

# Militant

The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth

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Inside...

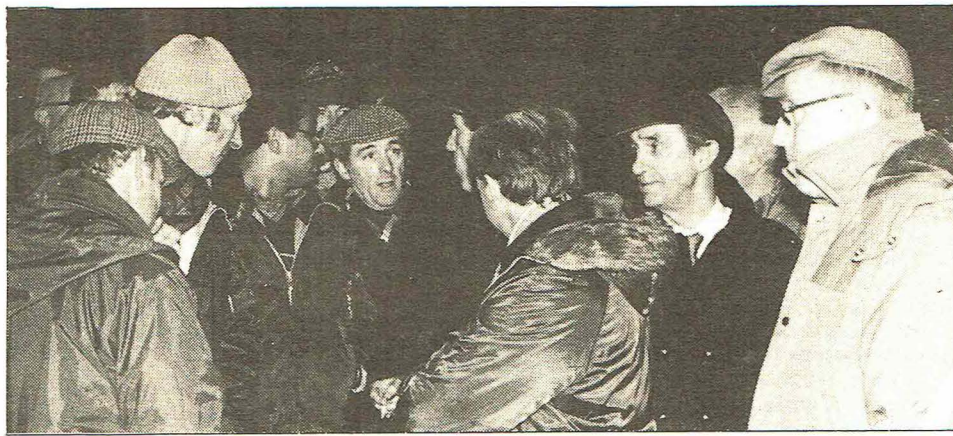


Possil

See pages 8 and 9

# Solidarity

## with print strike



On the picket line at Wapping (top) Terry Fields MP (right), shows his support. (Below) Police guard the gate.

## BL sack steward

SENIOR TGWU shop steward and leading *Militant* supporter in Land Rover, Solihull, Ian Schofield, has been victimised and suspended by the management.

By Bill Mullins  
(West Bromwich TGWU District Committee, in personal capacity)

Undoubtedly this is an attempt by management to weed out militants from BL to make the company attractive to prospective buyers (see page 3).

At an informal trade union/management meeting on Wednesday 29 January, after the workers had gone home, the company made allegations that Ian had submitted an incorrect job application form in 1972 when he first started work.

They said that he had not written down that he had worked for Land Rover for two or three weeks in 1970. For this 'serious misdemeanour' they suspended him on pay pending investigations.

The action against Schofield is directly linked to the refusal by management to recognise him as the elected senior steward for the Range Rover line.

He was elected in March 1985 after being a shop steward and deputy senior steward for eight years. He has recently been elected to the TGWU Automotive Trade Group National Executive. The company's refusal to recognise him is a direct challenge to the trade unions in Rover and the right of workers to elect their own representatives without interference. The suspension if allowed to go unchallenged is undoubtedly a prelude to the sack.

The latest affront to the Range Rover workers led to a stoppage of work on Schofield's own section and an accompanying one. Massive intimidation by the management forced the workers to go back.

A full shop stewards' meeting must be called to organise renewed strike action if the company refuse to reinstate him. Full-time officials must give full backing to this fight to defend fundamental trade union rights.

FLEET STREET trade unionists are appealing to all workers to prepare for action in support of their fight with Rupert Murdoch.

Any doubts about his intentions have been exploded by the letter which reveals his cynical conspiracy to provoke a strike so that he could sack 5,000 workers without paying a penny of redundancy money.

Print workers are defending conditions and staffing levels which have taken over 200 years to achieve. They have been in the forefront of all trade union struggles, as in 1959 when they were the first to win the 40-hour week.

### Unity

At a *Militant* public meeting on Tuesday, print workers spelt out what the fight is about. "The employers don't want the kind of union we've got in this industry" said AUEW FOC at *The Times* Jim Brookshaw, "Murdoch wants to be able to order things to be done; he wants to break the unions—but he

By Pat Craven

won't break us. He has brought about more unity than ever before."

John Bloom, a SOGAT member, urged that "unless we start to escalate this dispute then we are in for a hiding. Every day that the strike goes on, Murdoch is ironing out his distribution problems. He will not negotiate unless we force him to the negotiating table. We must start preparing now for the total shutdown of every national newspaper. Hit them while they are not prepared!

"All the proprietors are working hand in glove to destroy the newspaper industry as we know it. If Murdoch gets away with this, all the other titles will follow down the same road. We can win, but we've got to act now and we've got to act fast".

The union leaders want to put economic pressure on

- Prepare for complete Fleet Street shut down
- Mass picket at Wapping
- United FOC/MOC committees to build maximum unity and run the strike
- Immediate all out national print strike if any union funds sequestered by the courts
- TUC to mobilise maximum support including industrial action
- Immediate expulsion of the EETPU from TUC
- Defend the closed shop
- No redundancies
- Nationalisation of the press facilities under workers' control and management

Murdoch. "Let's hope that economic pressures are successful" said NGA member Peter Jarvis, "but we cannot allow the trade unions' millions to be squandered away. The unions should already be going out to the rest of the movement to galvanise support."

"Go to your work mates, explain what the strike is about" appealed John Bloom: "We will be calling upon every trade union to come along and support us".

Fighting Fund hits new high

A FANTASTIC end to the quarter has pushed the final figure to £49,010. This beats last quarter's total which included the massive collection at the Albert Hall.

In the last 10 days £16,799 arrived. The last three days alone brought £11,510.

The total exceeds the £47,042 which we raised in the whole of 1977! In the last 12 months we raised a magnificent £194,430, another record year for the fighting fund—£35,727 more than in 1984.

Including £87,098 for the Marxist Daily Building Fund 1985 saw £281,528 raised in support of Marxist ideas.

# Militant

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## EETPU: tasks ahead for rank and file

THE COLLABORATION with Rupert Murdoch in recruiting a scab workforce for Wapping is the culmination of a long series of provocations by the leadership of the 350,000-strong Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunications and Plumbing Union. Frank Chapple and now Eric Hammond have steered the union executive into a position far removed from the real needs and direct control of the rank and file and increasingly into opposition to many of the basic tenets of the broader trade union movement.

In recent months Hammond has entertained Norman Tebbit at union functions, boasted about his union's support for private medicine, applied to join the bosses' organisation, the Confederation of British Industry and has organised joint meetings with the breakaway Union of Democratic Miners.

What for many trade union activists is the 'final straw' is the assistance given to Murdoch to establish his scab printing plant at Wapping, trampling on the most basic norms of union solidarity, and disgracing the very fine traditions of a once-great trade union. There is now an overwhelming case for the expulsion of the EETPU from the Trades Union Congress, until it changes its leadership, its outlook and its policies.

Eric Hammond seems to believe his union could survive intact after a split with the TUC, perhaps forming the basis for a new right-wing grouping including the UDM. But if this is his perspective, it is very much mistaken. He seems to have forgotten the elementary laws of trade unionism: a union does not rest on anonymous check-offs and secret postal ballots, but on the self-sacrifice and work of thousands of committed branch and shopfloor activists, shop stewards and lay officials. A split from the TUC will in the short-term lead to the EETPU being cut to pieces by other unions in many areas of industry, and in the long-term to convulsive changes and a shake up of the union from bottom to top.

Many EETPU activists, frustrated after years of almost totalitarian control and official policing may go over in droves to other trade unions, particularly, where the union members feel themselves isolated. Among these will be some of the best class fighters in the whole of the trade union movement.

But Marxists in the EETPU, although they are now the subject of a witch-hunt to remove them from positions as delegates to Labour Parties, would not argue for the membership to leave the union, but rather to fight to change it. Where a group of EETPU members in a workplace vote to transfer to another union, the majority decision should become the policy for all and Marxists would go along with that. But it would be a mistake to imagine that the problem of the EETPU can be solved purely by its disintegration and absorption into other unions.

Those remaining in the electricians' union—and there will be hundreds of thousands—will not be assisted by the mass exodus of the most committed and experienced activists. Moreover, in the longer term, even a rump union still led by Hammond will be subject to enormous stress as a result of the conditions facing the membership. No union, no matter how right wing, can be immune to big battles, given the crushing economic catastrophe that faces British capitalism. Every union will face upheavals and convulsions capable of throwing aside old leaders and old policies.

In many areas of industry, especially where the EETPU organises large numbers, the instinct of the members will not be to leave, but to stay and fight. In North London, the electricians in the contracting industry have formed an 'unofficial' branch and have made approaches to the TUC. One leading EETPU left, John Aitkin, has called for TUC assistance to reform the union.

The Marxists within the EETPU, already working as active supporters of the Broad Left, must base themselves on the programme of perspective and democratic change in the union, in order to re-affiliate to the TUC on an entirely new basis. No-one wants a return to the days of ballot-rigging when the Communist Party controlled the union in a corrupt and bureaucratic manner, paving the way for Chapple's ascendancy. But the union must be made open and democratic, freely controlled and run by its members through conferences, branches, and shop stewards' committees where dissenting opinion can be heard without fear of disciplinary action.

The present crisis in the union will provoke an unprecedented degree of awareness and activity among the rank and file and with this lies the possibility of building a strong opposition to Hammond. The activists in the union, and the Broad Left especially, must step up their activity openly and audaciously appealing to the rank and file.

The TUC, having taken extraordinary steps in an extraordinary situation must follow up the expulsion of the electricians' union with active assistance to the Broad Left, 'unofficial' branches and other formations in the EETPU to reform the union. The EETPU must be rebuilt on the democratic traditions of the past, so it can resume its rightful place in the collective organisations of the trade union movement.

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# Stop Ipswich purge

THE McCarthyite nature of the witch-hunt reached new levels last week with the proposed expulsion of long-standing Ipswich Labour Party members Teresa and Roger McKay.

The two—with a combined Labour Party membership of 39 years—have been told by the local right wing they will be expelled unless they have absolutely nothing to do with *Militant*. A resolution that will be sent to the party's general committee, says the two shall be expelled unless they sign a statement agreeing to:

“...renounce their membership of, and associa-

tion with, *Militant* and to abandon all their activities in and on behalf of *Militant* and its associated organisations, including organising *Militant* meetings, selling and organising the sale of the *Militant* newspaper, collecting subscriptions to the *Militant* Fighting Fund, subscribing to *Militant*, organising and attending *Militant* conferences, rallies and readers' meetings, and recruiting and attempting to recruit new members to *Militant*.”

It only stops short of telling them not to think Marxist thoughts!

The executive meeting which took the decision was lobbied by 30 Labour Party members in protest. The McKay's have been surpris-

ed where some of the support for them has come from.

One Felixstowe councillor told them: “I'm on the extreme right of the party and you are on the left, but I still believe in your right to be in the party. If you are expelled we will be no different from the SDP.”

The local newspapers and radio has given the expulsion threat extensive coverage, which obviously had an affect on Ipswich Town supporters during their home match against Liverpool last Saturday. They were chanting at the opposition ‘There's only one Derek Hatton’ and even ‘We've got more Trots than you’.

## Manchester rally success



Derek Hatton addresses the 800 strong rally in Manchester last week.

Photo: Pam Bromley

DESPITE HEAVY rain and sleet, hostile press coverage and even a bomb threat and a death threat, 800 people poured into Manchester Free Trade Hall for a *Militant* readers meeting and heard Derek Hatton, Liverpool deputy leader, Peter Taaffe, editor of *Militant*, and John Tocher, broad left candidate in the AUEW elections.

Many arrived a full hour before the meeting was due to start. One *Militant* supporter was surprised to find half his family in the hall,

another found his neighbour had come along. Three 70 year old ladies entered the foyer looking unsure of themselves, but on seeing Derek Hatton gave a delighted “Oh there he is” and went in.

The mood of inspiration at the rally was captured by a nursery nurse union leader who made a magnificent donation of £100 during the collection.

Sheffield saw a similar success, despite last minute changes. Forty-five minutes

before the meeting was due to start, local supporters heard Radio Hallam announce that it had been called off! Apparently the landlord at the pub booked for the public meeting cancelled it complaining it had been ‘advertised’. Despite switching to a new venue at the last minute, nearly 90 attended the successful meeting.

By Phil Frampton

## Candidate works on at Wapping

THE PROSPECTIVE Labour candidate for Stevenage is working for Rupert Murdoch at Wapping. Malcolm Withers, a member of the National Union of Journalists and Father of Chapel (shop steward) at the *Sun*, has been asked by Stevenage Trades Council to attend their next meeting to explain his conduct.

Stevenage Labour Party recently tried to expel ten of its members who support the *Militant*. They were stopped by a High Court order. Withers, who is also a Lincoln councillor, at first opposed this witch-hunt, but later argued that he had found it electorally popular

and so swung round to support it.

The Labour Party National Executive has withdrawn all co-operation from journalists working for Murdoch's papers. Will they, and the Stevenage and Lincoln parties now act

against a public representative who is flouting a decision of his own union and helping Murdoch to strike a blow at the whole trade union movement?

By a Militant reporter

## Protest at arrest

A PICKET has been called of Highbury Magistrates court to protest at the arrest and prosecution of Further Education Labour Students activist Lesleigh Woodburn. Lesleigh was arrested after a teachers' union demonstration and during police detention was racially abused. LPYS branches in Hackney South and Islington have campaigned against her arrest. They have called the picket outside the courts in Highbury at 1pm on Monday 10 February.

## Labour students call lobby

ANGER IS mounting amongst members of the National Organisation of Labour Students over the leadership's bureaucratic measures against not only *Militant* supporters but all those opposed to the NOLS leaders.

Up to 15 college Labour Clubs have been disenfranchised from attending NOLS conference because the leadership failed to inaugurate them in time. Liverpool FE Labour Clubs have still not received NOLS cards this year. Southampton Labour Club has had to be inaugurated twice and is still not sure whether it can attend NOLS conference.

Even Oxford University Labour Club has reduced its affiliation to NOLS from 270 to 10 in protest against the NOLS bureaucracy.

Angry Labour students have called a lobby of NOLS conference on 1 March outside ULU, Malet Street, London WC1 at 8.30am. Tony Benn has backed the lobby and all Labour students and Young Socialists who want democracy in NOLS are urged to attend.

By Mark Ovenden  
(Southampton Colleges Labour Club)

## Ranks reject expulsion threats

THE MOOD of rank and file Labour Party and trade union members against the witch-hunt is hardening.

The Intake ward branch of expelled Sheffield councillor Paul Green has re-adopted him as their council candidate for the May elections, their action being endorsed by Sheffield Heeley Constituency Labour Party. This is in the face of the opposition of the Labour leadership and ‘soft left’ Sheffield council leader David Blunkett.

A Sheffield Campaign Against Witch-hunts has been set up, with speakers and literature available from the chair of Intake ward (in a personal capacity), Brian Salisbury of 90 Woodhouse Road, Sheffield. The campaign's first bulletin publicises the call by Sheffield Central Labour Party to lobby the local District Labour Party meeting on Tuesday 11 February at 6.30am at the Trades and Labour Club.

## Resolution

In the Black Country, the Pensnett and Brockmoor ward branch of GMBATU official Neville Hough—who is on the National Executive inquiry team into Liverpool—has passed a resolution against the witch-hunt.

In Kent a representative of the Liverpool City Council visited the Area Council of the National Union of Mineworkers, asking for support against the witch-hunt. Secretary of the Kent NUM, Jack Collins, said: “The area council agreed unanimously to write to Heathfield (NUM General Secretary) in order to remind him of the union's position of opposition to witch-hunts and also asking the NUM executive to make sure that union spokesmen observe union policy. We received a reply from Heathfield advising us that our people will take cognisance of union policy in their statements.”

Meanwhile in London, an attempt by the right wing to start a witch-hunt in Greenwich Labour Party failed dismally. Their resolution to ban sales of *Militant* received only three votes, and was overwhelmingly defeated.

● The undemocratic attacks on Labour's youth section, the LPYS are continuing. Bristol North West Labour Party voted by just four votes to suspend the YS branch and dismiss the youth officer.

In London, Bexley Heath LPYS has also been shut down, with the party leadership acting unconstitutionally. The LPYS representative to the party's executive committee was given no notice of the meeting which took the decision, and the party's general committee were not given seven days notice of the proposed action.

By Eric Segal

## Pound slides in oil crisis

**TICKING AWAY** under the Thatcher government is a time-bomb potentially far more explosive than the Westland affair.

The crash in oil prices threatens to shatter any lingering hopes that the government will be able to stage a 'recovery' or reduce taxes in time for the next election.

Crude oil has been traded for as low as \$15.00, down more than \$10 within a week, as the big producers in OPEC step up production to try to increase their share of the market at the expense of countries like Britain, whose oil from the North Sea is more expensive to produce.

For most of the advanced industrial countries, and manufacturing companies in Britain, this will mean cheaper fuel and transport and therefore more profit. It should also bring about an overall fall in inflation.

Typically the petrol companies have been slow to pass on the price reductions. While crude oil prices have fallen by 30 per cent over the last two months, pump prices are only eight per cent below their peak reached in April 1985.

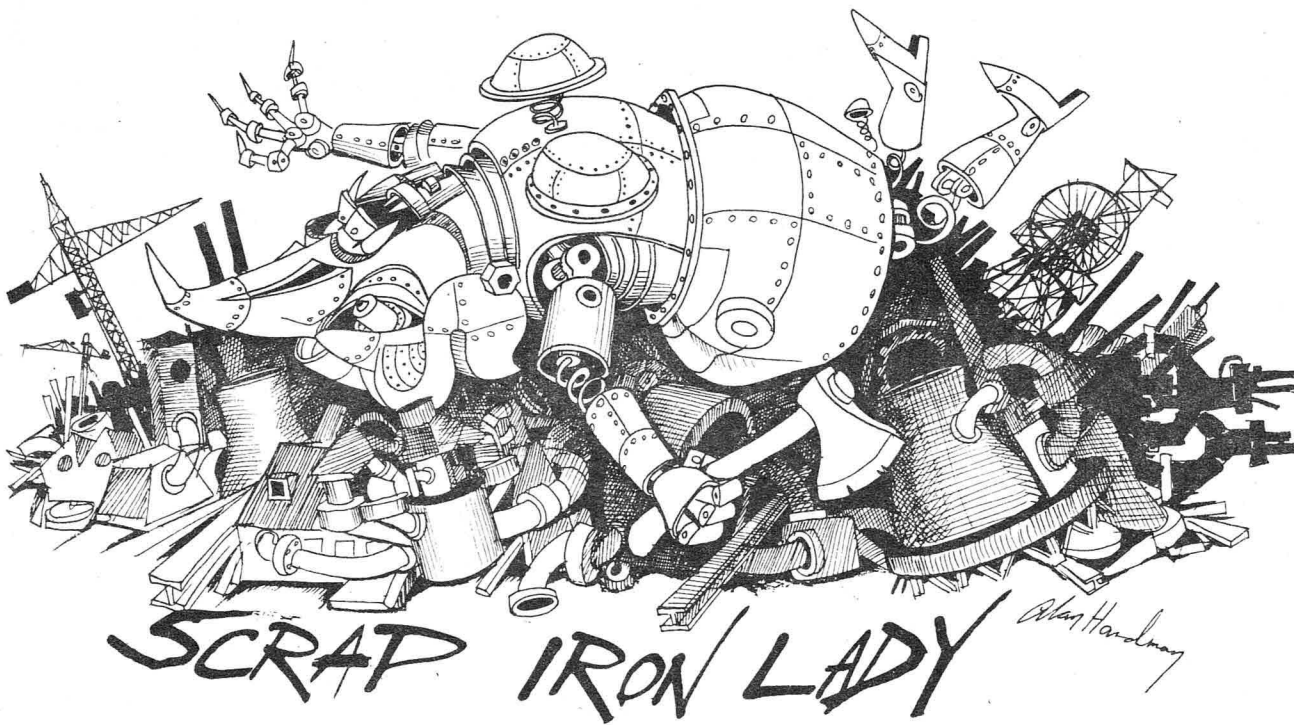
For Britain these gains will be outweighed by the losses. Not only will the government lose millions of pounds tax revenue, but the value of the pound will go on falling, as its value is now judged in relation to the that of oil. Such a fall will help British exporters by making their goods cheaper on the world market, but make imported goods dearer.

As a net importer of manufactured goods, British industry stands to lose, as prices rise and inflation takes off again. If they try to stem the fall in the pound by raising interest rates, that too will push up manufacturers' costs and lead to higher inflation.

British capitalism's reliance on oil to save it from bankruptcy and its failure to reinvest the profits from that oil in manufacturing now leaves it extremely vulnerable.

As with the recent collapse of the tin market, the insanity of the capitalist system of production and exchange of basic commodities threatens to bring misery to workers all over the world, not because there are shortages but because 'too much' is being produced.

By Pat Craven



## Jobs threat in BL sell-off

**HUGE CHUNKS** of British Leyland the state-owned motor company are likely to be sold off to multinational corporations.

The government is close to a deal which would sell off BL's commercial truck and Land Rover divisions to the US giant General Motors.

Leon Brittan's successor at the Trade and Industry department, the millionaire Paul Channon, also admitted they were having talks with Ford over the sale of Austin Rover, the only car manufacturers which is still

British owned.

All BL's sections have had huge sums of money pumped into them. Tax-payers have been bled, workers have been sacked, speeded up and underpaid to finance investment in new technology. All the benefits are to go to shareholders in US companies.

GM already own the Bedford truck and van plants at Dunstable and Luton. With 40 per cent excess capacity worldwide in heavy vehicles, GM will want to merge, gain new products and rationalise production. It will mean

more job losses, probably in both Bedford and BL. Ford want to expand, they have recently unsuccessfully tried to take over Fiat, they will probably also want to shed jobs.

Even Tory MPs have, post Westland, become more argumentative. MP Anthony Beaumont Dark has objected to the plans as they will leave "nothing but Meccano sets in the heartland of this country". The Tories have not objected to other privatisations which this government has carried out, giving instant wealth to Bri-

tain's own fat cats.

With the privatisation of British Gas which threatens more job losses, price rises and loss of control over safety standards, the trade union movement and the Labour Party must build a movement to stop the hiving off of state assets.

The next Labour government must renationalise all privatised industries. But this must be part of a new form of nationalisation under workers' control which aims to run these industries in the interests of ordinary workers and consumers.

## Dole figures slam Tory record

**UNEMPLOYMENT IN** Britain has soared to a record high of 3,407,729, which is a rise of 134,640 on December's figures.

The sharp rise reflects the underlying decline of the British economy particularly in manufacturing industry.

### Decline

Recently the CBI has predicted a decline in manufacturing output in the coming months which would ensure that the upward trend in the unemployment figures continues.

The Tories tried to pretend that the increase in December was due to 'special circumstances'. But now they admit that they

have no answer to explain this month's increase. After the seasonal adjustments are made the increase in adult unemployment is still 20,600.

A report by the OECD says that there is "little chance of a significant cut in unemployment... the problem today was more persistent and deep rooted than in the 1930s."

The new method of accounting introduced by the Tories, which excludes many elderly people disguises the real figure, which would be over 3.8 million. If YTS schemes were also included it would be over 4 million.

By Ben Eastop



Liverpool councillor Felicity Dowling addressing Labour's Local Government Conference at the weekend. Liverpool councillors are at present in the High Court appealing against the threat of surcharge. Photo: John Harris (IFL).

## Short reprieve for Haiti dictator

AS HAITI'S desperately poor population demonstrated, rioted and struck for food, jobs and freedom last month, President Duvalier's wife threw a lavish caviare and champagne reception for her visiting friend. It was Princess Ashraf, sister of the late and unlamented Shah of Iran.

Observers in Washington are afraid that "Baby Doc" Duvalier may shortly meet a similar fate to that of the Shah. A White House official, Larry Speakes, announced Duvalier's departure last week. But Speakes spoke too soon. Duvalier

was still in office, and still able to introduce a state of siege. He would try, as Nicaraguan dictator Somoza tried in 1978-79, to shoot his way out of trouble.

The American bosses previously backed the Duvalier family. They maintained a grim form of stability for capitalism for 28 years. But now the Haitian people are increasingly prepared for civil war, if needed, to overthrow the dictatorship—and possibly capitalism as well.

The people are not just demanding an abstract 'democracy'. There have been huge demonstrations, riots and

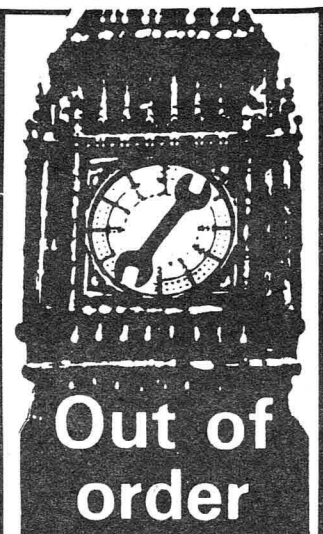
general strikes. Food stores have been sacked as frequently as militia headquarters. Starvation is loading the guns. The economy is in ruins: over half the population are out of work or severely underemployed, and one child in six dies before the age of one. Their condition contrasts markedly with the country's 200 millionaires and with life in Cuba just a short sea trip away, where despite the limitations of Stalinist bureaucracy, living standards are immeasurably higher.

A revolution is developing in an area of great strategic importance for

US imperialism. The army is split, only the former Tonton Macoutes, the Duvalier family's private militia seem reliable. The Catholic church and sections of the ruling class are hoping to cobble together a moderate opposition to the doomed Duvalier regime.

But the words of one slum dweller quoted in the *Guardian*, will ring in capitalists' ears. "Why don't the Americans help us. We might as well try the Cubans."

By Roger Shrivess



'LOYALTY IS the Tory Party's secret weapon'. I've often heard this phrase at Westminster, quoted by Tory MPs smugly contemplating their big majority and unity in comparison with the internal controversies in the Labour Party.

However, the 'loyalty' of Tory MPs has its limits, even to a Prime Minister whose every heartless statement and reactionary measure they have until now loudly applauded. It's quite clear from the opinion polls that most people don't believe Thatcher has told the truth in the Westland affair, and that the Tories are heading for a thumping defeat at the forthcoming Fulham by-election.

What's new, though, is the feeling amongst the Tory rank-and-file (and through them the Tory backbenchers) that Thatcher's continued presence at the helm now greatly jeopardises their chances of winning the next election. Suddenly I hear all these stories of 'six months grace', 'eye infections' and 'early retirement'. The 'secret weapon' has been fully brought out into the open!

The Tories on the defence select committee face an unpleasant dilemma. If they aren't seen making a serious attempt to overcome Thatcher's obstruction, the cynicism felt by workers towards the Parliamentary process will be reinforced. As Tory select committee member, Keith Speed, remarked: "We do not have it in for the Prime Minister or any other minister, but we have got a job to do, and the credibility of the whole select committee system is at stake".

On the other hand, the more information is uncovered, the greater will be the discredit heaped on the whole Tory government. It is already clear from 'informed sources' quoted in the *Observer* of 2 February that the real sequence of events concerning the leaked letter is substantially different from Thatcher's version given in the emergency debate.

There are still golden opportunities for Labour to make capital out of this situation. The Labour leadership should be using every chance to expose not only the truth about this incident, but the whole strategy employed by the Tories to defend their system.

Let the Tories display to the full their understanding of 'loyalty' by all means, but let's also see our leaders repay the 'loyalty' of millions of workers who have waited seven years for the Tories to be replaced.

By Dave Nellist MP

# What we stand for

## Militant relaunches successful pamphlet

**THIS WEEK** a new updated version of *What We Stand For* is published. Despite two print runs the previous edition sold out. Kevin Ramage interviewed the pamphlet's author and *Militant's* editor, PETER TAAFFE, about the policies and demands it puts forward:

**Why has the pamphlet been produced?**

It aims to give a brief introduction to the basic ideas upon which the *Militant* newspaper was founded, 22 years ago. It is an exposition of the crisis of British capitalism and the relevance of Marxism to the Labour Party, and gives a sketch of the colossal advantages to working people of a socialist plan of production.

**How would you answer the claim that it is a completely separate programme from that of the Labour Party?**

On the contrary our basic demands are those that have been taken up by workers in the course of struggle. The 35 hour week for example—*Militant* first raised this in the early 1970's, but the idea of a shorter working week to combat unemployment is a very old idea in the labour movement. The minimum wage—we campaigned for this in the face of opposition from many trade union leaders, but it is now accepted as Labour Party policy. The question of a massive building programme—that too is part of Labour's programme.

### Reforms

The difference is that the reformists put Labour's programme in a completely utopian fashion, because they believe capitalism will be able to absorb these demands.

We support all reforms, but explain they can only be made permanent if a Labour government carries through fundamental socialist change. Thus we call for the nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies. Our critics say this is not official Labour Party policy, but all that this demand does is put Clause IV Part 4 of Labour's constitution into every day language. **How would you respond to Neil Kinnock's accusation that *Militant's* demands—particularly for a guaranteed job for school leavers—are 'impossibilist'.** Many workers, particularly the youth, will be alarmed and indignant at his statement. There is a grain of truth in what he says—he realises that capitalism cannot afford reforms, but his solution is to throw socialism out of the window, and try to manage capitalism better than the capitalists.

On the guaranteed job for youth, an opinion poll last year amongst young workers found that 93 per

cent supported this demand. It is Neil Kinnock who is out of step with the labour movement and the basic demands of ordinary people.

**Does this mean that you therefore reject the possibility of winning reforms?**

No. There is no contradiction between the struggle for reforms and fighting for the socialist transformation of society. We support all workers involved in struggle. *Militant* supporters have played a key role in shopfloor and local battles, such as in the civil service, amongst the miners and so on. They are foremost in championing the day-to-day demands of working people.

Where we differ from the reformists of both left and right, is that we link up these struggles for reform with the understanding that only a fundamental socialist change can guarantee lasting reforms. **Wouldn't your opponents argue that *Militant* supporters on Liverpool City Council were forced to 'accept reality' at the end of the day?**

No I don't believe so. The attacks on Liverpool in the media, by the Tory government and ruling class, and their echoes in the labour movement, has been one of the most gigantic dust throwing operations in history, to try and cover up what the Liverpool Council and Labour Party achieved in a heroic struggle. No other city has had the

number of one-day strikes, mass demonstrations or such a high level of participation in the Labour Party. It is the most politicised city in the country. It is an anticipation of what is going to happen to the working class as a whole.

What is striking about Liverpool is there have not been the savage cuts wanted by the government, nor the backdoor cuts seen in other Labour authorities. There is a £3 million unallocated cut, but the main conquests of the struggle on jobs and new house building remain.

Marxism has always stated that in effect reforms are a by-product of mass socialist struggle.

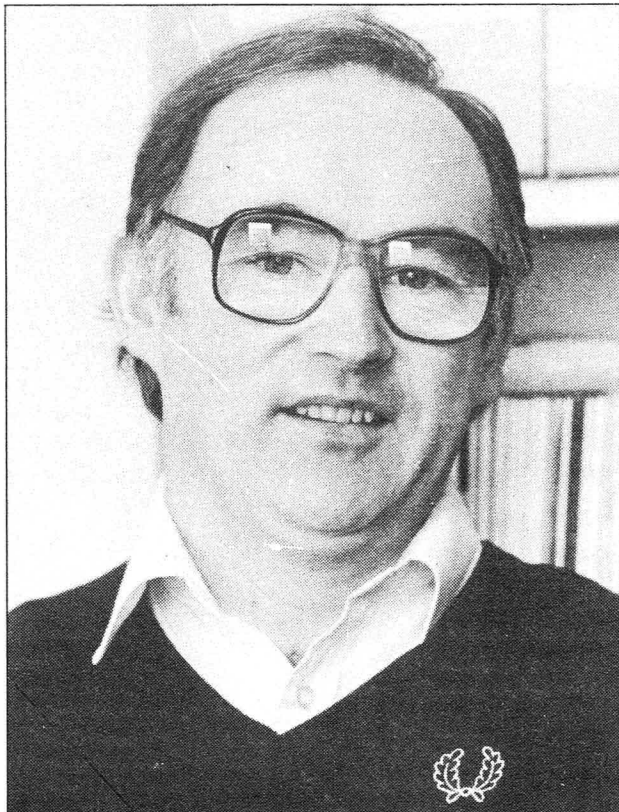
**You are referred to as Trotskyists. Some people believe this means that you want an East European style society?**

What we see in Russia and East Europe is a perversion of Marxism. 'Marxism' and 'Trotskyism' are merely scientific socialism, a means of explaining the development of society and providing the working class with a rounded out programme to overthrow capitalism and establish a new democratic socialist society.

### Democracy

We defend all democratic rights, the right to strike, freedom of assembly, the right to vote and, something we do not have in Britain a free press. Whether in Britain or Eastern Europe, we support the right of all political parties, except the fascists, to be able to campaign for their point of view.

But there would be one fundamental difference in a socialist society. At present three millionaires control 90 per cent of the press. Under socialism the printing facilities of the country would be nationalised and allocated to every political party on the basis of support in society, perhaps by the number of votes they received in elections.



Peter Taaffe. Photo: Militant.

**You put forward the call for an enabling bill to nationalise the commanding heights of the economy. Do you believe that socialism will come through parliament?**

If a Labour government passes such an enabling bill to nationalise the top 200 monopolies with minimum compensation, and at the same time mobilises the tremendous support of working people outside of parliament, in committees of, say shop stewards, housewives, small businesses etc, then undoubtedly that would paralyse any attempt by the ruling class to overthrow that government. We have no doubt that a radical socialist government would meet with the most ferocious resistance by the ruling class. They would try as they did in Chile to overthrow that government.

But what social reserves could the ruling class rely on? At the moment we have strikes by teachers, who were a pillar of Toryism in the 1930's. Even University dons have been on the picket line. In the miners' strike we saw how small businessmen in the pit villages were drawn behind the miners. A similar thing would happen on a national scale if Labour put forward a socialist programme.

As for the army being used against a Labour government, every army is only a social copy of the society upon which it is based; the ranks of the army come from the unemployment blackspots of Merseyside, the Midlands, the North East etc. Any attempt to use the army against a radical socialist government would cause it to disintegrate in the hands of the ruling class.

**How do you see the struggle for socialism developing in Britain?**

The perspective for socialism is extremely optimistic. In contrast to the pessimists in the movement like Eric Hobsbawm we see a powerful labour movement; ten million workers are still organised in the trade unions. Meanwhile capitalism is breaking down, as explained in the

pamphlet, not only in Britain but internationally. The great majority of the population are dissatisfied at the way things are going. The Heseltine affair indicates the growing splits in the ruling class.

The ruling class see the danger before them, which explains their venom against *Militant*—because they fear the support we are attracting. They understand that if a Labour government is elected but remains in the framework of capitalism, it will not be able to implement even the minimal demands that people want. That in turn would have a radicalising effect within the Labour Party. The trade unions will also be transformed in this period because they will have to give answers to the pressing problems of working people on jobs, housing, education and so on.

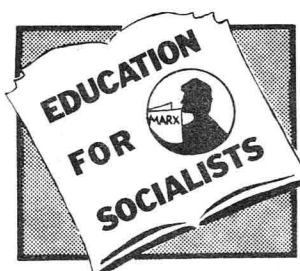
### Marxism

Marxism, as represented by *Militant*, will become a predominant force in the labour movement in the next five or ten years. This development will be in parallel with similar ideas throughout the world. The struggle for socialism is the only hope not only for the British working class, but for workers throughout the world, and for humanity as a whole.

**Finally, how do you want *Militant* readers to use this pamphlet?**

Our readers must make sure that this pamphlet is given the widest possible circulation—in the street, at meetings and so on—amongst thousands of workers, who have heard about *Militant* but have not read what we really stand for.

We hope that discussion groups can be set up around this pamphlet, the *Militant International Review* and *Militant's* other publications to discuss, debate and become politically aware. In that way, equipped with a socialist perspective, we can build a powerful socialist movement that will be absolutely invincible and ensure a successful struggle to transform society.



## Discussion Groups: striking a balance

IN OUR last column we suggested that discussion groups should aim to strike a balance between issues of topical interest, historical and theoretical issues, and the international struggles of the working class.

Our suggestions this week fit into all of these categories and will undoubtedly be discussed at all levels in the labour movement over the coming weeks.

*The crisis facing British capitalism and likely political developments.*

The present turmoil in the Tory Party is confirmation of *Militant's* analysis of the deep crisis afflicting Britain's ruling class, as outlined last year in *Capitalism at an Impasse* (40p) by Ted Grant. The new supplement to that pamphlet (20p) should form the basis of any discussions over recent developments. **Additional reading:** *Where is Britain Going* by Leon Trotsky £1.50.



Ted Grant, author of *Capitalism at an impasse*.

*South Yemen and the Middle East.*

What is the nature of the crisis in the Middle East where the US and Soviet Union haggle over spheres of influence? **Reading:** *Militant* issue 782, *Civil War Rages in South Yemen and The Coming World Revolution* E. Grant (30p).

*South Africa: The Struggle Grows:*

The momentous struggle of the black workers of South Africa has once again, posed the question of how the regime can be brought down. The new speakers' notes *South Africa the Struggle Grows*, 30p are a valuable addition to the wealth of other material available in *Inqaba*. Full reading guide and question list enclosed.

*Philippines Election—7th February. Can Marcos Survive?*

Watch out for news coverage for results and material in *Militant* in coming weeks (Issue 784 feature article.)

*Militant International Review No 31 (80p).*

Contains articles on Liverpool, the Anglo-Irish Agreement, the inner city riots, and Part III of Alan Woods' series on the History of Bolshevism. Plenty of material for discussion.

All books and pamphlets available from World Socialist Books. Orders under £5 add 25% for postage, £5-£10 add 10%, over £10 post free.



Price 30p (and 10p p&p). Order from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB.

# Tories unleash two year YTS

THE INTRODUCTION of the two year Youth Training Scheme on April Fools Day this year will mean one thing—an intensification of all the problems faced by YTS trainees.

The new two year scheme is a blatant attempt by the Tory government to hide the real number of unemployed youth in time for the next general election.

They are planning to spend over £1 billion on 500,000 new schemes by 1987, claiming the schemes will be in a 'new, improved' form. This in itself is an admission that the current YTS schemes have failed. The record of YTS from 1983-86 is far from a success. The government had expected 460,000 places to be taken up—yet only 350,000 schemes were filled. In 1984 180,000 trainees left their schemes before completion.

## Exploitation

Youth have seen YTS for what it is—a crude attempt to remove them from the dole figures and provide a pool of cheap labour for the bosses with no real training or job at the end of the course.

YTS was heralded as a "bridge between school and work". Yet according to the Manpower Services Commission's own figures, by October 1984 only 48 per cent of trainees went on to get a job—38 per cent went back on the dole. Besides, if YTS was getting young people work, why extend it to two years? Indeed the MSC admitted in its report on the new scheme that "no training course, however high its quality can guarantee a job".

Real training on YTS will be even less likely. On current YTS schemes, the government gives firms £660 towards training costs. In the new scheme this will be reduced to £500 in the first year and only £100 in the second. The result will be employers rearing trainees to do productive work in the second year. Not being proper-

By Tony Cox  
(Secretary YTURC)

ly trained or skilled, already appalling levels of safety standards on YTS will drop even further.

However, the two-year YTS will have one consequence that the government has probably not considered. Employers are now raising fears, reported in the *Guardian* (7 January), that "a longer period would lead to trainees becoming resentful about their status and discontented with their allowance".

While unions like NUPE, GMBATU and TGWU have begun recruiting trainees, this campaign must be stepped up, with the trade union movement involving groups like the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign and the Labour Party Young Socialists who have already extensively campaigned in this field. Similarly the National Union of Students should be involved, having access to trainees during their 20 week 'off the job' training at FE colleges.

## Action

Trainees will want action. They must not be recruited just to swell union membership figures, but be actively involved in union campaigns, with priority given to fighting for trainees' wages being topped up to trade union rates of pay. At present only 16 per cent of trainees' wages are topped up, the best examples being the agreements implemented by Labour councils in Liverpool, Hackney, Sheffield and Edinburgh. Equally important, the trade unions must monitor the training content of the schemes and fight for guaranteed jobs at the end of YTS.

# Fight racist attacks

A REPORT recently published by the Community Alliance For Police Accountability group last year identified an increase of 25 per cent in racial attacks in the East End of London.

The attacks included five cases of arson, 10 attempted arsons, 94 cases of criminal damage and 91 bodily assaults, directed at the Bengali community in Tower Hamlets.

This is part of a disturbing trend covering several areas in East London. The Greenwich Action Committee Against Racist Attacks has reported a 72 per cent increase in racist assaults in the South East London borough.

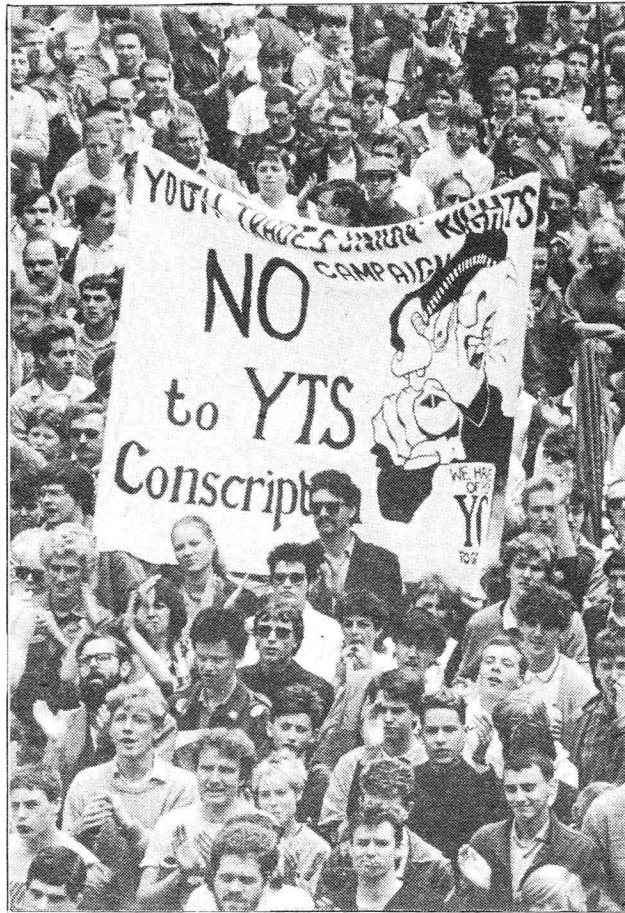
CAPA said the attacks involved window-breaking, excreta through letter boxes and physical harassment of women and children. So

much so that many have become prisoners in their own homes. Intimidation on some estates also takes an organised form where some local white residents have organised hostile "reception committees" for Asian families rehoused on estates.

## Police

A common feature in all these attacks is the unwillingness of the police to investigate these cases. Of the 495 cases which CAPA dealt with in 1985 only 16 resulted in any arrest. The main concern of the police seems to be to cover up the racist nature of these attacks, even when the victims' homes have been daubed with NF slogans. In some cases the victims have been charged with wasting police time.

For all their talk of 'law and order', the Tories priorities are clear. A case in point has been the use of



YTS trainees join demonstration in support of Liverpool City Council last year. Photo: Militant

## YTURC 'declaration' campaign kicks off

THE DECLARATION of Youth Rights, launched by the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign and backed by the Labour Party Young Socialists, has got off to a lively start.

The declaration, which outlines eight basic rights for young people on jobs, low pay, drug abuse, political power, education, housing, discrimination and entertainment (see *Militant* 777) was launched at a series of meetings up and down the country in December.

So far the biggest event was in London where the launch was accompanied with a 'Celebrity-five-a-side' tournament. Besides teams from 'YTURC Athletic' and the London LPYS, also showing their skills were *Madness*, *Style Council*, the South London reggae band *Swaye*, and teams from London's pirate DJs, *New Musical Express* and *The Voice/Black Beat*.

Despite *Madness* being the favourites, the dark horses of the day proved to be *Style Council*, with help from soul singer Junior. However, in a hard-fought final, they lost out to *Swaye*.

Over 300 people attended, with £400 raised for the campaign's funds.

Support for YTURC is not restricted to Britain. Last year, when *Style Council* released 'Our Favourite Shop', to show their support they published YTURC's address on the album cover.

As a result, young workers from all over the world have written to YTURC. Letters have come in from Italy, France, Japan, USA and Brazil. Many display the instinctive internationalist feelings of youth.

The spirit of youth was best summed up by 18 year old Ana from Sao Paulo in Brazil, who said simply: "The world is wrong—but we can change it for sure".

## Luxury lunch to launch low pay

AMID THE marbled halls of London's luxurious Barbican centre, the two year YTS was officially launched at a press conference on Monday 27 January.

The banner across the stage proclaimed: "YTS-Training for Skills." More like 'YTS Training Kills' when you consider the incredible accident rate of one death every eight weeks on YTS. Sixteen youth have been killed on YTS with 22 killed on its predecessor, the Youth Opportunities Programme, since 1979.

## Conscription

The chairman of the Manpower Services Commission, Bryan Nicholson, along with Lord Young for the government and Sir Terence Beckett for the bosses all gave the new YTS the 'hard sell', exposing the wonders of the scheme.

The most telling remark came from Nicholson: "Already nearly two thirds of all 16 and 17 year old school leavers go onto YTS and our aim is to keep driving that proportion up so that two year YTS becomes the normal and preferred route to the world of work for young people and employers alike." In other words the Tories plan to take under 18's out of the labour market into a form of industrial conscription.

Amazingly the panel were joined by Norman Willis for the TUC, who cracked jokes with his 'friends' from "the other side of industry". He did say the TUC were "disappointed that the first year allowance had not been raised above £27.30." The TUC wanted £34. The TUC also suspected some employers of exploiting YTS trainees as cheap labour, but generally the TUC



A scene from the advert promoting the two year YTS. In an unlikely scenario, England football manager Bobby Robson approaches a youth hanging around, telling him about the wonders of YTS. Perhaps he needs replacements because football stars are generally pricing themselves out of a job?

welcomed the two year YTS.

The press conference was a very cosy affair with a buffet lunch complete with mango moose and plenty of wine. Along with all the hype came Nicholson showing off, to use his words, a "bunch of trainees" who were of course very happy with the scheme. A typical "bunch"? Not exactly—they included a football trainee with Chelsea FC, a trainee jockey, and, significantly a trainee clown.

## Compensation

The convivial atmosphere was only broken when a representative of the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign asked the panel: "Have you got a message for the parents of the 16 trainees who have died on YTS and have not received proper compensation?" They hadn't, and quickly moved onto the next question.

By Martin Smith



Konor points to the window of his home in Bow, East London. From there on 7 August last year, his uncle hung clutching a 10 month baby for 15 minutes before being rescued by the fire brigade, after fire swept through their flat following an arson attack. Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (Report).

controls.

On the other hand the LPYS has shown the way forward by forging links with several anti-racist campaigns, defence campaigns etc involving themselves on a day to day basis with black youth fighting to defend

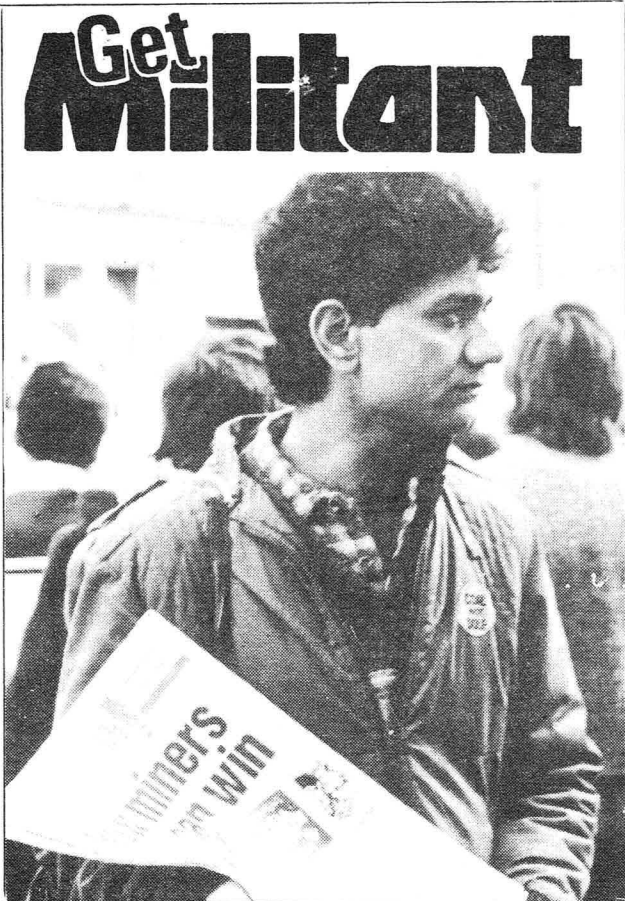
their communities. With such an approach the Labour Party will be in a position to recruit large numbers of blacks to its ranks. Moreover, only with a socialist programme which would be capable of removing high levels of unemploy-

ment, bad housing and general social deprivation that the fuel for further racial conflict will be removed.

By Colin De Freitas

## Marxist Daily Building Fund

Don't forget to send in your tenners to the Marxist Daily Building Fund to produce all the material we need and bring a more frequent paper nearer.



Militant—the paper that backs workers in struggle.

ON 30 January *Militant* sellers sold 37 copies in Fleet Street. The next evening, sales reached 41 despite sellers being harassed by the police.

Two sellers near the *Sun/News of the World* old premises were warned that they couldn't sell papers because of a City of London bye-law; they were moved round the corner into Fleet Street.

After about five minutes a policewoman returned to tell

us that her 'Governor' had arrived and would arrest any paper-sellers.

The policewoman said that sellers get permits from Wood Street station round the corner but she didn't think that *Militant* sellers would get one if they applied! We let printworkers make up their own minds what papers to read—and kept on selling.

By Kevin Parslow

## The Marxist paper for youth

AS KEVIN Parslow's article shows, *Militant* has sold well in Fleet Street in recent weeks. One seller sold 16 by himself on Saturday night.

But if you look at our masthead, you will see "*Militant*, Marxist paper for Labour and youth". Sales on the Red Wedge tour showed how attractive our paper is to young people. Over 50 were sold at the Leicester concert, 60 in Birmingham, 70 in Edinburgh and over 25 in the driving snow in Bradford.

Red Wedge's tour is over but you can get a similar response from young people in concerts and other activities.

In Kent, supporters in Maidstone, Gravesend and Chatham sold 44, 30 and 42

papers respectively at recent LPYS street meetings. If you don't already hold street meetings, why not suggest something similar in your LPYS branch?

Other street sales are proving successful. Sheffield supporters regularly sell up to 50 on Saturday city centre sales. Sellers in Castleford use the petition against the witch-hunt to introduce people to our ideas. They are selling 15 to 20 every Saturday. Keep your reports coming in.

Send us your tips on paper selling techniques too. This week's tip, though, is only for the brave. Some people tell Vic Dale on the Isle of Wight "you must be joking" when he offers to sell them the paper. But he has a ready reply: "If I'd wanted to be a stand up comedian I'd have gone to your hairdresser".

1986 MARKS the fiftieth anniversary of the Spanish civil war. The Spanish revolution was one of the most heroic struggles of the century. To mark the occasion we have brought together some existing material covering the momentous events of 1936 and the lessons of the disastrous policies of Popular Frontism pursued by Stalin. A ideal introduction for all socialists. Contents: The Spanish Revolution 1931-37 by Peter Taaffe and Ted Grant. The Lessons of Spain by Leon Trotsky. Marxist Study Guide. Popular Frontism. Articles covering French Popular Front 1936, The Spanish Revolution and Chile—Lessons of the Coup. Plus the Spanish Revolution by Alan Woods—C 90 tape. Available from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB. Only £2.25.

# FIGHTING FUND

This week  
£5,239

Final Chart  
next week

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 London South West	1448		1200
2 London West	2324		2750
3 Humberside	1568		2150
4 London East	2445		3350
5 London South East	1434		2200
6 East Midlands	1852		3050
7 Scotland West	2205		3800
8 Southern	2986		5450
9 Eastern	1626		3450
10 Yorkshire	2421		5650
11 South West	816		2150
12 Manchester/Lancs	1467		4200
13 West Midlands	1513		4500
14 Scotland East	967		3100
15 Northern	1323		4650
16 Merseyside	1624		6850
17 Wales West	625		2950
18 Wales East	579		3050
Others	8268		5500
Total received	37492		70000

## Donations

THANKS FOR the following contributions: J Fletcher and J Morgan £45, Dave Conway £100; Linda from Fife (unemployed) £30; Steve Poole £27; Tony Orham £52; Dominic Gwyn £10. Redeemed IOUs Rabby Haddow £5; Helen Mullineux £50; A Jones £21; J McGuinness £20; striking TGWU worker Gatwick £1; Steve Cooper £10; D Vanderhoven £5. Regular donations include £56.88 from Gedling, £57.24 from Essex and £245 and £145 respectively from different areas of Humberside. Keep it up.

## Make next quarter a new record

MONEY IS still pouring into our offices. We have seen more money raised from the areas this quarter than ever before. We look set to go over £40,000 even without any major national events.

This should be a springboard for a bumper collection next quarter. The hundreds of *Militant* public meetings (below) should get us off to a good start. Leeds supporters sent us £235, Swansea £311, Burnley £92, Tooting £79 and Middlesbrough £47 and Putney £48.

Have a week of action beforehand with Defend *Militant* petitions and hand them in at the collection. Stan Natrass of Bognor raised £25 on one collection sheet! Take a petition around your workplace, school or college. Rattling tins and stickers are a must on every paper sale. Wirral readers raised £5.42 on extras. Broadgreen £23, Snowdown Colliery sales raised £5 and St Helens pit sales £2.42.

At the Red Wedge concerts Manchester readers raised £50, Edinburgh supporters raised £60 from stickers. Some of the grow-

ing band of ticket touts tried to pinch our stickers in Manchester to make a few bob for themselves!

### Systematic

We don't get the big business millions that swell the Tory, SDP and Liberal bank accounts. We rely on the systematic collection of pennies and pounds on the estates, in the streets, workplaces, Labour Party and union branches. Neither do we get cash from 'mysterious foreign sources' as the gutter press claim.

The dictator Tito, in Yug-

oslavia was rumoured to be the richest-ever Stalinist leader. He was believed to have owned at least 20 villas, huge acreage of land including a safari park and Adriatic vineyards, luxury yachts and a Rolls Royce from our own dear Queen.

Some "Communist"! Believe it or not this 'leader of the people' didn't leave us a penny. It was not in his interest.

*Militant* is fighting to build a Marxist alternative to both capitalism and Stalinism. That is definitely in your interest to support. Help *Militant* build.

## 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.

### "Militant fights back" meetings

#### Scotland

Strathclyde University: Friday 7 February, 1pm. Speaker—Ted Grant.

Motherwell: Friday 7 February, 7.30pm, Garrison Hotel. Speaker—Ted Grant.

#### North East

Newcastle: Sunday 9 February, 7.30pm, Trent House pub, nr. RVI. Speaker—Bob Wylie.

Ashington: Saturday 1 March. LPYS Regional Conference fringe meeting.

Gateshead: Sunday 23 February.

#### Yorkshire

Bridlington: Saturday 1 March, Labour Party Regional Conference fringe meeting. Speaker—Brian Ingham.

Stanforth: Sunday 9 February, Hatfield Miners' Welfare.

#### North West

Bury: Tuesday 11 February 7.30pm. 'The George' pub, upstairs room (Near the interchange at Bury) Speaker: Margaret Crear.

Blackpool: Saturday 15 March 1.00pm Labour Party con-

ference fringe meeting. Lecture Hall, Central Library, Queen Street, Blackpool.

Blackpool: Saturday 15 February 7.30pm LPYS Regional Conference fringe meeting. Lecture Hall, Central Library, Queen Street, Blackpool.

#### Wales

Wales LPYS conference Saturday 8 February 6.15pm Barry Memorial Hall. Speaker: Keith Dickinson.

#### Midlands

Coventry: Monday 10 February. Speaker—Clare Doyle.

Nottingham: Tuesday 11 February. Speaker—Steve Morgan.

Mansfield: Tuesday 4 March. Speaker—Steve Morgan.

Derby: Thursday 13 February, 7.30pm, Crown and Cushion Hotel, corner of London Road and Midland Road. Speaker—Steve Morgan.

Chesterfield: Wednesday 19 February.

#### London

Dagenham: Monday 10 February, 7.30pm, AUEW Hall, Rainham Road South.

Hayes: Monday 10 February. Hounslow: Tuesday 11 February, 7.45pm, Hounslow Middle School. Speaker—Lynn Walsh.

Merton: Tuesday 11 February, 7.30pm, Christchurch Hall, Christchurch Road, Colliers Wood, SW9.

Brixton: St Matthews Meeting Place, Brixton opposite Town Hall, 7.30pm. Tuesday 18 February.

Tottenham: Thursday 13 February, Tottenham Library, High Road, N17. Speaker—John Pickard.

Stratford: Monday 17 February, 7.30pm, Bryant

Street Methodist Hall, off West Ham Lane, E15.

Oval: Tuesday 18 February, Vassall Neighbourhood Centre, Brixton Road, SW9.

Ealing: Tuesday 18 February, 7.30pm, Ealing Town Hall, High Street, W5.

London Labour Party conference fringe meeting: Sunday 2 March, 12.45pm, Brixton Recreation Centre, SW2.

All London meeting: Thursday 13 March, 'Northern Ireland—the socialist alternative', Conway Hall, Red Lion Square. Speakers—Joe Higgins (Irish Labour Party Administrative Council, personal capacity) and Peter Hadden (Labour and Trade Union Group secretary).

#### Eastern

Great Yarmouth: Saturday 8 February, 7.30pm, LPYS Regional Conference fringe meeting, Marine View Hotel.

Colchester: Sunday 23 February, 7.30pm, Colchester Labour Club. Speaker—Mike Waddington.

St Albans: Tuesday 25 February, 8pm, Bee Hive pub, off London Road.

#### South and West

Yeovil: Friday 7 February, 7.30pm, White Horse, St Michaels Avenue.

Brighton: Saturday 8 February, LPYS Regional Conference Fring Meeting.

Poole: Sunday 9 February, 7.30pm, Quay Hotel, the Quay.

Eastbourne: Tuesday 11 February.

Oxford: Wednesday 12 February.

Exeter: Wednesday 12 February.

Portsmouth: Thursday 13 February, 7.30pm, Central Library.

Southampton: Friday 14 February.

# Council answers critics in the Sam Bond affair

Photo: D Sinclair

**THE HOSTILE** climate created by the media surrounding Liverpool Council's campaign has encouraged all the enemies of the council, within and outside the movement to exploit any issue in order to discredit the council's socialist programme.

By Neelam De Freitas

The controversy over the appointment of Sam Bond as race relations advisor is one such issue. Bond's appointment was immediately opposed by the Black Caucus group, whose members were involved in the council's race relations advisory committee under the Liberals.

The then unknown Black Caucus has since received acclaim from such diverse quarters as the Liberals, the Communist Party and Neil Kinnock because of its opposition to Bond's appointment. The only thing which unites all these opinions is their revulsion of the Marxist policies of the Liverpool Labour Party and the council.

For more than a year these groups have maligned the council's anti-racist policy by building up a distorted picture of the Sam Bond dispute as part of a general political attack on the council to support their own political interests.

To put the record straight the council put a submission on the issue of Sam Bond's appointment to the inquiry into Liverpool District Labour Party. This article summarises the main points of the submission.

## 'To build support for a strategy to deal with the root causes of racism'

Bond was appointed on 9 October 1984 according to the agreed union procedure and authorised by NALGO to take up his job. Immediately the Black Caucus group began to object and applied pressure to the NALGO branch to join in a boycott of Bond.

The objections originally took the line that Bond didn't represent the local black community and didn't come from Liverpool. But the council never intended to impose an unelected 'representative' on the black community. Bond's appointment was not a political one, his position was that of an employee whose task it was to implement the council's anti-racist policy.

Out of all the candidates he was considered the best for the job. The question of him not coming from Liverpool is completely bogus—Liverpool born blacks are employed in Manchester and London and possibly elsewhere in the same post.

It was always the intention of the council to carry out a thorough going campaign in the city against racism spearheaded by what was originally the race relations unit. In a statement issued at the time of his appointment, he makes it clear that he wanted to go beyond the normal strait-jacket of the race-relations 'industry' promoted by 'experts' and professionals in order to develop "a systematic anti-racist policy".

The underlying reason for the misinformation spread by the Communist Party and soft left groups is that Bond's views and the aims of the council in fighting racism contradicts their own moralising crusade approach. They put the onus for dealing with racism on the individual, not with the prevailing system in society.

For example, a GLC leaflet on



Sam Bond on first demonstration in defence of the Newham 7, Asian youths arrested by police after racial attacks. Bond has been accused of being 'unqualified' for the job of race relations advisor. But he has a long record of fighting racism and has been appointed as representative of the Newham 7 campaign in Liverpool.

racism urges people to "secure anti-racist commitments from as many of London's inhabitants as possible", and would require "a commitment to become anti-racist by being deeply aware of all forms of oppression and taking action personally and collectively to end all oppression".

The same leaflet deals with racism in the Church. It urges blacks to take up positions on the church committees and calls on people to "pray for the oneness of God's people particularly those who suffer the divisions caused by racism". But this moralising is no substitute for attacking the real causes of racism which lie in the class divisions within society. That is why the battle against racism is inseparable from the battle for socialism.

Bond's aims are, and always have been, to combine the anti-racist campaign in Liverpool with council's own campaign for a housing, jobs and local services, "to build support for a strategy to deal with its (racism's) root causes."

"I view racism", he says, "not as a natural process, but as a phenomenon that specifically arises out of the prevailing economic and social framework."

The second objection raised by the Black Caucus was that Bond was unqualified. Yet apart from his academic qualifications he has extensive grass roots experience in fighting racism and was appointed by the Newham 7 campaign as their spokesman in Liverpool. In past years he has taken part in campaigns to abolish the notorious 'sus' laws used against young blacks and helped or organised young blacks against the fascists in Lewisham and elsewhere.

## 'I view racism as a phenomenon that arises out of the prevailing economic and social framework'

Behind the objections of the Black Caucus is the idea that they are the sole representatives of the black community. This is clearly not the case. The group originated from 12 members of the city's race

relations liaison committee set up when the Liberals were in power. They have never been elected by anyone and their most recent attempt to win some recognition from the black community failed, when they called a public meeting in Liverpool 8 and the 600 people present passed a vote of no confidence in them. Many at the meeting were calling for Sam Bond to address the meeting but it was closed down before he was able to speak.

The majority of Liverpool's black organisations now oppose the stand taken by the Black Caucus and 800 people in the Granby area have signed a petition in support of Bond. 21 black organisations have disassociated themselves from the Black Caucus and 17 black groups signed a letter to Neil Kinnock protesting at his decision to meet exclusively with the Black Caucus on his visit towards the end of last year.

But the real bone of contention, in the opinion of the District Labour Party and of many observers in Liverpool is that one of the Black Caucus' own supporters didn't get the job. In Liverpool, as elsewhere the 'race relations industry' has been built up through local and central government funding, much of which goes to fund useful and positive projects without which many black communities would sink further into the mire of deprivation and poverty. Liverpool council itself spends £2 million a year on black community projects and per capita is one of the highest in the country.

But some councils have developed a policy of tokenism, of attempting to buy support on the basis of appointing a few middle class blacks to positions. This can be no substitute for dealing with the real problems of the black communities or fighting racism. It is not the course which Liverpool council wishes to follow.

The council wants to develop an overall strategy of fighting racism and its root causes. The response of the Black Caucus, far from being positive and constructive was to launch a campaign of intimidation, including actual physical assault against anyone who opposed them. This began in October 1984 when Black Caucus supporters occupied

the council leaders' office, held councillors and staff against their will and forced Derek Hatton, under duress, to sign a declaration that the post would be readvertised.

The campaign continued with the violent disruption of the council chamber and personal threats, and then physical attack on Bond himself in his office. Steve French, spokesman of the Black Caucus said "The City Council won't be able to put full time security on Mr. Bond and that's what he's going to need."

## The council reaffirms its commitment to fight racism and racial discrimination in every form.

Then in July last year a public meeting organised by the council in Liverpool 8 was broken up by about 10 members of the Black Caucus. The submission by councillors who were at the meeting describes in detail the physical and verbal abuse which eventually led to the meeting being abandoned. "It was at this stage that the situation deteriorated and threats of violence, with people being pushed around, actually started... One person... went up to Felicity (councillor Dowling) and spat in her face. The person thrust his face into Felicity's on both occasions that she was spat at and she was spat fully in the face."

"A member of the audience, a black woman, was man-handled and one member of the Black Caucus had her by the hair while another had her gripped by the back of the neck and again abusive statements were made to her, eg she was referred to as nothing but a black bitch."

A black woman was also assaulted at another meeting later on at the Liverpool 8 Law Centre. She was recognised as a Sam Bond supporter and was spat at and thrown out of the meeting. Derek Hatton who was to address the meeting was also assaulted.

This is the record of the Black Caucus which has severely

## Hypocrisy over grants to black groups

**THE LEADERS** of Liverpool Council NALGO branch are using unscrupulous methods in an attempt to disrupt the council's grants policy to black groups in the city.

The branch secretary Peter Cresswell has sent out letters to all NALGO members to refuse to cooperate with the appointment of a secretary to the Merseyside Action Group, an anti-racist group set up in Liverpool 8.

In a complete fabrication the letter claims that the "post will be linked to the so-called Race Relations Unit which is officially boycotted by NALGO".

But MAG was set-up independently from the council and along with several other groups applied for a grant in November last year to take on a full-time secretary for six months at a cost of £3,500. The group has no connections with the council's own race relations unit and entirely refutes the 'mischievous allegations' which have been repeated in press and radio reports.

The appointment was immediately opposed by the Black Caucus group even though this group and other schemes run by its supporters in the city receive a total of £800,000 in grants from the city. The Black Caucus claim to be the sole representatives of the black community but several other groups and hundreds of individuals have countered these claims by demanding that the boycott of Bond and the race-relations unit is lifted and have backed MAG's call for a public meeting on the issue.

Certain figures in NALGO have continually supported attempts by the Black Caucus to frustrate any efforts by the council to move forward in its anti-racist campaign. The Black Caucus opposes any groups which it doesn't have control over, and has dubbed MAG a *Militant* front. In collusion with the *Liverpool Echo*, which has repeated the allegations almost daily, the Black Caucus has tried to smear the council's reputation with more "jobs for the boys" stories.

But what concerns the Black Caucus is the possibility of a challenge to their position from groups like MAG which, with the proper funding, could carry out a more effective and genuine campaign against racism and unemployment.

By Neelam De Freitas

hampered the anti-racist campaign proposed by the council in the city. Those who support the Black Caucus, in an effort to denigrate the council's policies conveniently forget these attacks and examples of intimidation, and then have the temerity to accuse members of the Labour Party in Liverpool of intimidation.

All negotiations with the Black Caucus were broken off after the attack on the council's public meeting in August. There is growing frustration that the actions of the Black Caucus, and the boycott of Bond is having a harmful effect on the anti-racism drive in the city. At the request of a majority of black groups in the city the council is now in the process of carrying out a major consultation exercise with the black community.

The council says in its submission that it "reaffirms its commitment to fight racism and racial discrimination in every form."

We recognise the important role the authority can play in building a united movement to combat racial injustice. The task now is to translate this commitment to action."

# Possil

## - a community fighting back



**POSSILPARK IS** a housing estate in Glasgow. It has a population now of between 15,000 and 20,000 people. The planners would describe it as one of the most 'socially deprived' areas of Glasgow. Parts of Possil are amongst the areas of greatest need in Western Europe.

Statistics are one thing; real life is another. Possil is characterised as suffering from 'multiple deprivation'. That means there are no jobs, no money, no decent houses, no hope and, for many, no escape.

### No jobs

Steph is in his twenties and has been unemployed for years: "I don't know why it is called Possilpark; there is no park here. There is not even a set of swings. There is nothing here. Nothing. Nothing except smack (heroin—Ed)".

There are used to be plenty of work in Possil at one time. But the avalanche of unemployment has swept down these hillsides, killing thousands and thousands of jobs since the late 1960s.

Hugh is a member of the tenants' association, "Scotland is dying. It's like a modern Highland clearances what they are doing to us. There are two industrial estates locally. We were told that we are

the labour force but we don't get the jobs. You don't get jobs in empty factories.

"You must be talking of thousands and thousands of jobs gone. Look at the list; Smiths and Maclean, GKN Nut and Bolt Factory, Alliance Box, 100s at the Blindcraft, Metal Box, White Horse Whisky and long before that the foundry. Now 800 jobs are going down the road at the BREL (British Rail Engineering Workshop—Ed). This place is a desert".

Robert is 18 and has been on the dole for more than a year. He has lived in Possil since he was born. "Archer the Tory said people could get jobs if they got off their arses and looked for them. Well he wants to try it. The truth is that there are no jobs. I've got three

Many different people are due thanks for the preparation of this report. Some who were interviewed were young, some were older. Some were members of tenants' associations; some were Labour Party members; other saw themselves as non-party political and only interested in a better deal. Everyone quoted in this report lives in Possil. It is their story to tell.

highers (Scottish 'A' levels—Ed) and I've had three interviews in the last year. I've more chance of buying an aeroplane than getting a real job".

Robert's experience at school



Feature by Bob Wylie

Photos by Robert McKeown

gives the lie to all those who say working class youth are apathetic, don't care and don't try: "After four years at school I had three 'O' levels. I decided to stay on, to get some highers to prove something.

"I went to see the guidance teacher at the start of the 5th year. Some guidance. Her attitude was pure snide as if to say I wrote you off years ago. She said no way I'm putting you up for Highers. You are wasting your time.

"I sat outside her office all morning and she would not see me, but I just waited and waited. She said no you are not. But I just kept telling her, oh yes I am.

After I got the results I passed her in the corridor. She knew I had Highers. I looked at her and she smiled. She knew I had done her over. She knew she was clamped".

### The benefit of unemployment

The current rate of unemployment in the Possil area is 45 per cent. However, in parts of the estate that rises to as high as 75-80 per cent.

Paul is 18 and has never worked since he left school: "You want to know about life around here? You go to the local Post Office in Saracen Street on Thursday. Thursday is giro day. You can go down there in the morning at half past eight and you'll see hundreds queuing waiting for their money.

Queuing at the Possil Park Post Office. Waiting for the Post Office to open. Some Thursdays it can take you two hours to cash your giro. What a way to live.

"You know they have raids now and again at Post Offices. Well, the biggest raid in recent history was at Saracen Street Post Office. It was said the raiders lifted over £100,000!

"Sometimes you lose your giro or it does not turn up. It's murder. You go down to the Social at nine. They tell you to come back at eleven. You go back at eleven. They tell you to come back at three. You go back at three and they tell you they are shutting, come back at nine. You go back at nine and they tell you it's in the post."

Steph: "You ask me, how do you survive on the dole? You don't. I know a woman who got a £9 death grant when her baby died. It was six months. Do you think the Tories live like this?"

Marion is the secretary of one of the local tenants' groups in Possil. She has a grown-up family. "There is no hope of a job for me. I'll be on the DHSS for the rest of my active life. Look at me, what have I got to look forward to. I'll be one of the old people who dies of hypothermia".

### Housing

Housing conditions in Possil are as bad as can be found anywhere in Glasgow.

The lack of regular housing maintenance and cuts in housing repairs year in year out has exacted a terrible toll. In some parts of the area surveyed, 69 per cent of the houses were found to be suffering from dampness and 100 per cent virtually, from ill fitting, draughty windows which allow rain penetration. In this area children are 150 times more likely to go to hospital



Robert outside the remnants of the GKN factory.



## Comfortably numb on heroin

There are people in Possil who are fighting back with every ounce of energy they can muster. There are others who have given up seeking change as a way out and look to other avenues of escape. One such route is the escapism offered by drugs.

A recent Glasgow District Council report estimated that there may be as many as 10,000 heroin addicts in the Glasgow area. Unfortunately Possil has its share of that problem. But people have not taken that lying down.

'The Place' is a residential centre for heroin addicts in Possil. It first opened its doors in November 1984. It came to be as a result of the common effort of people in Possil, seeing that something had to be done about the problem of heroin abuse. It is run totally by volunteers and is funded by voluntary donations. In the past these have included contributions from the churches, the Home Office, Urban Aid and private individuals.

Paul: "It's environmental, you hear that all the time, but it's true. When I was young it was glue. Now it's battering straight into heroin. There are 14 year olds into it."

"A bag of heroin purchased in the street can, depending on the quality, make you numb for the first time for as long as eight hours. The next time maybe it's six hours. Then it gets down to four hours. Then two."

"That's the spiral of addiction. You can progress from a habit then which costs a £5 bag for eight hours, to the need for as many as ten £5 bags a day. You are then into criminality."

"There is nobody I know takes smack and does not become a heavy user. If you are a junkie you are either a dealer, a prostitute or a shoplifter. It's as simple as that."

"Heroin has the street name 'junk'. That is because the first quantity of pure heroin is cut with other substances to increase the bulk for sale. This happens right down the line."

Steph: "Street level heroin in Glasgow can be cut with anything from talcum powder, baking soda to Vim and Harpic. One boy in Possil died from stuff which, they say, had been cut with dehydrated battery acid. Brown heroin, brown sugar, is frequently cut with Bisto".

Paul: "Wrecked sums it up... Wrecked. You could take a 'before and after' picture. Eyes like pins. Ever seen somebody with hepatitis, pure yellow, pure yellow?"

"Thatcher says we will stop this curse and then sacks customs officers. The bosses are into this. There would be pure anarchy if there was not smack".

Robert: "Bitter as hell. The drugs are a sign of it. People don't express anything but you know it. The problem with smack is that it stores up bitterness. It just revolves it round your head and stops you doing anything about anything. It's Tory smack".

Chris: "I was at the funeral of one of the boys who died, so that is why I got involved. I was just leaving university at the time. I lived in the area and did not know a great deal about heroin addiction."

"I realised that heroin was being sold about three years ago. A boy, about 14, asked me in the street if I wanted to buy some kit, 'real good stuff'. I thought that was funny at the time, but then I went upstairs, sat down to watch the telly and thought, 'Oh my God'. So I went to the public meetings and I thought, this is something I should be doing something about".

"The people who live in Possil and sell heroin are pushers and they are addicts. If you are a pusher and not using it, you would not be living in Possil. You'd be buying yourself a mansion and a Jag."

"That's how much money is in it! The big money in heroin is made by professional criminals, who know that there is less chance of being caught selling heroin than robbing a bank."

"There is a massive supply and a massive demand for heroin, and as a result a massive addiction. The supply comes from outside this country and in places like Possil social conditions contribute to the demand. For people who are already drug addicts you need a lot of facilities and medical help."

"A heroin addict is somebody just like you or me who happens to be addicted to a powerful painkiller. Because that painkiller is an illegal drug it costs a lot of money. Because of that the lifestyle is financed by crime. A heroin addict is somebody who is ill".

The abuse of alcohol and tranquilliser pills are also common routes of escape in Possil.



than children from other, more prosperous parts of Glasgow.

Most of the houses in Possil were built 50 years ago and there have been no new houses built for more than 15 years. Glasgow District Council budgets for an average expenditure on repairs of £200 per house per year. The average spending in Possil is £600 per house per year. In part of the area, where a feasibility study for a Housing Co-op has been carried out, it would take more than £3m to make 400 houses windproof, waterproof and landscape the back courts.

Robert: "People are bitter as hell. Sometimes there is almost a prison like atmosphere. When you walk through the streets there seem to be walls everywhere. It's like having stone blinkers".

Susan is a long-standing activist in tenants' groups in Possil. She calls a spade a shovel: "In 1971 when I moved here I thought it was great. From a room and kitchen in Anderston to this. I thought I'd reached heaven. Now all round about there are problems. When we came here it was central heating. Underfloor central heating, we thought that was great, but we haven't used it for ten years because we can't afford it. It's as simple as that."

"When we first came my rent was £12.06 and you were supposed to get everything done for that. Now it's £75 a month and you still don't get anything done!"

"The dampness is really terrible. I went to see a pensioner in Torr Street. She had a bubble in her living room, a huge bubble in her ceiling, covered in green and black fungus and stinking to high heaven. Does the housing manager for Glasgow have to suffer things like that?"

"The housing department seem to have plenty of money for projects. Project this, project that. They want to get a project to get

somebody to write letters that people can understand.

"Some of the things the Housing Department write would need a Philadelphia lawyer to interpret. Take my windows. They use words with 27 letters to explain it all. All I know is that my windows don't fit. None of the windows round here fit the houses. It's as simple as that."

"I sometimes think that things cannot get any worse. But if they don't do something soon they can come in with the bulldozers. It won't be worth anything else."

"The problem is the money. The Tories say there is not enough money but they always have it to give to other folk. Look at it this way—Margaret Thatcher sits in her house at night without any worries so why can't I?"

Hugh: "In 1939 this place got a residential award for structure and design. Who'd believe it? When I was young I used to come for walks up here; it was considered a posh area".

### The housing co-op

In the middle of 1984 the tenants in the part of Possil where the housing is especially bad got together to fight for a better deal. They wanted things to get done and they wanted more control over what was done. They decided to form a housing co-op and go for government money.

The Possil co-op feasibility study states: "We want a co-op for two reasons. Firstly, there is no money for improving council houses yet there is money to improve privately owned houses. The only way to get the houses improved is to become part of the private sector by becoming a co-op. The second reason is that it will give us control."

In the circumstances of Possil today can these residents be blamed



Hugh and Marion—"militant for change".

for taking this road? If the case was to be decided on determination, energy and commitment to fight for a better deal then the money for the co-op would be in their hands right now.

Since June 1984 the steering committee has met nearly every week. In addition to these meetings there have been 80 additional meetings, nearly a fifth of which were to enlist labour and trade union support. The way the tenants have organised and fought is a real tribute to their refusal to accept things as they are. They are now waiting in line for the money which may or may not come.

Marion: "We went to the unions first. We have spoken to some of the Scottish secretaries of the unions. We have spoken to local union men. We have given them guarantees that they will be the first to do our repairs."

"We are determined that our area is not written off as too far gone. We live here."

"We want to live here. People say I'm supposed to be a Tory because of what I say. But I'm militant for a change, to get things done. I see the co-op really like the unions. We are fighting for better houses like the unions fight for wages and jobs. We are a union for decent houses."

Hugh: "If the people here in Possil have anything to do with it we will get the money. And when we do get it and when people see what we do with it, those who have moved out will want to move back

changing the outlook of the people.

"Derek Hatton tells the truth, that is why they are after him. Militant seem to be the only people strong enough to stand against all the moderation at the top. They are the only ones still shouting for socialism. That's clear."

### The Future

The people interviewed in Possil had different ideas of the future. For those, in the tenants' groups especially, the future was about the day to day struggle for the right to a decent house. For the younger people, there was a much clearer 'all or nothing' mentality.

Marion: "Possil has been promised that many things and nothing has happened. But we are not going to sit back and say 'do what you like' any more. We have had enough. We have learned the hard way. We have learned that the only people that can help us are ourselves."

Robert: "I'd like to see socialism in Britain. You need to change things totally or not at all. I'm not that confident of success but I'm definitely prepared to fight for things to change."

Paul: "I'm with the Militant for change. For change from top to bottom. Call that revolution if you like. OK that's long term but that's the real answer. Nothing else will do."

### Politics

Marion: "People tell us now at City Hall—oh, it's the Tories. Well OK, but she has only been in since 1979. What happened to the years previous? Just what happened to the years previous?"

Robert: "Kinnock was on a programme last night about the 1979 Labour government. He was a big left winger then but as soon as he gets to the top he goes straight to the right. He wants to change the nature of socialism instead of

## The last word

In recent years Glasgow District Council have spent hundreds of thousands of pounds in promoting a new image for the city. 'Glasgow's Miles Better' has been the cry. They have won acres of newsprint in the big business press praising their responsible, entrepreneurial approach to local government.

These statements tell us a different story. They show that whilst the city council may be putting lace curtains in the living room window, they cannot hide the fact that the carpet is threadbare and the sideboard is falling apart. Against this background it is likely that the Labour Group will, in March vote for a budget which will mean a 20 per cent rent increase and a 10 per cent rates increase and a further round of cuts in housing repairs, housing maintenance and housing renovation. Or, in other words, more misery piled on misery for the people of Possil, and other places like it.

These words show that Glasgow isn't miles better. In fact they show how hard life now is for most ordinary people. But they also show that a social volcano is being stored up in the depths of Britain. There will be retribution for all of this, for the last word has not yet been spoken.

## Philippines

# Marcos regime under siege

**THE PHILIPPINES' Presidential elections on 7 February come after almost three years of uninterrupted economic crisis, mass demonstrations and strikes, and an ever-worsening guerilla war.**

Tens and hundreds of thousands have flocked to mass rallies addressed by Corazon Aquino, liberal bourgeois leader and widow of the leading oppositionist murdered by agents of the president, Marcos. Even the president's aides admit that Aquino would easily win an unrigged election.

Foreign journalists report that the army has filled out tens of thousands of pro-Marcos voting cards. The president says the military will take over if Aquino tops the poll.

Whoever wins the turmoil will continue as the masses seek a way out of their poverty and oppression.

Marcos himself first won power in 1965 on a promise to end the old oligarchies and initiate reform. He wrenched power from the great families (see page 11), and handed it over to his friends. Crony capitalism was born. Individuals—not families—now control powerful monopolies. Roberto Benedicto owns all the sugar industry. E Conjuangco the coconut industry, Disini the cigarette industry.

## Martial law

The end of the post war boom in the late 1960's led to increased unrest so Marcos introduced martial law in 1972 with US support. The regime virtually outlawed strikes and jailed union leaders. Foreign capital flooded in to capitalise on slashed wages and a stunned working class. The economy benefitted from the commodities boom after the oil-price hike in the early 1970's. Growth averaged six per cent.

But even with these advantages, capitalism could not take the country forward. The crony capitalists preferred to pilfer the loans and aid rather than invest in industry. Most growth came from the state pumping money into the economy at the expense of huge budget deficits. Hyper-inflation followed. The collapse of the 1970's boom was triggered in 1981 when a crony capitalist, Deney Dee, fled the Philippines with \$80 million in unpaid debts!

All capitalism was left with after the 1970's was the working class decisively strengthened especially in new sectors such as light manufacturing. But although its social weight has never been so strong, the working class is saddled with a disastrous political leadership.

The old pro-Moscow Communist Party actually supports Marcos! It is the only political party to give

By Stephen Murphy

credit to Marcos' claim that the army didn't assassinate Benigno Aquino in 1983.

In disgust with the old leaders, pro-Peking elements split off to form the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) in the late 1960's and formed a military wing, the New Peoples Army



Salvador Laurel.

(NPA), which has waged a peasant-based guerilla war ever since. With over 30,000 fighters, it is an increasing threat to the Marcos regime.

In 1985, 95 per cent of all military clashes with the NPA were won by the NPA. Desertion by the army rank and file to the NPA is now common place. Marxism is certainly not opposed to the peasantry taking up arms against landlordism. With almost 70 per cent of the population living on the land the peasantry must play a key role in the revolution. The question is under whose leadership: the working class or the bourgeois.

The NPA's political line is the disastrous Stalinist theory of "two-stage" revolution. The first stage they say, is the national-democratic revolution where the liberal bosses take power with support from workers and peasants. The new regime will supposedly break up the monopolies, free the Philippines from US domination and give land to the peasants.

But the so-called liberal-bourgeois is tied in a thousand ways to the landlords and the imperialists. How can they lead a struggle against their friends and defenders? The peasant masses can only prosper by the working class coming to power and nationalising the banks and monopolies and immediately giving land to the peasantry. In other words, by carrying out the programme of the Bolsheviks in Russia in 1917.

Despite the martial law of the 1970's, the Philippines working class began building an independent trade union movement. On May Day 1980, the Kilusang Mayo



President Marcos and his wife Imelda at a World War II commemoration. The president has lost support from many sections of the ruling class as the revolution develops. The Catholic Church has cast doubts on Marcos's self-proclaimed war record.

Uno (KMU) was launched at a mass rally of 25,000 workers. Much work lies ahead however as only 1.8 million of the eight million strong working class is unionised and many are still in "yellow" pro-employer unions.

The KMU and other independent unions must also enter—in an organised way—the fight against the Marcos regime. Bayan the mass political opposition to

the army. Overnight he became a martyr. Two million attended his funeral and the economic crisis deepened as imperialism's confidence in the country's stability was dashed. His death sparked a whole new period of mass demonstrations and opposition to the regime. Ironically Aquino, desperate to thwart a revolution, has actually started one.

Following Aquino's death

**AT COUNTY Hall, London, on Saturday 8 February at 10am, there will be an international conference on the trade union struggle in the Philippines.**

**Many Filipino workers are exploited by the same companies who employ thousands of workers in Britain, for example, Ford, Dunlop, ICI and Unilever. However, their living conditions are appalling with pitiful wages, poverty, malnutrition and the constant fear of company and police thugs.**

**At this conference the experiences and struggles of both British and Filipino workers can be shared and linked into practical ways of support.**

**Workers who can get their trade union/labour organisation branch to send them as delegates are urged to do so, but all individuals are welcome. Further details from 'Philippine Support Group'. Telephone (01) 624-7819.**

By Pauline Wardleworth

Marcos is supported by workers but still dominated by the liberals, petty-bourgeois and intellectuals. An organised intervention by the unions could end this and for the first time since the 1930's form a mass working class led political opposition to the regime, around socialist ideas.

## Revolution

The main bourgeois opposition leader to Marcos, Benigno Aquino, viewed these developments in his country with horror. From his exile in the United States, he feared another Iran.

To thwart such a possibility he returned to Manila in 1983, hoping to lead the opposition along safe liberal bourgeois lines. He represented the old family-based capitalist oligarchies against Marcos and the crony capitalists. But Marcos, like Pinochet in Chile, has acquired a taste for the lush trappings of power despite the nervous twitching of the more far sighted section of the capitalist class.

On arrival at Manila airport, Aquino was shot dead by pro-Marcos elements in

underground political organisation, the National Democratic Front (NDF) which has played a key role in fighting Marcos through strikes, demonstrations etc. *Newsweek* admits that these protests made Aquino's candidacy possible. Under the NDF's umbrella thousands of students, priests, nuns, union members and even businessmen have forged an anti-Marcos underground.

## Second fiddle

Such a structure shows the great potential for workers' political organisation. This would have far greater strength to unite all the oppressed. But in line with the CPP's 'two stage' theory this organisation plays second fiddle to the guerilla struggle.

With the CPP offering no independent programme, the urban masses have temporarily fallen under the political leadership of Aquino's wife Cory and an ex-follower of Marcos,

entered the political arena. Capitalising on divisions between Laurel and Aquino, Marcos called this snap election. However, the pressure of the masses forced the bourgeois opposition leaders together and now Marcos has a real fight on his hands.

Aquino and Laurel's policies can not end Philippines problems. Aquino comes from one of the country's richest families while Laurel's father was a puppet leader in the Japanese occupation during the war. Economically there would be little difference from Marcos and Aquino has guaranteed the future of US military bases until the 1990's.

The Bayan (Nation) party is the largest left legal opposition with one to two million members. After Aquino rejected its 15 point programme, Bayan boycotted the elections but without

explaining why and without exposing Aquino's policies, so many rank and file supporters will support Aquino.



US marines on a military exercise in North Luzon.

the Philippines' foreign exchange reserves dropped from \$2 billion to \$600 million two months later. The rise in GNP fell to three per cent in 1984 and minus two per cent last year. All new credit from foreign banks to the government was stopped and budget expenditure was consequently slashed. A crumbling Peso led to 20 per cent inflation and falling living standards. The CPP has an urban

Laurel. The middle-classes have been swept by the crisis into the arms of Aquino. As Marcos himself becomes the main threat to stability in the Philippines even US imperialism and the big bourgeois have swung behind them. Marcos now rests solely on the military and the vast bureaucracy under his patronage.

But though passively supporting Aquino the working class has not yet actively

Continued on facing page

# Seattle youth battle for their rights

ON 27 November, at the Seattle club, the 'Gorilla Gardens', the band Circle Jerks were about to begin their second song, when the police stormed in. They announced the gig was over and everyone should go home.

Many of the young audience protested. They'd paid out their hard earned cash to see the band. Around two thirds of US teenagers exist on the national minimum wage which is less than 35 per cent of the average wage.

When they questioned the police action, many youths were grabbed and beaten with police 'Billy clubs'. Those refusing to leave were beaten. I got hit twice when I pulled a cop's hand off my throat. Then as I ran for the door I was struck on the head by another policeman.

Outside the club we saw at least a dozen cop cars. We were told to disperse but the cops had the streets cut off. Many of us were really angry at seeing our friends beaten senselessly and being insulted for being 'punks'. Things got worse when riot police arrived and police cars drove into the crowds.

## Violent cops

I managed to escape down an alley, ahead of us we saw two cops jump out and start beating on a youth. I ran and joined a big crowd where I thought I'd be safe. About a dozen or more people were arrested as examples. Three were charged with crimes including 'reckless endangerment', 'obstructing justice' (!) and 'destruction of personal property'. All witnesses say those guys are completely innocent.

Out of this nightmare has arisen the Youth Defence Campaign. At present we are a group of about 5 young people aiming to help organise fellow youths against this attack and to raise money through gigs to help pay costs incurred by the three charged.

By Jay Bradshaw  
(Acting secretary of the Youth Defense Campaign)

This is the third such police action. Gigs at the 'Lincoln Arts Center' and also at the 'Graven Image', had been broken up.

In July 1985 a law was passed by Seattle City Council called the 'Teen Dance Hall Ordinance'. The pressure group behind the bill was the ultra-right-wing group 'Parents In Arms' whose open aim is to close down all youth clubs and enforce a curfew. The group

charge of at least half the original price if they choose to step outside the club.

The new law also demands that all clubs which allow under 18 year olds to enter must have insurance coverage of \$1m per year, which costs approximately \$200-\$300 each night. This makes "all ages" gigs financially impossible.

## Censorship

A television commentator said of the ordinance: "It may not wipe the punk movement out but it's a step in the right direction." Of course we all know that an attack on the punk movement is an attack on all youth culture.

The results have been drastic. More and more young people are walking the

Every way young people turn they are faced with breaking the law.

The heavy-handed police tactics will not solve youth problems. It is as if they believe cutting off your head is the best cure for a headache. Attempting to force youth back into the home where they are exposed to the most degenerate TV shows isn't an answer. Making it more difficult for young people to meet is no remedy either.

Those youth who have managed to overcome some of the obstacles of the system and formed bands now find it much harder to get by financially because under-18's are 'banned' from their shows. The bands affected by the laws are not the big groups who get on commercial radio, but those

## YOUTH DEFENSE CAMPAIGN

The heavy handed actions of the police at local gigs over the past twelve months has provoked widespread anger and frustration amongst young people. Many youth are beginning to see the necessity to organize and defend themselves from these attacks. Out of this situation has risen the youth defense campaign.

At least three gigs over the past year the police have used unnecessary force against young people just trying to enjoy themselves. At present 60% of teenagers exist on minimum wage and trying to survive is an uphill struggle. When they can find somewhere they can afford to go to at night there's the added fact of police harassment often bringing young peoples frustrations to a boiling point.

Bulletin produced by the YDC in Seattle.

has a great deal of money and has many of the best lawyers working for it.

The councilmen in City Hall are Democrats or Republicans, both representing big business. We have no Labor Party right now in the US.

The ordinance says that "The pervasive problems of runaway children, drug abuse and abuse of children (are) contributed to by unregulated dance halls." It outlaws under-sixteen year olds to enter youth clubs, and makes it possible for police to raid clubs without a search warrant. It forces youth to pay a re-admission

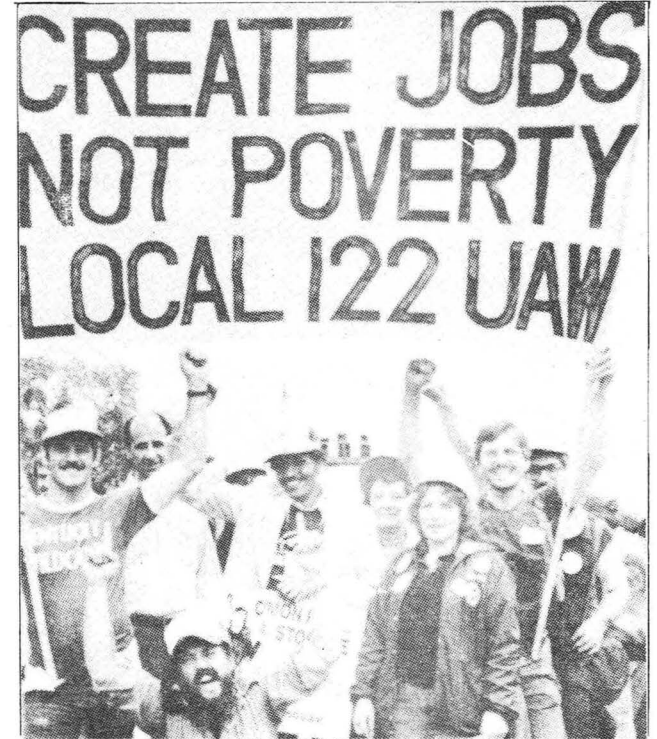
streets with nothing to do. Many under-age youth are now in taverns using false ID's.

Some unscrupulous businessmen rent out unlicensed fire hazard halls filling them sometimes up to twice the legal capacity. A couple of these businessmen have told YDC representatives to follow their 'initiative' and hold similar gigs. "The only cost", they tell us, "is that you have to approach the policeman's guild for a rent-a-cop for the night. It's only \$100 a night but it guarantees you from getting busted." We do not see this as an alternative.

who are still in touch with us—and with reality.

They ridicule the privately owned mass media and sing about unemployment, about feeling shunned by society, about the hypocrisy of the system. These bands have effectively been censored by the Council and the police are being used to rub our faces in the dirt.

The Youth Defence Campaign believes drugs, street crime, violence and vandalism are not natural diseases of youth, but the symptoms of a hopeless system. We can see this in another section of American society, the farmers. Farm



Few jobs and low wages are the future for working class youth even in the previously affluent West Coast cities like Seattle.

closures, inability to pay debts etc. are the reasons why farm families have been hit with record levels of suicide, alcoholism and child abuse.

Youth unemployment is three times the adult rate. The poverty wages of \$3.35 (the national minimum wage) is the norm rather than the exception. And youth entertainment?

At the first YDC meeting, almost all the young people were low paid or unemployed, we drew out a set of demands to clarify our aims:

- ★ Drop the charges
- ★ An independent inquiry into police methods
- ★ Repeal all anti-youth legislation
- ★ Decent inexpensive entertainment for youth
- ★ Trade union rights and conditions for all youth.

In February we will be holding our first gig. The great majority of Seattle bands have offered their ser-

vices free and word of the campaign is spreading fast. One youth said to me: "Nothing like this has ever happened in Seattle before."

We aim to have regular monthly gigs, raising funds for the campaign, where there will be an open microphone for union officials, unemployed youth, students, YDC officials and any other people who want to criticise or endorse the YDC. Naturally racists will not be allowed to speak.

We are going to print T-shirts and badges. We've printed over 400 copies of our Youth Defence Campaign programme with endorsements from bands in the area on the back. We've received huge support from youth on the street and from many organisations. With the correct approach we will go from strength to strength.

Messages of support to Labour and Trade Union Group, PO Box 9191, Seattle, Wa. 98109, USA.

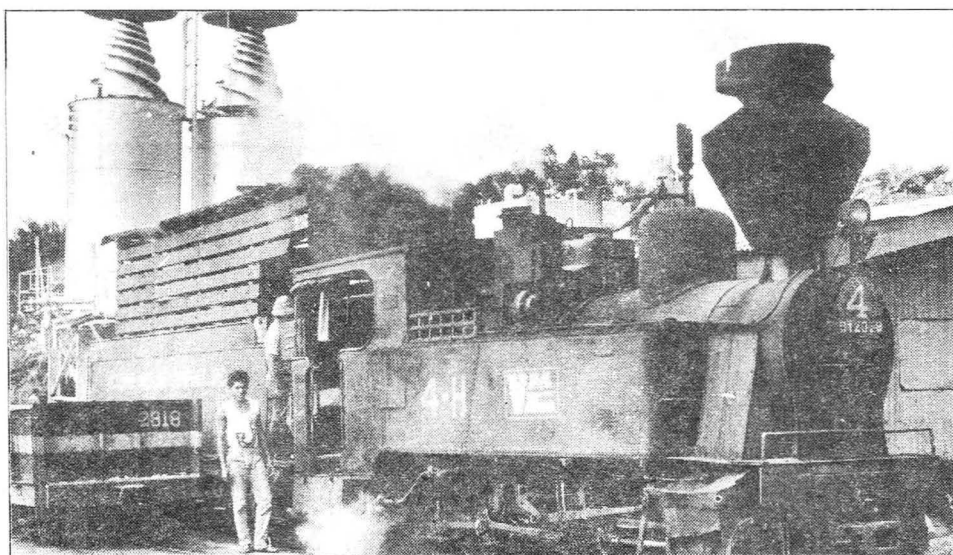
THE SO-CALLED 'miracle' nations of capitalism (Singapore, South Korea, Philippines etc) are badly hit by the end of the boom of 1983/5 and the resulting contraction of world markets. Singapore had a "negative growth" in 1985 for the first time ever. Indonesia expects a fall in growth to one per cent in 1986.

South East Asia fought its way into the world market primarily through the vicious exploitation of the workers. The fading boom leaves these capitalisms with only a tiny home market to fall back on and a stronger and bitter working class. Nowhere are the problems more acute than in the Philippines.

## US domination

American bosses have used the Philippines as a source of cheap raw materials. On independence in 1946 US imperialism maintained economic control through making the new regime give US citizens equal rights with Filipinos to the ownership and exploitation of the country's natural resources.

The continued exploitation fuelled a Communist Party-led peasant uprising in



Old steam train in operation at a Negros Island sugar mill. Thousands of workers have been laid off after mill closures.

the late 1940's. With the defeat of capitalism in China in 1949 and increased tension in Korea, the US could not let the Philippines go bankrupt.

Some protectionism was allowed and limited industrial development took place in the 1950's. US monopolies adapted to the new situation by moving in behind the new tariff walls.

Today 80 per cent of all foreign investment in the country is American and of the top 190 companies, 50

are from the US. The two US military bases at Subci Bay and Clark Airfield are the largest in the whole region. The local bourgeoisie have long given up any hope of wresting economic control from imperialism.

## Working class

The top layers were, until the 1960's, divided along clan lines. Great families dominated whole regions, exploiting the workers and peasants in 'their' area.

Leaving the juicy manufacturing sector to imperialism, region. The local capitalists over domination of agriculture and the service sector and the thousands of administrative positions in the state bureaucracy. They co-operated with the Japanese occupation during World War Two, while thousands of workers and peasants lost their lives in a guerilla war for freedom.

As in all the underdeveloped world, the tasks of uniting the nation, free-



Village life in Central Luzon. Poverty and exploitation has led to resistance to the activities of the multinationals.

ing it from imperialism and solving the land question rest on the working class.

The eight million strong urban working class make up only 15 per cent of the population but contribute 72 per cent to the country's gross domestic product. Even among the 10 million workers in agriculture, many

are wage earners on vast estates. The workers have a proud history of struggle especially in the 1930's when the League of Poor Workers, the Socialist Party and the Communist Party had over 100,000 members and led countless strikes and peasant land seizures.

## Sound advice

Dear Comrades,

Recently some supporters of *Militant* in Paisley were out for the usual sale in the town centre. Unusually we had sold no papers in the first hour so some of us moved to the railway station.

After only a few more minutes in the wind and rain a little old lady approached me. I thought at first I was in for some advice not to sell

such a paper as *Militant*. Not at all!

The lady said "I'm all for *Militant*. You are the only people who are trying to sort out this dreadful mess we are all in. I'm over seventy now but you young ones have your lives and future to fight for, so fight."

Yours fraternally  
Gordon Fegen  
Scotland

# Letters

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

## NCB threat to safety

Dear Comrades,

One of the side effects of the miners defeat last year has occurred in the field of safety. Since October accidents have increased by 24 per cent in the NCBs North Yorkshire area, three men have been killed.

This has occurred because of intimidation from NCB. Pit after pit has been threatened with closure. League tables of production

are published in the NCBs *Coal News*. Miners are harangued to increase output or face possible closure. Therefore safety precautions have suffered, thus the rise in accidents.

But not all the NCB employees are suffering; area director Albert Tuke was awarded an OBE in the New Year's Honours List.

Yours fraternally  
Simon Duerden

# Tories slash psychiatric services



Fighting hospital closures. So much for the Tories' promise that the NHS is "safe in our hands".

Photo: *Militant*

THE RECENT ITV programmes *Zero Options* (21.1.86) and *Insiders* (28.1.86) highlight the plight of mentally ill patients as pawns in Tory Government policy.

which were highlighted recently in *Brookside*, where residents got up a petition to prevent the siting of a 'Group Home' for the mentally ill, adjacent to the Close.

work, they have dismissed low wages and fears of job security as minor factors.

### Resources

What is needed is a massive increase in expenditure on building of day centres and other community resources as part of a general programme of public works, to build schools, hospitals, houses etc. A 35 hour week would lay the basis for guaranteed jobs and improved staffing levels.

Capitalist society is not interested in provision for the mentally ill or the future of low paid health workers.

Health workers are under attack on all fronts through cuts in expenditure and privatisation. Health Service unions should fight the government instead of hounding socialists in the trade union movement.

By David Curtis  
(NUPE personal capacity)

The implementation of 'Care in the Community' instead of isolation in large psychiatric hospitals (old asylums) is long overdue. Many long stay patients have become institutionalised after 30 or 40 years in hospital for a minor depressive illness or for so-called 'moral' issues such as the mothers of illegitimate children.

The Tories are using this new trend in health care as a backdoor method of cutting the quality and quantity of hospital based services without providing corresponding provision in the community. Health Authorities are currently under extreme pressure to cut wards, laundries, catering and portering services

etc. which will lead to job losses.

So much for the Tories' promise that the NHS is 'Safe in our hands'.

### Community

If the policy of 'Care in the Community' is to work for the patients' benefit, what is needed is not cuts in service provision, but an expansion in resources and facilities to make the service work. This should mean increased staffing levels. With guaranteed jobs for health workers in the community and opportunities for retraining for the new service.

"Community Education" is also essential to break down fears and prejudices



Yorkshire miners march back to work. Since then they have been threatened with pit closures and attacks on safety.

## Roy's perfect pressy

Dear Comrades,

"The Prime Minister is now left utterly exposed...For the first time, Mrs Thatcher's own future is now seriously in question...She is now vulnerable on many fronts..." Commented *The Guardian* (25/1/86).

"Even though we are only half a dozen days away from February fill-dyke and spring can only be a few soggy days behind, I hope you will not find it wholly inappropriate if, today, I write about my perfect Christmas present..." Roy Hattersley, also in *The Guardian* (21/1/86) on the same page.

Can somebody explain to this man he is deputy leader of the Labour Party?

Yours fraternally  
Andy Beadle

### Slave labour

Dear Comrades,

Having been on the dole for six months I recently received a letter from the MSC. It came under the guise of giving information about the community programme scheme.

It required that I fill in a questionnaire about my

situation—how long I'd been unemployed, etc, but one of the questions stood out: "What is the lowest wage you would accept for a job?" Are the MSC doing their own market research to see what they can away with?

Yours fraternally  
L Miller  
Coventry

## Trotsky exhibition

A PHOTOGRAPHIC exhibition on the life of Trotsky and the Russian Revolution is currently on show at the Riverside Studios, Hammersmith.

The exhibition, which has never been shown before, includes constructivist style posters, and is part of the collection of designer and photographer David King. King's collection has taken over 20 years to put together and the photographs are to be published in a book entitled "Trotsky, a Photographic Biography" which will appear in the spring.

One of the photos, which illustrates the Stalinist methods of redrawing history, shows a St Petersburg rally being ad-



dressed by leaders of the revolution in which Trotsky is conspicuously absent.

Riverside Studios foyer, Crisp Rd W6, 15 Jan to 16 Feb, open Tuesday to Sunday from noon till 11pm.

By Tim Eastop

## Natural justice in CPSA

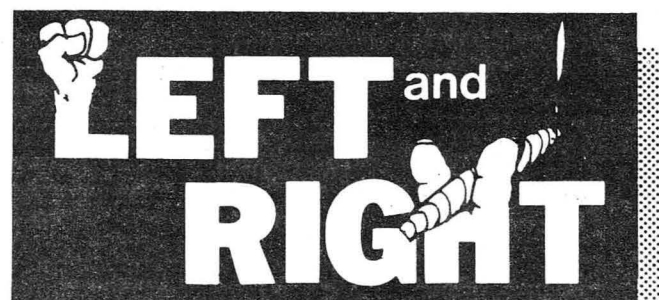
Dear *Militant*,

I refer to the revealing article in issue 782 dealing with the split within the right-wing 'moderate' group of the CPSA.

While standing for local election on a Broad Left platform against Peter Desmond-Thomas, now expelled from the 'moderates', I was subjected to a right-wing orchestrated whisper-smear campaign. Their venom was wasted, with members eventually seeing through Thomas' careerism and electing Broad Left reps.

Nevertheless, I have afforded myself a wry smile on reading that the 'moderates' have ditched Thomas. He is by no means the first to experience the right wing knife in the back, as I can personally testify, but his assassination displays ironic justice.

Yours fraternally  
C Walker  
Middlesex



### Panto politics

MANAGEMENT AT Sunderland's Empire Theatre have been threatening to cancel pantomime productions of *Sleeping Beauty*. Actress Ann-Marie Jeffries who plays the Wicked Witch decided to spice up her role by adopting the voice and mannerisms of Mrs Thatcher. The Wicked Witch and other panto villains are used to getting boos and hisses when they appear but 'Mrs Thatcher' gets pelted with sweets and fruit by enraged kids to the consternation of management.

### Criminals and Liverpudlians

DETECTIVE CHIEF Inspector John Clinton could be demoted after being found guilty of racism. Apparently he told local councillors that he would arrest any black people spotted in Wilmslow, Cheshire, accusing them of only visiting the town to commit burglaries. Mr Clinton then went on to have a go at people "with a Liverpool accent".

## Spotlight on Silentnight

# A family at war

Photo: Phil McHugh



Alan and Olga Ideson outside the Barnoldswick home of Silentnight boss Tom Clarke.

ON 10 June 1985 the production workforce at Silentnight Beds went on strike. Six weeks later, 500 workers were sacked for taking official strike action. They are still out, nearly eight months later.

**LINDEN STAFFORD** who has worked with the strikers and reported their case in *Militant* looks at the background to the dispute and the life of one family:

THE STRIKE started because the company broke a no-redundancies agreement and refused to pay a nationally agreed wage rise. Management, headed by millionaire chairman Tom Clarke, are rejecting arbitration, and are recruiting a new workforce.

This is only the second strike in the company's forty-year history, and the branch of the Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades union (FTAT) was only eighteen months old at the start of the strike.

Despite their lack of experience, ordinary union members have shown great competence in the handling of this dispute.

## National interest

Before the strike, the names Barnoldswick and Sutton—where the Silentnight factories are located—were virtually unknown outside this part-rural, part-industrial area straddling the Yorkshire-Lancashire border.

Yet the Silentnight strikers have become a nationally acclaimed example of a group of workers determined to struggle against oppression by the bosses and the Tories.

Obviously the strike has taken its toll on every fami-

ly. Financial and other pressures have forced a number of couples to break up, and the financial strain will continue to cause distress.

Some strikers have partners or relatives who are scabbing. A minority have abandoned the strike and got jobs elsewhere. But the main body of strikers remain totally solid and in relatively good spirits, despite the sacrifices they are making.

One couple have recently received an added blow, and I went to talk with them at their home.

Alan and Olga Ideson live on a council estate in Skipton, with their two children—Nicola, aged nine, and Mark, who is thirteen.

Alan is on strike at the Silentnight factory in Barnoldswick, where he worked shifts on a piece-rate basis for fourteen years as a frame assembler, producing bases for divans. "I haven't made a million," he said, "but I must have made half a million beds."

Just before Christmas, Olga lost her job as a domestic when the psychiatric hospital where she worked weekends was closed down. With only three months short of five years there, she failed to qualify for any redundancy payment. Neither Alan nor Olga showed any reluctance about the strike, and both have joined the Labour Party as a direct result.

What was most on their minds was not their present hardships but the problems of shift-working and its ef-



A strike marches on its stomach—make sure they don't go hungry.

Photo: Phil McHugh

fect on their family life. As Olga told Alan: "All those years you were working shifts at Silentnight, with those kids it showed. You'd be in bed when they got up and they'd be in bed when you got home."

## Shift-work

As for her own shifts: "The children were counting the weekends after they knew the hospital was closing. I wouldn't work weekends again."

Although they have no earnings, Alan had found they were spending less money now: "Shifts are no good. You could never manage on the wages they paid there... We're probably saving £10 a week on food now. For shift work, for what they were paying you, it's not worth it."

Olga explained: "We've got on much better since Alan's not been working shifts. You've got to have a square meal if you're working, but if you're not you can have beans on toast."

"With piece work, the money's never the same.

You never know if it's going to drop from one week to another, so you can't set a standard of living."

It wasn't just the hours but the literally sweated labour of piece work.

Olga described its effect: "The workers all flake out asleep as soon as they come home—some of them can't even do little household jobs. Alan used to come home covered in sweat."

Alan: "You've got to be an athlete to work there. The rates are so hard to do. If you're over thirty you're past it. Production jobs are advertised for eighteen to thirty-five year olds. If you're with a younger bloke you have to work at his pace. If my back didn't give up, something else would."

Olga: "It was a sweat-shop." "It always will be," Alan added: "especially with no union. They'll tamper with the rates again."

Jobs kept getting re-timed, so that workers ended up with less money. Piece rates were divisive too: "Management used to split us up. Someone would get a bigger bonus than others. They split

the whites up from the Asians.

"They seemed to get the Pakistani workers on ram-and-padding—they put the spring unit on top and stapled it to the frame. It was hard on the back and legs. Only one white man was on that."

"At one time they were on a lot less than other workers. Then the jobs were re-timed. Management said it would be evened out. What happened was that all the wages came down to the level they were paying the Pakistanis."

Alan was particularly disgusted by the ways in which management tried to divide the workers amongst themselves.

One method was a grading system: "There were five grades. Someone on grade 1 was not supposed to think anything about someone on grade 2, and so on. There was a few pounds' difference in each grade."

## Divide and rule

"In the initial stage the highest grade had about sixty-seven points on the importance of the job. For example, points 1-5 were how often you had to use your eyes, how much physical effort you had to put in and so on.

"I worked on grade 2, which was only half a point away from grade 1 but you lost £5-£6 a week. If you said there was dust, you'd have got half a point, but management would never agree there was dust, even though you could see it all above you, all over the pipes in the ceiling."

Management had other ploys: "They split you up during meal breaks in the canteen. They'd say it was just routine for the canteen, but I'd say everything has a motive."

But the strike has brought unity: "A lot of lads in the loading bay, I didn't know them," Alan said. "My workmates are my friends now."

He thought they'd been

deliberately provoked into striking. "Before the Tories got in we used to be busier. People who're out of work don't buy beds... Tom Clarke wanted a hundred redundancies. He thought most people would go back and a few would stay out, and then he'd get his numbers right."

Instead, Tom Clarke has lost most of his experienced workers, and had to start recruiting: "Young lads who have been forced into scabbing by the dole office."

Asked what would have happened if they had abandoned the strike last July rather than risk being sacked, Alan replied: "If I'd known for sure I'd be sacked, I'd still never have gone back. I'd never cross a picket line... I knew what was in store because they're in the business of being competitive, and wages were going to go down. What value is a job like that?"

## Money tight

But of course they still worry about money. Olga said: "It's going to be hard when we have to start replacing anything. I don't know how it's going to hit us yet. Until now we've lived on my wages."

"I did fourteen hours a week minus the coffee break. The social security make deductions for Alan's strike pay. They allow £65 for four people. You're penalised for being on strike. If you're on strike there's no welfare state."

Alan is sure the strike will go on until they win. "We're not likely to lose people after all this time. I'll never give up. It's something you can't afford to lose—not just because we're struggling now, but for afterwards..."

"I'm still resentful against Tom Clarke—it's obvious—but I still believe we're right, and you've got to keep fighting if you want to win anything. I wouldn't change my mind if it started all over again—I'd still vote for the strike."

Does Silentnight management really know what kind of a strike they have got on their hands? When people are so bitter about how they were treated at work they will endure the poverty of striking and unemployment to stop this company from making profits through wage cuts and non-union labour.

As Alan pointed out: "If you've worked there, you know all the tricks they get up to. It's a pittance of a wage and they want to cut it. It's hard to put into words the build-up of how they've tried to put you down all these years... It's just to get people working as hard as they can for bugger all."



Silentnight pickets.

Photo: Trevor King—a striker employed at Silentnight for 27 years

## Print-out

# Stop Murdoch's papers now

## Talking to a TNT worker

MURDOCH OWNS 28 per cent of TNT. TNT is an Australian company, the largest transport company in Australia. It started operating in this country about eight or nine years ago and has since become the largest next-day, express delivery transport firm in the country. It's organised on the basis of a closed shop.

Last August internal advertisements began to go up for a new division. They set up a new management which established 28 separate depots up and down the country, each of which had a fleet of vehicles. 2,000 have been employed at the new depots.

The first sign of Murdoch's involvement was three weeks ago when the *Sunday Times Colour Supplement* was moved by road after it was first printed at Wapping.

Many normal TNT depots were due to handle the STCS and they were assured that it

was just a one-off, so the T&G allowed it to be distributed through the normal TNT depots.

### Uncertainty

A week last Saturday the first lot of papers came out—*News of the World* and the *Sunday Times*—through the separate distribution network and the new drivers were unsure what the situation was and crossed picket lines. Then came Ron Todd's announcement not to cross picket lines.

The biggest problem is

that SOGAT members were accepting the *Sun* and the *Times* and *Sunday Times* and *News of the World* from the TNT vans and delivering them to the shops. It's difficult to persuade men who know they are going to lose their jobs if they don't deliver the stuff, to support a union, (ie SOGAT), whose own members are handling the papers.

There must be some input from the unions, they can't just expect people to go out on strike. They have got to explain the issues.

TNT are the highest paid transport workers probably in the country. The basic rate is £180 for four days work so obviously Murdoch will be after the wages and conditions of TNT workers next.

Jane Hartley spoke to a TNT worker.



Wapping picket line

Photo: Dave Sinclair.

## Wapping lies

MY FIRST visit to Fleet Street and Wapping on Saturday night was definitely an experience never to be forgotten—it showed me the truth about the whole establishment's calculated attack on print unionism.

The mood was quiet but thoughtful amongst the hundred or so pickets, perhaps knowing that what they were witnessing was a vision of industrial relations of the future.

Firstly it was clear the police were hand in glove with Murdoch. As artic lorry after artic rolled along the road, they were swiftly directed down different side streets leading to the plant. So there was no one entrance for the incoming and outgoing lorries.

### Police help

Military precision and radio linked lorries helped Murdoch get out his scabby papers. A friend and I decided we would try to follow a lorry to see where it was going. So we watched to see how they were being let out of the plant.

The police were stopping all traffic, letting the lorries out a furious speed and then allowing the traffic to move after the lorry had sped away.

We waited off the road further along and pulled in behind the lorry a few cars down. It soon became obvious that the lorry was also being given an escort by police from the rear, who



quietly spotted us tailing them.

It was then that we noticed that the lorry they were following, had its number plate at the rear painted out. Apart from the fact that the police were allowing this lorry to break all the speed limits, they were also allowing a lorry to travel without number plates. So much for the rule of law.

The police were agitated by our presence, so much so that they decided to follow us while the lorry sped away breaking all limits. Unfortunately we lost the lorry at the Dartford Tunnel.

But as we lost that one we saw three others in a convoy returning to London. This got us thinking that perhaps there was a point nearby where the loads were being broken down into smaller vans for distribution. We decided to check the local industrial estates which was fruitless.

Since then we have heard on the grapevine that they went out to Southend airport where they broke the loads

down.

However we returned to the picket line at Wapping to report our trip. Upon return we got involved in an interesting discussion between the pickets and the police.

A policeman told my mate that we should "go to Russia". He replied, "why don't you go to Chile or South Africa, you'd enjoy that".

The copper then said something along the lines of, "the police in South Africa are real police, they get the job done and no mucking about."

Talk on the picket line was that some lorries were decoys, going out unloaded and then returning to demoralise the pickets. So we decided to follow another one.

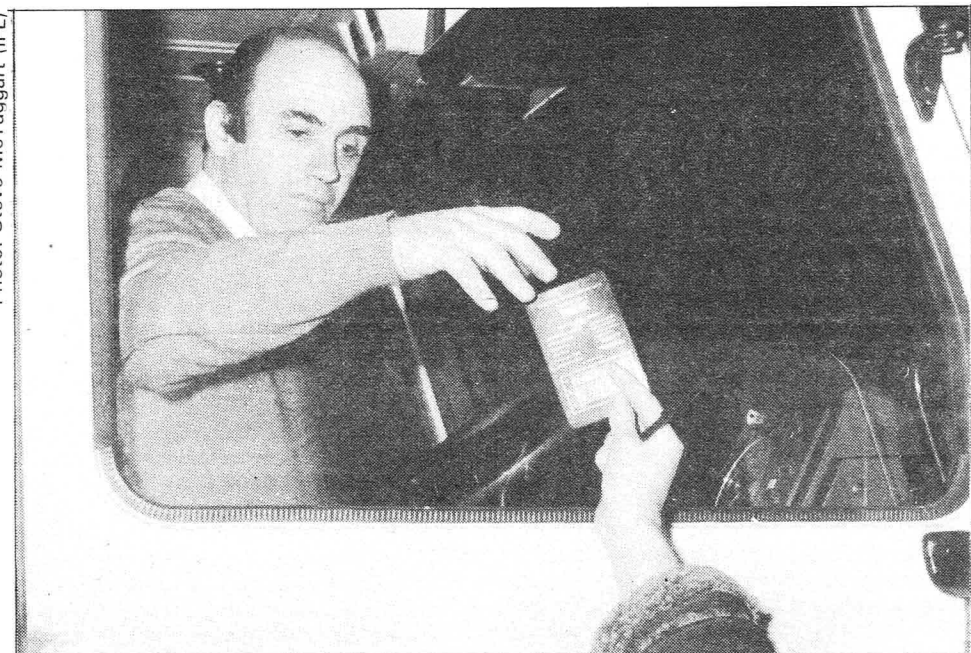
### Long way to go

This took the most round-about route to the M1 it possibly could. From close up though it did seem as if they were fully laden as they had soft sides which were bulging. Once again probably illegal as an unstable load.

When it reached the M1 we left it. At 2.30 am we went to bed. Tired but inspired.

This strike has a long way to go. The rest of the movement must be activated. The mood is determined, the dispute is bitter from the start due to the action of News International. Late nights are nothing if it means beating Murdoch and his backers.

By Mick Barwood



Driver shows TGWU card to pickets at News International printing plant in Glasgow.

## Appeal to Murdoch journalists

THE NATIONAL Union of Journalists' members who crossed the line in the battle of Wapping are learning some bitter lessons.

Those NUJ fainhearts who defied an instruction from their national executive to work in the factory of filth owned by Rupert Murdoch are finding life very tough—and it won't get any easier.

If they had stood firm they could have negotiated with other print unions a decent package of working conditions.

### Bad conditions

If they had united with other print unions they could have saved jobs—and been able to hold their heads high.

Now they must continue to skulk into their place of work, hidden on the floors of coaches.

They must wear identification badges at all times and only move in certain sections of their high-tec factory.

They must grapple with the new techniques under impossible pressures to produce low-quality editions of the *Sun*, *News of the World*,

*Times* and *Sunday Times*.

Those of them who gave into blackmail and worked at Wapping only under duress know they have little protection in the long-term.

That's why many are now busy trying to get out—by finding other jobs. Many of them are crucial to the continued dominance of the newspaper markets by Murdoch's newspapers.

His management know this and are bending over backwards to keep their staff.

Those brave few who did not cross the line have not been sacked. According to Murdoch's Australian sidekick Bruce Matthews, those journalists have been given more time to consider their future.

Those frightened hundreds who entered the Wapping gates must be kicking themselves for not staying out and forming a united front with other print unions.

It's not too late. Maybe many journalists still feel the fight will not involve them. It already has—and in a bloody, revengeful way.

Maybe many journalists feel that the battle of Wapping is over. It has only just

began and will spread from London's docklands throughout the country.

Trade union members will move from the grass-roots level to envelope Murdoch's sickly enterprise and stifle his crude, Victorian style of management.

Murdoch's newspapers, even if he manages to produce enough of them, will sit rotting in the large distribution centres.

### Union offer

And Murdoch's journalists will be straining and sweating to produce nothing of which they can be proud—ghosts of newspapers.

The NUJ should continue to implore its members at Wapping not to work under the present conditions, assure them of financial aid and attempt to find them other employment if they join the fight.

It should also remind each member there of the risks they run in continuing to defy the union and the appeals of other trades unionists.

By a Fleet Street NUJ member

## Spread SOGAT blacking

350 TO 400 delegates at a SOGAT FOC's meeting in the North West heard Brenda Dean outline the history of the News International dispute and why it was so important that SOGAT members in wholesale blacked these papers.

She pointed out that Murdoch and TNT weren't just union busting on the printing side but if they won would turn their attention to the distribution network.

And that Murdoch, through a new company, News Distribution Limited, was already canvassing newsagents and other

publishers with the idea of taking the news distribution into their non-union operation.

### Intimidation

Speaker after speaker from the floor of the meeting gave graphic illustrations of the tactics of the scab operators (physical intimidation and attempts to hire drivers in pubs) and explained what kind of successes they had had in blacking the papers.

In Glasgow and the West of Scotland, Merseyside and Newton-Le-Willows, no

News International papers were being handled except by management. The same night a chapel meeting at my own branch voted in favour of blacking News International.

In the face of threats of suspension, or dismissal from the management, a majority held out and are determined not to handle the scab papers and to support their union.

By Bernard MacGuire  
(FOC WH Smiths,  
Stockport, personal  
capacity)

## INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

## Sheffield steel victory

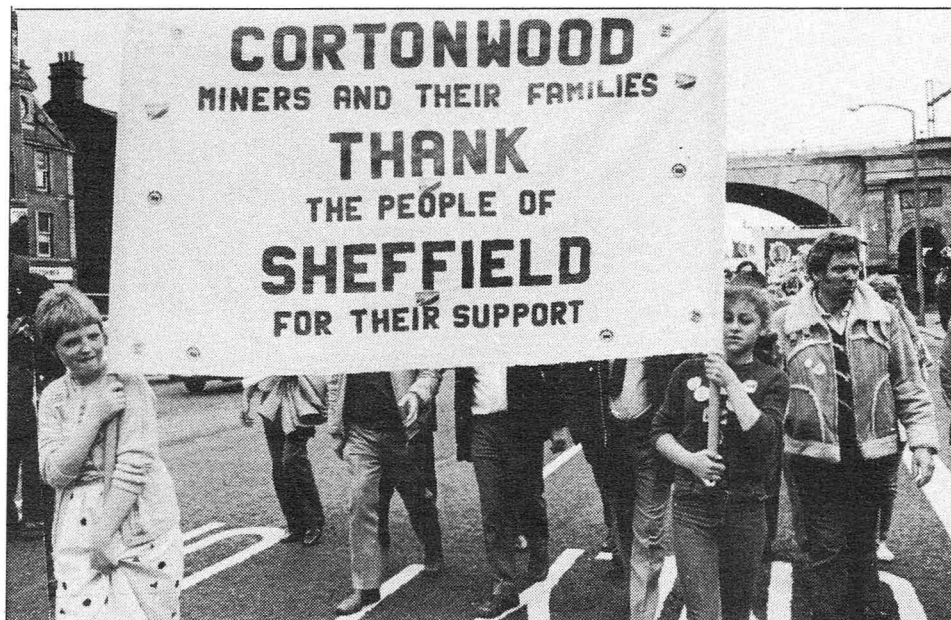
ON MONDAY 3 February, 1,400 Forgemaster steelworkers and many other trade unionists who had supported them marched through Sheffield back to work in a victory parade.

They marched behind their Joint Shop Stewards' Committee banner, half an hour after normal starting time, in a show of solidarity with their heads held high.

After 16 weeks of magnificent struggle, they had won. They had overwhelmingly voted to accept the return to work formula drawn up between the stewards, ACAS and management.

## Steward's view

Arthur Millward, GMB steward spoke to *Militant*: "It is a resounding victory, Ron Ward (convenor) has described it as a victory for all at Forgemasters, and for all those who have supported us and provided us with cash and goods and support to carry on. In particular the NUM who gave us tremendous support, despite their



Miners march in Sheffield—they returned local support during the Forgemasters' strike despite problems with the ISTC during the strike.

year long battle and their own hardships.

The lads were totally committed and had total faith in Ron Ward and the strike committee to carry the battle through.

But it was the lads who manned the picket lines and they deserve the praise. They stuck it out. It's easier to

spout on at meetings, in warm rooms, (though that's important too) than it is to stand out in the cold on the lines. All credit to them.

## Attack beaten

Management plans for a totally subservient workforce, leaving union

representation with legs and heads but with no arms, failed miserably. The actions of 1,400 workers ensured that Phillip Wright and his puppet failed. We've won back 90 per cent of what management wanted to deny us and also other concession on top. (more details next week)

## Miners fight on

## Notts strike despite UDM

MEMBERS OF the Union of Democratic Miners have returned to the NUM following a strike at the Bevercotes colliery in Nottinghamshire.

The 'afters' shift walked out on 29 January following management punishing two NUM members. The two had been told to transport material on a conveyor. In the process the conveyor belt was damaged—management fined the two men £50 each and moved them off the face (which meant receiving only a 50 per cent bonus and a reduced basic rate). Management refused to allow the NUM to represent the men.

A canteen meeting of all the shift—including UDM members—was called and they voted not to go down the pit. Management agreed to meet the NUM official

but only offered to reduce the fines to £25.

The men voted to walk out, with only about 10 against, UDM members, who went to work. The rest of the UDM members—the shift is split about 50/50 between the unions—joined the strike.

The next day management dropped the punishment. But what was significant was the anger of the UDM members with their officials. The UDM official argued that it was a NUM problem and nothing to do with them. 32 UDM members took forms to rejoin the NUM—there were only 32 forms available at the time.

With already 400 NUM members out of a workforce of 1,200, the NUM are confident that the 50 percent figure needed for representation can be achieved.

By Paul Shawcroft



Picket line in Notts during the strike. Bitterness can be overcome in struggle.

## Splitters in trouble

THIRTY MINERS from all over Lancashire, including many from Agecroft, where the majority had worked throughout the strike attended a meeting to hear Arthur Scargill.

Rees Vaughan a miner from St Johns Pit Community Action Group spoke on the lessons of their fight against closure.

Sid Vincent, the area president spoke on Agecroft pit and their unconstitutional attempt to join the UDM. The vote to join the UDM was 270 for and 190 against, and not the 5/6 majority that was required.

Arthur Scargill began by saying he was pleased the men from Agecroft were present, but it was unfortunate he had not been able to address a branch meeting, whilst UDM officials could.

He commented on Darfield Main, on their victory and how it was not just through the correctness of their argument or through sending writs to people but they were fighting in the spirit of 1984/85.

He showed a financial statement of the UDM which showed they were £418,000 in the red. And in the *Daily*

*Mail* they had actually written: "The UDM is dying".

The union had claimed 45,000 members, but in a recent radio interview in Nottingham Roy Lynk had claimed only 27,000 and when questioned replied: "If this goes on, I'm going home".

Arthur Scargill also mentioned how he challenged Lynk to stand against him, and whoever lost should resign and that was the way to democratically argue, not to form a breakaway union.

In the question time a bloke stood up who had worked throughout the strike and tried to smear Yorkshire's record of strike action in the '60s and in the 1980s. Scargill answered him, and again asked to be allowed to speak at the branch meeting and urged UDM members to rejoin the NUM.

A Silentnight striker also spoke and a collection was held for them as well as the paper: *The Lancashire Miner*.

By Gary Knowles  
(Bold NUM, Lancashire)

## Stormy future for seafarers

BRITISH PETROLEUM Shipping announced at the beginning of January that all its vessels were to be handed over to management agents who would be responsible for the running, manning and conditions of their fleet.

The 30-ship main bulk fleet will go to 'off-shore' foreign agents flying 'flags of convenience' and the North Sea operations will go to a UK-based manager. This move by the semi-state-owned company is designed to cut costs by forcing its employees to take redundancy and then seek a contract with these agencies.

## New agreements

Around 1,400 seafarers are being confronted with new agreements which can only be described as horrendous. The new agencies are out to bust the union and to take the conditions of merchant seamen back to the last century. The terms and conditions laid out would give NUS members virtually no rights whatsoever.

They include: tours of duty which have been extended from four months to six months with the proviso that this may be extended when necessary. The fee (or wages) will be reviewed 'periodically'.

There will be no standby remuneration as is the case with BP at present, but worst of all, there will be no right to trade union representation "without first consulting the company either by telex, telegram, or letter and allowing the company 30 days in

which to give written replies". Any direct or sympathetic action by seafarers will result in immediate dismissal.

NUS members have been stunned by the action of BP shipping which is really the last bastion of British shipping. By flying under 'flags of convenience' unorganised third world crews will inevitably start manning these ships if the agencies are allowed to push through their demands.

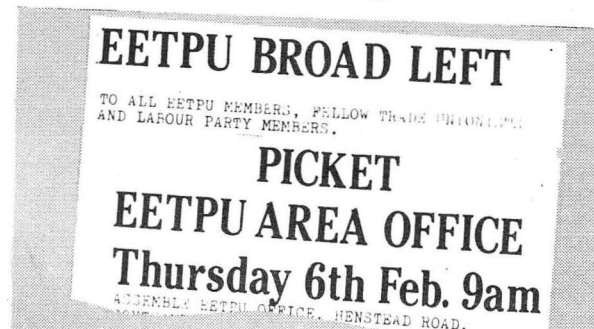
The NUS has responded by refusing to sign the proposed agreements until the terms and conditions are dramatically improved. NUS members are delaying ships from sailing to put pressure on the company to negotiate as well as a refusing to leave their ships at the end of the tour until NUS members have replaced them. If the agencies refuse to negotiate a decent agreement, further action must be considered by our members.

The crisis of capitalism in the UK is perhaps best reflected in the devastation of the merchant navy. These further attacks against our members will be strongly resisted.

A future Labour government must ensure that British ships fly the red ensign (the merchant navy flag) and thus safeguard the wages and conditions of our members.

By Joe Barlowe  
(National Union of Seamen, Full-time official, West Wales, personal capacity)

## EETPU opposition in Southampton



THE SOUTHAMPTON area office of the EETPU recruited the scab workforce being used at Wapping. Many branches in the region covered by the Southampton office expressed disquiet and concern over the role of the full-time officials months ago.

A full-time official attended my branch meeting in mid-December. His explanation was that the EETPU has a traditional role in the printing industry and that Southampton Area Office were approached by an Employment Agency from Liverpool (name undisclosed) and were asked to provide labour for Wapping.

He was asked if it was true that non-union members were signed up to the EETPU then given jobs at Wapping. He replied that union cards are not being handed out.

He was then asked if the

EETPU would settle a one union no-strike agreement. He said no, and that the NGA and SQGAT were at present negotiating with Murdoch.

The branch was far from satisfied with his replies. Since then Wapping has been producing all Murdoch's dailies. It is now known that at least three TGWU members from Fawley oil refinery (near Southampton) took voluntary redundancy, joined the EETPU and are now working at Wapping. The same thing has been done by workers from Vosper Thornycroft.

The local EETPU Broad Left has organised a picket of the Area Office on Thursday, in support of the 5,000 sacked printers.

By a Southampton EETPU member

NUPE Broad Left  
National Conference  
Saturday 15 March  
11am - 5pm  
Sheffield.  
Details contact:  
30 Winchart Road,  
Thamesmead,  
London SE28.

*Militant* would like to confirm that last week's statement on Liverpool was received from the NUPE Broad Left and not on behalf of any individual.

Mass picket  
John Laing site,  
Hayes Wharf,  
Bermondsey  
Monday 7am

Support building workers' fight against redundancies. Support etc: Dave Docherty, 69 Holland Road, East Ham, London E6.

NCU  
General Secretary  
election  
Broad Left  
candidate,  
Phil Holt  
Main balloting begins next week.

For details contact Dave Hagger, 11 The Rising, Billericay, Essex CM11 2HN.

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# Militant

Liverpool *Militant* Public Rally: 'Expel the Tories, not the socialists' Tuesday 11 February, 7pm James Pearson Hall, Liverpool Polytechnic, Byron Street, by Central Library. Speakers: Peter Taaffe, Terry Fields MP, Derek Hatton and Ian Lowes



Liverpool and Lambeth councillors rally before the High Court hearing started.

THE 48 Liverpool Labour councillors now facing surcharge and disqualification had "conscientiously and painfully attempted to do the things all councils are supposed to do".

By a Militant reporter

The idea accepted by the District Auditor, that they had "deliberately set out for confrontation" and "refused to manage the local economy" was completely false, argued Stephen Sedley QC for the councillors in their high court appeal against the DA's penalties.

Testimony of the social problems created by industrial decline—inner-city decay, mass unemployment and a dwindling and ageing population—read like the great social reports of the past which led to public health and housing reform, said Sedley.

Liverpool Council was attempting to implement a strategy of urban renewal to break out of the vicious circle of decline. This required massive capital spending, but the government had "stolen" more and more from the City, through reducing grants, imposing penalties, and failing to provide funds to cover new responsibilities.

It was no answer for the Council to save capital projects through massive rate increases or cuts. That would push up already intolerable levels of unemployment and aggravate every kind of social problem.

Far from spending extravagantly, in some areas the council was just about providing the services constituting the bottom line which no civilised society can forgo. The only way out was to campaign for cash from central government.

# Liverpool: socialism on trial

Much of the proceedings inevitably revolve around interpretation of the tangled framework of local government legislation, most of it framed to restrict the scope of councils. The councillors contend that, faced with a whole range of duties and contending, often irreconcilable, legal demands, councillors have a right, as democratically elected representatives, to use their own political judgement on the course they take.

The councillors acted reasonably and responsibly in not setting a rate until 14 June, 1985. Until subsequent legislation, there was no legal deadline. Liverpool's campaign in 1984 had made the Secretary of State (Patrick Jenkin) think again, and they had won extra resources. Because of catastrophic cuts, the

Labour group believed they again had the duty to campaign for more cash in 1985.

In practice, the formula for assessing government grants and penalties left a lot of room for political decisions by the Minister and Liverpool could therefore not be blamed for trying to persuade him to come up with more.

## Fair hearing

In any case, the whole system of fixing the Rate Support Group, with target expenditure levels, penalties and rate-capping was already tottering in 1984-85. The National Audit Commission itself severely criticised the uncertainty and anomalies created. Since then, the government indicated that it would be changing the whole system. It would have been

**BROADGREEN CLP** have called upon all Labour movement activists to support their mass lobby of Labour's NEC on 26 February at 8.30am outside the Wálworth Road headquarters of the Labour Party. The lobby is to support Liverpool DLP.

irresponsible for the councillors not to have argued for a reconsideration of Liverpool's case.

Dealing with the role of the District Auditor, Sedley said that as prosecutor, judge and jury rolled into one, he was obliged to give the councillors a fair hearing—but had failed to do so. The DA had claimed in effect, that the councillors were lying about their reasons for delaying the rate—but had given them no chance of answering back.

Not only had the DA reached wrong conclusions, therefore, but the way he had conducted the audit made it invalid. The court, Sedley submitted, should

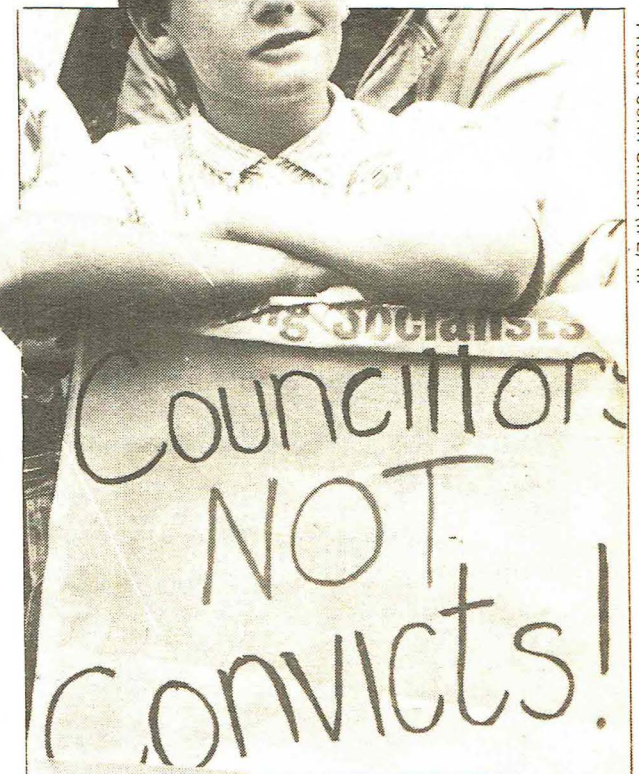


Photo: John Smith (FL) III

Liverpool backs the council.

quash the surcharge and disqualification on this ground alone, regardless of the rights and wrongs of the case. The judges said they would consider this together with the arguments about the substance of the case.

## Achievements

Commenting on the first few days of the case, Councillor Felicity Dowling said: "It's ironic that after the argument has been won several times over among the people of Liverpool, who recognise the council's real achievements, the issues now have to be put all over again in the court. But the evidence shows just how impressive the Council's case is."

"We were quite justified in delaying the rate to demand further negotiations with the government. It is unfortunate that there is

not a much wider audience than this courtroom for all the evidence on our side."

Tony Mulhearn, councillor and president of Liverpool DLP, added: "The case shows that we were legally justified in taking the budget decisions we did."

★ **COURT** costs have now soared to £200,000 pending an appeal to the House of Lords, leaving £120,000 still to raise.

Support, averaging £1,000 per day, continues to pour in from workers' levies, local and national Labour Parties, local authority trade union committees and individuals.

It is up to workers everywhere to redouble their efforts in ensuring that the councillors case does not become a dead issue. Money must be raised and the issue explained to alert workers to the seriousness of the situation.



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