baker of 'vindictiveness and intransigence' after the Environment Secretary refused to meet Liverpool City Councillors.

"There will be no change in my position" he told the MPs at a meeting on Tuesday: "There will be no extra money for Liverpool City Council this year. It is for Liverpool to sort out its own problems and get its budget

straight in line with the Stonefrost report."

Terry Fields, MP for Broadgreen, argued that the fat had been trimmed right away from the bone: "With 65,000 jobs gone since 1978, Liverpool City Council is not going to add to that. There is nothing the council can do either in the short term or the long term without the injection of cash by the government.

"They have had £30

million through the task force" replied Baker, "£25 million for dock redevelopment and that was it. There is no more to be discussed." He said enormous efforts had been made to find a way through this business, "with assistance from Neil Kinnock, John Cunningham and now Stonefrost."

After the meeting Eric Heffer, MP for Walton, accused Baker of washing his hands of Liverpool and its

people: "He is not prepared to talk in any shape or form."

Terry Fields told *Militant*: "The government is preparing, through the sacrifice of Liverpool this year, to have no resistance from other local authorities next year and the year after. Other cities have used devices like capitalisation to hide from the people the true extent of the effects of the cuts in rate support grant. But as sure as night follows day, they are going to be suffering next year."

Arms talks
—page 7

NUPE says:
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Kinnock and
'impossibilism' — pages 8 and 9

THE TORIES have brought the City of Liverpool to the moment of crisis. Baker's intransigent refusal to provide the £30 million that the councillors are demanding means that the city council's money has now run out.

Unless additional money is secured, workers will no longer be paid; schools face closure, as their boilers are drained. The emergency committee set up by the Labour councillors and the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee is now in operation to ensure that those in greatest need are cared for.

Volunteers from the workforce are coming forward to take part in the campaign starting next week to take the council's message to the people of Liverpool.

That message is that the Tory government, representing the wealthiest minority in society, the big businessmen and bankers who live in luxury, is starving the city with the worst poverty, unemployment and slum housing.

Since 1979, the Tories have given the top five per cent of taxpayers £13,000 million off their tax bills, yet they are not prepared to give a fraction of that to enable the Liverpool council to continue its unrivalled programme of house-building, job creation and education expansion.

There is still a possibility that a last-minute settlement may be reached through the Association of Metropolitan Authorities. If a way can be found of balancing the council's budget through extra cash, without renegeing on the council's commitments to save jobs and services, then it could be acceptable. There can however be no question of accepting the ideas of the Stonefrost report, with its options of job cuts, house-building

By Pat Craven

delays and rent and rate rises.

Although members of several council unions have voted to accept the Stonefrost report, that has only been as a result of confusion spread by union leaders that it is a 'painless' solution to the council's crisis. Senior stewards from the largest union, the General, Municipal and Boilermakers (GMBATU) have remained opposed to Stonefrost, after a 4½ hour meeting with the general secretary-designate John Edmonds completely failed to convince them to change their position.

Fight on

One GMBATU branch which previously opposed strike action in support of the council has voted to oppose Stonefrost, and there are reports that the electricians' and plumbers' union has done so too.

The fight is now on to force the Tory government to provide the money Liverpool needs. National action is now crucial, as the Liverpool councillors and the workforce make a stand on behalf of the whole British labour movement. They are facing a grim winter of struggle, but are prepared to make sacrifices to win the battle not just for their own jobs, but the jobs of all council workers and the services they provide throughout the country.

Crisis city fights for cash



Photo: Militant

Liverpool's Labour council has fought for the working class of the city by:

- ★ Saving 1,000 jobs and creating 1,500 new jobs.
- ★ Not increasing the rents by one penny or carrying through massive rate increases to compensate for Tory cuts.
- ★ Building some 3,800 houses with thousands more planned.
- ★ Employing 100 YTS trainees at trade union rates of pay with a permanent jobs guaranteed at the end.
- ★ Introducing a 35-hour week for the council workforce.
- ★ Opening six new nursery classes and building four new sports centres.



What council has done

Help us to help the council

MILITANT IS stepping up its campaigning support of Liverpool council. More leaflets are being printed and more public meetings organised. The *Mersey Militant* is being published regularly.

But we need more cash for this. We are restricted by our lack of resources. But the battle in Liverpool will not wait for us to get more money. We

need more cash now!

So, if you haven't donated a week's wage to the Marxist Daily Building Fund this year or given an additional £10 donation to finance our work in Liverpool, we are asking you do do so now.

Militant is the only paper that argues the case for Liverpool council. Give us the finances to continue the work.

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

North East shipyard victory

WORKERS AT Austin and Pickersgill shipyard voted by a three to one majority for strike action to resist redundancies and forced management to withdraw the notices and agree to all the union demands.

By Tony Carty

(Chairman, Austin and Pickersgill CSEU, personal capacity)

British Shipbuilders have completely ignored the standing agreement on redundancies agreed at national level and are attempting to force through compulsory redundancies or compulsory transfers.

The fitters, blacksmiths and joiners affected by redundancies held meetings

recording votes of six to one overall for strike action, showing their determination to fight for their jobs.

In preparation for the vote each shop steward held meetings or individual discussions with their members in order to get across the union case. If the campaign is done before the vote we have nothing to fear from ballots.

This is not just a question of the 37 jobs at stake but the future of trade unionism in the shipyards.

Compulsory transfers would be used by British Shipbuilders to eradicate the £20 differential between Austin and Pickersgill and other yards. British Shipbuilders have already tried a wage freeze to cut this differential.

In addition things like selective overtime, compulsory shift work, more subcontracting, temporary labour and no voluntary machine work would lay the basis for an end to effective trade unionism in Austin and Pickersgills.

Wide attack

A&P is the first yard not facing closure to be attacked by compulsory redundancies. With the longest order book in the merchant sector this was clearly an attempt to set the tone for the rest of British shipbuilding and introduce compulsory redundancies across the industry.

Shipyard workers have bent over backwards for British Shipbuilders in recent years. Our living standards

have gone down through wage freezes and low increases. From second to 27th in the wages league.

We have seen changes in working practices, subcontracting and a contraction of the workforce from 10,000 to 2,800 on the Wear in recent years. British Shipbuilders also want to mothball the Deptford yard with 250 redundancies and sub-contract work at Sunderland Shipbuilders.

Shipyard workers have given enough, now it is time to make a stand. Unless compulsory redundancies are fought off, trade unionism in our industry will be dead. British Shipbuilders will ride roughshod over all we have fought for in recent years.

Scottish steel closure threat campaign vital

BSC HAVE recently announced they are going to axe 211 jobs at the Clydesdale steel and trade works at Bellshill, and a further 89 jobs at Imperial works, Airdrie.

By Colin Brown

(Motherwell North LPYS)

As well as this the workforce at Clydesdale face a two or three week loss in December in the run-up to Christmas.

British Steel Corporation management blame the job losses on a fall in orders and the steel unions are using the 90-day consolidation period to try and salvage something from the situation but the outlook is gloomy.

These redundancies have come as a shock to an area where unemployment is already over 20 per cent.

The steel industry is supposed to be nationalised for the good of the workforce and the community yet BSC management treat workers and their families with contempt, hiring and firing at will.

With the closure of Gartcosh on the horizon as well,

the Labour Party and the trade unions especially the ISTC must be prepared to stand and fight and mount a campaign for effective industrial action to prevent all closures and job losses in Scotland.

Unfortunately the SNP are far ahead of Labour in publicising the threat to steel with posters all over the place, and a recent Triple Alliance demonstration in Glasgow looking more like an SNP march.

We can't wait til the next Labour government to save our industries. Scotland and Lanarkshire in particular, are in grave danger of turning into social and industrial deserts.

Union campaign forces discrimination retreat

SANDWELL education authority with 3,500 teachers have been forced to back down from their anti-gay stance by the local NUT and NALGO branches.

The education authority in Birmingham outraged local trade unionists by saying that gay men could not be trusted to care for young

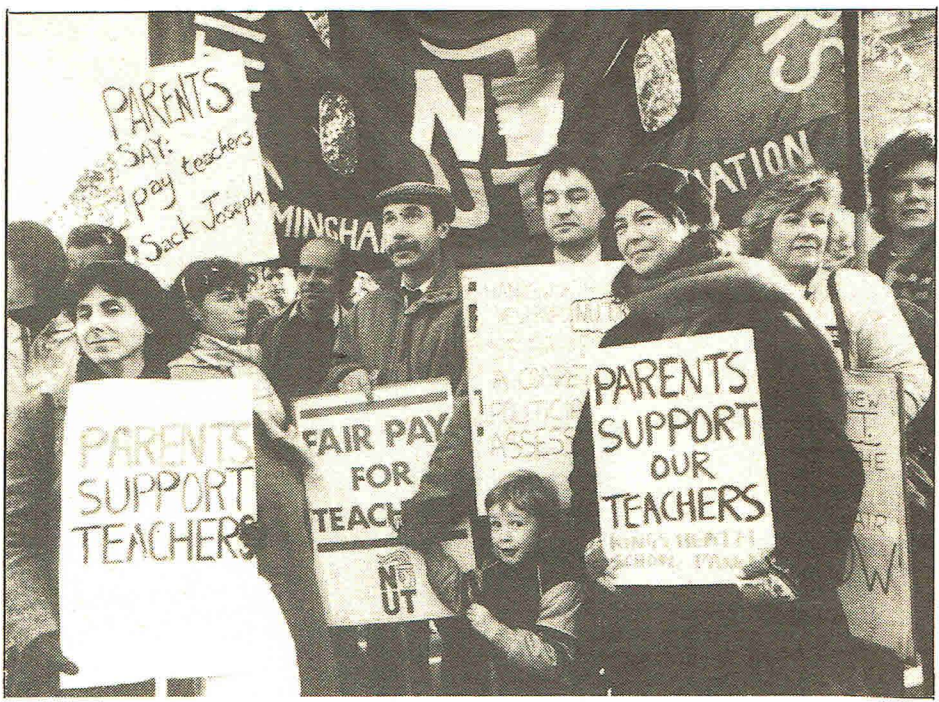
boys and refused to include them in the council's equal opportunities programme.

After a joint campaign the NUT and NALGO forced the Labour authority to include sexual orientation as a form of discrimination, giving protection to job applicants and employees.

Teachers dispute continues

Birmingham parents picket schools conference attended by Sir Keith Joseph. They support the teachers' pay claim and rightly blame the government for school disruption.

Photo: John Harris (IFL)



Addenbrookes

Move to end dispute blocked

ON FRIDAY 14 November the NUPE area health committee met to discuss the Addenbrookes dispute in Cambridge.

After an incredible 14 months of not discussing the dispute on this committee, the December meeting was brought forward.

There was only one reason for this—to end the dispute and get the cleaners to accept the offer of being redeployed.

The officers had already attempted to defeat it at branch level, which failed. The branch made it clear that their intention was to fight on.

After an intervention by Militant supporters at the hospital, the recommendation to accept the offer was defeated by one vote. The officers should be showing a lead to these workers. They have shown their determination to continue the struggle and must be supported.

By a Militant reporter

Midlands TGWU elections

IMPORTANT elections are imminent in the Transport and General Workers Union. General Executive, regional committee and trade group committee seats will be contested.

The right wing, still smarting from the defeat of George Wright who is now busy leading the witch-hunt of Militant supporters in Wales are hoping to shift the balance of the GEC to the right.

Region 5 (Midlands) has been a traditional right wing base and the left has a chance in these elections of loosening their grip.

The most important contest is in the Birmingham/Black Country, where there is a straight right/left fight. Ray Sherlock is the broad left candidate here for the General Executive and all efforts must be exerted by union activists to see he is elected.

A number of Militant supporters are also standing in the Midlands for other committees, with broad left backing.

Ian Schofield (Central Division) and Pete Heywood (N. Div) are standing for the Automotive Trade Group. Alan Jones is standing for the General Workers National Committee and Bill Geoghegan for the Regional Committee.

This is an excellent opportunity to inflict a serious defeat on the right wing. The campaign also shows the need for an open and campaigning broad left to make the TGWU a more democratic and fighting union.

By Bill Mullins

(West Bromwich TGWU district committee, personal)

Scottish and Newcastle

THE STRIKE at the Scottish and Newcastle brewery in Moss Side in Manchester previously reported in Militant is now into its eighth week.

40 production workers, all members of the Transport and General Workers Union, are protesting over management attempts to impose harsher working conditions as a prelude to a massive expansion of the plant.

Management demands include a three shift system, compulsory overtime, fewer meal breaks etc.

The strike has meant that

production at this high technology plant has completely stopped, costing the company an estimated £200,000 a week.

When Scottish and Newcastle took over the brewery two years ago workers braced themselves for a battle with the management who had a reputation for being inflexible. Up til then there had been no history of industrial disputes at the plant.

Donations and messages of support should be sent to: Tony Morbey, c/o Transport House, 1 The Crescent, Salford M5.

International Silentnight support

AS THE Silentnight strike enters its sixth month, the dispute is being spread from the factories at Barnoldswick and Sutton to the international trade union movement.

By Linden Stafford
(Skipton Labour Party)

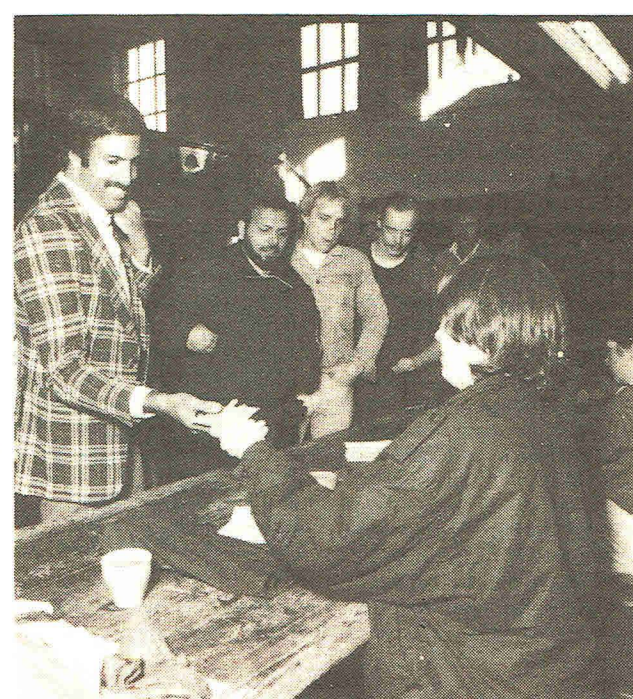
Silentnight FTAT convenor, Charlie Gee, was in Rotterdam last week, gaining support at an international dockworkers' conference, and also contacting other trade unionists in northern Europe.

All the timber for Silentnight beds comes from the continent, and FTAT members are expecting this timber soon to be blacked overseas as well as at ports in Britain.

FTAT shop stewards have this week been putting pressure on their officials to organise a more effective campaign on blacking.

They appreciate that fundraising alone will not win this dispute, and are therefore demanding that delegations of strikers be sent to wire manufacturers, to gain support from workers there, and that efforts to black timber be stepped up.

Shop stewards are also demanding a clarification of the present state of Co-op blacking, as well as urging more determined approaches to USDAW members in other shops selling Silent-



Silentnight strikers

Photo: Phil McHugh

night products.

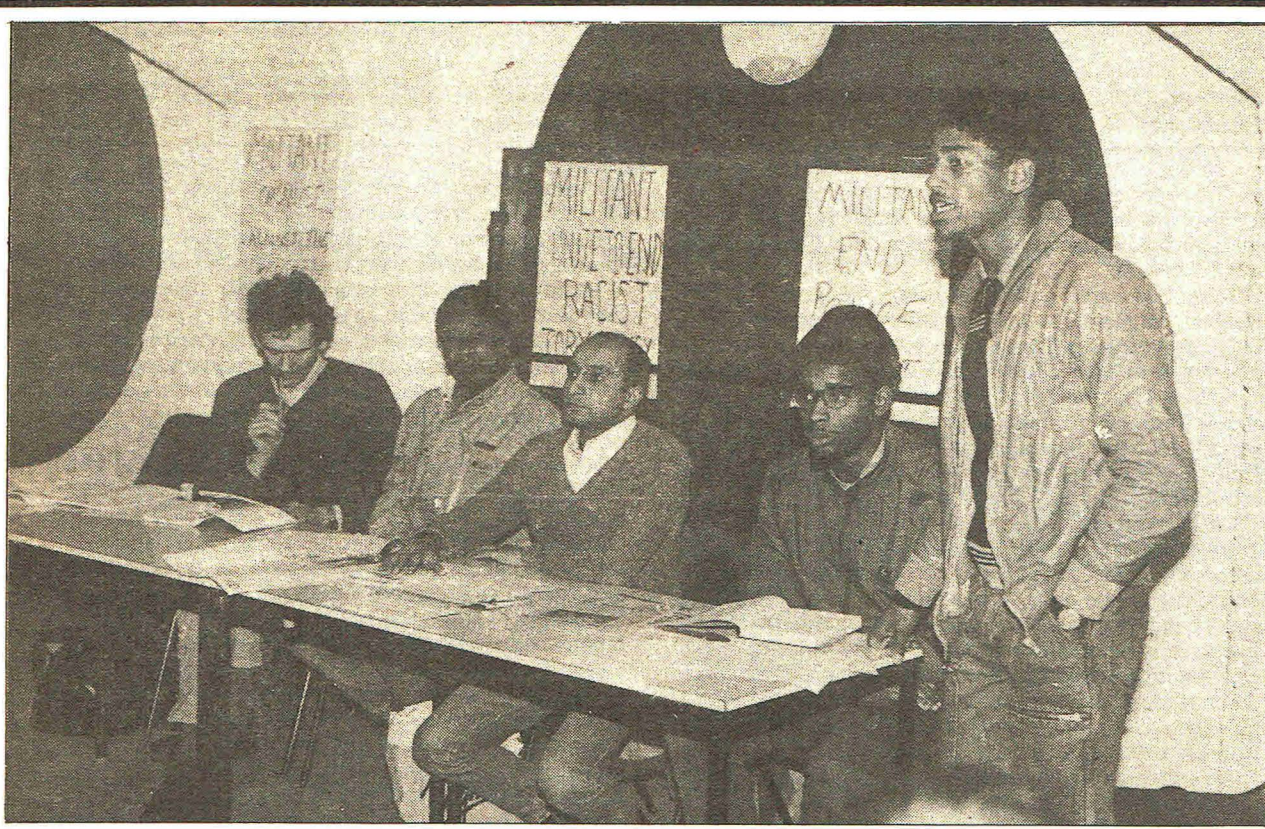
On Tuesday 26 November, the Broad Left Organising Committee are holding a public meeting on the Silentnight strike at 7.30pm in the Labour Rooms at Keighley, West Yorkshire.

Rally

Strikers are calling on all their supporters to show solidarity with them at the big march and rally to be held in Barnoldswick on Saturday 30 November.

With Christmas on the way, it is important to help strikers give their families a good Christmas, so toys and food parcels, as well as financial donations, should be brought along to the rally. It starts 10.30am in the Victory Park, Barnoldswick, Lancashire.

Please send messages of support and donations direct to: FTAT Crvendale No 92 Branch Strike Fund, c/o Ann King, 10 Rainhall Crescent, Barnoldswick, Colne, Lancashire.



50 people attended a *Militant* readers' meeting in Brixton after the 'justice for blacks' march. It was addressed (left to right) by Lynn Walsh from the *Militant* Editorial Board, Emerson Webster (Groce Family Support Campaign), Kevin Fernandes (LPYS), Presley Antoine (Jarrett Family Public Inquiry Campaign), and Delroy Lindo (Winston Silcott Defence Campaign). Photo: Mick Carroll.

General strike in Greece

AROUND 200,000 workers marched through the streets of Athens on 14 November, during a massive general strike against the Socialist Party (PASOK) government's austerity policies.

The one-day strike call from the General Confederation of Greek Workers got an 80 per cent response from workers throughout the whole country. Public sector workers plan another 24-hour strike on 28 November.

Papandreou's PASOK government

won two great election victories in 1981 and 1985, enthralling voters with the promise of 'change'. Workers did not consider the policies of a sliding scale of wages and pensions or of reduced working hours to save and create jobs were "impossible". They knew it was impossible to live in a permanent crisis-ridden capitalist society.

But the bosses have once more put pressure on the PASOK government to introduce a pay freeze and other anti-working class measures. Papandreou was elected on a far more

radical programme than Neil Kinnock seems to be planning. But unless the power of big business is decisively broken the ruling class will demand greater and greater sacrifices to sustain their profits.

Workers will back every move forward by the PASOK government, but they will organise against any retreat. Marxist ideas are gaining new respect. The Marxist journal *Xekinima* is selling at a record level, and is expanding from a monthly to a fortnightly.

**Support
your
workers
paper**

WORKERS' PAPERS have always faced persecution and suppression by the ruling class and their agents. *Militant* has been heavily penalised in legal fees for printing the story of TGWU members in dispute with James White, right wing Labour MP for Glasgow Pollok. We appeal to workers and especially the trade union movement to defend our right to speak the truth.

Do not let our crucial work of supporting Liverpool City Council, victimised miners and other workers in struggle be undermined by the massive legal costs we will be forced to pay out in the next few weeks. We make an urgent appeal to the movement for funds. When trade unions are approached and the issues clearly explained, we are confident of a generous response, as shown by some of this week's donations.

Thanks to: TGWU 6/51 Oldham, £25; TGWU 9/8 Leeds, £5; Killoch SCEBTA Ayrshire, £20; COHSE 285 Wakefield, £25; ASTMS London Publishing Branch members, £18; Kent supporters, £20; Barnsley, £4.90.

Send donations to: *Militant* Defence Fund, 5 Cremer House, Deptford, London SE8 4SB.

Young Socialists lead 600 against Front

A NATIONAL mobilisation of the fascist National Front aimed to hold a march and rally on 16 November in Stockport.

It was met by a counter-demonstration of over six hundred with a big LPYS contingent from Manchester.

After meeting at the town hall the anti-fascist demonstration marched around the town led by the LPYS.

The counter-demonstration was preceded by two days of action by the LPYS in the town centre when

thousands of leaflets were given out.

The fascists were to speak on the steps of the town hall after the Tory and Liberal controlled council had decided to let fascists use public buildings.

Police

About 40 fascists arrived at the station and were escorted away by a larger number of police amid deafening chants of anti-fascist slogans from the crowd outside. Police horses moved into the crowd and 13 arrests were made, mostly charged with 'breaches of

the peace'. One fascist was arrested for possession of an axe, a claw hammer and a snooker cue.

With police protection including assistance from the Tactical Aid Group, the fascists met near an underground car park behind the town hall. But the strength of feeling shown by the counter-demonstration will make them think twice about coming to Stockport again.

By Hilary Lewis
(Stockport Labour Party,
personal capacity)

Fascists attack meeting

NATIONAL FRONT supporters attempted to break up a meeting organised by the Labour Party Young Socialists in the Newcastle area.

The meeting had been called to protest at the growing number of racial attacks in the West End of Newcastle. Seventy people packed out the meeting room in a local school to hear Kevin Miles and Dave Clelland.

Kevin explained the need to fight the fascists through the Labour and trade union movement. Dave Clelland, Labour candidate for the Tynebridge by-election outlined the need to stop racism before it becomes a

widespread problem in the area.

Six fascists including a full time organiser attempted to enter the meeting room in order to disrupt the discussion. When asked to leave by stewards they launched a vicious and unprovoked attack on the people in the hallway.

Fortunately the Labour Party Young Socialists had anticipated the possibility of attempts to disrupt the meeting and the fascists were thrown out of the school but not before some of the windows had been broken and the caretaker badly beaten. YS members held onto one of the fascists responsible for

the damage while his henchmen fled into the nearby council houses.

In a desperate attempt to cause further confusion a smoke bomb was thrown along with a potato studded with razor blades. By the time the police arrived the fascists had gone and YS members had to clear up the mess that was left behind.

Young Socialists in the area have made it clear that they will not be intimidated and that they will continue to repulse any attacks on meetings.

By a Militant reporter

No hope for jobs in Lawson's dream-world

CHANCELLOR LAWSON is living in an 'Alice in Wonderland' world. In his Autumn Economic Statement he claims that 1986 will be "the fifth successive year of growth at an average of three per cent a year."

"What is beyond doubt", he boasted, "is that we are now achieving the steady growth with low inflation which successive governments have sought in vain for a generation."

His only reference to dole queues is a passing comment that unemployment is "still at a sadly high level".

The four million without work, the bottom ten per cent of wage earners who have taken a cut in real earnings since 1979 and the tenants of council houses which require £20 billion worth of repairs know how different is the real world. So do the workers in the Health Service, education and local government who have seen vital services cut to the bone.

Juggled

Lawson has juggled with figures to give a totally false picture. He bases his "five successive years of growth" from 1981 and including 1986 when any growth is yet to happen! In the two previous years, 1979 and 1980, there was a drop of four per cent in production. By 1983 production had only got back to where it was when the Tories came to power. If average growth is calculated from 1979, the economy has been 'surging' forward at...one per cent a year.

That includes growth in services and North Sea oil. Manufacturing industry is still producing less than in 1979 and less even than in 1974. It is manufacturing industry which creates wealth, not services, and revenue from North Sea oil production has reached its peak and is now set to fall.

British capitalism is now a massive net importer of manufactured goods, with a deficit of £4 billion a year. Only oil and the export of services like banking are keeping the economy in surplus, helped by a fall in world commodity prices and the high value of sterling.

Yet now a forecast in the Midland Bank Review predicts that by 1988 there will be an overall trade deficit of £5 billion, equal to

1½ per cent of gross domestic production. This would force either a devaluation of the pound, which would push up the cost of imports and cause inflation, or austerity measures to cut spending and/or raise taxes, which would put an end to the Tory pretence of sustained economic growth.

Lawson's statement has been presented as a 'U-turn'. Rather than still calling for overall restraint of public spending, he talks of "significant additions" to some expenditure programmes (though others remain tightly held back). But these minute increases are to be financed not from the benefits of economic expansion, but by further sales of nationalised industries, which he also hopes will allow tax cuts for the better-off in time for the next general election. Reflecting the unpopularity of the government, Lawson has been forced to appear to be changing course, but there is no fundamental change.

For the unemployed and the low paid there is nothing. Even the president of the bosses' union, the CBI, has expressed concern that more is not being spent on measures that would directly lead to more jobs. That strategy, however, is no more a solution to the crisis of British capitalism than Lawson's. Handing out government subsidies to big business, the favoured policy of the Labour right wing, has been proved to solve nothing and only adds to the problem of inflation.

Under the system of the private monopoly ownership of industry, finance and land there can be no escape for the British economy. Even the minimal growth rates of the last three years have been the result of the good fortune to have discovered oil in the North Sea and the fringe benefits from last year's boom in the US economy.

That boom is now tailing off and the oil is starting to run out. A programme to take over big monopolies with compensation on the basis of need is the only socialist way out of this dead end. The planning of the economy and industry under democratic workers' control and management, could then develop and expand the economy for the benefit of society as a whole.

By Pat Craven

Mulhearn support in Knowsley North

TONY MULHEARN, President of Liverpool District Labour Party has had early success in the reselection contest in Knowsley North CLP.

Four out of the ten wards in the constituency have nominated him. Sitting MP Robert Kilroy-Silk has three nominations, and Keva Coombes, leader of Merseyside County Council has one. Two wards are still to decide.

Tony Mulhearn also has four nominations from trade

union branches and affiliated organisations. Half of the Labour Party wards and the big Birds Eye TGWU branch have passed resolutions condemning Kilroy-Silk for calling for the constituency to be closed down. This has sent a shock wave through the camp of the sitting MP. The closing date for nominations is only a week off and the selection meeting is on 10 December.

By a Militant reporter

Unions must back Liverpool councillors

THE TORY government, backed by the most rabid and dishonest campaign in the press, has brought the city of Liverpool to crisis point. The theft of £350 million of rate support and other grants from the council since 1979 has left the city council without the money to maintain the jobs and services which they were elected to preserve.

The government of big business is not prepared to spend £30 million to maintain services to the most deprived city in Western Europe. Yet it spends £72 million a year just to store 'surplus' wheat and barley. £30 million is less than the profits ICI make in a fortnight, yet the Tories are not even prepared to discuss the needs of the people of Liverpool with the elected Labour councillors.

In the past week, however, it has not been Tory ministers who have been face-to-face with the councillors, demanding that they sack workers, delay house building, put up rents and rates and cut services. National trade union leaders have taken on the job of trying to pressure the councillors into complying with the Tory demands. Members of these unions will be incensed that when they

should be backing the council to the hilt to help save their members' jobs, these leaders are demanding that they carry out redundancies and carry out the Tories' dirty work for them.

John Edmonds, general secretary designate of the General, Municipal and Boilermakers' Union, has effectively absolved the Tories from blame, saying that "if as a result of tactical errors and tactical misjudgement Liverpool slips into financial crisis and from that into chaos, the responsibility must be on the council", a remark quoted in the following day's editorial in the *Tory Daily Express* to back its own condemnation of the councillors.

Local leaders of the white-collar workers and the Transport and General Workers Union are still peddling the idea that the council has a way out of the crisis which would involve no more than a modest rate rise, with no cuts or redundancies, based on the 'Stonefrost' report. In fact this report offers nothing of the kind.

A solution based on this report, which the national union leaders are now demanding would mean the council abandoning its election pledges and making the workers pay for the Tories' crisis.

Already the council has achieved more than any other Labour authority in the country. They have built far more houses; saved and created jobs, while others have been cutting them; opened six new nurseries. All these gains would be cancelled out if the council now bowed down to the demands of the union leaders.

It is an outrage that these leaders should be playing this role. The Liverpool Labour councillors have risked their money, their positions on the council and possibly their freedom to defend the workers who elected them.

Yet these workers' 'leaders' are not prepared to give even verbal support. They are not merely standing aside from the struggle, but are demanding policies which would mean a defeat for the working-class people of Liverpool.

It is now up to the members of these unions to bring their leaders to account. In every branch, workplace and district committee, emergency meetings need to be convened and resolutions sent off to the union head offices to demand a reversal of policy. The unions and the Labour Party must be committed to a national campaign of solidarity with the Liverpool City Council.

Already next year's budgets are being prepared by other Labour councils. They are finding that they will be in a position like Liverpool's this year. They will have the choice of savage cuts in spending and redundancies, on top of damaging cuts made already, or taking a stand and following Liverpool's example.

Liverpool's struggle is now the key battle for the whole labour and trade union movement, as the miners' was a year ago. A victory for the council, forcing the Tories to back down and provide the cash the council needs, will be a victory for every worker in Britain. It will signal the beginning of the end for this reactionary government. It would prove that when a fight is waged not just with words, but carried into the language of jobs, houses, services and education, the support of workers will be there and that the Tories can be beaten. Liverpool has already shown how popular the council's policies have been, with support, according to the opinion polls, up from 46 per cent to 55 per cent. The lesson for the Labour Party nationally is that with a commitment to carry out the same policies nationally a landslide victory can be won at the next general election.

Stevenage lobby against expulsions

LABOUR'S right-wing are stepping up their witch-hunting of supporters after the green light from Neil Kinnock at his Fabian Society speech.

In Stevenage, ten party members threatened with expulsion were made to sit for up to seven hours in a cold room waiting to be heard by the executive committee, and some were grilled for an hour each.

Sunderland Council's Labour Group has voted to ban the sale of *Militant* from the civic centre and shopping precinct. The group also voted to remove Bob Young, an observer from Sunderland District Labour Party from the meeting because he is a *Militant* supporter.

Although the attacks are increasing, the right-wing haven't reckoned on the intense campaign of opposition their undemocratic activities will provoke in the local parties. These campaigns will inevitably bring new support for the Marxists and bring new socialists into the party.

Meeting

Militant supporters in Stevenage have held their biggest ever public meeting. Over £80 was collected for the fighting fund. Four out of the eight ward branches of Stevenage Labour Party have voted to condemn the witch-hunt, reports Steve Glennon.

This was the culmination of hard campaigning in defence of the ten. The party's executive members had to walk through a lobby of over 50 Labour Party members and young socialists, chanting slogans

of "witch-hunt out—socialists in" to get into the meeting called to investigate the ten.

The executive meeting has been preceded by a weekend of activity, mass paper sales canvassing of new voters and Labour Party members and visiting of executive committee members.

The ten were told that their records of service in the Labour Party were totally irrelevant.

Send letters and resolutions of protest to Stevenage Labour Party 121B Bedwell Crescent, Stevenage, with copies to Labour Unity, 45 Walden End, Stevenage, Herts.

★ Two *Militant* supporters in Macclesfield have been accused of membership of "an organisation ancillary or subsidiary to *Militant*," by the Victoria branch Labour Party. No evidence what-so-ever has been given. Simply that "participation in the activities of the *Militant* newspaper distribution and sales falls within the category of membership" according to a letter sent to the two by the branch secretary.

Already a *Militant* Readers' meeting has been planned for 12 December, which will be addressed by expelled member Lynn Walsh from the *Militant* Editorial Board.

★ In Cardiff South Constituency Labour Party where ex-leader Jim Callaghan is a member, two long standing Labour Party members and *Militant* supporters, Andrew Price and Dave Bartlett, are to be investigated on a recommendation by the executive committee.

An anti-witch-hunt meeting has been called and Tony Benn invited to speak.



'Cuddly' lefts Robin Cook (left) and David Blunkett (right). Photos: Dave Sinclair.

New group to give left face to right's policies

A NEW 'soft left' grouping in the Labour Party has materialised out of the confusion left in the wake of Neil Kinnock's stampede to the right.

The new group, the 'Democratic Left' includes leading Tribune MPs like Robin Cook and Harriet Harman, Peter Hain, students from the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, recent refugees from the Campaign Group, the Livingstone/Blunkett local authority set, trade union officials like Jack Dromey and Tom Sawyer, and the editor of *Tribune*.

United as ever, the Tribune group of MPs have since distanced themselves from the new group.

The group is not pro-Kinnock. Oh no. Rather, according to *The Guardian*, its aim is to: "Stop Mr Kinnock relying too much on support from the right in the shadow cabinet and national executive in his attempts to squash initiatives from the

hard left". Otherwise Labour Party members might think Kinnock was acting like a right winger, which just isn't true.

They want to fill the 'political space' between Kinnock and the 'hard left' (quite an area) and are to set-up a think tank to give the leadership and the party 'ideological direction'. Or, as some cynics have suggested, give 'socialist' explanations for the leadership's right wing actions.

'Macho' style

While they were "excited and alarmed" (?) by Kinnock at this year's conference, they didn't like his "macho" presidential style. No doubt he should have smiled and used polite language when he laid into Liverpool and kicked the miners.

They are also "concerned that he no longer appeared to be consulting the section of the party from which he rose to become leader". What a surprise. Their main aim though

will be as an "organisation to combat the influence of *Militant*..." Derek Fatchet MP complained to the meeting that for "far too long *Militant* and other groups have been allowed to define the terms of debate on the left".

With four million on the dole, living standards plummeting, trade unions and the public sector under attack from a right wing Tory government full of class venom, you would have thought the 'terms of debate' were pretty straightforward. But what is interesting is that many of those who for the past year have been declaring *Militant* 'dead and buried' are now setting up organisations to combat its growing support and influence in the movement.

The new group have dubbed themselves the 'Cuddly Left'. They will certainly be embraced by the right wing.

By Bob Wade

Morning Star supports Kinnock

THE *MORNING Star* last Thursday ran an editorial declaring its support for Neil Kinnock.

"Neil Kinnock's criticisms of this sectarian grouping (*Militant*-ed) are broadly correct and justified by the role it has played in Liverpool." On the other hand they say: "It is...vital to replace the disuniting approach of the so called 'realignment of the left' with the search for common ground." "Neil Kinnock's position is obviously complex. He is very good on nuclear weapons...on incomes policy and the EEC...he is in Hattersley's pocket."

Their balancing act is an attempt to appease sections of the labour movement bureaucracy by excluding themselves from the so-called "hard left" like Tony Benn who have stood out against the move to the right by leading Labour figures. At the same time they wish to maintain a facade of support for class policies and working class struggles.

They are caught between the struggle of Liverpool council on the left and on the right, the social democratic apologias of *Marxism Today* 'theoretician' Beatrix Campbell: "What has emerged in 1985 is a sectarian alliance between Trotskyists, Bennites, ...Arthur Scargill and Ken Gill, and a sectarian minority in the Communist Party". Thus they resort to denunciations of Liverpool and an appeal to left respectability.

The question labour activists will be asking is: "whose pocket" is the *Morning Star* in.



Tories want to beef up the law to deal with working class opposition with new crimes of 'riot' and 'violent disorder'. Real crime continues to increase.

New riot law threat to workers

"IF YOU don't like what we're doing, keep quiet—or else" is the Tories message in the Queens Speech. The new public order bill is designed to make organised opposition more difficult.

For all the ballyhoo about law and order, the main role of the proposed new police powers is to give legal cover to the kind of policing carried out during the miners strike.

The Tories want a new crime of 'riot' with a maximum penalty of ten years imprisonment. The maximum penalty for 'violent disorder' would be five years, for 'affray' three years, 'threatening behaviour' six months with fines for the 'crime' of 'disorderly conduct'. These terms are wide enough to cover most forms of peaceful protest.

The government are playing on people's fears, par-

ticularly of violent crime. Crime has gone up 40 per cent under the "law and order" Tories. The police are being beefed up with new equipment, but not to stop criminal activity. How many police are involved in investigating the Johnson Matthey affair? How much police training time is taken up with crime prevention as opposed to crowd control for use against picketing and demonstrations?

How serious are the Tories in tackling the drugs plague when they are cutting customs officers and giving more priority to immigration control than to stopping heroin? What are they doing to stamp out the causes of this autumn's disturbances, the social problems, the brutal, often racist policing?

In fact the Tories' devil take the hindmost philosophy encourages anti-social activity. Their answer

is the big stick.

The government would seem to prefer you to become a criminal than turn to active organised opposition to their capitalist plans. All the new public order provisions are likely to get their major tests in big class confrontations in the future. The Tories are beefing up the state machine—not to deal with criminals but the working class.

Campaign urged on equal pay

EQUAL PAY for work of equal value was the subject of the National Women's Consultative Conference held by ASTMS on 26 October.

According to the Equal Opportunities Commission, it was the first conference where women trade unionists, active at grass roots level, were brought together and consulted about what strategies the union should adopt nationally to take advantage of the new amendments to the Equal Pay Act.

These amendments allow women to claim equal pay not just for work 'broadly similar' to that of a man, or for a job rated the same under a proper job evaluation study, but also for work which is of equal value when measured in terms of the effort, skill, decision making, and other demands of the job.

The way is now open therefore for women to escape the trap they've been in for so long, of not being able to compare their jobs with men's for a claim for equal pay because they've traditionally been segregated into 'women's jobs'—cooks, cleaners, typists etc—and there's been no man to compare themselves to.

Now jobs which are very different can be compared on a more objective basis (although all the jobs compared must belong to employees working for the same company).

The case which set this precedent was taken by Ms Hayward, a cook working for Cammell Laird. She won equal pay when she compared her job with that of men employed as painters, thermal insulation engineers and joiners.

Fifteen years after the Equal Pay Act women's average hourly earnings are still only 73.5 per cent of men's and their average gross weekly pay is £116 compared with £177.

This new legislation is obviously a welcome step forward. But it is important we don't imagine this means that courts will now champion the cause of women.

A case can only be taken to a

By Ginny Armstrong
(ASTMS, London Publishing Branch, personal capacity)

tribunal on behalf of an individual, or a small group of individuals, and the legal process is lengthy, intimidating and expensive.

Even if a case is won, it may benefit only a small section of workers who fall precisely into the carefully defined category of the original plaintiff who, by this time, may well find herself dismissed or made redundant!

For the vast majority of women workers, any improvement in their pay and conditions will still ultimately rest on the industrial 'muscle' they can muster to 'persuade' their employer to be 'reasonable'.

More resources

Most of the delegates to the ASTMS conference recognised these difficulties and stressed that the union must spend more money and resources on training and campaigning against discrimination at grass roots level: this was more important than risking thousands of pounds on protracted court cases. In particular reps needed more training to tackle discrimination and job evaluation schemes in their workplace and to fight for better pay generally.

Unfortunately, this positive aspect of the conference did not spill over

Photo: Viv Seal



Amendments to the Equal Pay Act will enable a wider selection of jobs done by women to be compared to jobs done by men.

into a wider political awareness.

Any attempt to explain that discrimination and the use of women as a 'second labour force' could only effectively be abolished in a socialist system was seen as an unwelcome 'diversion' from the main issues. 'Women's issues' were seen as separate from politics.

But the profit system requires discrimination and exploitation in order to survive. If we don't link all these issues, we're just tinkering with the system—fighting for the equal exploitation of all.

There are real dangers to be avoided. A NUPE spokesman referring to the NHS said recently: "With the cash limits operated by the government, if a great deal of money is taken away by successful claims for work of equal value, it will leave no

money for pay increases". (*Guardian*, 25 October, 1985).

Even left-winger Jo Richardson MP, addressing conference on the need for women to support the Labour Party, reduced the problem to a meaningless formula, suggesting that having more women in positions of power, particularly in the Cabinet, would lead to better conditions for women.

Other trade unions are reportedly now queuing up to follow ASTMS' example in organising consultative conferences. It remains to be seen whether anything tangible comes out of the exercise but this kind of democratic consultation of reps at group level must be welcomed and women must be recruited and organised to ensure it is translated into practical action in the workplace.

Big eats small in package tour war

THE RECENT antics of British travel firms trying to outdo each other with generous offers to the great British public has left many observers both amused and bemused.

What on earth are these profit-motivated businessmen up to giving away free holidays? Surely a group of hard-headed British capitalists haven't flipped their lids and decided to give back a share of the ill-gotten profits.

One of the ostensible reasons why these "bargains" are on offer is to enable the (larger) travel firms to get money into the coffers for "investing" at a time of the year when their capital resources are traditionally at their lowest. This is dubious since in some cases, the companies are actually paying the customers to go on holiday.

Another reason offered by one leading travel agency was that they were allowing the early bookers to get bargains for a change instead of the late bookers. As if they cared who their profits came from! In fact, come next year when holidays remain unsold, "bargains" will be there as usual as travel agents desperately try to off-load them.

The real reason for the silly season of holiday prices is reflected in the wider crisis of the British economy. It is another example of the conflict within the capitalist system. The drive for profits and the need to reduce incomes has cut the market. Mass unemployment and low wages have dramatically reduced the number of consumers able to afford the cost of a holiday abroad.

The big travel agencies don't intend to sit back and watch their profits decrease. They realise that there are too many companies—around 600 in Britain—all jostling for what has become a massively depleted market.

Inevitably this variation on a price-war theme will escalate as the big travel agencies force some of the smaller ones into take-overs or bankruptcy. The larger companies will get the share of the market vacated by those companies who go bust. The consumer then foots the bill for the price-war in holiday prices next year and after. As competition declines the largest companies will be more able to collectively monopolise the market and dictate prices.

By Kevin Williamson
(Leith LPYS)

Sell Militant...

AS LIVERPOOL councillors enter the most decisive period of their battle against Tory cuts, who can they rely on for support?

Only *Militant* has told the truth about their struggle, and tried to explain to other workers the city's plight and why the council had no alternative but to fight back.

Fleet Street has stooped from the gutter to the sewer in their attempts to undermine the campaign, so worried are the capitalists about Liverpool becoming the example for workers throughout the country.

Unfortunately instead of using the council's stand to rally the whole working class

movement, the Labour leaders have sought to spread a cloud of confusion and downright untruths about Liverpool.

All *Militant* sellers must recognise that one of the most important ways to support Liverpool council is to boost the sales of the paper. Use *Militant* to get across the Liverpool message, use paper sales to help encourage workers everywhere to back the council.

Sales at council depots and offices are essential. But also door to door sales around Labour estates will be successful. An estate sale in Bermondsey last Sunday produced 25 paper sales.

Workers are looking for *Militant*. They want to read about Liverpool. They are interested in the socialist paper that the Tory press is

attacking. Every seller must be out now on the streets selling *Militant* and winning these new readers. Sellers in Leicester sold 20 outside a public meeting where Tony Benn was speaking.

From activity of *Militant* in the miners' strike, the North Staffs Miners' Wives Action Group has just placed a regular order for six papers per week. How many local authority stewards' committees or union branches will do the same with *Militant's* coverage of the Liverpool campaign?

With all these opportunities for increasing circulation and spreading the ideas of Marxism still wider, every *Militant* seller must ensure they are doing their utmost to build sales.

By Jeremy Birch

ads CLASSIFIED

15p per word, minimum 10 words.

SEMI-DISPLAY
£2 per column centimetre. Three weeks for the price of two. *Militant* meeting ads free.

All advertisement copy should reach this office by Saturday.

ABERYSTWYTH: Weekly *Militant* discussion groups. Details, phone Alan Huyton on 615911.

SWINDON *Militant* Marxist Discussion Group meetings held monthly. Phone Martin on 24796 for details.

MAIDSTONE "Militant's socialist programme". Thursday 14 November, 8pm at the Wheeler's Arms, Perry Street, Maidstone.

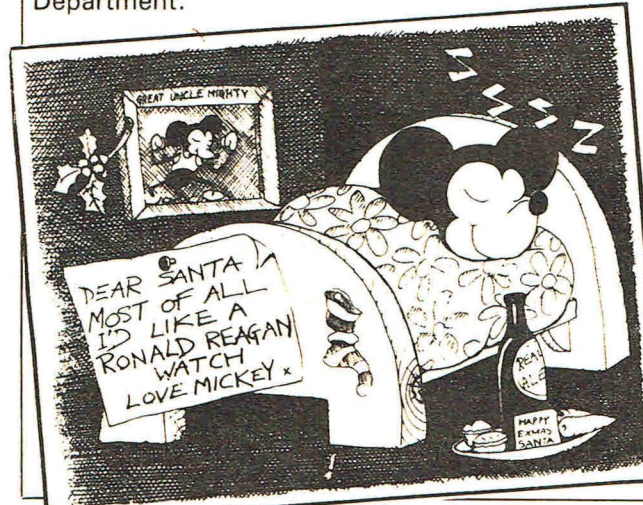
NOTTINGHAM *Militant* Readers Meeting. "For a Socialist South Africa". Speaker from SALEP. Thursday 5 December. The International Community Centre, Mansfield Rd, Nottingham. 7.30pm.

PAISLEY *Militant* Public Meeting: "The Coming Revolution in South Africa". Speakers: Dav' Churchley and Larry Flanagan. Gents Chorus Room, Paisley Town Hall. Contact: Tom Henry 041 877-6465 or Hugh Henry 041 812-5494 for further details.

NOW AVAILABLE 1986 *Militant* poster calendar. £1.00 each plus postage and package. 50p each on orders of 10 or more—profit to your area Fighting Fund. Orders to 3-13 Hepscoot Road, London, E9 5HB. Cheques payable to *Militant*.

A3 POSTERS for sale. "Stop the racist attacks". 50 for £3 + £1 P&P; 100 for £5 + £1.50 P&P. Post free on orders of 200 or over. Send orders to: Bow and Poplar LPYS, c/o 172 East India Dock Road, London E14, or phone 01-515 1718, or 01-515 6222.

XMAS CARDS now available. Pack of four cards 75p/pack. Bulk orders of 10 packs £6.50 please enclose 25p P&P. Orders through Fighting Fund Department.



FOURTH GREAT annual West London LPYS Talent Nite. Saturday 7 December from 7.30pm. Ruskin Hall, Church Rd, Acton W3. Tickets £2, £1 for the unwaged. ★ Also acts still wanted ★ for details of tickets or auditions ring:- 01 840 3445 or 01 993 2324.

TED GRANT—*Rise and Fall of the Communist International*. With an introduction by Alan Woods and an appendix. Marxist Studies Series pamphlet No 3. Now available from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB. 80p including postage.

Militant Winter Draw

Registered Promoter: D Smith, 14 Station Road, Brightlingsea, Essex. £1,000 worth of prizes to be won.

1st prize Video Equipment worth £500.
2nd prize Stacking Hi-Fi worth £300.
3rd prize Portable TV worth £100.
4th prize—5 prizes of £20 worth of socialist books.
The draw takes place on Saturday 4 January, 1986. Price of tickets: 10p (ten pence).

All counterfoils, cash and unsold tickets to be returned to *Militant*, 3-13 Hepscoot Road, Hackney, London E9 by first post Saturday 4 January, 1986.



Get wise with World Socialist Books

World Socialist Book tokens

Send 17p for the card for anything on our list plus the amount you want to give. Ideal for socialists. redeemable

EETPU BROAD LEFT/ BLOC National Conference

Owing to a postal dispute in Liverpool, credentials for the EETPU BLOC conference on 30 November may be delayed pending a settlement. Anyone who has applied for credentials and does not receive them will receive them at the door.

LONDON LPYS Xmas Party. Saturday 21 December. 7.30pm to Midnight. Florence Nightingale pub, Westminster Bridge Road, SE1 (near Waterloo station) £1.50 waged. 75p unwaged. All welcome.

FOUND—a one-piece baby suit (green, red and white) for child aged between 1½ and 2 years was left at the crèche at the *Militant* National Rally. Ring (01) 533 3311 to claim.

1986 POCKET Diary 60p, Bookmarks, sew on badge 40p, plastic sleeves 20p, pens 20p. Plus post to *Militant* 10 Rodney Ct, Anson Drive, Sholing, Southampton, SO2 8RU.

DUE to an excellent response, Liverpool, Manchester and Rochdale Womens Councils will be putting out a second edition of their 'Charter for Women Workers'. Will everyone who took orders please ensure the money is returned as quickly as possible to the address below. Any further sponsors should be notified to Ann Bannister by 30 November.

Cheques should be made payable to 'Womens Charter Campaign Fund' and sent to Ann Bannister, 55 Lunt Road, Bootle, Merseyside, L20 5EZ.



This year's Labour Party conference. Socialists sold *Militant* and collected finance for *Militant* Get the message of Marxism across in your area!

... Finance Militant ...

LIVERPOOL GMBATU member John Williams has shown the determination of that city's working class by sending a day's pay—£15—to the Fighting Fund. Another council worker, Wally Kennedy in West London, has promised £300. What examples to follow!

They have helped us reach £2,988 so far this quarter. But we need three times that each week to hit our 31 January target. Draw up a few simple plans and implement them and we will get that £70,000!

Edinburgh and Lothians area are showing the way with £132 this week. Don't let your area get left behind at the starting blocks.

Firstly, make sure anybody unlucky enough to miss the rally is asked for a donation of £21. Even those who were there are still sending us money. Ian Sellers from Camberwell, writes: "I gave £12 at the rally, but as everyone else was giving £21, I've decided to give £9 extra".

Why not follow this example? Also, if you put in an

IOU at the rally PLEASE send the money now! We cannot spend IOUs!

The union conference season is nearly over, so the marvellous sum of £592 collected at the NCU Rules Revision Conference was particularly welcome. Make sure that we continue to collect the valuable pounds and pennies from trade union supporters by passing round appeal sheets or rattling a *Militant* tin at your workplace or union branch. £3 was collected at Dundee Public Works Department. UCW Broad Left supporters in London have sent us £2.25.

Every week we hear of new workplace collections showing our increasing support. Let us know of any such collections in your area.

Young Socialist branches can send us late 21st birthday or early Christmas presents. We don't mind which. This week Middleton LPYS sent us £25! Members of Wansbeck LPYS collected 92p. Small collections held regularly are an invaluable source of income to us. If your LPYS branch doesn't collect for the *Militant* yet,

why not try next meeting. Show your YS supports the ideas of Marxism which have built it up nationally.

The only way we can step up our fight against the Tories and all they represent is by ensuring we have the resources to do so. Our support comes from ordinary working class people. Whether you can give or raise £21 or 21p it is all vital needed for our work.

There are hundreds of thousands of potential contributors to our fighting fund; they only need to be asked. Give them the opportunity to have a go back at Thatcher by backing the paper that fights the Tories. With all the publicity about *Militant* there can be no better time to ask workers to donate. Ask and you shall receive.

DONATIONS INCLUDE:— W Hawker, Blackwood, Gwent £10, Dundee University Students/NALGO £5. Cynthia Cook, Newcastle £5. Miguel Pino, Spanish Civil War veteran 50p. Mr and Mrs McCancey, unemployed Coventry £1. Steve Pounder, Ealing Councillor £1, Frank Conniff, Coventry LP £5. F Vasey, Batley £4.

cil's strike fund. They will be sacrificing not a tenner but a week's pay every week until a solution is found.

So, for our supporters in the rest of the country and those still working in Liverpool, similar sacrifices are essential. If you haven't given a week's wages to our campaign and an extra tenner to help our work in Liverpool, make sure you do so now.

This week, donations have come in from Sefton, £20 and Broadgreen £10. £13.50 has come from Dorset and £57 from Aire Valley. £80 has come from readers in South London and £93 from Welsh supporters.

Match the sacrifice being made by the workers in Liverpool. Send a flood of tenners and week's wages to the Marxist Daily Building Fund to release our funds so that we can campaign effectively for a workers' victory in Liverpool.

... and help us grow

A WEEKLY *Merseyside Militant* and the weekly *Militant* nationally are not enough to counter the lies in the press about Liverpool. We desperately need to produce more material more papers and more leaflets and to hold more public meetings.

The main reason why we can't produce more is our shortage of funds. We still have some debts left over from the beginning of the year and these are preventing us from doing what we think is absolutely necessary in Liverpool.

From Monday, Liverpool council workers will be locked out by the Tory government and will not receive any pay. The councillors too will be donating their pay to the coun-

Since last week £501

	£		£
Eastern	4382	Scotland West	2840
East Midlands	4390	Southern	5860
London NE	5088	South West	1440
London NW	5307	Wales East	2606
London SE	2828	Wales West	2021
London SW	2367	West Midlands	3156
Lancashire	1060	Yorkshire	2900
Manchester	3207	Humberside	3572
Merseyside	6097	National	1327
Northern	4691		
Scotland East	2535	Total	67672

Summit: behind the war of words

LONG BEFORE going to Geneva, Regan and Gorbachev attempted to blame each other in advance for the failures of the Summit talks.

By Lynn Walsh

Neither side arrived indicating any real confidence that any definite agreement on arms limitation could be reached. Nothing concrete has been negotiated in advance, the key to previous Summits, when leaders like Nixon and Brezhnev merely signed on the dotted line. On the Geneva stage this week both sides have been determined to convince public opinion in the west that they are sincerely trying to reach agreement. It is predictable, however, that the only result of the talks will be an agreement to hold more talks.

Behind the war of words, there is real pressure on both the leaders of US capitalism and the Soviet Union's ruling bureaucracy to limit the crippling burden of the nuclear arms race. The Kremlin leadership faces acute economic problems at home. They have set out to curb the military spending plans of the US super-power, which still sets the pace of the arms race. Through their propaganda initiatives, based on various proposals for a nuclear 'freeze', the Soviet leadership is attempting to play on a growing mood of opposition in the US and Europe to the grotesque accumulation of weaponry.

The fresh, apparently positive approach of Gorbachev has been

highlighted by the Western media. Superficial comment on the bureaucrat's smile and his wife's fashionable clothes, however, explain nothing. The bureaucracy is desperate to deter the US from embarking on a new phase of military preparations.

If the US goes ahead with space weaponry, the Kremlin would be forced to counter it with its own system. That would place enormous strain on the near-stagnant Soviet economy, aggravating all the discontent of the working class who carry the weight of Stalinism on their shoulders.

The new Kremlin leadership wants a breathing space internationally to allow themselves time to concentrate on problems at home. Like many of his predecessors, Gorbachev is desperately trying to improve the efficiency of the creaking machine in an effort to raise productivity and increase output. But his "reforms", all of them tried before, will rapidly be stifled. Every initiative, after an initial spurt, will be throttled by the stranglehold of a privileged bureaucracy over a modern industrial economy, crying out for the invigorating oxygen of workers' democracy.

The last thing the bureaucracy wants is to have to match a US "Star Wars" project by the diversion of vital scientific and technical resources away from manufacturing industry and consumer-goods production. This is why the Soviet leaders appear to have offered some cuts in their strategic nuclear arsenal in return for agreed limits



Protests at Molesworth earlier this year—there is enormous opposition in the West to nuclear arms.

(not necessarily cuts) on US strategic weapons. Given the "overkill" capacity on both sides this would not significantly alter the world balance of forces.

But in return the Kremlin wants the abandonment of the so-called Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI).

Until recently Reagan seemed all set to launch the Star Wars project. Undoubtedly, many of its advocates have links with the big corporations of the "military-industrial" complex, which will milk fabulous profits from tax payers if the SDI goes ahead. Spending on research alone will exceed \$26 billion over the next five years.

Far from putting a ceiling on arms spending, as some of its defenders claim, Star Wars would multiply the economic burden.

The more intelligent representatives of US capitalism (as shown by recent Congressional opposition to the Pentagon's MX missile project) fear the catastrophic effect on the economy of the unprecedented government budget deficit. They especially fear the political consequences of trying to balance the books through tax increases and cuts in social spending which bear down most heavily on working people.

Global military expenditure has now reached \$800 billion a year, while one in four goes hungry and one out of three adults cannot read and write.

But talks between the super-powers will not guarantee world peace or halt the arms race—as all the unsuccessful talks and broken

agreements of the last 30 years show. Even if temporary pauses are agreed (which is possible in the next period), the renewal of tension and accelerated arms rivalry is inevitable so long as the underlying class conflicts remain.

The problem of war and peace can be solved only by the working class. Under present conditions, the enormous power of the workers acts as a decisive check on the strategies of the ruling class. Ultimately, however, only the socialist transformation of society throughout the capitalist world and the overthrow of bureaucratic regimes in Russia and Eastern Europe can eliminate the danger of world war and nuclear annihilation.

Fabians—united by fear of the working class

The Fabian Society was a suitable place for Neil Kinnock to deliver his latest attacks. Below, *Militant* looks at their historical record.

OTHER THAN the Labour Party, what do Gwyneth Dunwoody, Peter Shore and Neil Kinnock have in common? They are all members of the Fabian Society.

At least 100 members of the Parliamentary Labour Party are Fabians. Roy Hattersley, Peter Shore and Joan Lester are on the executive committee of the Fabians.

The Fabian Society is particularly proud of being in at the birth of the Labour Party and of remaining with it ever since, the only "socialist society" to do so. The Fabian constitution heralds their tolerance to everyone's right to their own socialist viewpoint.

But their boast of tolerance is being, and always has been, vigorously flouted by some of their leading members. It is these people who are now campaigning for expulsions of socialists who support the ideas of *Militant*.

Far from being a proud founder of the Labour Party, the Fabians blocked its formation at every stage and only began to play a more enthusiastic role when leading members carved a niche for themselves in the party's governing bodies. The Labour Representation Committee, the forerunner of the Labour Party was established at a conference in February 1900. At this conference delegates from organisations were one per thousand members. The Fabians had one delegate (861 members), the Independent Labour Party (ILP) had seven and the Social Democratic Federation (SDF) four out of a total delegation of 129.

But this was 16 years after the Fabian Society was formed. The 1880's were no millpond of class tranquility. In Britain it was a decade when trade union membership trebled, unions such as the General Workers were formed and struggles such as the matchgirls' strike and the fight for the 'dockers' tanner' took place. Trade

unions, from being 'friendly societies', were becoming politicised. Class conscious workers were increasingly demanding a workers' party and workers' candidates in elections. This was already happening in Europe where mass-based, Marxist Social Democratic parties were being formed.

In Russia Plekhanov on returning from Europe helped to establish the Russian Social Democratic Party from which Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks came. In 1889 the Marxist-led Second International was set-up.

In Britain the right wing leaders of the old craft-based unions discouraged working-class organisations from forming a workers' party. And who was it who joined with them urging working class support for the Liberals—none other than those modern-day champions of democratic socialism, the Fabians!

This was underlined in a letter written by Engels to Karl Kautsky about the general election of 1892, "and what did the Fabians do, not just this or that Fabian, but the society as a whole? It preached and practised: **affiliation of the workers of the Liberals...**" (Engels' emphasis). And this at a time when in Engels' words, "The workers for the first time came out independently".

Even today this practice isn't dead, as demonstrated by Fabians Shirley Williams, David Owen and friends in the 'Alliance'. What else did Engels think of the Fabian type? In a letter written in 1890, he described them as "superficial and shallow as the Dismal Swamp". In 1893 the Fabians, with 12 delegates out of 120, were at a conference called to gather all the independent labour organisations to form a national Independent Labour Party, but the Fabians declined to join the new party.

In fact research carried out on the period by Dr Siegfried Büniger, showed that the small group

around Engels made a bigger contribution to getting the Labour Party off the ground than the Fabians, and the SDF and ILP made even more. Even Professor Hobsbawm (Neil Kinnock's mentor) considered that the Fabians didn't take the Labour Party very seriously until 1914 when other ventures and 'experiments' in community politics failed and when Sidney Webb (a founding-father of the Fabians) finally got onto the party's National Executive Committee.

During the period of the Taff Vale dispute the trade unions had so little confidence in Sidney Webb because of his class-compromising attitude towards the dispute, that they wouldn't accept him as the



Lord Passfield (Sidney Webb).

Labour representative on the Royal Commission set-up and therefore boycotted it. Is this the record the Fabians are so proud of?

It is interesting to deal a little with Sidney Webb, or Lord Passfield as he became known. He was the author of Clause IV (part 4) of the LP constitution. A Fabian taking the lead in committing the LP to socialism? No, not quite. It was a compromise between those in the party calling for a commitment to 'soviet democracy', and commitment to socialist revolution and workers' democracy and those who wanted the slow erosion of capitalism—gradual change through reforms. This whole

debate in the LP hadn't been inspired by the Fabians but by the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, the first successful working class revolution.

At the 1918 party conference there was a standing ovation for the fraternal delegate representing the newly established Soviet state under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky. The role that Fabian Webb played was to pull the Labour Party back from the brink

Philistinism

of a clear commitment to the socialist transformation of Britain.

In 1923 the Webbs saw little difference between Bolshevism and Tsarism. Ten years later they waxed lyrical about the 'democracy' of Stalinism. Like Fabians as a whole they worship the accomplished fact, particularly when it is no threat to the status quo and class system. In 1907 Lenin wrote that Sidney and Beatrice Webb were "obtuse eulogists of English philistinism".

In the '29 Labour government Webb (by then Lord Passfield), was party to the decision to refuse Trotsky an entrance visa to this country. Trotsky was most scathing in his condemnation of the Fabians in *Where is Britain going?* He declares them the "most reactionary group to be found in Britain because of the role they played in the movement of the working class".

Trotsky's anger was aroused by the fact that with so many Fabians in leading positions, and with the opportunities for the working class movement presented by a general strike and two Labour governments in the '20s, no real advance to socialism was even attempted. The Labour leaders, the Fabians thick among them, became apologists for capitalism in crisis.

The Webbs summed up Fabian thinking in "the theory of types of socialism development"—that meant civil war in the USA but peaceful evolutionary socialism in Britain. In their book *Decay of*



Beatrice Webb.

capitalist civilisation they state that with "considerate adaption (capitalism) can be made to pass gradually and peacefully into a new form", completely ignoring the contribution of the Chartist movement and the intense struggles of the developing labour movement before then (and since) to gain the rights to vote, organise, strike and gain any meaningful reform.

The whole base of the Fabians is from their cosy middle class towers, making grandiose statements more from hope than conviction. The one thing that united them was their fear of the working class and its potential power as expressed in the Russian revolution.

The Fabians have no interest in building a campaigning socialist body. They have a membership of just over 4,000 but a disproportionate number of Labour Party leaders. They continue to exist merely as a 'club' that leading Labour Party figures join to cover their theoretical nakedness.

By Bob Edwards
(Harlow Labour Party)

Defend socialist

THE PAST six years have seen a catalogue of Tory devastation. The economy has been plundered. Four million are on the dole with poverty returning on a scale not seen since the 1930's. Never before has a victory for Labour at the next election—and with it jobs and hopes for the future—been so vital. Yet the Labour leadership are playing into the Tories hands with their divisive attacks on *Militant*. Labour

leader Neil Kinnock now says our ideas are 'impossibilist'—hitting at the heart of the labour movement's socialist aspirations. Below BOB WADE shows that our ideas are in the traditions of the labour movement, and how the leadership's attacks are a prelude to ditching the Labour Party's radical programme.

IN HIS attack on *Militant* Neil Kinnock has raised all kinds of organisational issues, political slurs and scare stories, all gleefully seized upon by the Tory press. It is a smokescreen for the real issues at stake—the attack on *Militant* today is a prelude to abandon any semblance of the party's radical programme.

Repeating a common thread in all his speeches against *Militant*, Kinnock said in his speech last week to the Fabian Society:

"It (*Militant*) makes a deliberate practice of campaigning for unattainable objectives and cynically encourages expectations—especially amongst the young—of guarantees of work and income. It employs 'impossibilism' as a calculated means of setting unachievable demands in order to charge... (those) who take responsible office in the movement with timidity and 'betrayal' when those demands are not realised."

Class demands

These 'unattainable objectives' *Militant* has always argued for include the 35 hour week, the minimum wage, a guaranteed job for youth, trade union rates of pay and conditions for YTS trainees, an end to mass unemployment. These are by no means the sole domain of *Militant*, but have been fought for by various trade unions and the Labour Party over the years. It will be news to them that the leadership have suddenly declared these demands off the agenda.

Kinnock's talk of 'impossibilism' signals that the leadership is growing further away from Labour's commitment to socialism, and that

the next Labour government will work within the confines of the capitalist system. This has been the repeated message from Kinnock and the deputy leader Roy Hattersley—Labour must be 'practical'. But they are the 'impossibilists' if they think they can squeeze even the mildest reforms from bankrupt British capitalism. Manufacturing on which wealth of an industrialised society is based has collapsed in Britain—a fifth of the country's manufacturing plants have shut up shop. By 1988—probably the year of the general election—the balance of payments deficit is expected to be £4 billion. Nor should there be any illusions that Britain's oil wealth can be used to pay for reforms. A recent House of Lords report predicted that the country's oil profits would begin to decline next year and disappear completely by 1990, two years into the would-be Labour government.

If a Labour government does not break with capitalism it will face a stark choice. It will not be like any other post war Labour government, but will come to power at a time of grave economic crisis. If it tries to restore the manufacturing base through devaluing the pound it will stoke up the fires of inflation. It will come under enormous

pressure from big business as they jealously guard their profits from inflation. Through the threat of an investment strike or pressure from the International Monetary Fund, they will demand spending cuts, wage restraint and, through higher interest rates to reduce imports, increased unemployment.

That was the lesson of the 1974–79 Wilson-Callaghan government and has been the experience of Mitterrand in France, a country with a third more industry and a third more wealth than Britain.

Such a Labour government would be a repeat of the 'grotesque chaos' of the Callaghan administration of cutbacks, rising unemployment, wage restraint and crisis, but all in a more aggravated form. Once again it would be the workers who would have to shoulder the burden of the capitalist crisis. The subsequent disillusionment of Labour's support would pave the way for the return of an even more reactionary, venomous government of big business.

Realism

It is *Militant* that is being 'realistic'; it is *Militant* that is being 'honest' when it calls for the transformation of society to socialism. It is the only way society is to be taken forward. People desperately need change. Kinnock said that the next Labour government plans to create one million jobs in the first two years of office—that is, by 1990. But how

long will the other three million on the dole have to wait—7 years, 11 years? And that under the 'impossibilist' event of capitalism, in a terminal crisis world wide, returning to an era of full employment.

The labour movement wants the policies it has discussed, argued and campaigned for implemented by a Labour government. They do not want it to be added to the sorry list of failed 'socialist' governments, like Mitterrand of France, Gonzalez of Spain or Papandreu of Greece.

Militant has always backed the demands of the labour movement with its call—quite openly and honestly as any Labour Party member would admit—for the nationalisation under workers control of the top 200 multinational firms which control 80 per cent of the economy. This is a practical interpretation of the socialist aspirations of Clause IV part 4 of the Labour Party constitution, which calls for the common ownership of the means of production. Only then will the capitalists' grip on the levers of economic power be broken. The enormous resources in society currently left untapped by capitalism through mass unemployment and deindustrialisation—estimated to be £50 billion a year—could be put to work for the benefit of all. With socialist control of the economy all the demands, all the conference decisions of the labour and trade union movement could be fulfilled.

This is the real issue before the labour movement.

Attacks Labour p



School students march for jobs in Glasgow. Work is an impossible dream.

MILITANT HAS openly fought Neil Kinnock and the labour leadership are rejecting much of the Labour Party's radical programme. It is what the attacks on *Militant* by the Tories, the Liberals and SDF are preparing the way for. They are preparing the way for the Labour Party's radical programme. They are preparing the way for the Labour Party's radical programme. They are preparing the way for the Labour Party's radical programme.

Militant's demands outlined in the 19

The 35 hour week without it

"We will work through bargaining to reduce working progress towards our aim week."

A minimum wage.

"We will work together with to tackle low pay... discuss the possibility of introducing minimum wage."

A massive programme of public end unemployment, build schools, hospitals, transport

"We will provide a major public investment, including housing and energy... begin a huge programme... halt the destruction... encourage and authorities to begin a massive of house building and improve

Trade union rights and rate a guaranteed job for YTS trainees

"Labour will end the scourge of unemployment... give trainees) at least £30 per week... trade unions being free to negotiate terms... Our aim is that no one of work for more than a... receiving an offer of a job place."

A grant for all 16-18 years education of at least £25 per

"Provide student-trainees education with... £25 per

The Marxist traditions of the movement

KINNOCK HAS said that *Militant* is "directly hostile to the Party's democratic socialist objects". The labour leadership have described *Militant* as being 'alien' to the British labour movement.

Yet Marxism has always been a major influence on the labour movement, since its inception. It is the right wing, who have constantly

tried to water down the movement's progressive policies, who are out of keeping with the movement's traditions.

The Labour leadership should look again at the labour movement's rule books and constitutions—not only the Labour Party's Clause IV part 4 which encapsulates Labour's socialist aspirations, but also those of the trade unions:

Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers:
Object rule 1 (2): "The control of industry in the interests of the community."

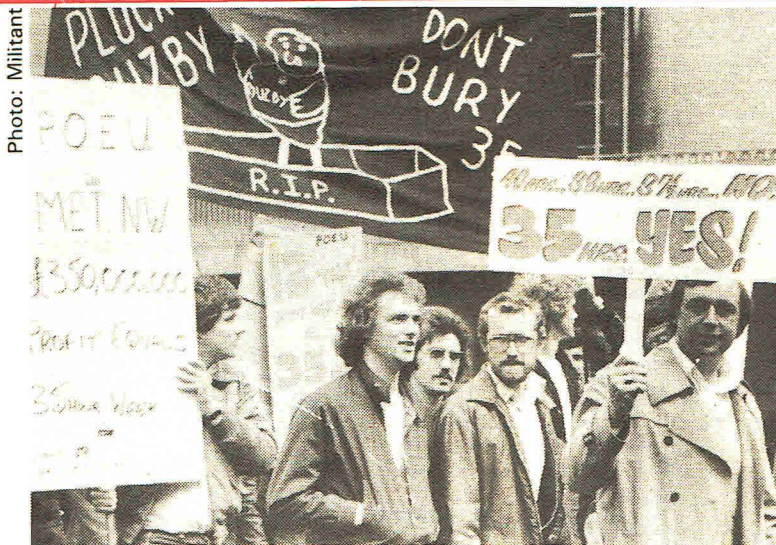
ASLEF (train drivers)
Object rule 5: "To assist in the furtherance of the labour movement towards a socialist society."

EETPU (electricians)
Principal objects, rule 2: "To improve members financial and social conditions by supporting conditions which will

ultimately give the workers ownership and control of industry."

USDAW (shop workers)
Objects rule part 1 (3): "...to work consistently towards securing the control of the industries in which the members are employed."

UCATT (building workers)
Objects rule 1 (4): "...the securing of a real measure of control and participation by the workers in the management, in the interests of



Post Office engineers 'fantasise' over the 35-hour week in 1978. Through mobilising its membership the old POEU won two and half hours off the working week.

labour and the general community".

National Union of Public Employees

This union incorporated the Labour Party's Clause 4 part 4 into its rule book.

Fire Brigades Union

Constitution states: "...the FBU is part of the working class movement and, linking itself with the international trade union and labour movement, has as its ultimate aim the bringing about of the socialist system of society".

policies

hide threat to programme



low during the school strike this year. Youth did not accept that the right to
Photo: Alan Wylie

ht for the demands set out below. Yet when Neil Kin-
hip dismiss these as 'impossiblism' or 'fantasising' they
our Party's democratically decided programme. That
nt are all about. Following the lead of big business, the
and Labour's right wing, the leadership want to roll back
programme under the smokescreen of attacking the Marx-
ground for the next Labour government to capitulate under
class. The ranks of the movement must fight this move
aspirations, embodied in Clause IV part 4 in the party's

(in bold type) compared with Labour's policies, as
3 election manifesto, the *New Hope for Britain*.

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Unilateral nuclear disarmament, scrapp-
ing Cruise and Trident, and the victory for
socialism internationally, the only real
guarantee of disarmament and world
peace. The arms industry to be restructured
for socially useful production with no loss
of jobs.

"We will be seeking agreement with
other countries on nuclear disarma-
ment... the next Labour government will
cancel the Trident programme... we will
not permit the siting of Cruise missiles in
this country... we shall give material sup-
port... to plans for industrial conversion so
that valuable resources of the defence in-
dustries can be used for the production of
useful goods."

**Opposition to the Common Market—for
a Socialist united Europe and international
socialism.**

"British withdrawal from the communi-
ty... in no sense represents any weaken-
ing of our commitment to
internationalism."

**Nationalisation of the top 200
monopolies, banks and finance houses
under workers' control and management,
with compensation on the basis of proven
need.**

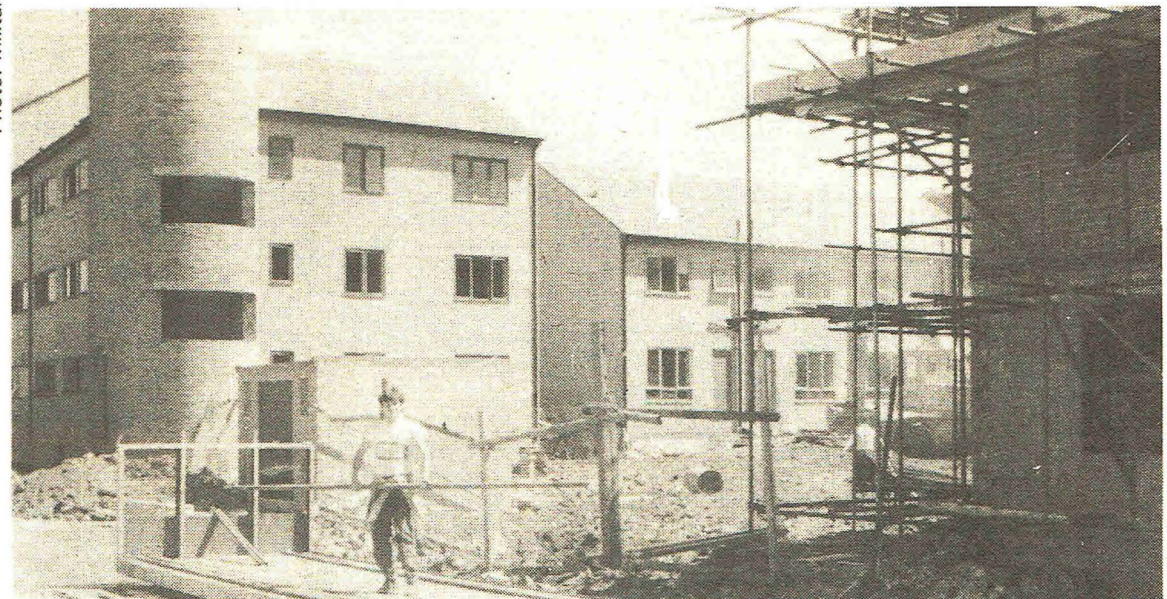
"We expect the major clearing banks to
co-operate... we shall stand ready to take
one or more of them into public
ownership..."

Also: Clause IV part 4 of the Labour Par-
ty constitution. "The Common ownership
of the means of production, distribution
and exchange..."



The 'grotesque chaos' of the 1974-79 Labour government—low-paid nurses fight for a £60 minimum wage against the 5 per cent limit imposed by the Callaghan administration. There will be intense anger from the labour movement if Kinnock tries to follow the same path.

Photo: Militant



'Impossiblism' at work in Liverpool. New flats go up under Liverpool City Council's housing programme.

Kinnock—fight the Tories not the left

**AFTER A series of articles in
the Times giving 'advice' to the
Labour Party, the political
editor of Militant, Ted Grant,
has written a reply, extracts of
which are printed below:**

The crude attempt to present the
party's Marxist wing in a sinister
light, regurgitating all the old
nonsense about "conspiracies" and
"secretive organisations" will cut
no ice. The right wing 'Solidarity'
has an organisation with members,
and policies different from those
approved by Labour Party con-
ference. Yet only *Militant* is sing-
led out for attack. Why?

The reason has nothing to do
with organisation, but everything
to do with ideas and policies. *Mil-
itant* has never made any secret
about its support for the ideas of
Marxism. We defend genuine
socialism represented by Clause IV
part 4 of the Labour Party's con-
stitution.

Militant's only crime is to fight
to defend jobs and services against
the deprivations of Thatcherism.
And here the example of Liver-
pool is important, because it shows
in practice the superiority of Marx-
ism over reformism (more ac-
curately nowadays, counter-
reformism, or reformism without
reforms).

At the last general election,
despite an hysterical smear cam-

paign by the local media, Labour's
vote went up by 2.5 per cent in
Liverpool. In Liverpool
Broadgreen, where Terry Fields
stood as a Marxist candidate, the
seat (generally regarded as a Tory
marginal) was won for Labour on
an outstanding 4.5 per cent swing.
This is in a context of a resounding
collapse of the Labour vote in the
rest of Britain.

Labour support

Since then, despite an un-
precedented vitriolic campaign
against Liverpool City Council for
its courageous stand against the
cuts, Labour's support in the City
has shot up from 45 to 55 per cent,
a fact to which even the right-wing
Economist was obliged to refer to
recently. If this figure were
repeated on a national scale in a
general election, it would mean a
landslide for Labour of 1945 pro-
portions and even a 300 seat
majority.

The lesson is clear. If Neil Kin-
nock were to dedicate his con-
siderable energies to attacking
Thatcher and fighting to defend his
class, instead of vilifying the Left
of his own party, Labour would by
now be riding on a wave of popular
support.

Militant supporters have always,
and will always, worked to elect

Labour candidates at local and na-
tional level. We will strive to ensure
the victory of the Labour Party at
the general election, whether we
agree with the programme put for-
ward or not.

We are in favour of each and
every progressive reform—no mat-
ter how partial—carried out by a
Labour government. However, so
long as what Nye Bevan described
as the "commanding heights of the
economy" remain in private hands,
it would be utopian to imagine that
such reforms would be long lasting.

This is no "dogma", but the on-
ly practical means of mobilizing the
wealth, manpower and resources of
Britain on the basis of a democratic
plan of production.

Marxism cannot be separated
from the Labour Party, of which
it is an organic part. The threats,
insults and attempted witch-hunts
merely confirm two things: firstly,
that the right has decisively lost the
battle of ideas and is incapable of
answering the reasoned arguments
of the Marxists and secondly, that
Militant is a growing force within
the labour movement; the ideas
and policies which it defends are
seen by an ever-increasing body of
opinion within the movement as
the only viable solution to the
nightmare of capitalism in crisis.

Photo: Militant

Anglo-Irish agreement

New deal for peace in Ireland?

LAST FRIDAY Mrs Thatcher and Garret Fitzgerald the Tory Fine Gael Prime Minister of Southern Ireland signed an agreement on Northern Ireland.

By Roger Shriver

The agreement has been widely praised by the press and even by leading Labour politicians as a worthwhile initiative offering peace to Northern Ireland. It will bring nothing of the kind.

The main provision allows the Dublin government to participate in regular conferences to discuss political, security and legal issues with British ministers. A small permanent secretariat of civil servants from the South and Britain would service the conferences.

There is no constitutional change. "Sovereignty" remains with British imperialism. For workers and the numerous unemployed in Ireland, north and south, in Catholic and Protestant areas, it will offer nothing. No end to the poverty, no hope of employment except in the job creation scheme for top civil servants. The agreement will not end the army or police repression, and will certainly not end sectarianism, discrimination or violence.

One purpose of this talking shop is as an incentive to further cross-border co-operation on security. The other purpose is to show some concrete gains from "constitutional" politics to bolster up the moderate nationalist SDLP against the Provisional IRA. At the same time to encourage the Unionist politicians, the Tories are dangling the offer of a limited devolution of government for Northern Ireland providing these changes are accepted.

As a "peace initiative" the first reactions were hardly encouraging for the government. The most rabid sectarian 'loyalist' politicians are erupting with fire and brimstone. Arch-reactionary Enoch Powell accused Thatcher of treachery.

No solution

Unionist MPs at Westminster have threatened mass resignations and by-elections, and have talked of organising 'strike action'. Loyalist claims to have 100,000 shotguns are probably accurate.

Most workers in Northern Ireland would bitterly oppose a return to the sectarian bloodbath of 1971-75. But whether loyalist bigots like Paisley have the support to drag down the agreement or not, the proposal is doomed, like all attempts to gain lasting peace in Northern Ireland on a capitalist basis.

The loyalist politicians anticipate a long drawn out struggle against the agreement, a campaign of building up sectarian tensions. Southern politicians could come under pressure to withdraw if sectarianism takes a hold. But the Tories will push for the agreement to succeed, even if it causes

policies and partitioned in 1920. This was mainly to cut across the revolutionary tide in the working class throughout Ireland and amongst the rural poor fighting for independence. British imperialism also had military and economic reasons to favour partition at that stage; these no longer apply.

Over half a century later, a divided Ireland and a sectarian statelet in the North is no longer in the interests of British capitalism. Provided their investments north and south of the border were safe, they would have no objection to uniting Ireland.

But the Protestant population of Northern Ireland fear a united capitalist Ireland where they would lose political control. Southern Ireland has even lower living standards than the North and more abysmal welfare provisions. Many Protestants, workers and middle class, would fight and arm

themselves against unification. The sectarianism and fear the British ruling class encouraged in the past are kept alive by the harsh reality of capitalism in Ireland.

The loyalist alternative of a "unilateral declaration of independence", is an independent Northern Ireland would be a sectarian hell for the Catholic minority. But, given the loss of the huge subvention from Britain, mainly for social security payments, maintenance of industry etc, it would be an economic hell for Protestant and Catholic alike.

Capitalism cannot offer any solution. How can this crisis-ridden system North or South offer the chance of a better life for all workers, which would make sectarian fears irrelevant? The organised working class fighting around socialist policies is the only force capable of uniting Irish workers and the Irish nation.



Protestant Orangemen clash with the RUC in Portadown in July. Top: a demonstrator on top of the RUC barricade before being removed by a baton round. Below: Baton charging the crowd. Workers must organise to prevent a resurgence of sectarianism.

IN 1973, a year after the old Northern Ireland parliament of Stormont had been dissolved in favour of direct rule, a new Assembly was introduced. It had a majority for the Unionist Parties with the SDLP, the middle class "moderate" Alliance Party and the minute Northern Ireland Labour Party in opposition. The key idea was "power sharing" with SDLP members holding ministerial office.

In the Sunningdale talks at the end of 1973, represen-

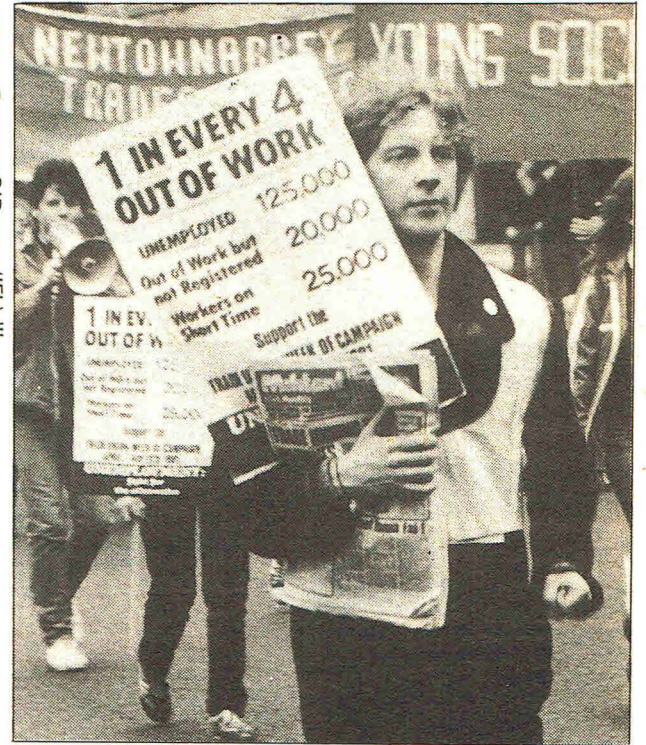
tatives from London, Belfast and Dublin planned a consultative Council of Ireland with members from both sides of the border. A council of Ministers was set up. The South was to recognise the North's "constitutional position" and take action against republican groups.

But in January 1974, the Ulster Unionist Council rejected Faulkner's power sharing plans and in May 1974, the executive collapsed, after a lock out organised by the so-called Ulster

Workers Council, Protestant bigots and paramilitaries.

Other attempts at a political solution followed. In 1975 a constitutional convention met, dominated by the Unionists but designed to appear as a new initiative. In the years after the convention, the British government were conducting negotiations with Provisional IRA leaders while the IRA's rank and file were being rounded up or shot.

Photo: Eamonn O'Dwyer (IFL) III



Workers demonstrate against unemployment. The organised working class are the only force able to resolve Northern Ireland's problems.

For a socialist alternative

The "solutions" British imperialism has come up with in the past have been frenetic attempts to bring stability to safeguard profits. They have consistently centred on a large military presence and repression.

Army patrols, armed attacks on civilian homes, internment without trial, the non-jury Diplock courts, forced confessions, the use of supergrasses, plastic bullets, the use of draconian public order provisions extending into Southern Ireland and Britain have all been tried, mainly against the Catholic population.

But the ruling class recognise that bullets cannot resolve the political problems of Northern Ireland. In 1979, documents leaked from the British army admitted that army methods and social conditions would continually recreate new generations of republican activists.

Workers' unity

Militant has always opposed the Provisionals' tactics of individual terrorism. These methods have thrown the Protestant working class into the arms of vicious reactionaries. They have provided an excuse for British imperialism to step up its repressive state apparatus. They have failed to provide a socialist alternative to unionism and capitalist nationalism. Most of all they have cut across the task of building a powerful united working class opposition to exploitation and repression.

The Provos are incapable of defeating British imperialism but the Army itself admits it can do no more than keep an "acceptable" level of violence. Acceptable violence for them of course includes Army harassment and the horrors of H-blocks.

So British governments have tried a series of political initiatives, designed to bring middle class leaders of the minority Catholic community into the state apparatus, and so isolate the paramilitaries. (See box left).

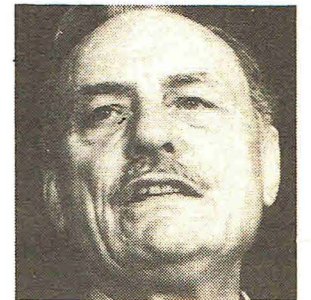
The latest initiative comes after some years of total dependence on military methods. The main aim is to use the capitalist leaders of Southern Ireland and of the North's Catholic minority to stabilise the six counties. As the article in *Militant* (8 November) explained, the last thing Southern Ireland's Tory politicians want is a united capitalist Ireland even if it were possible under

capitalism. They do not want to have to cope with a million alienated Protestants and half a million Catholics expecting a better deal.

But a cosmetic agreement which can be sold to the electorate as a victory for their negotiating skills is a different matter. They want to prove the superiority of their "constitutional" methods over terrorism.

Workers throughout Ireland want an end to sectarian violence but only the strength of the working class can achieve this.

It was the spontaneous revulsion of workers in Derry, Newry and other towns which led to the partial general strikes and demonstrations against sectarian killings in 1975. The next year saw the re-birth of labour movement organisations such as the trades councils and the formation of the trade union-organised "Better life for all campaign".



Enoch Powell

It was workers' organisation which crushed Paisley's attempt to repeat the UWC lock-out in 1977. Paisley tried to use the paramilitaries to build his own sectarian bonapartist power base, but workers braved murder and intimidation by loyalist bigots to rebuff Paisleyism.

The mood of most workers is still against the paramilitaries but the trade union leaders have so far failed to build on the growing strivings for class unity to create a party of labour. The movement must now make a decisive political intervention and put forward a clear independent working class position.

The ruling class have produced yet another non-solution, which raises the possibility of renewed sectarian strife. Workers must fight for a socialist alternative.

Photos: John Arthur (Reflex)

Emergency-workers must not pay

WE ARE re-printing below a leaflet produced by a group of Nigerian trade unionists in protest at salary cuts for public sector workers introduced at the end of October.

The latest Nigerian military government ordered the cuts as part of its 15 month period of 'Economic Emergency'. They want them extended to the private sector. A few days before the cuts were announced, the military rulers cut the army's salaries, but no-one knows what these mean in practice because military salaries and perks are not published!

IMF debate

Since the last coup under General Babangida there has been a government-sponsored debate on whether or not Nigeria should accept an IMF loan. As there is massive opposition to the loan and its accompanying conditions, the government and the press push wage cuts as an alternative to the IMF.

The Nigerian Labour

Congress (NLC), the Nigerian TUC has opposed the wage cut and given the government an ultimatum to withdraw the measure by 26 November. But so far it has not shown what action it proposes to take to defeat this attack.

The wage cut has not stopped the wave of retrenchment (redundancies) which has led to the sacking of a minimum of 1½ million workers in the past few years. The first week of November saw the immediate sacking, at a few hours notice, of hundreds of workers at the Nigerian Television Authority, a new plan to sack 7,000 from the Telecoms and Postal authorities and the sacking of workers in the private sector because they organised industrial action.

Prices are rising rapidly: together with wage cuts and sackings they are preparing the way for a mighty movement of the Nigerian workers—if not immediately, then certainly when either the IMF loan is taken or when workers see that their sacrifices have not made the conditions improve.

THE MILITARY government's wage cuts are the most open attack Nigerian workers have ever suffered and requires a nationally organised mass struggle as was mounted before in the 1945, 1964 and 1981 general strikes.

Already workers' wages have been cut indirectly by constantly rising prices, with no wage increases since the 1981 minimum wage victory plus the effects of dependent unemployed relatives, withdrawal of allowances, stopping of annual increments, school fees, increased medicare costs, etc.

The government is not even pretending to control prices but is in fact helping employers boost their profits by encouraging the private sector to cut wages in addition to already allowing indiscriminate retrenchment. Thus we see an attack on all workers, public and private.

While the government keeps saying that public opinion will determine the taking of the IMF loan, it treats workers as if they are soldiers in the barracks. The military government did not even inform the NLC of the wage cut, let alone allow a debate on the issue, even though it is one of the IMF conditions.

The government and IMF apologists attempt to confuse workers by saying that if workers are opposed to the IMF then they must accept austerity measures. Some workers may even reluctantly agree to the wage cut so long as the IMF loan is not taken. But wage cuts have fundamentally the same effect as a Naira devaluation.

A devaluation cuts real wages by reducing the Naira's value, wage cuts do exactly the same thing only more bluntly. In fact devaluation and wage cuts are part of the IMF conditions Nigeria is expected to fulfil to get the loan. Wage cuts are not an alternative to the IMF, nor will they stop retrenchment.

Workers should not be deceived into thinking that the wage cuts will stop after the 15 month period of economic emergency. Let us remember Governor Mark

of Niger State who last January announced the withdrawal of workers' allowances for six months, but the allowances have not yet been restored.

It is ironic that Nigerian workers who always struggled for wage increases in the past are now faced with a battle against wage cuts. But those who cannot defend old gains cannot win new ones. The labour movement must engage in a stubborn campaign against wage cuts and combine it with a call for wage increases to match inflation.

Workers must show the government that they will no longer bear the burden of the crisis of Nigeria's capitalist system.

The outcome of our struggle against wage cuts and retrenchment depends on what our trade unions do individually and under the NLC's banner. In this respect we welcome the initial meetings of the NLC, the ten public sector industrial unions and their declared intent to fight.

But these are merely the first shots. Only a formidable force of working people can defeat this attack. The NLC and trade unions must draw up a full programme of mobilising the rank and file. Mass rallies to explain the issues must be organised at union and shop floor levels, canteens etc.

The IMF debate and the military government's measures show that, so long as Nigeria remains capitalist, austerity measures will form the basis of every economic recovery programme. This will be the case whether or not the IMF loan is taken.

There are two reasons for

No to wage cuts, no to retrenchment.

NLC act to defeat austerity.



Photo above: May Day 1985 in Nigeria's capital, Lagos.

this. Firstly, capitalism on a world scale is in crisis, reflected in the sharp booms and ever-deeper slumps it is now suffering from.

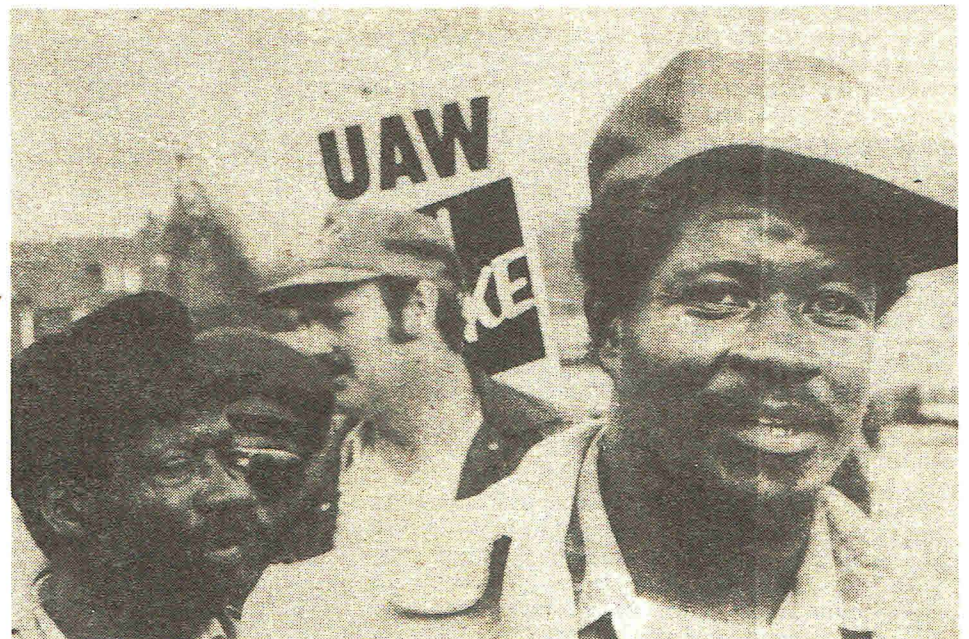
Secondly, despite the 1960s and 1970s economic 'golden years' and our country's enormous wealth in the 1970s capitalism has proved utterly incapable of developing Nigeria. During 25 years of independence, imperialism continued to dominate Nigeria through the world market and our local Nigerian capitalists had so little confidence in their own system that they looted instead of investing in the country.

Our experience of 25 years of independence under the capitalist economic system shows in practice that only a centrally planned nationalised economy, under democratic workers' control and management, can guarantee economic progress and social development. The NLC must explain to workers the real cause of Nigeria's crisis and campaign for a clear socialist alternative.

The NLC has the responsibility to lead the struggle in defence of living standards, democratic rights and for the socialist transformation of Nigeria by a democratically elected government of workers and peasants' representatives.

Today the labour movement, if it seriously going to fight, must prepare, as a first step, a 24-hour general strike (involving mass meetings and demonstrations) of both public and private workers after the expiration of the NLC's ultimatum. This would serve both to rally and mobilise in action the working class and act as a warning to the military government of labour's opposition to wage cuts and to retrenchment.

The three sides of Motor City



Pickets at Chrysler's plant in Jefferson Avenue, Detroit last month.

WHEN YOU drive in from Detroit Metro—politan Airport to the city centre, you pass a giant Firestone sign, a digital display showing how many motor vehicles the city has produced since 1 January. At the end of October it was approaching 7 million.

In the time it takes to pass the sign, 11 more vehicles had come off the lines. How much sweat and blood, aching backs and muscles, stress and tension those fast-changing figures hide. In the Vietnam war years more workers died at work in the auto industry than in the war.

This is a fitting welcome to the home of Ford, GM, Chrysler, the city which brought the auto and mass production assembly line to the world. But Detroit is not just fancy cars. It is the sixth largest US metropolitan centre.

Detroit had the highest number of crimes in 1982 (the last available statistics) and was number two in the murder league. The day I left the city, three people had been shot in a barber's shop in the morning and two school children had been shot by mid-afternoon.

So far this year 207 school children have been shot, 23 of them died. 943 school children have been caught with weapons. Police now regularly surround schools and search all the pupils.

The force of the future

At a rally of 10,000 school children, Jesse Jackson asked how many used drugs. 7,000 admitted they had. In streets like Woodward Avenue drug addicts mingle with mentally ill people put out of hospital because they could not pay.

But this is also the area of Flint and Toledo, of the CIO

union, of the great labour upsurge of the '30s. 70,000 Chrysler workers and UAW members were on strike and 5,000 UAW members were out at General Dynamics when I was there.

At the union local where 1,500 Chrysler workers met to vote on a new contract you could see the force that would change Detroit and the USA. Black, white, young, old, male, female, slapped each other on the back, studied the contract, argued and protested and debated soberly but with great humour the price of their labour power for the next three years.

These workers brought to mind Engels' comments on America: "a people full of energy like no other". There will be many more "Toledoes" and "Flints" in the next few years. Detroit will play a central role in developments in US society.

By Robert O'Neil

Definitions of socialism

Dear Comrades,

While watching Neil Kinnock on television speaking at a Fabian Society meeting, he scathingly attacked *Militant* supporters for putting forward aims that are unachievable.

I looked up 'Fabianism' in the dictionary which said: "Using cautious delay to wear out an enemy". It also means a socialist society advocating change by non-revolutionary means.

Then I looked up 'socialism' for which the dictionary's definition is: "A

political and economic theory that the means of production, distribution and exchange should be owned by the nation, that wealth should be equitably distributed and that opportunity and security should be available to all".

Militant and its supporters have always supported the realisation of socialism as outlined above, but the history of the past 50 years, and especially the last 30 years has shown that the ideas of Fabianism: ie, "reformism" or socialism by

stealth, have been tried by various post-war Labour governments only for working class people to find that all these gains are being taken away.

All *Militant* supporters are asking is for the socialist doctrine as outlined above to be put into practice, but Neil says these aims are "unachievable". How can decent housing, a job and good health care for all be impossible demands?

Yours fraternally
Mrs M Backerill
Sheffield



Neil Kinnock

Photo: Dave Sinclair.

Surviving by stripping

Dear Comrades,

Recently two young unemployed girls in their early twenties were fined in total over £150 by Gateshead Magistrates after pleading 'guilty' to fiddling the DHSS by earning money and claiming benefit at the same time.

The charges were brought by the DHSS snoopers squad who told the court that the girls were known to offer their services to various strip clubs two or three nights a week.

The girls told the court that living on their own, they found it hard to survive on the supplementary

allowance they received and through desperation had resorted to stripping. On top of this those who own these dens, knowing the girls were unemployed, exploited this situation by paying them next to nothing.

Here we have two young girls condemned to unemployment and poverty by the system, in my view a classic example of the whole rotten system we presently live under.

Yours fraternally
Bob Harker
Gateshead East Labour Party

Letters

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

In the bleak mid-winter...

Dear Comrades

Selling outside factories is fine in summer, but as one bloke at Pork Farms said: "Will you be here in the winter?"

As winter approaches and I still sell my papers each week and collect a quid or so fighting fund, I can tell him I'll still be there. After all, I would not want to miss the bloke who has apoplexy if my foot crosses the gate into 'his' factory, or the one with all the winners—as he's still working perhaps he

should swop the *Sporting Life* for the *Militant*.

The laugh, smile and joke makes the hour catching the different shifts worthwhile. But the real boost was when one woman brought me out a coffee "Here's my 10 pence worth".

Even if not everyone buys one it's good to know there's a lot of sympathy for our ideas. But you've got to stick at it.

Yours fraternally
Gary Freeman
Nottingham

NHS-condition 'critical'

Dear Comrades,

An incident recently happened to one of my friends that brings home to me the chronic state of the NHS under the Tories.

My friend had gone to the corner shop to buy some cigarettes. An old man was lying face-down on the pavement with someone standing beside him. Inside the shop they were phoning for an ambulance—this was at 6.30pm.

My friend came out of the shop and went over to the old man who was choking and gasping for breath, and then asked the other bystander to help put the old man in the recovery position, and she sat down waiting for the ambulance and checked the old man's pulse.

A crowd had gathered by this time and at least three people had phoned for an ambulance—it was now 6.45pm. A nurse came from across the road who had heard what had happened. She said that the old man had died.

At 6.50 the police came and radioed in that the man had died—still no ambulance. My friend left to go home at around 6.55pm and an ambulance had not even come by then!

"I knew he was dying, but I couldn't do anything; just wait for the ambulance", my friend told me.

This did not take place in some rural backwater, or in the remote highlands of Scotland, but in the middle of Britain's 'second city', Birmingham.

The NHS is so underfunded by Thatcher that you have to wait over



25 minutes for an ambulance after an emergency call! We need a massive increase in spending on health under an NHS run for workers' needs, not bosses' profits.

Yours fraternally
Paul Ellis
Erdington LPYS



Hospital workers protest against closures.

Photo: Militant.

Dear Militant,

Recently I decided to go for a cervical smear test, as you can never be too careful, and chose a lady doctor, thinking she would be more sympathetic to my request. Not on your life! I was subjected to a ten minute harangue on "immorality" and "sinful behaviour" (I couldn't help noticing a poster on her wall advertising the "LIFE" anti-abortion group).

She concluded with the remark: "Still people like you from the council estates don't really know any better, do you?"

Breath-taken I almost walked out, but managed to keep my cool. Eventually, I got my test, but incidents like this show that the NHS ought to be run by the working class, not reactionary fuddy-duddies like this lady.

Yours fraternally
Susannah Blount
Leicester

LEFT and RIGHT

When charity doesn't work

THE QUEEN Alexander hospital in Portsmouth has turned down charity to expand its breast cancer screening unit—because it would be unable to cope with the resulting extra cases detected. An anonymous breast cancer patient made the financial offer to her doctor after being angered that the hospital's screening unit was open only three and a half days a week: "His response was to beg me not to raise the money. He said QA didn't have enough beds, or doctors, or operating facilities to treat further cases... using it (the screening unit) to the full would make the system crumble".

Christmas cheer

THE TORIES have been upset by a Father Christmas at a well-known department store in Manchester. According to local press reports, a three year-old boy asked him for a toy gun for Christmas. Santa replied that the young lad should have a real one, and should shoot Mrs Thatcher.

I spy...

AMERICA'S CENTRAL Intelligence Agency is beginning a recruitment drive this week, offering language graduates £18,000 to work as spies. It marks a return to 'human surveillance', after the past few years of relying on spy satellites to photograph the Soviet Union's military secrets. The USSR has been playing games with the CIA. In one case, a spy satellite spotted a giant submarine in a Russian dockyard, bigger than any military vessel ever known. As the alarm bells rang in the Pentagon, more bizarre news came in from the satellite—the massive submarine had folded in half. Closer inspection found it to be a colossal blow-up submarine made of rubber, specially designed to waste the CIA's time and money.

Law and order

Dear Comrades,

Did you see Kinnock's latest attempt to get the support of Britain's "moderate" voters on 6 November with his party "political" broadcast calling for the strengthening of the forces of "law and order". The same "forces" whose murdering, racist, heavy-handed tactics sparked the recent inner-city riots.

Young people will certainly not support Kinnock's argument for 'tougher' measures against crime—all that means to us is an increase in harassment—we know what it is like to be stopped and questioned endlessly and to pay massive fines for pointless trumped-

up charges while the real criminals—the Tories—continue to smash the economy, job prospects and hopes for a future.

Kinnock made no mention of the issuing of CS gas and plastic bullets, no criticism of the use of the police to attempt to smash the miners and more recently to defend the South African embassy. He never criticised the anti-trade union laws and the new laws being introduced by the Tories giving police state powers.

What we need is a democratically controlled and accountable police force and 'laws' being decided upon and enforced by the majority of people—the working class. The last thing I want to see is the police being controlled by Kinnock and his fellow bureaucrats. Thanks Kinnock for losing Labour a few more million votes!

Yours comradely
D Rudd
Portsmouth LPYS

Hackney demolition —no mistakes

Dear Comrades,

The record should be set straight on your article, 'The leaning tower of Hackney'.

The idea when demolishing the tower block was to collapse the lower floors leaving eight stories remaining upright on a pile of rubble to then be knocked down by ball and chain (which was standing by). This was to ensure safety, avoid disrupting the local rail, road and canal, while bringing the building down whole could have ruptured the gas mains.

This was a very difficult operation, carried out by skilled workers—most of whom vote Labour—which was carried off almost

perfectly, down to eleven floors and at a slight angle. Yet they are now derided by the Tory press who want to show British workers are no good. What is worse Hackney's Labour council, and now it seems even *Militant* has jumped on the bandwagon.

Shame on the Tory press (of whom this behaviour is expected) shame on Hackney Council and, unfortunately shame on *Militant* too. *Militant* prints the truth, let's hope that this was a slip up. An apology should be made in the paper to those workers.

Yours in comradeship
D Ezra
Witham Essex

Industrial feature

Anger at Rosyth

Clear lead needed in dockyard battle

THE QUEEN'S speech two weeks ago makes it clear that the government is hell-bent on pushing through the "Dockyard Services Bill" which would commercialise the management of Rosyth and Devonport Naval Dockyards.

This would mean a major "bidding" for the private company which took over the running of the yards; £200 million every year for Rosyth alone.

The Tories don't give a damn for the effects of this measure. The workforce of the two yards would be reduced by 2,000. At Rosyth 500 would go.

Yet a memorandum published last week points out that there will be no real savings made from privatising the management of the yards.

Michael Heseltine merely seeks to line the pockets of big business at the expense of the taxpayer and the dockyard workers.

Leading up to the Queen's speech Rosyth management have been waging a war of attrition against the trade unions by trying to tender out selected ships for refits at private shipyards.

Botched job

They did this with the *Redpole*, a coastal patrol boat, sending it to Richards of Lowestoft shipyard. Despite assurances from this company that the *Redpole* would be refitted quicker and more cheaply, the ship was returned to Rosyth 15 weeks late and in an unseaworthy condition!

Management then expected the Rosyth men to finish the botched job on the *Redpole*. It was promptly blacked by the Rosyth unions.

The bosses responded by suspending all those refusing to work on it. At the height of the blacking 150 mechanical fitters had been sent up the road.

This was a major trial of strength between the unions and management. Mass stewards' meetings affirmed that the blacking would continue despite the lay-offs. Now was the time to extend the dispute, introduce the shiftwork and overtime ban, possibly leading to a one-day strike. Determined action could have forced a climb-down by management.

By Bruce Wallace
(Abbeview LP,
Dunfermline)

At this point the national officials: Jack Dromey of the T&G and Peter Adams of the EETPU entered the dispute.

At the behest of certain right-wing convenors who were petrified at the prospect of an "early" fight, Dromey and Adams, without consulting the shop stewards, stitched-up a deal with management.

The deal included a statement from management to the effect that they had acted "incorrectly" in sending the *Redpole* out of the yard and a commitment to set up a joint trade union/management committee to monitor any future proposals for private contractorisation of work.

Such "consultation" has not stopped the management from ignoring the Rosyth trade unions before. And any joint committee won't effect their decisions now.

Nevertheless, Dromey got a mass meeting of shop stewards, and then the men, to sanction the deal. He got it through a mixture of smooth talking and veiled threats, although "sellout" was on the lips of many of the rank and file.

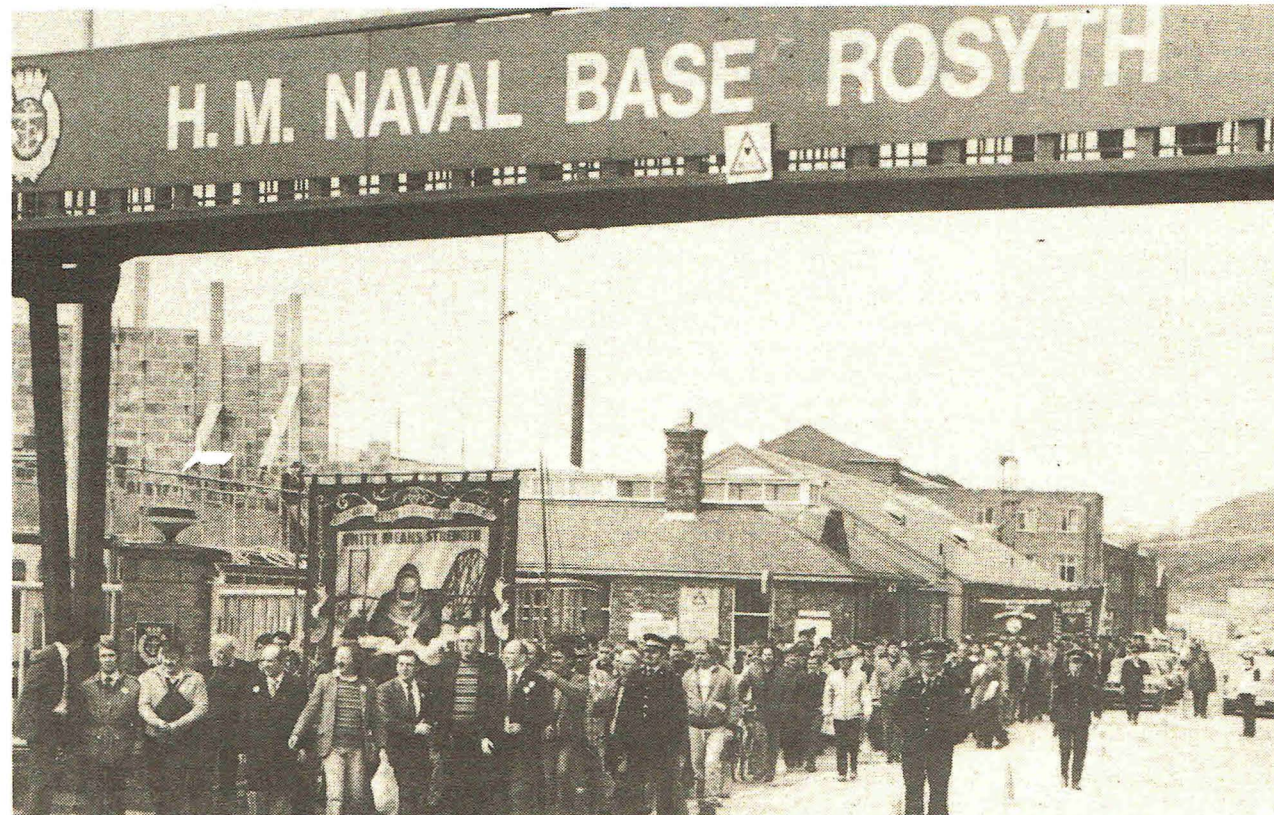
Significantly, no call for a continuation of the blacking came from the Joint Convenors' Committee save that of chairman Jock Penman, the only Rosyth Broad Left supporter on the committee.

The *Redpole* climb-down produced a certain lull in the anti-privatisation battle and emboldened management to push ahead with their plans.

On 6 November representatives of Babcocks Power, a leading contender for the Rosyth contract visited the yard.

If the *Redpole* climb-down seemed to have knocked the fight out of the men then management must have been flabbergasted at the effect that Babcocks' visit, to "view the spoils", had.

No call had been given from the convenors' com-



Half-day strike at Fife on 22 April in protest against privatisation of the Rosyth dockyard.

mittee for specific action to be taken, yet the rank and file reacted magnificently.

Everywhere that Babcocks' reps showed their faces, the workers spontaneously downed tools and marched out of their workplace.

In some places spanners and other objects were thrown at the entrances barring the way to any privateer foolish enough to risk a look.

'Mutiny'

When management tried to show Babcocks around the nuclear complex, where Britain's Polaris submarines are refitted, hundreds of workers barred the gates. There was no attempt to get inside, which was, in any case, impossible. Then 3,000 men rallied around the main office block in the yard demanding the withdrawal of Babcocks' men.

Two senior managers came out to address the crowd. The two, who just happen to be Admirals as well as managers, could not have expected the "mutiny" that faced them.

After a chorus of boos and whistles, they high-tailed it under a volley of eggs and

uprooted turfs. A UCATT member sounded the charge on a trumpet!

With such determination and anger amongst the rank and file, many must have wondered why, only the day before, Jock Penman had been removed from the chairman's position of the convenors' committee by the right wing.

The pretext had been that he had "prolonged" the *Redpole* dispute and was a poor chair of mass meetings.

The real reason was that Penman had publicly criticised the bankrupt leadership in the yard and, far worse, had allowed himself to be quoted in the pages of *Militant*.

Jock Penman was one of the few real fighters on the convenors' committee and his replacement by a right wing UCATT convenor, who has played hide and seek with his members for months, means that the leadership is set on a course of "horse-trading" with management.

The move against Penman was encouraged by the attacks of the national officials, particularly Dromey, on the Rosyth Dockyard Broad Left and Penman as the leading Broad Left supporter in Rosyth.

Dromey has attacked the Broad Left openly at mass shop stewards' meetings for being divisive, and warned the shop stewards not to read *Broadside*, the bulletin of Rosyth Dockyard Broad Left.

Fighting mood

This will have the opposite effect. Workers will seek out Broad Left supporters and ask for the *Broadside* as the only alternative to the existing leadership in the yard.

Despite the attacks of Dromey, in tow with the right wing, the mood of the workers remains high. On Saturday 9 November, over 2,000 dockyard workers demonstrated their defiance of privatisation in a march and rally.

At the rally, Dromey announced that there was to be a strike on the following Wednesday against the Tory proposals—without any consultation with either the convenors or the shop stewards.

At the packed rally on the 9th there was general laughter when Dromey declared: "everybody knows that I don't tell any fairy-tales to the men".

Nevertheless the workers in the yard took up the strike call and held a 90 per cent ef-

fective walk-out despite the lack of preparation by the officials after Dromey's announcement left the shop stewards only three days in which to organise it.

Jock Penman's replacement didn't even turn up at the yard on the Monday to chair the mass shop stewards' meeting which was to support strike action.

Penman had been accused of being a bad chairman, yet the new chair left the Monday meeting in the hands of the vice-chair and everyone was in agreement that the meeting was absolute chaos.

That the strike was at all successful is down to the rank and file, 500 of whom manned the picket lines on the Wednesday.

The lessons are clear. No faith can be placed in the officials or the present leadership. The real strength of the Rosyth fight lies in the spirit of the men and the movement which represents this spirit in an organised form, the Broad Left.

There can be no negotiated settlement with the Tories, only the complete defeat of their plans can ensure any security for the 8,000 workers at Rosyth and the 16,000 at Devonport.

Photo: Rick Matthews (IFL)

Post Office war on workers

POST OFFICE management have declared war on staff on the counters and in the writing rooms.

They have announced plans to split mail from the counter business early next year and to drastically attack working conditions.

The new proposals, designed to cut costs and "increase productivity" include:

- Bringing part-timers on the counter;
- Recruitment of casual labour for the summer leave period;
- Bonus schemes based on individual offices with no bonus where targets are not met;
- Tea breaks and meal breaks to be at the discretion and time set by the local manager;
- Ending of union involvement in staffing arrangements for writing duties;
- Annual reports to be kept on all staff;
- Time off for bank holidays will have

to be made up during the remaining days of the week; Redundancies, the Post Office "can no longer guarantee security of employment".

These proposals are still liable to negotiation although the Post Office have threatened to introduce them by executive action if the union refuses to co-operate with or agree to the package.

The plans are a direct attack by the management on UCW members. They are threatening every gain that workers have made and have struggled for in the past.

They would lead to divisions in the union. Already post men have a different branch to postal officers. Now counter-clerks and clerks in writing rooms would be separated.

Individual post offices will be more isolated. More part-time and casual workers means that the union would

be weakened—a threat to the closed shop.

There will be less overtime and bonuses. Many workers depend on these to take their wages up to a living wage. While *Militant* stands for a 35 hour week with a living wage and no loss in pay, these will lead to a drop in living standards.

The leadership of the UCW must make sure that every one of its members is clear about what these proposals mean and why management is doing this.

It must send bulletins to the members and organise workplace meetings to explain the issues and counteract management propaganda about "need for increased efficiency" and a "better image to customers".

But most important of all the union must organise a campaign involving all the members to fight these proposals.



Counter offensive by the bosses.

Miners feature

**Notts pay
not so
good**

THE NOTTS miners have received their 'reward' from the Coal Board for breaking away from the National Union of Mineworkers—a pay offer falling far short of the £400 plus loudly talked about in the Tory press and linked to productivity deals that will set miner against mineworkers, pit against pit. They have so many strings attached it looks like a spider's web.

By Steve Betts

(Acting branch delegate,
Bilsthorpe NUM,
Notts Area,
personal capacity)

In the run-up to the ballot that decided to break away and form the so-called Union of Democratic Miners, the Lynk leadership backed up by the Board and the Tory press said the Notts miners would be better off if they negotiated separately, with rewards for their 'loyalty' and profitability.

Yet all they have been offered on pay is an increase on basic grades of £5.50 per man shift and only £3 for 'juveniles' (younger miners). The increase in the district incentive scheme will be 50p per man shift for achieving standard performance.

This little package is worth a 4.9 per cent increase for face workers—a long way short of the wild promises of £400 a week.

Additional earnings, say the Board, will be possible from two of three schemes being put forward. These schemes are not negotiable—the Coal Board are 'evaluating' them, and they will pick two they like.

The schemes are:

a) A scheme designed only for installation workers based on improved performance, which means that only those people on face and development work will get extra money for increased production, thereby dividing face workers from other miners.

b) A scheme designed for all non-installation workers based on financial viability—that means non-face workers will get extra money only if their own pit is making a profit.

c) A scheme designed for all mineworkers based upon improvements on safety and attendance records, that is discouraging men from reporting accidents and taking time off sick.

The dangers can be imagined, with 'minor accidents' (eg cut fingers, etc) not being reported or getting medical treatment, increasing the risk of infection. It will reduce the number of common law cases against the Coal Board.

The extra earnings under these schemes will be payable as a lump sum paid on a quarterly basis or at holiday times.

Of the three schemes it seems likely that the board will choose firstly scheme c followed by a.

Altogether it is not—as activists in the NUM warned—much of a reward for splitting and weakening the miners' fight against the Coal Board's policy of pit closures and attacking wages and conditions.

Marxist contests Welsh miners' presidency

"A MINERS' president on a miner's wage". The battle is in full swing for the post of President of the South Wales Area of the NUM.

Three candidates have been nominated from the lodges. According to the *Western Mail* the contest will be a two-horse race, categorising Terry Thomas as a 'Kinnockite' and Des

Dutfield as a 'Scargillite' and well known Marxist Ian Isaac as an also-ran.

The press are attempting to influence the outcome of the ballot. Undoubtedly the NCB and the press are terrified at the prospect of a campaigning, fighting president in the South Wales coalfield. They will do all in their power to cloud the issues and ensure status-quo in the mining union.

Since the strike a mood of disenchantment with the NUM leadership at area and in some case at lodge level has developed. Some nine pits have been axed since the return to work in March.

St Johns campaign

St Johns Lodge, where Ian Isaac is secretary of the NUM is virtually the only pit campaigning against closure. Indeed St Johns has been an inspiration to rank and file miners throughout the British coalfield.

The lodge brought in economic and geological experts to fight the Board on their own terms. They exposed the lies of the Board by bringing to light the falsehoods of management's S23 internal accounting system, which is their method of cooking the books.

Above all the lodge have informed and involved the rank and file at every opportunity.

This Marxist approach is basic to lodge secretary Ian Isaac's view of the situation facing South Wales miners as a whole.

He stands by his track record as St John's Lodge secretary since 1978 and

as an area executive council member since 1983.

If successful in his bid for the presidency he intends to see an NUM-sponsored geological survey conducted for each individual pit. This survey would also take in all known reserves and suspected reserves of coal in South Wales.

The results would be produced in a comprehensive and clear form and be made available to all individual members of the union.

This would be done in conjunction with a comprehensive analysis of the NCB's internal accounting system for each pit, and the economics of the area as a whole.

The rank and file miners must be armed with the arguments to refute the Board's lies. He intends to take the battle to the national Coal Board. There will be no 'ostrich' tactics from a Marxist president.

Ian Isaac's campaign has attracted criticism from certain quarters in the area leadership of the union.

The platform of 'a miners' president on a miner's wage' has been condemned as an attempt to cheapen and undermine the standing of the President.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Isaac stands for change, his intention is to represent the needs and aspirations of the membership. He believes that NUM officials should experience the same living conditions and standards as the ordinary mineworkers.

A president on the same income as a face worker is more able to ap-



Ian Isaac, Secretary St Johns Lodge NUM.

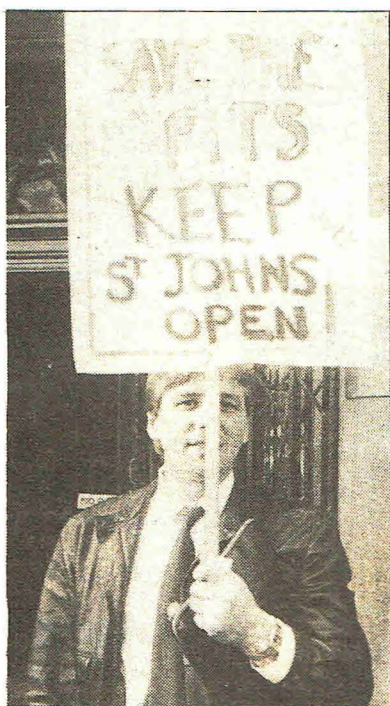
preciate the economic pressure they face. Further, the inflated salary—some £19,500 per annum for the president—is an outcome of the Gormley era of the NUM leadership.

Workers' wage

It was argued in those days that union officials should be paid on a par with colliery managers, a view propagated by the TUC. But the prevailing climate in the coal industry today calls for a return to the traditions of Horner and Paynter, a campaigning leadership and a fighting union.

The post of South Wales Area President must be filled by an individual dedicated to serving the best interests of the miners and the working class in general.

St John's lodge committee believe their nomination follows that goal.



Ian Isaac at St Johns Lodge closure hearing in London.

Leadership fail to mobilise against Bold closure

BOLD COLLIERY in St Helens, Lancs is to close with a loss of 700 jobs.

Men have been offered jobs at other pits as well as the offer of generous redundancy terms. Since the dispute the pit has gradually been run down since we started back.

The union allowed hundreds of men to transfer, leaving only a few older men more likely to forsake everything for a few thousand pounds.

It must be said that the NCB has had a free rein in leaflets and rumour spreading. As a result the men have become demoralised, not knowing which way to turn. When they looked for a lead it wasn't forthcoming from our branch officials.

When the actual date for the closure was announced there was no surprise and at first there was determination to oppose the closure.

A Joint Union Action Committee was set up and an NUM branch meeting, attended by a majority of the men, voted two to one to fight the closure.

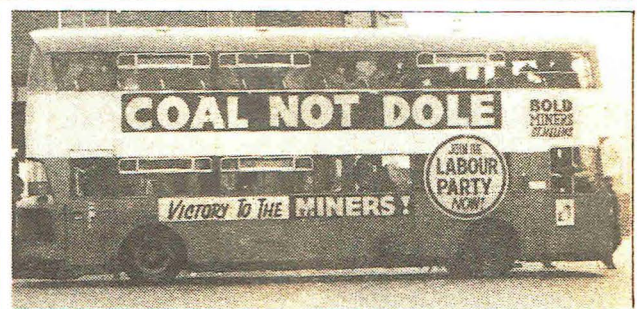
From the meeting a very small minority of men who attended the meeting and participated in the vote decided that they wanted a secret ballot.

Of course the union refused, and the men, nearly all face workers, said they weren't going to cut any coal until they got one.

So these men, along with the NCB, who are giving



Bold miners during the strike—including the Bold bus.



them every assistance, wanted in effect to close the pit down.

The union tried to get them taken off the face and put some more men on, who would cut coal. The NCB said they would take the NUM to court if they tried it.

That particular coal face was the one we were all putting our hopes in and these men, only looking after their own needs, with no consideration about the future of the pit and subsequent loss of jobs to St Helens, knew that without that coal the NCB would close it down anyway.

The NCB then started the propaganda war in earnest. There were newspaper articles telling the men about

the new DHSS laws and how much money they would lose, a regular bulletin from the manager, and of course a rumour room was set up.

At every meeting place men would gossip about the latest moves in the pit and the deputy-manager deliberately mis-led them into thinking that the union had thrown the towel in.

But the union did little to counteract these rumours. We had one leaflet from the Joint Action Committee, and one, from the NUM secretary.

In the meantime the 'super democrats' held a ballot with 251 voting to close the pit and 29 voting against. The NUM boycotted the ballot, which showed in the result,

as there are 530 NUM members at Bold.

After the ballot things took a turn for the worse. The NUM had talks with the NCB. The union wanted some guarantees about redundancy payments and coal allowance. It must be said that even our officials, bar one, had secretly thrown the towel in and it was only a matter of time before the ballot was called.

There are serious lessons to draw from Bold:

You can't expect the men to follow when you don't explain the issues. Keep going back to them at every opportunity. Canteen meetings and pit-head meetings, regular branch meetings are a must to get all the men to

fight the closure. This has proved to be correct as in the cases of Darfield Main in Yorkshire and St Johns in South Wales;

You must counter the NCB propaganda machine, regular bulletins must be sent out weekly, daily if required, always try to keep one step ahead of the Board;

Expand the fight, link up with other pits in the country facing the same problems, a major fightback is now needed to stop the NCB closing pits down at their own convenience.

The closure of Bold could have far-reaching effects throughout the coalfield, especially in the Lancashire area, so the time to prepare is now, not when the NCB move in to threaten the next pit.

We must maintain the momentum we had during the dispute. We can learn from what happened at Bold, so if the NCB do try something we'll be ready for them.

By Gary Knowles
(Bold NUM)

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

North East shipyard victory

WORKERS AT Austin and Pickersgill shipyard voted by a three to one majority for strike action to resist redundancies and forced management to withdraw the notices and agree to all the union demands.

By Tony Carty

(Chairman, Austin and Pickersgill CSEU, personal capacity)

British Shipbuilders have completely ignored the standing agreement on redundancies agreed at national level and are attempting to force through compulsory redundancies or compulsory transfers.

The fitters, blacksmiths and joiners affected by redundancies held meetings

recording votes of six to one overall for strike action, showing their determination to fight for their jobs.

In preparation for the vote each shop steward held meetings or individual discussions with their members in order to get across the union case. If the campaign is done before the vote we have nothing to fear from ballots.

This is not just a question of the 37 jobs at stake but the future of trade unionism in the shipyards.

Compulsory transfers would be used by British Shipbuilders to eradicate the £20 differential between Austin and Pickersgill and other yards. British Shipbuilders have already tried a wage freeze to cut this differential.

In addition things like selective overtime, compulsory shift work, more subcontracting, temporary labour and no voluntary machine work would lay the basis for an end to effective trade unionism in Austin and Pickersgills.

Wide attack

A&P is the first yard not facing closure to be attacked by compulsory redundancies. With the longest order book in the merchant sector this was clearly an attempt to set the tone for the rest of British shipbuilding and introduce compulsory redundancies across the industry.

Shipyard workers have bent over backwards for British Shipbuilders in recent years. Our living standards

have gone down through wage freezes and low increases. From second to 27th in the wages league.

We have seen changes in working practices, subcontracting and a contraction of the workforce from 10,000 to 2,800 on the Wear in recent years. British Shipbuilders also want to mothball the Deptford yard with 250 redundancies and sub-contract work at Sunderland Shipbuilders.

Shipyard workers have given enough, now it is time to make a stand. Unless compulsory redundancies are fought off, trade unionism in our industry will be dead. British Shipbuilders will ride roughshod over all we have fought for in recent years.

Scottish steel closure threat campaign vital

BSC HAVE recently announced they are going to axe 211 jobs at the Clydesdale steel and trade works at Bellshill, and a further 89 jobs at Imperial works, Airdrie.

By Colin Brown

(Motherwell North LPYS)

As well as this the workforce at Clydesdale face a two or three week loss in December in the run-up to Christmas.

British Steel Corporation management blame the job losses on a fall in orders and the steel unions are using the 90-day consolidation period to try and salvage something from the situation but the outlook is gloomy.

These redundancies have come as a shock to an area where unemployment is already over 20 per cent.

The steel industry is supposed to be nationalised for the good of the workforce and the community yet BSC management treat workers and their families with contempt, hiring and firing at will.

With the closure of Gartcosh on the horizon as well,

the Labour Party and the trade unions especially the ISTC must be prepared to stand and fight and mount a campaign for effective industrial action to prevent all closures and job losses in Scotland.

Unfortunately the SNP are far ahead of Labour in publicising the threat to steel with posters all over the place, and a recent Triple Alliance demonstration in Glasgow looking more like an SNP march.

We can't wait till the next Labour government to save our industries. Scotland and Lanarkshire in particular, are in grave danger of turning into social and industrial deserts.

Union campaign forces discrimination retreat

SANDWELL education authority with 3,500 teachers have been forced to back down from their anti-gay stance by the local NUT and NALGO branches.

The education authority in Birmingham outraged local trade unionists by saying that gay men could not be trusted to care for young

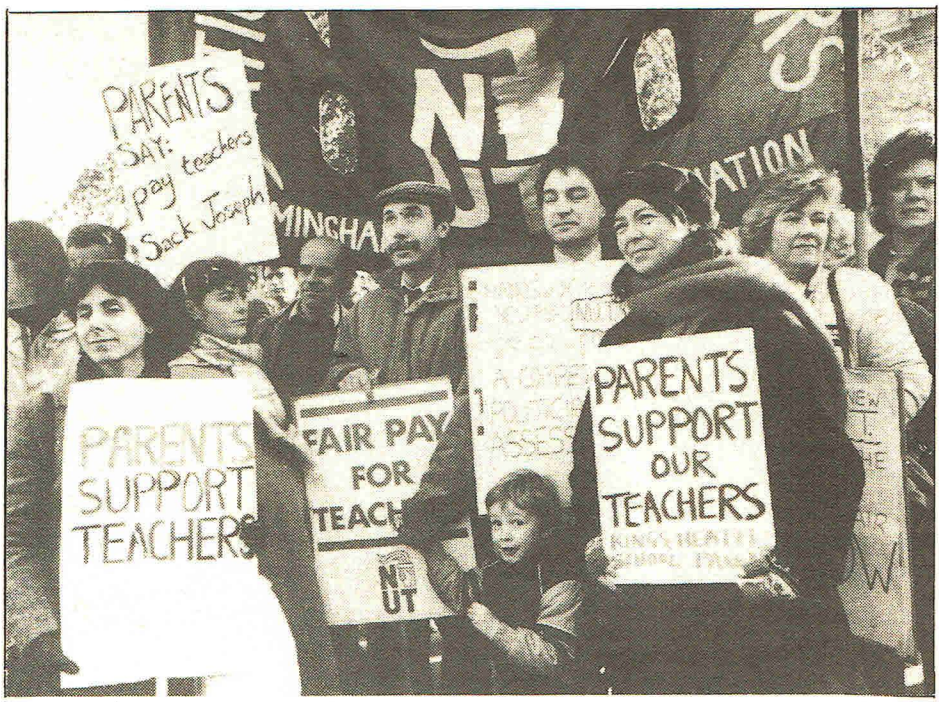
boys and refused to include them in the council's equal opportunities programme.

After a joint campaign the NUT and NALGO forced the Labour authority to include sexual orientation as a form of discrimination, giving protection to job applicants and employees.

Teachers dispute continues

Birmingham parents picket schools conference attended by Sir Keith Joseph. They support the teachers' pay claim and rightly blame the government for school disruption.

Photo: John Harris (IFL)



Addenbrookes

Move to end dispute blocked

ON FRIDAY 14 November the NUPE area health committee met to discuss the Addenbrookes dispute in Cambridge.

After an incredible 14 months of not discussing the dispute on this committee, the December meeting was brought forward.

There was only one reason for this—to end the dispute and get the cleaners to accept the offer of being redeployed.

The officers had already attempted to defeat it at branch level, which failed. The branch made it clear that their intention was to fight on.

After an intervention by Militant supporters at the hospital, the recommendation to accept the offer was defeated by one vote. The officers should be showing a lead to these workers. They have shown their determination to continue the struggle and must be supported.

By a Militant reporter

Midlands TGWU elections

IMPORTANT elections are imminent in the Transport and General Workers Union. General Executive, regional committee and trade group committee seats will be contested.

The right wing, still smarting from the defeat of George Wright who is now busy leading the witch-hunt of Militant supporters in Wales are hoping to shift the balance of the GEC to the right.

Region 5 (Midlands) has been a traditional right wing base and the left has a chance in these elections of loosening their grip.

The most important contest is in the Birmingham/Black Country, where there is a straight right/left fight. Ray Sherlock is the broad left candidate here for the General Executive and all efforts must be exerted by union activists to see he is elected.

A number of Militant supporters are also standing in the Midlands for other committees, with broad left backing.

Ian Schofield (Central Division) and Pete Heywood (N. Div) are standing for the Automotive Trade Group. Alan Jones is standing for the General Workers National Committee and Bill Geoghegan for the Regional Committee.

This is an excellent opportunity to inflict a serious defeat on the right wing. The campaign also shows the need for an open and campaigning broad left to make the TGWU a more democratic and fighting union.

By Bill Mullins

(West Bromwich TGWU district committee, personal)

Scottish and Newcastle

THE STRIKE at the Scottish and Newcastle brewery in Moss Side in Manchester previously reported in Militant is now into its eighth week.

40 production workers, all members of the Transport and General Workers Union, are protesting over management attempts to impose harsher working conditions as a prelude to a massive expansion of the plant.

Management demands include a three shift system, compulsory overtime, fewer meal breaks etc.

The strike has meant that

production at this high technology plant has completely stopped, costing the company an estimated £200,000 a week.

When Scottish and Newcastle took over the brewery two years ago workers braced themselves for a battle with the management who had a reputation for being inflexible. Up till then there had been no history of industrial disputes at the plant.

Donations and messages of support should be sent to: Tony Morbey, c/o Transport House, 1 The Crescent, Salford M5.

International Silentnight support

AS THE Silentnight strike enters its sixth month, the dispute is being spread from the factories at Barnoldswick and Sutton to the international trade union movement.

By Linden Stafford
(Skipton Labour Party)

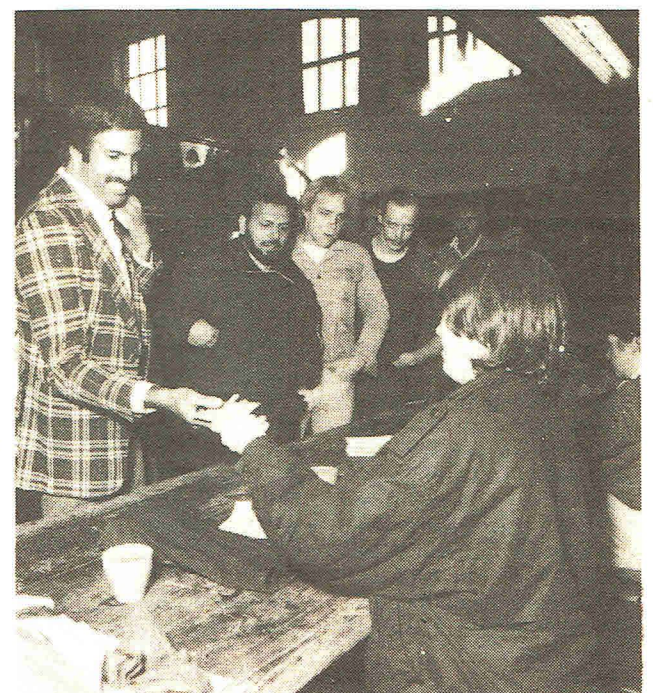
Silentnight FTAT convenor, Charlie Gee, was in Rotterdam last week, gaining support at an international dockworkers' conference, and also contacting other trade unionists in northern Europe.

All the timber for Silentnight beds comes from the continent, and FTAT members are expecting this timber soon to be blacked overseas as well as at ports in Britain.

FTAT shop stewards have this week been putting pressure on their officials to organise a more effective campaign on blacking.

They appreciate that fundraising alone will not win this dispute, and are therefore demanding that delegations of strikers be sent to wire manufacturers, to gain support from workers there, and that efforts to black timber be stepped up.

Shop stewards are also demanding a clarification of the present state of Co-op blacking, as well as urging more determined approaches to USDAW members in other shops selling Silent-



Silentnight strikers

Photo: Phil McHugh

night products.

On Tuesday 26 November, the Broad Left Organising Committee are holding a public meeting on the Silentnight strike at 7.30pm in the Labour Rooms at Keighley, West Yorkshire.

Rally

Strikers are calling on all their supporters to show solidarity with them at the big march and rally to be held in Barnoldswick on Saturday 30 November.

With Christmas on the way, it is important to help strikers give their families a good Christmas, so toys and food parcels, as well as financial donations, should be brought along to the rally. It starts 10.30am in the Victory Park, Barnoldswick, Lancashire.

Please send messages of support and donations direct to: FTAT Crvendale No 92 Branch Strike Fund, c/o Ann King, 10 Rainhall Crescent, Barnoldswick, Colne, Lancashire.

Militant

Miners feature — Page 14

Geneva conference — Page 7



Trade unions must build workers' unity

THE NORTHERN Ireland Labour and Trade Union Group has called on the trade union movement to present a socialist alternative to the Anglo-Irish agreement.

The group's secretary, Peter Hadden commented that the accord showed the inability of both Dublin and Westminster Tory governments to come up with a solution to the problems of the North.

"Capitalism in Northern Ireland means permanent mass unemployment and poverty" he said. "On a capitalist basis the national problem can never be resolved. Neither a poverty-stricken North, nor a poverty-stricken united Ireland can be made attractive to both communities. "Because the agreement

has increased fears and suspicions without offering a solution, the overall effect would be to heighten sectarianism. For this reason the statement by the leaders of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) that they can make no comment on 'constitutional questions' is to be deplored.

"Faced with these Tory proposals which can only divide workers, the unions have a responsibility to present a class alternative, around which workers can be united.

Socialist campaign

"The trade unions must reject the Tory proposals. Neither capitalist reunification nor a capitalist Northern Ireland offer any alternative for the workers. The unions must instead fight for the overthrow of capitalism in Ireland and Britain. On

this basis a socialist united Ireland and a socialist federation of Britain and Ireland could be built.

"The Labour and Trade Union Group is demanding that the leaders of the Northern Ireland Committee of the ICTU produce a socialist answer to the Anglo-Irish agreement, and circulate it for discussion among the trade unions and in the communities. Then they should call a special rank and file delegate conference of the entire movement to discuss and adopt this alternative.

"Such a conference could be the launching pad for a trade union campaign to counter the bigots on both sides and to mobilise workers around their common interests to put an end to sectarianism."

★ For the background to the new agreement, see page 10.



For many years now, the Labour and Trade Union Group in Northern Ireland has been fighting for workers unity, putting forward socialist policies for the labour movement. Sectarianism and the lack of a mass political voice for the working class, have left workers defenceless against capitalism. No to Tory agreements, yes to class unity!

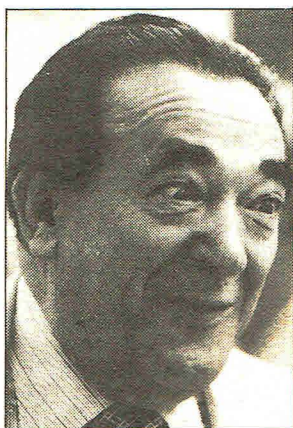
United action in the print

PRINT WORKERS have re-asserted their willingness to resist the bosses' offensive during the past week. Over 2,000 SOGAT '82 members at Mirror Group Newspapers gave a two to one majority for strike action if Robert Maxwell refuses to withdraw redundancy notices issued as part of his plan to cut 2,000 of his 6,000 workforce.

Maxwell has been forced to offer a meeting with SOGAT '82 general secretary Brenda Dean and it is possible that concessions will be made on both sides.

At the long-running Kent Messenger dispute, 27 of the 50 National Union of Journalist members have joined National Graphical Association members on the picket line after more than six months of inter-union friction.

The decisive factor here has been the national agreement between the NUJ and NGA on the introduction of new technology. The NUJ



Robert Maxwell national executive called on their members at the

Messenger to come out in support of the demand for talks between the unions and Boreham the managing director.

He has consistently refused to negotiate with the unions and has now threatened to sack the striking journalists. This is a vital dispute for the print unions to win a victory out of their new unity. It must be given full national backing, including blacking and mass picketing.

Both these disputes show the potential which exists to halt the print bosses' offensive if a mass campaign is waged by the print union leaders around a common strategy. Such action must be prepared now if trade unionism in the print is to be preserved.

Solidarity against apartheid violence

TWO INCIDENTS last weekend show the heightened state of repression against workers in South Africa.

In the BTR Sarmcol strike, one man was killed and four injured when the police opened fire during a battle with the scabs brought in by management (see Militant 15 November for details of the dispute).

In Soweto the sacking of over a thousand nurses and auxiliary workers at the Baragwanath hospital has

aroused huge anger, particularly after troops were sent in to cook and clean. Police had arrested 718 auxiliary workers after demonstrations a few days before.

Strike plans

The union representing many of the nurses and auxiliaries at this hospital have demanded that the troops be withdrawn. They say they will spread

the strike to other hospitals. Baragwanath, the biggest hospital in the southern hemisphere, already has a security police station on the premises to harass injured rioters.

Messages of support to: c/o COSATU, PO Box 9451 Johannesburg 2001, South Africa. More information from Southern African Labour Education Project, 28 Martello Street, London E8. Telephone 01-241 0434.



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Council workers misled by union chiefs

THE REFUSAL of the Tories to negotiate with the Liverpool City Council leaves the councillors with no alternative but to go on with the fight for the return of the cash withheld by the Tory government.

The initiative of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities seemed on the point of collapse but new agreements are still possible provided outside cash can be found and there is no threat to jobs or services.

Money is running out. Council cars are being repossessed to pay bills. Schools and libraries are preparing to close. Workers have been told not to expect wages next week. The Tory lock-out is about to begin.

The vast majority of the council's workers continue to back the council in its stand for jobs and services. Unfortunately many have been misled into believing that this can be achieved painlessly along the lines of the Stonefrost report.

What came as a blow to the Liverpool labour movement this week was the open declaration by the trade union leaders in favour of Tory cuts and rate rises. Moreover, some of these leaders are urging their members to take the council to court to pay wages, even though they know the money isn't there and that such action would multiply a thousand-fold the personal surcharges already hanging over the councillors.

The trade union leaders' intervention on behalf of Thatcher has undermined local trade union support for the council, at least temporarily. By a campaign of lies and misinformation—in harmony with the local Tory press—the leaders of half the city's workforce, principally the white-collar unions NALGO, NUT and NATFHE, have led their members out of the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee and into the opposition to the council. These union leaders are verbally opposed to cuts, but rather than back the council have sniped at it and ambushed it at every opportunity. They have pulled the wool over their members' eyes but have been afraid to allow coun-

cillors to address meetings in case their members heard the truth.

Some of the manual unions—TGWU and UCATT—also voted this week to back the Stonefrost report, following the intervention of outside union officials. Once again the councillors were not allowed to address the meetings. Now a nominal majority of the council workforce are backing the Stonefrost report "without cuts in jobs and services", because their union leaders have lulled them into thinking that such a solution is possible, when it is not.

The councillors have no alternative but to stand firm. A big rate rise like the 15 per cent suggested by Stonefrost, on top of the ex-

isting 9 per cent is not on.

In the war of nerves with the Tory government the Liverpool city councillors will not lose theirs. They were not elected to cut jobs and services and they will not do so.

The councillors are attacked by all sides—by Kinnock, the trade union leaders, the Tories, Liberals and the bishops. But a majority of Liverpool people understand that the fight is basically about jobs, houses and services. When their loyalty is put to the test, they will back the councillors who fought for their city against the Tory juggernaut.

By John Pickard

Workers back council when issues are explained

WHERE THE issues have been properly explained to Liverpool's council workers, there has been overwhelming backing for the stand taken by the city council.

At a mass meeting of GMBATU branch No 5 the officers clearly explained the implications of the Stonefrost report and the fact that it would mean cuts. The report points to a fifteen per cent rate rise—not as a solution to the council's financial shortfall—but only as the cornerstone of a solution.

Such a rate rise would have to be implemented alongside cuts of £19 million, with some mixture of rent rises, increased charges, staff reductions and capitalisation.

GMBATU branch No. 5 voted to back the city council in its refusal to implement Stonefrost, even though it would result in them not being guaranteed wages next week. They voted by about 1,000 to three to walk out if they were not paid. Even the three who voted against did so because they wanted a walkout there and then.

In contrast, when national officials of the TGWU addressed their union members, they continued to push the line of a "painless" option from the Stonefrost report. Councillors were not given the opportunity to attend or address the meetings of TGWU shop stewards or the mass meetings.

Jack Dromey, TGWU official, presented a cleverly worded resolution, first to his shop stewards and then to his mass meeting, in which he heaped lavish praise on "this socialist council" and condemnation of the Tory government. But by praising the "magnificent work" of the council, and by posing as

its friend, he was creating the setting for his real purpose—to call on the council "to balance the budget based on the Stonefrost-AMA proposals."

Before the resolution was passed the TGWU officials found it necessary to accept an amendment from the floor saying that this must not be done without cuts in jobs in services.

It is impossible to implement Stonefrost without cuts, but the insertion of the amendment shows the real fears of the council workers. But union officials are prepared to accept resolutions with built-in contradictions in the form of such assurances, in order to build up some momentum in favour of Stonefrost.

If it is necessary to spin a web of illusions about what the report says, then the union leaders are prepared to do so to avoid having to lead their members in a fight against the Tory government.

The mass meeting overwhelmingly passed the resolution. In exactly the same kind of circumstances a UCATT mass meeting the following day passed a similar motion.

Despite these set-backs, the councillors remain absolutely firm that they will not cut jobs or the living standards of the Liverpool workers. For the last two weeks the Tories have been able to sit back and do nothing while the Labour and the trade union leaders have done their work for them. Let these leaders come out openly, and based on the real Stonefrost report, indicate which jobs they think should be sacrificed and how much they think rents should go up.

By John Pickard

NOW LET us pray... for a rate rise. The good Christians of Liverpool must have been somewhat bemused at the clergy's call for a rate rise from the pulpits last Sunday. A simultaneous statement was read out by Derek Warlock, Roman Catholic Archbishop, David Sheppard Anglican Bishop, and John Williams, Free Churches Moderator, calling for the council to set a 'valid rate' and for prayers for a 'swift and just outcome.'

Happy families move into new homes



What Liverpool's struggle is all about—the Brownless family (left) leave their tenement and (right) move into their new council house



NALGO on strike last year supporting Liverpool council. This year their leaders have misrepresented the council's position and split the workforce.

NALGO's bogus 'painless' solution

THE LOCAL right wing leadership of the white collar unions are still trying to peddle the myth that the Stonefrost report includes "painless" options.

The NALGO branch published a leaflet giving their interpretation of the report "proving", to the delight of the Tories and Liberals, that the Stonefrost report included options that involved no cuts.

In a clash at the recent District LP meeting, Tony Byrne, chairman of the Finance and Strategy Committee, said that one of the

co-authors of the Stonefrost report had commented on NALGO's interpretation: "Amazing—they must have read a different report to the one I wrote".

Despite this, the NALGO leadership have continued to lull their members into believing that painless options are available. At a recent NALGO mass meeting, members voted on a resolution calling on the council to solve the financial crisis without rent rises, job cuts, increased charges or any cuts in the building programme, on the basis of "a rate rise".

Quite apart from the cuts that Stonefrost clearly argues are necessary, the NALGO leaders do not even have the honesty to point out that the minimum rate rise necessary would be 15 per cent, backdated to April.

Under the circumstances, therefore, it was hardly a surprise that 3,000 NALGO members voted for the resolution. What was more significant was the fact that about 1,500 didn't bother to go and that about 450 so distrust their branch leadership that they voted against.

'Sack our members' demand union leaders

'WE DEMAND you make our members redundant'. That was the effect of the message delivered by the trade union leaders to Liverpool councillors during an angry four hour meeting last Sunday.

The leaders, representing all the local authorities' trade unions, made it clear that their view was unanimous, so even the left leadership of the TGWU were included.

When the councillors made it clear that they were not prepared to cut living standards and jobs to make up for Tory cuts, the gloves came off and the union bosses demanded exactly the same as the Tory government were asking.

"We want you to increase the rate by 15 per cent," a spokesman said bluntly, "and the other £19 million worth of cuts is up to you to decide on".

"The other £19 million" of cuts can only mean the loss of jobs.

In the privacy of these meetings, the national local authority trade union leaders are conceding the truth—that the implementation of the Stonefrost report will mean cuts in jobs and services.

LIVERPOOL NALGO has pretended to find an answer to the Council's financial crisis within the Stonefrost report. As we show below, this so-called "solution" is nonsense.

NALGO'S CLAIMS

- 1) No cuts in jobs or services.
- 2) No reduction in funds available for the capital programme.
- 3) No increase in rents or charges.
- 4) An additional rate rise, none of which would compensate for government cuts.

THE TRUTH

- All of the Stonefrost's options involve cuts—up to 5,000 of the council workforce could be threatened.
- The capital programme would suffer, under all options available, between £3 million and £12 million. Hundreds of families would suffer from a cut in the housing programme.
- Charges would increase dramatically for everything from swimming baths to leisure centres, and new charges would be made.
- A 24 per cent rise all of which would compensate for Tory cuts. Otherwise the Council would not have levied a nine per cent rate increase.