

# Militant

The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth

25p

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Inside...

Lessons of Warrington

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# Stop Fleet Street



Time to show our strength

NOW THAT the High Court has sequestered the funds of SOGAT, and will probably do the same to the NGA, the print strike has developed into an attack by the state on fundamental trade union rights.

There is no way we can stand by and watch the union go down the plug hole. There has to be a reaction against this sequestration. It is up to us now to get the arguments over, not just to Murdoch's employees and Fleet Street but to the general membership.

The existence of the union is at stake. The courts and

the state are determined to castrate the unions; we cannot let it happen.

## Flying pickets

Other employers, like the *Guardian* and the *Express*, are seeing Murdoch get away with it. They see no organised reaction and think that now is the time to force their

own plans through. Our members are going to suffer, unless we take action now. Flying pickets should be sent out to the areas as well as to Wapping. In Manchester alone we have 68 wholesale outlets.

Labour Parties, the Transport and General Workers' Union and the miners have offered help. But it will be no good relying on the rest of the movement if we don't get our own house in order. Every member must know what is going on and the leadership must mobilise them in action.

The capitalists and Tories are falling out with each other; they are in disarray. Now is the time to show our strength. They have been kicking us for seven years, so now is the time to get in some kicks of our own.

It is the working class that is at stake now and the leadership cannot stand by and see us take a hammering.

By Eddie Furey  
(SOGAT '82  
National Executive,  
personal capacity)

By Peter Jarvis  
(London Region NGA)

would not be a long strike.

In answer to the argument that if Fleet Street stopped then only Murdoch's papers would be on sale, we demand the stepping up of mass picketing at Wapping and the use of flying pickets to wholesalers and transport depots. Other unions have already offered to help. For finance we have to turn to the rest of the movement. The miners showed the resources available to workers prepared to struggle.

Big meetings of print workers this week show a willingness to support action. That support now has to be mobilised. The TUC meeting on Thursday has the duty to call a 24-hour general strike as the first step in the fight to defend union funds.

## National action vital now

THE INTERVENTION of the courts into the print strike makes it vital to change the unions' tactics. We cannot let our money be stolen bit by bit. There is no alternative to stepping up the action. We need the assistance of the whole trade union movement, on whose behalf the print workers are now fighting.

First there must be a stoppage of the whole of Fleet Street and the rest of the trade. We cannot expect other trade unionists to put their jobs on the line unless we show our determination.

There is no way that Murdoch will be forced to the negotiating table through the disruption of his distribution. The longer this tactic is tried the easier it is for him to iron out his problems. If action is not stepped up, we are faced with a long drawn-out fight leading to defeat. But if we were all out, it

## Labour right's new offensive

LABOUR'S RIGHT wing are intensifying their witch-hunt in the party. The decisive showdown is now approaching.

Right-wing Labour MPs are boasting that they have a hit-list of 20 Liverpool party members, including Derek Hatton and Tony Mulhearn, who they want expelled at the next National Executive Committee meeting.

The democratically elected prospective parliamentary candidate for Bradford North, Pat Wall has been summoned to Labour's national executive to be grilled about his loyalty to the Party.

## Thought control

This attempt at thought control harks back to the dark days of right wing absolute control in the 1950s.

Every Labour Party in the country should tell the NEC they want to keep their hard earned right to choose socialist candidates.

Another NEC committee has taken the unprecedented

step of initiating the national expulsion of two elected members of Labour's Wales executive, Chris Peace and Tony Wedlake on the grounds of suspected support for *Militant* (see page 2).

## Civil War

Such action is madness. At the present time Thatcher has been completely undermined. The whole Tory party is on the run. What better opportunity could the Labour leaders get to rout the Thatcher government? But instead of fighting the real enemy they are causing civil war in the party. Safeguard Labour Party democracy! No witch-hunts!

Join the lobby of the NEC on Wednesday 26 February at 8.30am at Labour Party headquarters in Walworth Road. Speakers invited include Dennis Skinner, Eric Heffer, Tony Benn, Terry Fields, Derek Hatton and Tony Mulhearn.

By Roger Shriver

## Ipswich victory

WITCH-HUNTERS suffered a serious set-back on Wednesday when the High Court ordered Ipswich Labour Party to drop disciplinary action against two long-standing members.

Accepting that they had been denied 'natural justice', the court made an order restraining Ipswich CLP from taking any action against Teresa and Roger McKay.

After the hearing, Teresa MacKay said: "The party was not prepared to listen to reason. Unfortunately, we were forced to go to the law courts, who agreed with our arguments. I hope this puts an end to this divisive business once and for all. Let's fight the real enemy".

Full story next week

# New purge must be stopped

**LABOUR PARTY members will be angry and amazed that the party's right are set to take drastic action against supporters of Militant.**

Even full-time party organisers have said through their union that they are angry at the time they are having to spend policing the membership instead of getting on with winning the next election.

The attack on Bradford North Labour Party is a disgrace, Pat Wall has been a Labour Party member for 35 years, and President of Bradford Trades Council for over a decade. He is well respected fighter for socialism and stood for Labour in 1983. He was endorsed by the Bradford North Labour Party on the first ballot.

But Ken Cure of the AUEW at the NEC Organisation sub-committee said that as in the eyes of public opinion(!) Pat Wall was "associated with Militant" and should be interviewed about his loyalty to the Party.

## 'Target seat'

Bradford North is one of the party's 'target seats' for Labour to win from the Tories. It was only lost because ex-Labour MP Ben Ford split the vote in 1983. Red Wedge recently held a concert in Bradford to rally support for the party. Yet now Labour's chances have been jeopardised by putting Wall into the dock to defend himself before the NEC.

Bradford West MP Max Madden, has said that Pat Wall should be speedily endorsed and the campaign launched to get the seat back from the Tories. This was the view of Tony Benn, Dennis Skinner, Joan Maynard, Eric Heffer, Jo Richardson and David Blunkett who voted against the decision to summon Wall to the NEC.

There will be outrage also at the decision by a meeting of three members of the Appeals and Mediation Committee, by two votes to one, to recommend that the executive 'take action' against two members of the party's Wales executive Committee, Chris Peace and Tony Wedlake.

Peace was elected top of the poll in the constituency party section at last year's Wales party conference. Wedlake represents the Labour Party Young Socialists on the executive and also sits on the LPYS National Committee. At the first meeting of the Wales Executive, Ray Powell MP and defeated Transport and General Workers' Union leadership candidate George Wright tried to have them excluded from the committee.

National party officers declared such exclusion to be unconstitutional. Organisation committee chairman

Charles Turnock told the Welsh executive that only a constituency party or the NEC had the right to take action against a member.

## Evidence

The Wales executive therefore decided to submit a report to the NEC of 'evidence' that Peace and Wedlake should be expelled.

The following paragraph conveys an idea of the quality of this 'evidence':

**"Mr Peace was identified on Friday October 11, 1985 selling the Militant newspaper outside Transport House, Cardiff to Cardiff City Transport employees attending a strike meeting. Photographs of Mr Peace selling Militant newspaper are available".**

**The whole report is stuffed with McCarthyite smears of this character.**

Against Wedlake, the only 'evidence' is that his name appeared on a leaflet as a speaker at a Militant meeting, an honour he shares with Tony Benn and numerous other MPs and leading trade unionists. Are these all now at risk of expulsion?

Members in Wales and Young Socialists throughout Britain will be launching a full-scale protest at the decision moved by Cyril Ambler of COHSE, seconded by Ken Cure of the AUEW, but opposed by Dennis Skinner MP.

## Appeal

If the NEC expels these two members they will be the first national expulsions since the Militant Editorial Board were thrown out in 1983. Peace and Wedlake will have the right to appeal to the national conference. In a pre-election period the conference could be taken up with more internal disputes.

All those branches, CLPs, trade unions and other organisations which have already passed resolutions condemning such witch-hunts will have to be committed to pass further such resolutions to oppose this decisive new move by the right.

Trade unionists must insist that some of their representatives on the NEC abandon their support for attacks on party members for which there is no mandate and no support from their membership. Those who voted for the Pat Wall interrogation include Ken Cure of the AUEW, Charles Turnock of the NUR, Gordon Colling of the NGA, Cyril Ambler of COHSE and Neville Hough of the GMBATU.

By a Militant reporter



## Celebrations sweep through Haiti

**DELIGHTED CROWDS** in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, welcomed the news that the detested dictator Francois 'Baby Doc' Duvalier had fled the country aided by the US and French governments. Massive demonstrations, riots and strikes against the dynasty which had ruled poverty ridden Haiti for 28 years forced the other capitalist powers to get rid of Duvalier before he was deposed more violently. The dictator had previously wanted to hold on to power. Photo: John Arthur (Reflex).

## Paper sellers threatened

**THE MERSEYSIDE Anti-Apartheid Group have warned that Militant supporters may face attack from opponents of Sam Bond if they sell papers on the group's march in the area on Saturday 15 February.**

The letter states: "We regret to have to inform you that owing to the strong feelings expressed by the Liverpool 8 community, we feel that we will not be able to offer any protection to individuals who attend the demonstration... selling Militant papers or other material associated with Militant, or who display the Militant banner".

The letter follows on from threats by supporters of the Black Caucus—a self-appointed group opposed to the appointment of Sam Bond as head of Liverpool council's race relations unit—that Militant sellers who go on the march will be beaten up.

The only genuine "feelings expressed by the Liverpool 8 community" that Militant knows of is the 800 local people who signed a petition demanding that Sam Bond be allowed to speak in

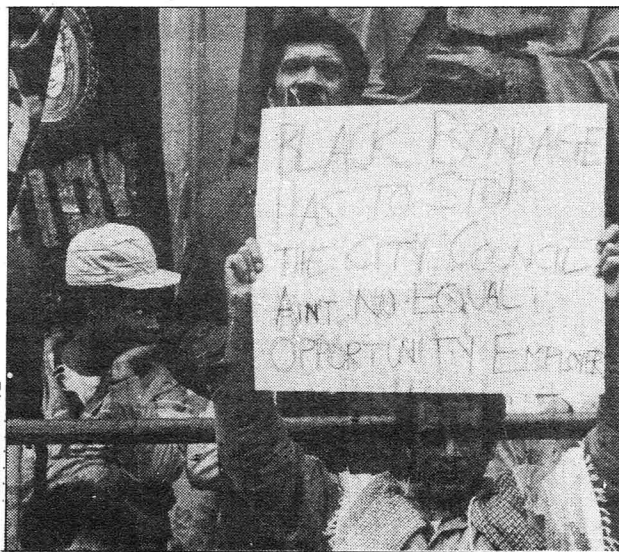


Photo: Militant

**A Black Caucus supporter obstructs a black speaker at a rally against unemployment in Liverpool last year.**

the area, following an earlier meeting being broken up by Black Caucus supporters.

The threats against Militant were made at Merseyside AA's meeting last Monday. A long standing member who objected was told to "get out" by these elements.

A Merseyside AA spokesman said: "There was a very long argument over this. AA does not condone such attitudes as it is threatening violence to people going about their

business quite legally." He said it was the first time this issue was raised and given the short notice AA were still committed to march, so felt all they could do was warn Militant supporters of the danger.

The opponents of Sam Bond have a record of using violence and intimidatory methods. That they should threaten to use such methods on a demonstration to defend black workers' rights speaks volumes about their self-centred interests.

## Black young socialist member racially abused by police

**THE CASE of Lesleigh Woodburn, a member of the Labour Party Young Socialists who was arrested and racially abused on 23 January was dismissed by Highbury Magistrates' Court.**

The arresting officer, PC Roden didn't appear when it was clear that he couldn't back up his account.

Woodburn was arrested leaving a teachers' demonstration. She heard a policeman shout across the road: "I think they all ought to be deported". She asked whether he was talking to her and he replied: "Yes I think you all ought to be deported".

"Are all police this racist?" Woodburn asked. "Yes all police are this racist", replied the officer.

Woodburn was then grabbed around the scruff of the neck and pushed against a wall. Another police officer arrived and the two officers dragged her into a van.

In her words: "I was then subjected to continuous racial abuse, in particular by PC Roden who called me a 'black whore, coon and nigger'. I asked him if this was the way they encourage blacks into the police force and he replied, 'There should be no f...g coons in the police force'.

"When I arrived at Highbury Police Station I

was introduced to the other officers by Roden as 'just another black slag'."

Woodburn was not allowed to use the phone until she had given her name and address and then the police officers made the calls, not her. PC Roden then gave his number to the officer filling in the charge sheet as 395. Woodburn corrected him pointing to the number on his lapel which was 305.

The officer in charge took Woodburn aside after a spell in the cell and said that he "had spoken to the young officer involved. By the way he had picked up another constable's coat by mistake."

## Liverpool appeal

**LIVERPOOL COUNCILLORS** are still in court defending their campaign against Tory cuts.

The District Auditor, who issued the surcharge notices, is not an accountant checking the council's books for accuracy, but combines the role of local government detective, prosecutor, judge and jury.

The auditor has powers to bankrupt elected public representatives, and to ban them from office for five years. He therefore has a special duty to act fairly. But in this case he had not given them proper notice of the items on which he issued certificates, and had not allowed the councillors a hearing, despite questioning their motives.

On these grounds alone, the auditor's penalties should be quashed, argued Stephen Sedely QC for the Liverpool councillors in their appeal.

Arguments on the DA's denial of "natural justice" dominated the last two days of the Councillors' case, to which the DA's counsel is now replying.

Earlier, the councillors rejected the charge of "wilful misconduct". Their motive for delaying the rate until 14 June was to press, for as long as reasonable, for extra funding from the government.

The "losses" alleged by the DA were not the result of the councillors' actions, but the outcome of ministers' decisions to delay certain payments as a way of putting pressure on Liverpool.

The appeal, which has already cost far more than the DA's alleged "losses", will probably continue to next week. The three judges will probably adjourn the court for a period to consider their verdict.

● £120,000 still urgently needed for court costs.

# Tory leaders vie for top job

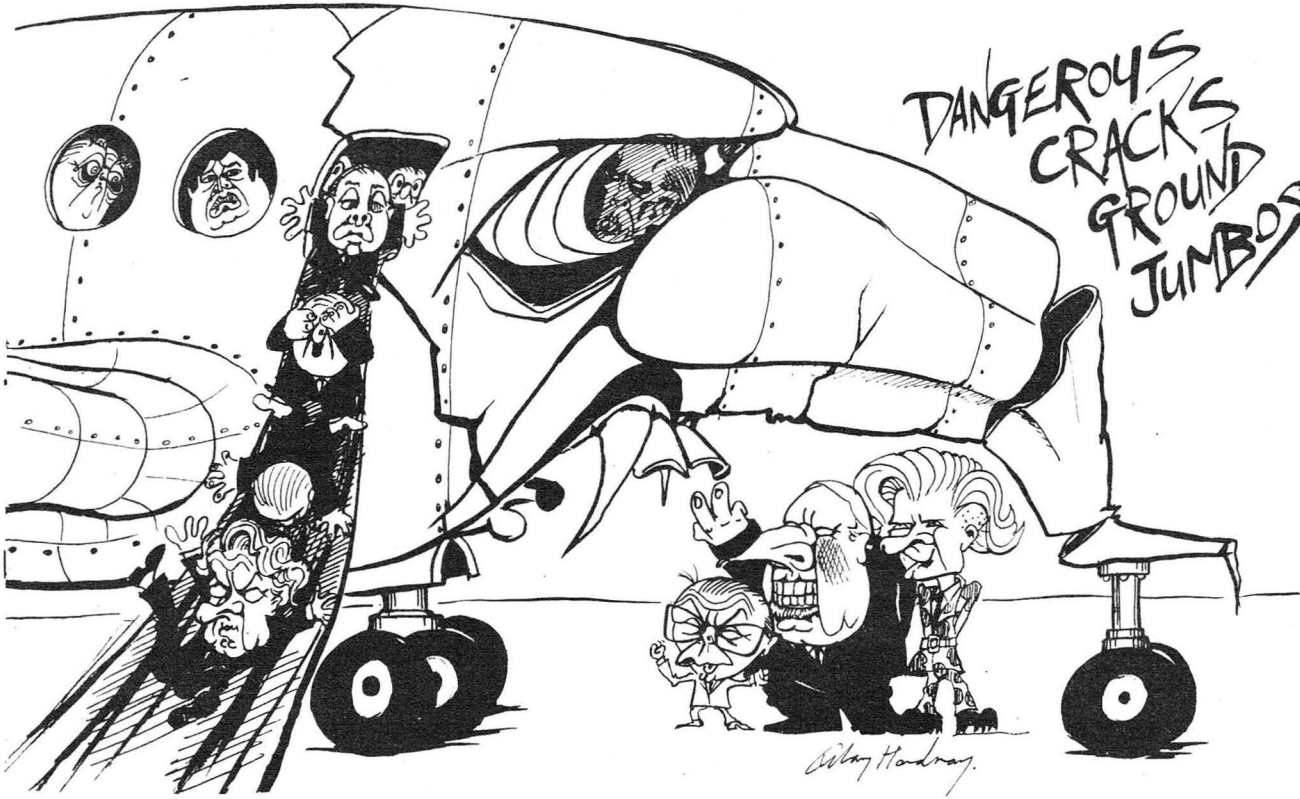
**WEEKEND SPEECHES** by top Tories have highlighted the disarray within their party. Beneath a banner proclaiming 'one nation', Howe and Walker, Tebbit and Heseltine all used the platform of the Young Conservatives' conference to advance their bids for the leadership.

It was an appropriate setting for such a scramble for power. The YCs are split between factions who hurl such words as 'traitor' and 'scum' across the conference at each other. The majority are on the 'wet' wing of the party supporting traditional Tory policies.

## Speeches

The minority, dominated by the Federation of Conservative Students, are on the lunatic fringe of the right. They support the Nicaraguan Contras, the Northern Ireland Paisleyites and voted against a resolution condemning apartheid—it was only passed by 338 votes to 228. They support the use of rubber bullets, water cannon and tear gas against 'rioting savages'. They tried to get the invitation to Heseltine to address the conference withdrawn, only backing down after an appeal by Tebbit. They then tried to shout down the former defence secretary.

As usual with Tory speeches, they were full of



ritual expressions of loyalty to the present leaders but that could not hide the deep and unprecedented divisions with which the party is now riven.

On every important issue, Walker and Heseltine are at one with Thatcher. They are as loyal in defence of their class as any other Tory and as leader would continue with the same basic policies.

The significance of their speeches is that they reflect the fear of a section of their class that Thatcher has

become a liability. She is too blatant and strident in promoting the cause of wealthy big business. "Toryism" says Biffen "is not a raucous political faction".

## Cosmetic

Such Tories foresee an electoral defeat in which hundreds of their fellow MPs would lose their seats and a Labour government would come to power. They also speak for a section of manufacturing industrialists

who view with alarm Thatcher's willingness, under the influence of finance capital to auction off huge chunks of British industry to American multi-nationals. The want cosmetic changes to try to deceive the electorate into thinking that the party has changed course.

For workers, however, no change in the leadership would end the misery which the Tories and their economic system has inflicted upon them. For Labour the Tory splits pro-

vide the chance to go on the offensive, to exploit their enemy's crisis and expose the whole capitalist system as the real culprit for the economic and social malaise within Britain.

A concerted campaign led from the top to mobilising the ranks of the labour movement could force the Tories not just to ditch their leader but to call an early general election, and bring in a Labour government.

By Pat Craven



**EX-TORY** Prime Minister Ted Heath didn't hide his anger at government plans to sell off parts of BL. "Public opinion, business and finance were stunned by the announcement", he said. "They do not know what to expect next. What else will the government negotiate to sell?"

He concluded: "I wish to be plain and honest, I cannot support the proposition. I shall resist it in every way possible."

For once Heath was not alone. He has often been isolated on the Tory benches, seen as a disgraced exile, motivated by bitter envy at Thatcher's success. Now he was the hero of the hour to Tory MPs with car interests in their constituencies. Their own speeches of course, were far milder in tone. But then you don't judge the mood of Tories by their parliamentary speeches or whether they support the government line at the vote.

I was sure that Heath's strong words had found a readier echo than appeared to be the case. Tory MPs are unaccustomed to criticising government policies. I don't recall them protesting at privatisation in the NHS for example. But circumstances change. The sale of Austin Rover would certainly lead to the virtual extinction of the car production and components supply industries. Therefore it's a fatal policy for a West Midlands Tory MP to support, when thousands of car workers live in your constituency. Otherwise, after the next election you'd be seeking alternative employment as well.

My suspicions were confirmed within 24 hours when the new secretary of State, Channon, informed MPs that the talks with Ford "will not be pursued" (only for the time being of course). What then has happened to the 'Iron Lady' image, the need for the resolute approach? Clearly the resignation of Leon Brittan has not enabled Thatcher to regain the authority as she had hoped. On the contrary, the mood of restlessness within party ranks has now percolated to its highest levels. Suddenly, other cabinet ministers found their voices and successfully over-ruled her on this issue.

The next general election has become the most important consideration of all. If that means 'the lady is for turning', then so be it. Here is another confirmation of the panic now raging in the government. It could not be a better situation for Labour to exploit.

By Dave Nellist MP

# Marcos clings on to power

**THE PHILIPPINES** dictator Ferdinand Marcos is desperately trying to cling on to power. He has stopped 'counting' the votes in the 7 February election and is blatantly trying to steal victory away from his liberal challenger Corazon Aquino.

Report after report on Western TV and press has had to admit that the former protege of American Imperialism had used thuggery, intimidation and poll rigging to keep in power.

In the cities Marcos' backers tried to steal ballot boxes. But in scenes which show the new determination to dump the dictator, students, workers, even Catholic priests and nuns stood guard over the boxes and ensured their safe conduct to the counts. But Marcos, to the obvious embarrassment of American observers, is still hanging on, despite an obvious victory for Aquino.

Most big business interests in America and the Philippines want Marcos to go quietly before he is thrown out violently. The masses are no longer afraid of Marcos, he is no longer a force for stability. The huge popular movements, a guerilla army and a militant working class can only gain strength if he stays.

The New Peoples Army (NPA), connected to the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) now reportedly has a basis in 63

of the 73 provinces, at least 12,000 full time guerillas and 18,000 in village based militias. The Pentagon thinks it is the fastest growing guerilla group in the world.

Reports suggest that the guerillas are transforming rural social relations by giving land to the peasants.

The working class movement has recovered from martial law to build a militant independent trade union movement which dwarfs the Marcos stooge unions. The Philippines had the honour of seeing the first ever strike in a supposedly strike-free Free Trade Zone.

## Capitalism threatened

Scared of a mass left wing movement in town and country, the majority of the capitalist class put their force behind Corazon Aquino, the widow of the murdered leading oppositionist. Much of her appeal was because of her husband's martyrdom, her distance from Marcos' corrupt regime and her undoubted personal courage.

But the Aquinos are a rich capitalist family, her economic adviser is head of a mining concern, and her campaign called for more "private initiative". Many of Marcos' bourgeois opponents welcomed martial law when it "merely" outlawed strikes and put down insurgencies. That led to a cheap and compliant

Photos: Piers Cavendish (Reflex).



Corazon Aquino.



President Marcos.

labour force.

But if Marcos clings on, particularly if the Aquino camp just accepts the results, more radical ideas will come to the fore amongst the working class and peasantry. Marcos cannot save himself for very long even if repression is stepped up.

The economy is in dire crisis. 60 per cent are estimated to be out of work or underemployed. It would take a 3 per cent rise in wealth each year until 1990 to regain the economic position of 1983—there is no sign whatever of that kind of miracle. Already capital is flooding out, deserting the Philippines. How long will it be before the Filipino people desert capitalism?

The American ruling class will be manoeuvring to build an alternative capitalist government but Marcos is making that difficult task even harder.

By Roger Shrivess



**1986 Conference**  
**19 April, 11am**  
**Sheffield City Hall**  
**Tony Benn**  
**main speaker**

For details contact:  
**Mick Barwood, 1 Earlswood**  
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**West Sussex, RH13 6DB**

# Militant

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## No witch-hunts!

ALL INDICATIONS point to a conscious decision by the Labour Party's right wing to carry out immediate wholesale expulsions of *Militant* supporters in Liverpool and elsewhere.

The decisions to summon Pat Wall to be interviewed by the National Executive Committee (NEC) and to recommend disciplinary action against two members of the Wales executive committee confirm that the right are determined to carry through a mass purge. With the support of the 'soft left', they are prepared to rip the party apart and wreck its prospects in forthcoming elections.

The whole of the next NEC meeting on 26 February will be preoccupied with the report of the inquiry into Liverpool District Labour Party. The attitude of the right make it clear that they will not be satisfied unless this leads to expulsions. Councillors who are defending themselves in the High Court against fines and disqualification from of-

fice for the crime of defending Liverpool's jobs and services, will be hauled before another 'court' to hear equally spurious charges from the right wing of their own party.

Just weeks before the Fulham by-election and two months before crucial council elections, the leading body of the Labour party will be spending the whole of two meetings within eight days debating whether to banish from its ranks some of its most loyal and hard-working members. The party ranks will recall the havoc wrought by the expulsion of the *Militant* Editorial Board just before the humiliating defeat in the Bermondsey by-election of 1983. Now the right are trying to present the media with the same picture of internal strife just before the voters of Fulham go to the polls.

As in 1983, the right's thrust against the Marxists has accompanied a further shift to the right on policy by the party leadership. At the Organisation committee, Tony Benn asked ironically whether Pat Wall was to be asked if he supported the Japanese system of society, or admired Franklin Roosevelt, for which Neil Kinnock expressed enthusiasm in his *Weekend World* interview—such views are far more remote from Labour Party policy than those held by the members now facing disciplinary action.

The underlying reason for the expulsion threats is that the right wing fear the anger of the party rank and file at the abandonment of policy commitments which they have fought for over the years. Kinnock's *Weekend World* remarks reveal that he envisages a future Labour government operating in

a wholly capitalist economy. Given the terminal sickness of British capitalism, this will inevitably doom his attempts to reform, or even mitigate the problems of poverty and unemployment which capitalism creates.

It is the Marxists within the party who consistently point out the flaws in the ideas of the Kinnocks and Hattersleys and who will be proved right after Labour has been in office. They will become the pole of attraction for all those looking for an alternative programme which faces up to the immensity of the tasks facing the labour movement. It is the Marxists who represent the party's future. That is why the right are desperate to force them out.

But there is no way that the future can be driven out by organisational means. These new attacks by the right will be met with a ferocious campaign of resistance. Especially enraged at the NEC's action will be party members in Bradford, whose respected candidate has been dragged up to defend himself, those in Wales whose elected representatives topped the poll at last year's Wales conference and Labour Party Young Socialist members of whose National Committee Tony Wedlake is a member.

Trade union leaders who have promoted these attacks will be called to account by their members who will be sickened to see Labour's chances of election victory being sabotaged just when the Tories are on the ropes. A sustained campaign to channel that anger into a wave of protest to the NEC can make certain that these attacks are repulsed.

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## Red Wedge-LPYS recruits pour in

WHEN RED Wedge came to Newcastle, the LPYS went to town.

As in the rest of the country, the Red Wedge tour has been hugely successful with thousands of youth showing support for Labour and many joining the Labour Party Young Socialists.

On the day of the Red Wedge concert in Newcastle, local LPYS branches organised a day's event with concerts, stalls, workshops and discussions. A bulletin called *Not the Evening Chronicle* (the local Tory rag) was produced.

### Surprise

On the day itself 700 attended the LPYS event, with nearly 200 joining the LPYS. Besides appearances from the Red Wedge performers and top local bands, there was also a special appearance by Elvis Costello.

An LPYS member spotted him earlier getting out of a taxi, and dragged him along to the venue! 100 papers and 250 bulletins were sold.

The atmosphere was electric and the message was clear. Youth were looking to Labour for an alternative but didn't want a repeat of past Labour governments. They want a chance to live a decent life that is what they expect Labour to give them.

● Red Wedge found a similar success at its two venues in Leicester. The LPYS also found a warm welcome. 146 people said they wanted to join Labour's youth section, and over 50 papers were sold. 130 copies of a special document for the coming regional LPYS conference, *Youth Fightback Charter*, were also sold.

By Andy Costello  
(Wallsend LPYS)



Billy Bragg and local LPYS members take the platform at the Digbeth Civic Hall in Birmingham for a discussion, before the local Red Wedge gig. Photo: Mark Salmon

**THE DEFENCE fund for the Liverpool City Councillors received a great boost on Saturday with a special benefit concert. Organised by the council, hundreds packed into the sold-out concert**

**at Liverpool's Royal Court to hear the Smiths, New Order and The Fall, with a special appearance by Margi Clarke, star of the award winning *Letter to Brezhnev*. Receiving equally rapturous ap-**

**plause was deputy council leader Derek Hatton who outlined the council's fight. He received even more cheers when, on stage, he sold a copy of *Militant* to Margi Clarke.**

## Purge fear in Fife

THERE ARE fears that the witch-hunt will spread to Central Fife Labour Party, the constituency of right-wing MP Willie Hamilton.

A meeting there recently opposed a motion attacking the inquiry into Liverpool District Labour Party with many of the old guard right wingers turning up to throw abuse at the left. Willie Hamilton referred to *Militant* supporters as 'loonies'.

LPYS delegate Steve Arnott pointed out that verbal

abuse would not stop the growth of socialist ideas. He added that he was going to address a *Militant* Readers Meeting in Glenrothes, which threw the right wing into uproar. Arnott was 'strongly advised' not to attend.

The right wing got their answer though, with two readers meetings being held in the area attracting a total of over 100 people and raising £300 for the fighting fund.

## Militant tour success goes on

DESPITE SOME of the worse winter weather for 40 years, the *Militant* Editorial Board speaking tour is meeting with success throughout the country.

The meeting in Bradford, which heard Rob Sewell for *Militant*, raised nearly £130. In Oldham, Lancashire, threats of violence from the National Front could not deter the 40 people who turned up to hear John

Hunt.

In Stoke the audience heard about the witch-hunt first hand, when Dugald McKinnon, expelled by the right wing from Newcastle-under-Lyme Labour Party, was the speaker. Over £60 was raised for the fighting fund.

The east of Scotland has also seen successful meetings with 200 at Edinburgh, 60 at Fife and 80 at Dundee, the

## Cardiff funds needed

THERE HAS been a very good response to the Cardiff South Legal Defence Fund, initiated by Dave Bartlett, Andrew Price and Diane Mitchell to raise money for their legal action against their expulsion from Cardiff South and Penarth Labour Party.

Over £800 has come in to date, along with many requests for speakers from labour organisations.

Considerable anger is being expressed in the movement over the Cardiff South right wing's decision to employ as their barrister in the impending court case, a Mr Elias who formerly represented the scab miners of Derbyshire in their legal action against striking NUM members.

For the Cardiff South Legal Defence Fund Andrew Price has said that he is prepared to account for every penny raised while secrecy surrounds the right wing's finances. Given the recent revelations of considerable financial patronage by Sir Julian Hodge to Cardiff South MP James Callaghan, Labour activists are demanding to know whether such finances are being used in this legal action.

Money is still urgently needed for the expelled three.

Donations to Andrew Price, 8 Dunsmuir Road, Tremorfa, Cardiff CF2 2SP.

By a Militant reporter

## Labour councils—action vital

**LABOUR LEADER Neil Kinnock at the Labour Party national Local Government Conference last month gave qualified support for the Liverpool and Lambeth councillors now up before the High Court.**

Speaking at the conference in Norwich attended by 1,000 delegates he said he disagreed with Liverpool and Lambeth tactics but he said: "These councillors are being held liable like no other members of the business community or individual in private industry is held liable. This is wrong and it must be changed."

Liverpool city councillor Felicity Dowling met stormy applause when she welcomed Kinnock's apparent change of heart and said she hoped to see him coming to the High Court to show his support.

Unfortunately the conference itself failed to work out a strategy to combat the

Tories' assault on the Labour authorities or draw up a balance sheet of the unsuccessful campaign last year against rate capping. There were no resolutions for discussion and barely more than a dozen speakers in the two plenary sessions.

Local authorities are a powerful force. One worker in eight is employed by a local authority, which altogether have a combined workforce of 2,300,000 and a budget of over £33 billion.

### Strategy

Council workers showed a willingness to fight Tory legislation, but were left leaderless after one 'Left' council after another backed down as the decisive moment of confrontation with the government approached.

The conference should have worked out a new strategy to take on the Tories, drawing on the lessons of last year. It should have issued a stronger rally-



Liverpool City Councillor Felicity Dowling.

ing call to the movement to defend the Liverpool and Lambeth councillors.

Instead there was not even an explanation or a discussion on why Liverpool District Labour Party, the largest DLP in the country, is currently suspended as the May council elections approach. The leadership's organisational measures against Liverpool and the witch-hunt generally can only hamper Labour councils' struggle to defend jobs and services.

# Wendy Savage v establishment

**WENDY SAVAGE** is one of the country's leading specialists in women's health and maternity care. She has been practicing for 20 years and a consultant for 12. In 1977 she was appointed consultant obstetrician to Tower Hamlets District Health Authority and senior lecturer in obstetrics and gynaecology at the London Hospital Medical School.

She is the only female consultant at the London Hospital and one of the 12 per cent of women obstetricians in the country.

Last April Savage was suspended without warning from her post as an NHS consultant for alleged malpractice in five of her obstetric cases. Last June she was made a Fellow of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the highest honour her profession could bestow on her, ironically two months after her suspension.

The suspension of Wendy Savage represents a bitter conflict that had been raging within the London Hospital reflecting a debate in the world's medical profession on the desired level of surgical intervention in childbirth and attitudes to the care of pregnant women.

Savage was regarded as a disciple of the progressive views on maternity care of Peter Huntingford who resigned from the London Hospital several years ago over a similar row over obstetric practice that now rages around Wendy Savage.

## Committed

From then on Savage was on her own and the struggle between her and her colleagues in the obstetrics department, based on differences of opinion and of philosophical approach to patient's care, has become more heated and more public. So what are these differences?

Savage is a feminist, a radical, and describes herself as a socialist. Her colleagues in the department at the London Hospital are regarded as very representative of the conservative, male-dominated obstetrics establishment in this country.

Savage is totally committed to the National Health Service and is one of few consultants nationally who refuse to have anything to do with private practice. Obstetrics is regarded as one of the most lucrative areas of private medicine especially when surgical intervention is involved, and all her colleagues have extensive private practice.

This is in stark contrast to Savage's practice. She provided NHS community based ante-natal care at GP's surgeries in order to save women bus journeys and long waits in hospital clinics. Her aim was to improve the low take up of ante-natal services among the working class in Tower Hamlets and in particular among the deprived Bengali community.

Being the only female consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist in Tower Hamlets made Savage very popular amongst the Bengali women who for religious and cultural reasons would be upset at having to be examined by a man. 51 per cent of births in the district are to Bengali women and Savage is determined that the health authority should recognise the needs and wishes of this community. In addition, a survey conducted in Tower Hamlets shows that 85 per cent of women in the district would prefer to be examined by a woman doctor.

Savage is determined that every woman registered with her should be informed, listened to, consulted and allowed to choose the sort of care and treatment she wants to be given.

She believes in an informal approach in her medical practice and her establishment colleagues find this deeply threatening:

*"I don't wear formal clothes all the time when I go to work. I wear what I feel like when I wake up. Sometimes it's jeans. I sent my four*

*kids to state school. Most of my colleagues send theirs to public school. Some of my patients call me by my christian name—it helps break down the barriers—but that is not approved."*

Neither her head of department, Professor Geddes Grudzinskas, nor her consultant colleagues Trevor Beedham and John Hartgill share her philosophy on woman-centred medicine. *"They all exhibit the 'doctor knows best' syndrome and such establishment figures tend to patronise their patients rather than take their opinions and wishes into account"*.

Savage is the only consultant attached to the NHS Day Care Abortion Unit at Mile End Hospital which was pioneered nearly ten years ago by Peter Huntingford. This unit has become well-known for offering a fast, comprehensive and sympathetic abortion service to the women of Tower Hamlets.

The future of this unit is now under threat since Savage lost the battle with her colleagues to keep her back-up gynaecology outpa-



Wendy Savage.

tients department and ward of 24 inpatient beds at Mile End.

Savage is publicly committed to the struggle for the expansion of NHS funding and services in Tower Hamlets, a health authority recognised to cover an area with the poorest communities and the biggest health and social problems in the South of England, which has already seen devastating cuts and closures and is threatened with much worse.

## Investigation

The investigation into Wendy Savage formally began in May 1984 after the death of Mohammed Uddin, a nine day old baby who had been delivered by her.

Refusing to allow the case to be discussed with Savage through the normal, routine procedure for case discussion, Professor Grudzinskas her head of department instead took the case to the health authority's district management team in August. As a consequence the district medical officer formally asked Beedham and Grudzinskas for a report on Savage's competence to carry out her duties. Both replied that they were unable to assure the authority that Savage was safe to continue to practise obstetrics.

No one informed Savage of the action taken to invoke the most serious disciplinary procedure against her. Her summary suspension by the Chair of Tower Hamlets Health Authority was not discussed with her in advance or put before the health authority, although legal advice was taken first.

They gave her no opportunity to hear her observations before they decided to suspend her under section 112 of Department of Health



Health workers and many of her own patients demonstrated their opposition to Savage's suspension last year.

## Mothers come first

The obvious crucial difference between Savage and her colleagues is over her determination to allow pregnant women to give birth in their own time at a place and using a method that they have a right to choose for themselves. To this end Savage reintroduced the chance of Tower Hamlets women to have home deliveries and pioneered a system of shared care of pregnant women between the consultant, the GP and the midwife.

For women who need to give birth in hospital Savage pioneered what is known as the 'domino' system where the woman is taken to hospital by the midwife who has looked after her through her pregnancy, delivered by that midwife, and then taken home again by the midwife as soon as possible and looked after at home with her new baby. This policy is comforting for mothers but does not fit in with the government's policy of 100 per cent hospitalisation of births.

Savage is committed to giving women in her care the chance of

natural childbirth if she feels convinced that neither the mother nor the baby's life is at risk. She believes that every individual case is deserving of special consideration but as far as possible she is prepared to allow the woman to have a slow period of labour without induction, a choice of which position to give birth in and the chance to have a normal vaginal delivery with only minimum surgical intervention such as the use of forceps or caesarean section.

## Production line

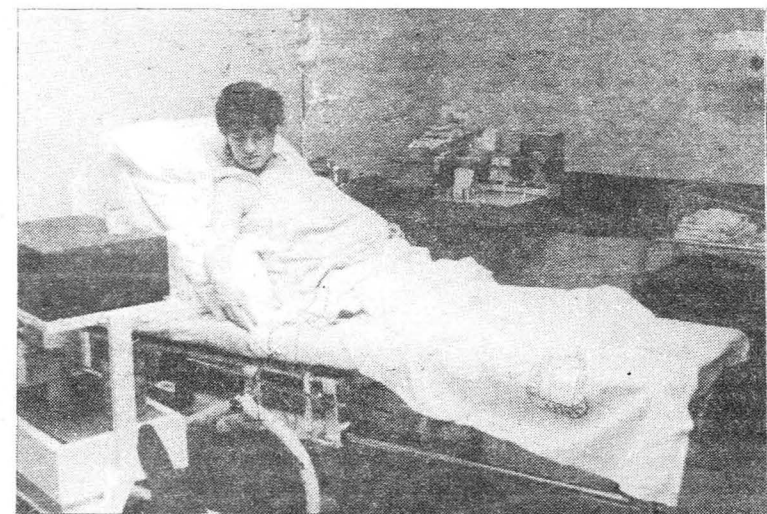
Her colleagues are known to favour high-technology hospital based care. As she says: *"What I am challenging is the applying of blanket solutions in pregnancy and labour when what we should be doing is deciding what should be done in each individual case. There are situations where high-tech can be life-saving but we don't need to apply it to every woman as a matter of*

disciplinary proceedings, Department of Health guidelines do not require doctors to be suspended pending investigation into serious complaints.

After Savage was suspended from her NHS post, Professor John Blandy, Chairman of the Academic Division of Surgery at the London Medical Hospital where Savage is a senior lecturer, reported Savage's suspension to the Academic Board. As a result Savage was also suspended from her teaching post, again without advance warning.

The London Hospital has confidential computerized records of the perinatal mortality (deaths from the seventh month of pregnancy to the first week of life) among the thousands of babies delivered by its doctors. That information shows that Savage's record is at least as good as, and in some cases better than that of her colleagues even though she deals with more local patients—which in the deprived East End means more difficult cases. In the North East Thames Regional Health Authority, Tower Hamlets district has the highest birthrate, the highest infant mortality rate and the highest percentage of births below 2,500 grammes weight.

It is widely rumoured locally that freemasonry might be one of the reasons behind the rapid sequence of events. Professor John Blandy is a past Master of the London



Hospital Lodge of Freemasons and he is known to be involved in higher masonic circles. Gordon Bourne, Trevor Beedham and John Hartgill are also known freemasons.

## Growing support

The four week public inquiry into Savage's management of the five cases opened on 3 February. In a future article over the next few weeks we will look more closely at those five cases and at the growing local and national support that Wendy Savage has received since her suspension. We will also look at one of the crucial implicators of the whole affair to socialists—the

routine".

The clearest example of this disagreement between Savage and her colleagues is over the management of breech births, that is when the baby is lying in a bottom first position at the time of birth. Savage has a practice of allowing, where possible, a normal vaginal delivery of a breech birth. Her colleagues are known to deliver breech births in caesarean section as a matter of course. Three of the five cases of Savage's alleged malpractice involved breech births.

Savage has a policy of performing Caesarean section only as a last resort because she believes the current rates in this country are too high. She maintains it has quadrupled in the last twenty years despite the fall in birth rate, until it now runs at between 12 per cent and 20 per cent. In some hospitals it is thought to be as high as 30 per cent. *"The people accusing her are getting at Wendy Savage, not dealing with the issue of birth rights. They couldn't care less about women or their rights. They want to get rid of Wendy Savage."*—Peter Huntingford.

debate on how much surgical intervention should be necessary in childbirth.

Meanwhile, Wendy Savage has the last word: *"It is important that I win, not just for myself but so that it becomes harder for other doctors to be attacked if they are different. For that is what this is all about. It's not about what hour I performed a caesarean or whatever. It is because I am not a member of their club. I am not a mason and I am not a conservative with a small 'c'."*

By Julie Morgan  
(Millwall Labour Party)  
and a gynaecology nurse

# Our answer—a fistful of fivers!

WE WOULD like to thank our supporters around the country for giving an irrefutable reply to all the witch-hunters in the Tory press and Labour's right wing.

Day by day, the press howl out their attacks on *Militant* and say our ideas are unpopular and in decline. If this is decline, let's have more of it!

In the final three days of the last fighting fund quarter we raised £11,510. The total for the quarter was £49,010. 1985 was our best year ever, reflecting a growth in support for the ideas of Marxism.

## Collections

When the right wing attack, *Militant* supporters go on the offensive to explain why the bosses fear Marxism. *Militant* Readers' Meetings all over the country have held bumper collections. Without a Murdoch or Maxwell, you, our readers, are our backers.

In Swansea you collected £276. £230 came in at Llanelli. £250 Leeds, £250 Woolwich, £240 Fife, £175 Preston, £92 Burnley and £914 at Manchester. Young workers, students and unemployed showed their backing for *Militant*, £798 was collected at the London LPYS conference and £314 at the Eastern Region LPYS conference.

Murdoch is out for the unions' blood and their finances, but his Tory cabinet friends, rooting for him on the sidelines, are in

# FIHTING FUND

Final total  
£49,010  
New chart  
next week

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 London South West	1561		1200
2 London West	2682		2750
3 London East	3251		3350
4 London South East	1978		2200
5 Humberside	1621		2150
6 East Midlands	2080		3050
7 Scotland West	2315		3800
8 Southern	3290		5450
9 Eastern	2020		3450
10 Scotland East	1414		3100
11 South West	981		2150
12 Yorkshire	2508		5650
13 Manchester/Lancs	1777		4200
14 West Midlands	1696		4500
15 Wales West	935		2950
16 Northern	1425		4650
17 Merseyside	1881		6850
18 Wales East	754		3050
Others	14841		5500
Total received	49010		70000

The chart above refers to the final quarter of 1985. The new chart will appear next week.

more disarray than at any time since the Falklands war. Now is the time for an all-out attack on the government and their rich sponsors. We need the resources now to put forward our socialist ideas and answer the continuing press attacks on *Militant* and the press lies about Liverpool council and all others standing up for workers' rights.

*Militant* supporters should make plans to collect money regularly. If you have passed, or are planning to put forward a resolution against the witch-hunts at your ward

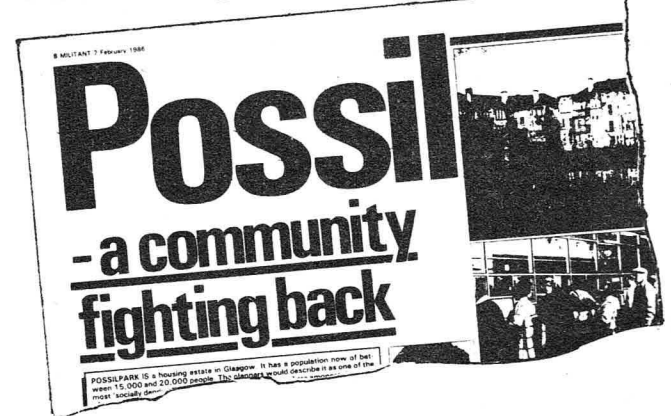
or Constituency Labour Party, YS, Women's Section or union branch make sure you ask for a donation and make a collection. If you're doing a paper sale ask for at least £1 per paper and ask regular readers for a weekly donation.

On top of that, make sure you have fund-raising events like jumble sales, sponsored events and discos planned well in advance. Make 1986 an even more fruitful year than 1985, so let's get the quarter off to a good start.

By Steve Morgan

Miles Parry, Isle of Dogs, £20; Anonymous, Caerphilly South LP £50; K. Savery, NUT, £5; L. Prince, Croydon NALGO, £10; C. Levene, Leyton LPYS, £12; J. Greaves, £17; Bristol NW LPYS, £5; Skipton LPYS, £10; C. Harley, Caeathorpes, £5; M. Dolan, Glasgow NALGO, £2; C. Thorpe, West Bromwich LP, £13; J. McGowan, Airdrie, £1; K. Butcher, London Central UCW, £4; Gosport LPYS, £40; L. Keelan, Carmarthen, £10; H. Wainwright, COHSE St Helens, £1.25; Social in Mossley Hill, £52.72; P. Bright, Bath LPYS, £1; M. Devant, Loughborough £2.

# Colossal sales in Possil



LAST WEEK'S centre-page feature on the Possilpark housing estate in Glasgow went down well. Many readers have told us it was one of the best articles they had read.

And it seems the inhabitants of Possil agree. So far we've had reports of 252 papers being sold in that community at the weekend—and there are more reports to come in. Our supporters in Possil organised mass street sales and a mass estate canvass to sell the article. They sold the paper with the headline: "Possil—a community fighting back" clearly on show. Papers sold like magic.

Now that's what you can do by having an article in the paper. Why not take the Possil path and write in and

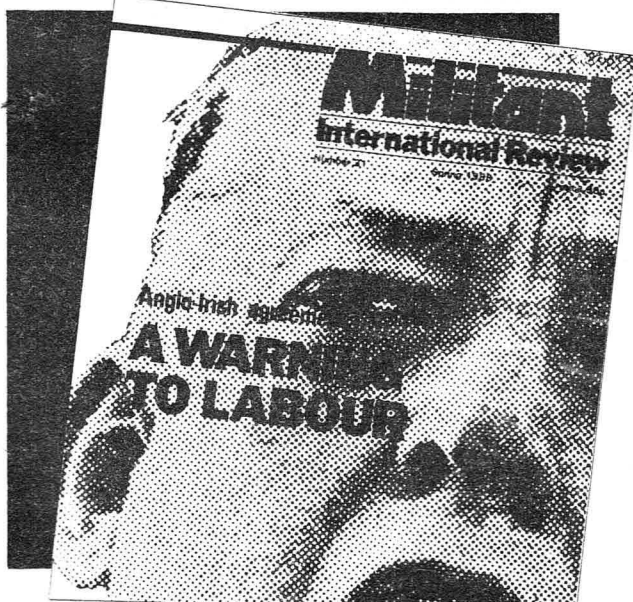
tell us about your estate, your workplace or your town? If we can use it, then organise a special sales drive around the article. Kinnock talks about impossibilism but Possil shows it's possible!

Glasgow's not the only place that can boast of high sales this week. 70 papers were sold at the Newcastle Red Wedge concert. Supporters in Glenrothes sold 40 in a day of action which was part of the build-up to a public meeting. If you are organising a public meeting in your area why not do the same? Boost your sales and publicise your meeting at the same time.

And don't forget the newsgagents and bookshops. At a small left-wing bookshop in Exeter last week, *Militant* appeared on the shelves for the very first time—and promptly sold out.



Militant backs all workers' struggles—sell it in your workplace.



*Militant International Review*. New edition out now. Price 90p from local *Militant* sellers or plus 20p post and package from *Militant*, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB.

# 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.

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

**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. Contains: 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.

## "Militant fights back" meetings

### North East

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

Gateshead: Monday 24 February.

### Yorkshire

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

### North West

Blackpool: Saturday 15 March 1.00pm Labour Party conference 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.

### Midlands

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 7.30pm. Chesterfield Library Lecture Theatre.

### London

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.

Hayes: Monday 17 February, 7.30pm. Kings Hill Library, Bury Avenue.

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

**MILITANT** Teacher Day School. Saturday 1 March 11.00am-5.00pm. At Woolton Labour Club, Childwall Valley Road, Liverpool (Buses from opposite Lime Street Station 79, 79b, c, d, To Belle Vale Shopping Centre). Speakers include: Tony Mulhearn (President Liverpool DLP) and a leading member of the Liverpool JSSC. Sessions on: Liverpool, Local Authority workers' fightback, NUT—Pay campaign and Perspectives. Creche/Overnight accommodation available if required. Registration fee £2,

**MILITANT** carrier bags—now reduced. 10 bags for only 50p. Please enclose 25p P&P. Send order to: Fighting Fund, 3-13 Hepscoot Road, London E9.

**CRICKLEWOOD** *Militant* supporters: fighting fund disco on Saturday 1 March at the Cricklewood Hotel, Cricklewood Broadway, NW2 (near Cricklewood bus garage), 8pm—midnight. Bar until midnight. Buses: 16, 32, 266, 245. Tube: Willesden Green. Admission £1.50, £1 unwaged.

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

Wembley: Wednesday 19 February, 7.30pm. Speaker: Nina Rahel, Copland High School, Wembley High Road.

**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

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

Southampton: Friday 14 February.

Exeter: Saturday 15 February. South West Region LPYS conference. Speaker: Rob Sewell.

Margate: Saturday 22 March, Southern Labour Party conference fringe meeting.

## 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.

# TUC must defend Murdoch's victims

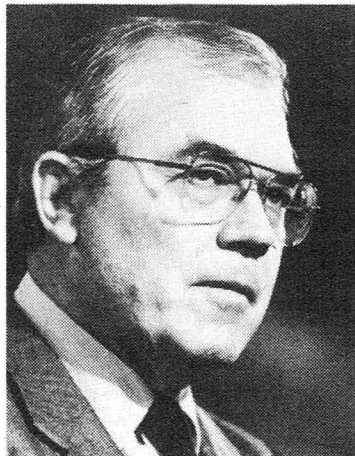
THE TUC consultative conference this Thursday 13 February meets at a time of the most serious attack to date on the labour movement under the government's industrial relations laws. For the crime of fighting the brutal sacking of 5,000 of their members the print union SOGAT has been hauled before the courts and the whole of its funds sequestered.

The purpose of the TUC's Thursday meeting (held as *Militant* goes to press) is to 'review' its previous opposition to accepting government cash for secret union ballots. Yet a far more urgent purpose must be to go on the offensive in defence of SOGAT and the sacked News International workers.

But it is not just a question of identifying the most important issue facing the movement.

If the TUC backs down and lets right wing union leaders like the AUEW and the EETPU off the hook for saying they will accept government funding for ballots, it will give employers and the government renewed confidence in their continued assault on trade unions.

The inaction by the TUC has been rewarded with harsher offensives by the Tories and the bosses.



Eric Hammond, leader of the electricians' union, the EETPU.

The trade union movement meanwhile, despite the battering it has received over the past six years, has remained largely intact, with 10 million workers still in its ranks. Where there has been a leadership prepared to fight, both nationally and locally, such as in the miners' strike, at Silentnight or at Forgemaster in Sheffield, the ranks of the movement have shown a tenacity and willingness to fight drawn out and bitter struggles.

With 6,000 print workers locked out by the print baron Murdoch and with another major industrial union up before the law courts, the TUC on Thursday cannot look at the issue of 'ballot money' in isolation. It should not be looking to see how they can 'accommodate' those right wing union leaders who have consistently broken TUC decisions.

The TUC must reaffirm its opposition to all aspects of the Tories' anti-trade union legislation, but then go onto the attack, forming a programme of action that can break the Tories' repressive laws.

The TUC leadership must pull the movement together, with a rallying call for a one day general strike against the Tory laws and in support of the printworkers. The line must be drawn here and the campaign begun to push back all the attacks this government and their class have metted out on the heads of the movement.



Women trade unionists and print workers' families march in support of those sacked at Wapping, on Saturday 8 February.

## Ballot cash—no retreat on policy

THE TUC must stand firm in its opposition to unions accepting government cash to pay for secret ballots ordered by the Tories' anti-trade union legislation.

There are fears that the TUC leadership will set out to 'accommodate' those unions which are set to break the decisions of the Wembley 1982 conference opposing Tory laws, including accepting government cash.

The TUC must not bow down before the chest thumping of the right wing leaders of the engineering union, the AUEW, and the electricians, the EETPU, who have both said they will take the money.

Government cash for secret ballots was the Tories' sugar pill to take the bitter taste away from the rest of their repressive package. To accept the cash is to give respectability to the rest of their anti-trade union legislation. It means accepting the Tories' dictates that there can only be six pickets on a gate, that an employer has the right to impound the funds of a union, that it is illegal to 'secondary' picket, that is take effective action. It is a move away from the traditional independence of trade unions.

Some trade union leaders have said that they are of course against taking the ballot money, but that the situation has changed. The memberships of the AUEW and the EETPU they point out, both voted for the money. National Communications Union general secretary Bryan Stanley argued in a letter on the issue that "These

unions are...in the impossible position that they must either disobey the instructions of their members or they must disobey the decision of the TUC'.

This is looking at the issue in isolation. The EETPU and AUEW leaderships are not some innocents caught between the decisions of both bodies. Their actions predestined this 'impossible situation'. They have actively campaigned for the cash alongside the continual attacks on TUC policy. Their memberships, dispirited by the ineffective leadership and hoodwinked by the propaganda of the union officialdom, no doubt felt that—given no fightback against the Tories was on offer—voting for the cash would at least mean something 'positive' came out of the Tories' anti-trade union package.

### Sabotage

Nor is it on this issue alone that these leaders, the EETPU in particular, ignored the collective decisions of the TUC. Eric Hammond has displayed a blatant disregard for even the most basic tenets of trade unionism. This right wing 'philosophy' has reached its logical conclusion at Wapping—actively organising to take other trade unionists' jobs from them. This is not trade unionism, it is called scabbing. There is no room to accommodate this open sabotage of the movement.

If the leadership climb down over the AUEW and EETPU, no doubt they will excuse themselves

by saying that these right wingers threatened to split away.

Such a split would be the most serious setback the movement has faced in its history. But while recognising that danger, the conclusion cannot be to sit back and do nothing for the sake of appeasing the right wing at whatever the cost.

The right wing can only be countered by the TUC mobilising the movement in action against the Tories and in support of the printworkers. Decisive, campaigning action would cut away support from beneath the likes of Hammond and company, and bring pressure on them to act more like trade unionists than aspiring 'statesmen'. They have only been able to build up their position in the malaise of inaction that has resulted in the trade union leaders' failure to take on the Tories.

If the right wing did split away, any dreams they had of setting up an 'SDP-type' trade union federation, while an immediate setback, would be short lived. Industrial struggles will intensify in the next few years as the bosses hit out in increasing desperation to protect their profits. There is no 'middle ground' on the shop floor in an industrial dispute.

Trade unionists want unity. But it cannot be unity on terms dictated to the TUC by a right wing minority. The movement wants the unity of action—solidarity in defence of trade unionists under attack and unity of purpose in fighting the Tories.

By Brian Ingham

### Warrington

In the Warrington dispute and the year-long miners' strike, the ruling class bided its time before bringing in crippling legal action against the unions. They were wary of provoking a wave of trade union opposition to their actions. They waited, testing the resolve of the trade union leaders, and then only used the Tory laws in piecemeal fashion, gradually clamping down on the unions involved. But in the Wapping dispute they have gone in boots flying, sequestering the whole of SOGAT's funds in one fell swoop. They have looked back at Warrington and the miners' strike and seen the TUC totally unwilling even to consider mobilising the kind of opposition that could stop the employers and the Tories in their tracks.

Yet the battle is far from over. Despite setbacks in the past, if the TUC learned the lessons of these failures and launched a renewed offensive, the Tories and the bosses could be stopped dead. The ruling class are in a far from inassailable position, with open splits in the Tory government, an impending economic crisis as oil prices crash, and the 'popularity' of the Tories reaching new lows with each day.

## Fighting against sweatshop conditions

As the dispute continues at Kay Wool Products Ltd in Upper-mill, Lancashire, more details of the scandalous conditions faced by women workers at the mill have emerged.

Apart from the excessive hours worked, over 80 hours in one week, and the low pay of £1.67 per hour, health and safety has been blatantly disregarded. The women worked in freezing conditions. Last winter, when the mill was flooded the boss sent the supervisor out to buy wellingtons so that they could continue to operate electrical machinery while the water swirled around their legs.

They work with glue and thinners yet have no protective clothing or masks and



By Margaret Creear

the ventilation system is totally inadequate.

When the factory was particularly busy they uncovered the safety lines and the workers had to climb

over it to get to and from their machines.

One of the workers, Stella, described how she came to work there:

"My husband had been on the dole for 18 months. If I'd heard about this place or seen it two years ago I'd have said 'you'd not get me working in a place like that', but we've struggled. It's alright being on the dole for one month, but when it gets to six months, it gets harder and harder.

"So in the end I took the job thinking that if Chris did take on a low wage job, the two wages together wouldn't be too bad, plus the fact that the children were getting older anyway.

"I took the job but when I walked in I thought 'my god, look at the state of this place'. But I got on with the

girls and was quite happy until all the trouble about overtime started."

### 'Outsiders'

The women have so far been denied any money by the DHSS because they were considered to be responsible for losing their jobs. The bosses claim they broke company procedure but the firm admitted in a confidential meeting in December (the notes of which have now been sent to the women) that they had no formal written procedure. This admission would have been invaluable in fighting an appeal to the DHSS, yet it had never been made available by the union until it turned up mysteriously in the post.

The document also appears to have recorded a very

strange approach to negotiations by one of the trade union officials who admitted at the first meeting with management that the union didn't expect to get anything out of the dispute. Later in the meeting the same official expressed concern at possible 'outside interference'. The trade union official implied that if political groups were trying to use the dispute for their own ends, he had "friends in high places" who would put a stop to it. He was then apparently corrected, the firm suspected some un-named competitor of paying the women.

One of the women sacked never worked overtime, her husband is chronically sick. She was sacked on the pretence that her work wasn't up to standard, even though she had worked in

the same job at another firm for 15 years and they'd given her a glowing reference.

### Support

Support continues to flow in from the labour movement. After some success in sending lorries away carrying foam from Dublin, some non-union drivers are now being used to cross the picket line. One of the key moves now is the attempts to link up with members of the T&G in the Dublin parent company. All those who support the dispute are being asked to turn up at Upper-mill on Monday morning at 7.15 am.

Donations and messages of support to: Kay Wool Workers in Dispute, 5 Hawthorne Terrace, Mill Lane, Mossley Tameside.

# WARRINGTON



Arrest of picket at Warrington. Photo: Militant

A MAJOR confrontation has developed in the newspaper industry. Rupert Murdoch has sacked the workers who built up his publishing empire and declared that the print unions will never be allowed into his Wapping and Glasgow plants.

The outcome of this battle will have fundamental consequences for the whole of the trade union movement.

The print unions have fought a number of bitter conflicts in the recent period. The most important of these was the battle against Shah's *Stockport Messenger* Group at the end of 1983. NGA member, PETER JARVIS looks at the many lessons raised by this dispute—the role of the police, the use of the courts and the Tories' anti-union laws, but especially the role of the workers' leadership.

**T**HE EVENTS at Winnock Quay, Shah's printing plant in Warrington, made Selim Jehan Shah, a cousin of Aga Khan, into a national figure.

The press portrayed him as the small man fighting against the might of a powerful trade union. But behind him stood the Institute of Directors, which claims members on the boards of 750 of *The Times's* top 1,000 British firms. Also supporting were the police, the courts and the Tories' new legislation.

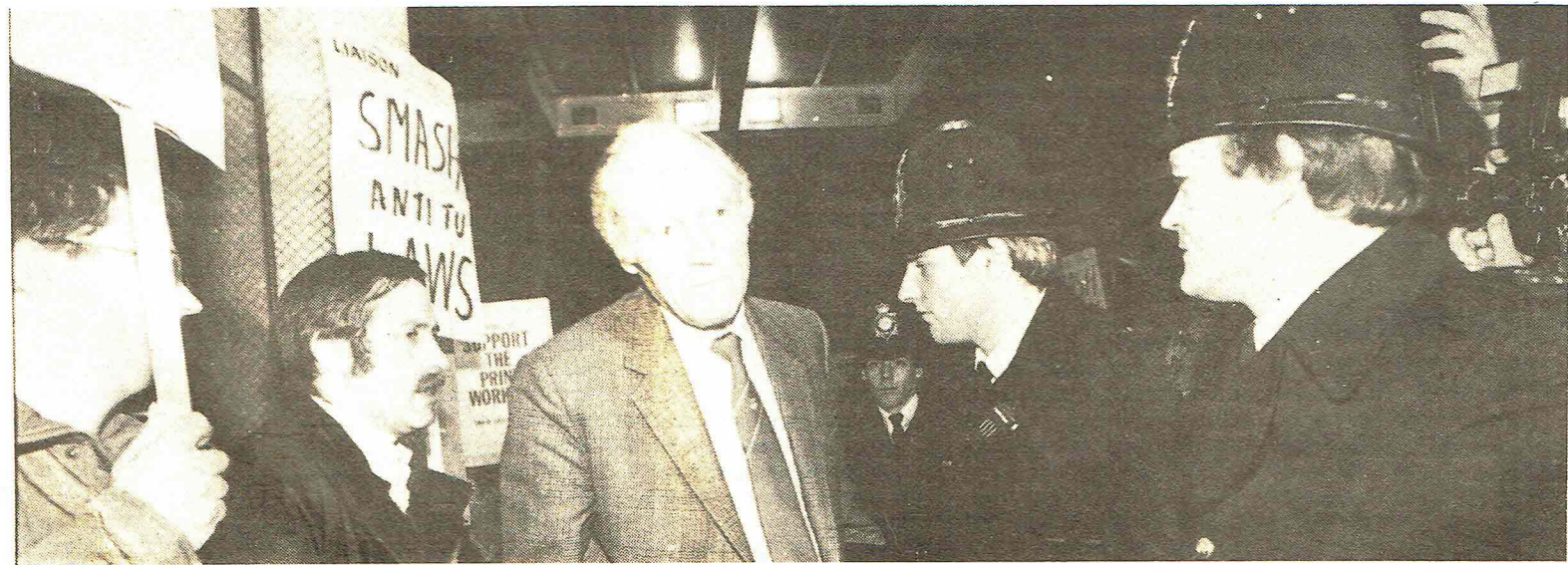
On 4 July 1983 six NGA members withdrew their labour from Finewood Ltd., Stockport. A number of them had given up jobs in Carlisle, moved to Stockport and helped Shah develop his free newspaper business. Shah then rewarded them by establishing non-union firms at Bury and Warrington, arbitrarily tearing up agreements and precipitating the long bitter conflict.

The media tried to present this struggle as a David v Goliath—the small one man proprietor against a powerful union. Yet 49 per cent of Shah's *Messenger* Group company was owned by Northern Counties Newspapers, a subsidiary of the company that then owned the *Mirror* Group, Reed International.

The national newspaper owners justify their plans to 'rationalise' the industry by pointing to the

# the lessons for the print unions

Picket of TUC to give support to call for 24 hour print strike. Photo: Militant.



## A focus for an

THE ANTI-union laws introduced by employers a new edge and of the trade union movement to undermine the democratic standards of working practice which it took years of striking industry.

*The Times* declared at gives parliament can take gave us these rights; they to be defended.

The NGA's grip on the 1 per cent closed shop made of the new legislation. A day have been relatively insignificant event in trade union history.



# ON



## State forces confronted the union

The fines of £50,000, £100,000, and £525,000 send shock waves through the whole movement. No one could now doubt what the intentions of the Tories were when they introduced their laws.

The days following these fines were crucial. Timing is of the essence in the class struggle. It was after the fines that a national strike could have been called, which would have shaken the confidence of the ruling class and made them re-think their strategy. Instead, the ruling class saw hesitation by the union leaders.

In the initial stages of the dispute, it was inevitable that the NGA National Council and membership would support a strike against victimisation, especially with the attack on the closed shop. The NGA influence is built around the pre-entry closed shop, which gives control over hiring.

Even the events leading up to the imposition of fines, such as secondary blacking and requests to advertisers to refrain from dealing with a blacked firm, are part of the print unions' normal traditional method in pursuing a dispute.

But this was no longer a battle that could be fought in the traditional methods. It was no longer a battle against a renegade boss, but against the full apparatus of the state.



Eddie Shah.

The courts, by means of the new anti-union legislation, put a noose around the union's neck and gradually began garotting.

Also the nature of the picket line had fundamentally changed. It was clear that the police, with an extremely friendly government, were never again going to allow a union simply to win by massive numbers on the picket line—that is, without a totally unprecedented showdown.

The NGA National Council was under clear instruction to respond to legal attacks. The motion passed unanimously at the union's 1982 conference clearly rejected the legislation and then stated: "The National Council is therefore instructed to resist any attempts by the courts to impose such measures against the NGA".

This resolution was debated in front of Len Murray, then TUC general secretary. A few moments later he addressed the conference saying: "the motions and the deci-

sions that you have taken illustrated your opposition to the government's economic policies and its blinkered determination to press on with its anti-union legislation. But they show something else which to me is equally and even more important—your determination to defend yourselves. That is as it should and must be, but it does not mean that we are just going on to the defensive. As your general secretary spells out in his introduction to the report, the greater the external threat the greater need for solidarity within and between affiliated unions."

Speeches are easy to make. The NGA President, then Les Dixon described the address as 'inspiring'. It is a shame that Murray later forgot his message to us.

## Relentless attacks by police

On the night of 29 November occurred scenes never before witnessed on mainland Britain. Portrayed as a thin blue line holding out against a raging mob, equipped with batons and protected by riot shields the police unleashed attack after attack against the pickets.

At one stage two police Landrovers drove at high speed into fleeing demonstrators, then reversed at a reckless speed. It was a miracle no-one was killed. Again the riot police charged, kicking and slashing at any unfortunate person unable to out run them. This was just one incident in a night when the police practiced 'riot' control.

Shah said: "This is a military operation. It would need three armoured tanks, a couple of helicopters with machine guns and about 600 from Two Para to stop us." It is doubtful whether all that armour could have stopped him with the protection afforded to him by the police.

Mass picketing is a vital focus of activity. The lesson must be learned however, that mass picketing by itself will not lead to victory.

## Union sought solidarity action

The dispute had now taken on national importance. It was clear that the NGA could not win alone. They turned to the TUC.

At Wembley in April 82, a special meeting of the union executives agreed on eight points to fight the Tories' anti-union onslaught. Item Five—"Support from the movement"—stated: "Where the General Council receive a request to assist a union faced by or experiencing legal action by an employer, and are satisfied that assistance from the movement is justified, they are empowered:

(I) to co-ordinate action by other affiliated unions in support of the union in difficulties, including if necessary, calling industrial action against the employer concerned, or more widely:

(II) to provide financial assistance to a union which experiences severe financial problems as a result of damaging actions."

It would seem that the NGA had a cast-iron case for aid. A determined response from the TUC could have secured victory. But Murray's "New Realism" ruled this out. The defeat of the Labour Party at the election put the TUC in a full scale retreat.

The right of the movement was giving advice. For the TUC, Terry Duffy, AUEW President said: "We will not support you unless you get within the law." Roy Hattersley speaking for the right in the Labour Party said that Labour did not back "mass breaking of the law and mass disobedience". Acceptance of such advice meant certain defeat.

The refusal of the General Council to support British Telecom unions in their fight against privatisation earlier was a clear warning.

The only section to take direct solidarity action after sequestration was the Fleet Street workers. The weekend issues were stopped. The writs began to fly and the Fleet Street members returned to work. The Newspaper Publishers Association were demanding £5 million damages. Some papers stayed off the streets because some employers tried to win 'good conduct' agreements.

This could have been the starting point for a wider campaign. After

firstly hitting the print bosses, a call could then have been made to other workers.

The Fleet Street stoppage occurred on the weekend of 26 and 27 November. The next industrial action was decided for 14 December. This was to be a 24-hour stoppage of print workers, but not at this stage seeking the involvement of the other unions.

## TUC support scuppered by Murray

The ball had moved to the TUC court. At the Economic Policy and Organisation Committee meeting on the Monday, the left had a majority and passed by 9 to 7 votes a supportive statement: "The committee adopted a sympathetic and supportive attitude to the entirely predictable official decision by the NGA National Council to call on its members to take industrial action.

"In this connection they agreed to reaffirm and remind unions of the General Council's request that affiliated unions should identify areas where support might properly be given to the NGA."

Murray could not accept such a decision. Straight after the meeting he made a statement annulling their decisions. Asked if the General Council would overturn his decision, he said: "I shall do my best to make sure they do". The press and the Tories heaped their praise on him.

The NGA National Council mistakenly suspended the action. It was left in the hands of the TUC. The General Council meeting went as expected, voting 29-21 not to support the 24-hour stoppage. The 21 votes represented 7 million members.

This decision was looked upon by the activists as the biggest capitulation since the 1926 General Strike.

This major body blow took the steam out of the NGA campaign. Much of the blame for the defeat was directed at the right-wing on the General Council. They will undoubtedly repeat their mistake in the present dispute with Murdoch they are faced with the same choices. Many of the NGA leaders hid behind and were relieved at the General Council decision, because it let them off the hook.

## Anti-union laws

roduced by the Tories gave the laid a legal minefield in front nt. The laws were designed tic rights and cut the living ple—rights and conditions ggle to build up in the prin-

he time: "What parliament way". But parliament never were won in battle and had

dustry through its near 100 it a prime target for the use pute which in the past would ificant thus became a major Y.

## Resolute leadership needed

THE FIRST task in the battle against Shah should have been to put the union members on alert, mobilising the activists who would be emissaries to the rest of the movement. This would have put pressure on the right-wing union leaders. If they then failed again to respond, an appeal could have been made over their heads.

To achieve this there must be a resolute leadership, showing no hesitation to give battle. This unfortunately was not the case. From unanimous votes at the start, only two stood firm when it came to supporting a 24-hour strike. To stand firm would have meant a political campaign against the government.

Inherent in the situation, then as it is today, was the possibility of a general strike. The fear of such a prospect paralyses many at the top of our movement. They are in the main creatures of the boom, unable to cope with a determined reactionary government, too ready to blame the workers for being unwilling to fight.

The miners showed what a capacity exists for the class to fight. The present print workers' dispute against Murdoch's News International Group shows how the high paid trade unionist is willing to fight. At the other end of the scale, Hospital workers at Addenbroskes have been involved in a massive battle against privatisation.

The working class are proving in the class struggle their determination. Now a leadership must be built to match that determination.

## South Africa, Chile, USA

### South Africa: solidarity in action

**SOUTH AFRICAN President Botha's statement of "reforms" on 31 January has convinced very few workers or youth in the black, "coloured" and Asian communities. Even many of the bosses see the changes as mere window-dressing. Apartheid will remain and it will be as vicious and dirty as ever.**

The police and Army have not been tamed—and the ruling class are as intent on using repression and violence to maintain their interests as ever. The "home-land" of Bophuthaswana (created by apartheid laws) has seen 23,000 mineworkers sacked at the Impala platinum mines after a year-long strike for pay, conditions and the right of the National Union of Mineworkers to organise. Workers have few legal rights in the home-lands.

British firms continue to prosper out of their misery. Workers at BTR Sarmcol have been on strike since last April for recognition of their union MAWU and for their reinstatement. They were sacked after two days of legal strike. This firm is part of the British multinational British Tyre and Rubber; they made £151 profit in the first half of 1985.

Dave Nellist Labour MP for Coventry South East tabled a motion in parlia-

ment on 6 February calling for British trade unionists to keep up the pressure on BTR in Britain to make them reinstate the workers.

Shop stewards at Dunlop in Leicester showed their internationalism in January at an excellent meeting in support of the BTR workers, Dunlop is part of the BTR combine.

After a visit by a speaker from the Southern African Labour Education Project (SALEP) organised by local LPYS members, Dunlop stewards gave a great donation of £200 to the Sarmcol relief fund.

Workers at Dunlop and BTR also face bitter struggles against the hardline policies of the management. The task of building a combine committee uniting the workforce at Dunlop and BTR factories is being taken up by a number of stewards in different plants. This would be a step forward for workers throughout BTR's international empire, enabling workers in Britain to increase pressure for settlement on Sarmcol's bosses.

Trade unionists, LPYS and Labour Party members should approach Dunlop and BTR stewards in their areas to raise the issue of Sarmcol and take forward the common interests of the working class internationally.



SALEP lobby of the London offices of the Gencor multinational over the Impala platinum miners' sackings. Photo: Militant

THE FORMATION of the new trade union federation COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions), has been greeted as a major step forward for the black working class of South Africa. It has organised 550,000 workers so far and aims to organise a million by the end of 1986.

Apparently the supporters of the *Morning Star* do not share such a view.

On 25 January the divisional conference of No.26 division AUEW—TASS saw a disgusting and vicious attack on COSATU by a leading supporter of the *Morning Star* and a member of the Communist Party.

A resolution was moved calling for direct links between unions in this country and the non-racial trade unions in South Africa. Another *Militant* supporter then moved an amendment calling for support for COSATU.

Although the Slough branch accepted the amendment it was challenged by Roy Hutchinson, formerly national President of TASS and a long standing sup-

porter of *Morning Star*. He attacked COSATU claiming it to be on the "fringe" of the struggle to overthrow apartheid in South Africa. He also claimed that COSATU was opposed by both the ANC and the Anti-Apartheid movement! When challenged on these claims his only reply was a stony silence. Although both the amendment and resolution were subsequently defeated many workers were disgusted by such slanders.

The best response to such attacks is to step up the campaign for direct links with non-racial unions in South Africa and to give as much support as possible to the struggle for liberation and socialism.

**By an AUEW TASS member**

**SOUTH AFRICA**—the struggle grows. Speakers' notes. Essential guide for your preparation. Facts, figures, background material and full reading list. 30p each + 20p post (add 10p per copy after one). Available, World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscoth Rd London E9 5HB.

# Chilean workers ask for international aid



Trade unionists on the march in London on the tenth anniversary of the Pinochet coup.



Pinochet and his generals.

A LATIN American day school has been called by London *Militant* supporters.

Saturday 22 February, 10.30am Chile on the brink. Speaker: Peter Taaffe.

2.00-5pm. Commissions: Nicaragua, Latin America, Lessons of Popular Unity 1970-73. Speakers

include Lynn Walsh, Rob Sewell.

At Kingsway Princeton College, Sidmouth Street WC1.

Entrance fee: £1.00 waged, 50p unemployed; including concert in the evening £2.00 waged £1.00 unemployed. Tickets available from 3/13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB. Don't miss it.

Further information can be obtained from, and donations sent to: CSDC, PO Box 448, Emma Street, London E2.

## Reagan defends defence, attacks poor

AN AMERICAN, Benjamin Franklin, once said that the only certain things in the world were death and taxes. The American President doesn't like taxes, they lose votes, but the latest US budget shows that death is high up on his priority list.

President Reagan is preparing for a battle with his fellow capitalists in Congress over the details of the budget he presented on 5 February. He wants to send military spending sky high with Star Wars and other schemes, while cutting back on welfare provision.

The budget deficit is around the \$200 billion mark. Reagan does not want to raise taxes in an election year, but the so called Gramm-Rudman act agreed by Congress and the President commits the government to eliminating the deficit by 1991! The politicians describe the act as a "club in the closet" which would only be taken out and used against the President in an emergency. They hope Reagan will cut spending of his own accord.

But Reagan says he can't cut defence spending, though that is supposed to take up over half the cuts under Gramm-Rudman. He wants to "contain Communism" and help his friends, mainly dictators, around the

world. There are more "trouble spots" in the world than ever for capitalism's top cop.

In any case, Reagan claims, cutting defence would "jeopardise the USA's chances of meaningful arms control talks"! So defence expenditure rises to around \$311 billion, an increase of about 11 per cent.

Reagan has taken a leaf out of Thatcher's cooked books; he proposes to privatise electrical power agencies and naval petroleum and sell off 'surplus' government property to give a once and for all income. British experience would suggest massive redundancies among the workforce.

### Workers and middle class suffer

Small business will get less aid as will small farmers; they will lose out on crop insurance, agricultural credit and subsidies, making the rural crisis deeper. Attacks on food stamp spending and welfare, 5 per cent reduction in medical aid for the old and a smaller decline in medical provision for the poor and a savage cut in urban development schemes are amongst the other reactionary recommendations. Aid to students is to go down by 41

THE CHILE Socialist Defence Campaign (CSDC) has been building links with the workers' movement in Chile which, together with the youth, has been in the forefront of battles against the Pinochet dictatorship.

The CSDC have received the following letter from dock and port workers in San Antonio.

Dear Comrades;

Through this letter we would like both to salute you and reply to the letter you sent us last December. In it you outline your activities and support towards all working class organisations that fight for a fairer and a socialist society.

On 30 October last year all workers connected with the sea started a conflict with General Pinochet in order to destabilise his dictatorship. This conflict has lasted for eighty days.

In the last few weeks we have been working out future plans of action for the year ahead. We believe that these struggles are crucial in order to regain freedom, justice and build a socialist democracy.

We also enclose a list of projects which we believe will be decisive in order to back up the work we will be doing in 1986. It would be of enormous value to us if your Campaign could sponsor, or subsidise one or more of these projects.

Salatiel Sanchez Abarca, president of the union and regional council of the dockers of the port of San Antonio.

Victor Gongoro Santis, Secretary of the union of manual workers of the Port of San Antonio.

San Antonio, Jan 20 1986.

Union budget for 1986.

Women: Workshop £818.

Sport and Leisure: Various activities: £218.

Printing and propaganda: Printing of *Mar Gruesa* bulletin: £1,368.

Trade union courses: Four three day courses with the participation of 30 workers per course: £909.

per cent by 1991 with more money to be repaid after graduation.

And this is on the basis of an optimistic view of future growth in the next half-decade. Reagan's advisors base their figures on a 4 per cent per annum rise in economic growth. Most observers think 2-3 per cent is more likely, even if there is no new recession!

Few top politicians have any overall objection to hitting the poor and enriching the defence corporations, but for political reasons they want bigger defence cuts to stop the worst welfare cuts which could provoke unrest.

The Reagan administration may cut down on the worst fiddles in defence procurement. The Pentagon were shocked to find they had paid contractors way over the odds. Hammers and lavatory seats had been sold to defence departments at ludicrous prices such as \$500. These smooth operators can recognise an open wallet when they see one! But no other defence cuts are likely.

Congress may push for a compromise, an amelioration of the welfare cuts and some tax rises, but the anti-working class nature of this budget will stay.

# Life under 'goulash socialism'

**THE BUREAUCRATIC clique that controls the economy in the Stalinist states such as Hungary is even less secure than the worried and split ruling classes of the capitalist countries.**

Hungary has always been a 'special case' in the Stalinist bloc. The workers attempted to establish true working class power there in 1956, only to be crushed by Mongolian troops who were told by the Russian government that they were fighting the fascists.

As a result of 1956, the Hungarian workers have a comparatively highly developed political outlook and have also managed to pressurise the bureaucracy into a more 'liberal' stance, although this alone is obviously failing to solve their problems.

## Revolution

Life under "goulash socialism"—as it is cynically referred to by many Hungarian workers (or the 'existing socialism' as the government frantically tries to have them believe) shows the potential for massive movements of the working class. Eventually political revolution is on the cards throughout the deformed workers' states and Russia itself.

Unlike in some other Stalinist states, the vast majority of workers in Hungary understand the gains made by the planned economy. But they also understand how the bureaucratic mismanagement and privilege are now a complete block to any further development of society. At the same time they remain totally anti-capitalist, aware of the misery of unemployment and the widening rift between the classes opening up in countries such as Britain.

During the sixties and seventies there was some pro-capitalist feeling among some of the youth but much of this was healthy scepticism towards the propaganda of the bureaucracy rather than deep political belief.

Now independent stories drifting in from the west of widescale political unrest, mass unemployment and deepening economic crises, are making young workers in Hungary in particular view the world situation with, as always, fresh eyes.

Frustrated by the stagnation of their environment, they are nevertheless aware of what socialism could

By David Kent

achieve. "This is not socialism" is a common phrase spoken in confidence. Yet a vigorous defence of Lenin and condemnation of Stalin is frequent, echoing the slogan of "Lenin for the workers, Stalin for the bureaucrats" of Polish shipyard workers in the 1970-71 uprising.

The bureaucracy finds itself under extreme pressure from all sides. Soviet military presence is a constant reminder of the pressure externally from Moscow; rising prices are a constant reminder of financial problems. Most worrying for them, though, is the pressure from the Hungarian working class.

Marx explained that the ruling class in the capitalist countries, while originally developing industry, created the class which would eventually overthrow them—the industrial workers. The bureaucracy finds itself in an ever worse position—it hammers workers under a system it calls 'socialism' yet also, through the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party, the youth section the KISZ, and its own propaganda, introduces workers to the writings of Marx, Engels and Lenin, even if in a perverted form.

## Arrested

No seventeen year old on a factory floor has to read very much Lenin before he or she realises that the great genius of the Russian Revolution had nothing but hatred for political tyranny. It is not surprising that during the late sixties, students were arrested for organising readings of Lenin without accompanying official comments.

Some of the youth are joining the KISZ clubs because of an interest in Marxism, not just to go to their discos. Disillusionment with the ruling party follows or is already inherent, but in some cases a continued thirst for Marxist ideas prevails.

No serious Marxist should think that political revolution in the Stalinist states will occur tomorrow—the battle to overthrow Stalinism has to go through many stages



Queuing outside a Hungarian food shop. The government's economic and political reforms have not stopped the food shortages.



Thatcher in Budapest, 1985.

Photos: Miroslav Milivojevic (Reflex)

yet, just as workers in the capitalist states will be driven again and again into struggle before workers' power is established there. But the bureaucracy is increasingly uneasy—quack cures are as commonly thrown up for the crisis caused by the bureaucracy as are 'solutions' to capitalism's problems in the West.

The Kadar regime combines straightforward 'work harder' campaigns with encouraging private enterprise on a small scale in an attempt to create more wealth. Perhaps the government also hopes that workers will blame this artificial 'middle class' for high prices rather than the failings of the ruling cliques. If they do they are mistaken—even some older minor party members are known to have reservations about the so-called 'private shops'.

## Cynicism

The working class's independent progressive outlook on world events is obviously feared by the bureaucracy. Hungarian TV and press try to give 'safety valves' for workers' cynicism about the system. Satirical TV shows abound as do cartoons in the press—as long

as they don't go too far. The best comedians, rock bands and journalists get very little exposure. Strikes over pay are reported on television, but only briefly, and with no real explanation, of course.

Occasional 'subversive' hints are given by those who appear in the media. One newsreader giving a report that included the phrase 'soviet democracy' paused, bowed his head and ran his hand over his hair before continuing, on one occasion. This obviously has little to do with the movements of the working class, but it is nevertheless a sign of how besieged Hungary's bureaucratic caste are becoming.

Every election shows boosts for the candidates in opposition to the policy of the HSWP although 'irregularities' in their election campaign or some other 'set back' are always 'discovered' by the Stalinist authorities. The Parliament in Budapest has existed in its present form since 1957 after the workers' rising was crushed. It was originally intended as a sop to prevent or forestall further unrest and calls for workers democracy. Now, it reveals itself ever more with every 'election' as a complete farce.

The future is very bleak

for the bureaucracy. Continued pressure from Moscow, the Hungarian working class and the flagging economy, all increase. Entanglements with the IMF, such as Hungary has, will obviously solve nothing as the economic situation in the West deteriorates.

## Memories

For workers throughout the Stalinist states a new period of struggle is opening up. The lessons of 1956 are still within the reach of many workers memories and those young workers who are feeling for political action today will find teachers among the older generation willing to help with new struggles.

News of the miners' strike in Britain inspired workers even though there is little 'in depth' coverage of any sort on television. Political oppression such as that in the Stalinist states can restrain and suppress workers, but it cannot extinguish their activity altogether especially when battles in both the capitalist states and other deformed workers' states such as Poland are continually providing new hopes and lessons.

## What is Stalinism?

**BUREAUCRATISM OR Workers' Power** by Roger Silverman and Ted Grant. A Marxist analysis of the Russian revolution and the rise of Stalinism. Originally written on the 50th anniversary of the October revolution, this has been comprehensively updated. The answer to the question every socialist is asked: "What about Russia then?" Available from *Militant* 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB.

## Stalinism and Bolshevism



**STALINISM AND Bolshevism** by Leon Trotsky. What happened to the Russian Revolution? How did Stalin come to power? Is Stalinism inevitable? In this pamphlet Trotsky shows that the roots of the Stalinist bureaucracy were not in the victory of the Bolsheviks in the revolution of October 1917, but lay in the conditions of backwardness which followed the isolation of the revolution to Russia, and the destruction of four years of civil war.

Stalinism represented not the development of Bolshevism but a political counter-revolution, bringing forth the task of a new political revolution, to restore workers' democracy to the state and economy.

Available from *Militant*, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB. Price 40p (plus 20p post and package).

## Genuine hatred of imperialism

**HATRED OF the Russian government is very widespread. However, allied to this is an even stronger dislike of US imperialism. The 'threat to world peace' caused by the US SDI programme, cruise missile deployment and such developments as the Neutron bomb is widely accepted by Hungarian workers and as a result the bureaucracy continually emphasises the acts of US aggression hoping it will portray them in a more favourable light.**

Hungarian workers, nevertheless, independently view US intervention in El Salvador, Vietnam, Chile and elsewhere with hatred. This independence of thinking was shown over the Falklands war.

Workers in the factories viewed the actions of both the Argentine junta and the Thatcher government as an attempt in the first case to 'redirect' mounting discontent among Argentinian workers and in the second an opportunistic adventure to whip up patriotism by a government flagging in popularity. This is in marked contrast to some older peasants who simply saw Thatcher as exercising righteous anger against an intruder in 'her' territory.

## Condemned to poverty

Dear *Militant*,

Recently I started a part-time job (one or two nights a week) which is paid on a commission basis. I thought this would help out a bit as we are both on the dole. I couldn't have been more wrong.

Having only been doing the job four weeks, I haven't really had a chance to make back my initial outlay, so im-

agine how fed up I felt when, on signing on, I was told my unemployment benefit was suspended until they decided whether or not I was still entitled to it.

So because I decided to use a bit of initiative and try to ease our situation, and because my benefit is the bulk of our income we have been left to live on £10 a week for at least six weeks.

It seems to me that this Tory government whilst professing to be the party of the family and of free enterprise, deliberately try to stifle any initiative in the working class in order to maintain their pool of unemployed and bring down pay, condemning millions of families to live in poverty, in or out of work.

Yours fraternally  
Mara Dale  
Isle of Wight

## SWP—used by establishment

Dear Comrades,

For those who know the arguments of the Socialist Workers Party, the television programme *Diverse Reports* (ITV 29 January) would have been interpreted for what it was, a party political broadcast on behalf

of the SWP, and not a look at the role of the *Militant* Tendency in the Labour Party.

We switched off with the impression that the establishment had 'set up' the SWP merely to reinforce the opinion that there is no place for socialists in the Labour Party.

Yours fraternally  
Nicole and Michael Gill  
London

# Letters

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

## Council's housing policy affects lives

Dear Comrades,

In my work as a nursery assistant, I have heard children say many funny things, but they also tell us a lot of the truth. At present I am working in a nursery unit in Vauxhall.

On one occasion two three year old boys were playing in the sand tray. They got into an argument and one boy said "Well we've got a new house and I can play in the garden". This boy's family have moved into a new council house.

On another occasion a five year old boy, when asked about his new house, told us how lovely it was. Then a great smile broke out on his

face as he told us about his big garden he can play in and he told us "My grandad's getting us some flowers for our garden."

Parents also commented on their new council houses. One parent came to tell us her child was ill, the teacher enquired about her new home. She told us how lovely it was and of the visit of the local doctor. After examining the child he asked if he could have a look round the house, as he hadn't seen inside the council houses before.

Yours fraternally  
Tricia Jockins  
Merseyside

## Forced onto cheap labour schemes

I AM 19 and after being unemployed for ages hope to start a part-time job with the Community Programme scheme on Monday.

I say 'hope' but really hope has very little to do with it. I live in lodgings and was told by the DHSS that I was only getting lodging allowance for one more week, so I had a choice, either get a job or begin the six month tour of DHSS districts, claiming for a few weeks in each one.

This is not much of a choice and as I don't want to leave my friends and girl friend there is no choice at all!

Then comes the second problem, to find a job within a week! I am too old for YTS, the only thing left is the Community Programme. This is also a plan by the government to get the unemployment figures down, but I'm forced to go onto the scheme as it is the only way I can live where I want to. At least I've now got the time to look for



Youth can be forced onto cheap labour 'job creation' schemes by legislation such as the new 'board and lodging' regulations.

something properly.

I have been to some meetings of the LPYS and also buy a copy of the *Mili-*

*tent* regularly. It's nice to see some real truth being printed, instead of the 'truth' that's printed in other

newspapers.

Yours fraternally  
Brian Sculley  
Basildon

## Witch-hunt runs out of steam

Dear Comrades,

It appears that the witch-hunt on the island has run out of steam after only four expulsions. Whilst none would have been better, I feel that the witch-hunt has fallen far short of the clean sweep that we were promised by the CLP secretary, Robert Jones 'which would rid the party once and for all of the *Militant*'.

Since the first expulsion (my own) the CLP has not had one public meeting, *Militant* has held three. The CLP has not put out one single leaflet, I've lost count of the number that *Militant* has put out. The CLP is losing members hand over fist who don't wish to be associated with comrade Jones' presidential style of leadership and especially his penchant for expulsions.

We didn't ask for a fight but now that it has started we shall go all the way and there will be no peace in the Isle of Wight CLP until the four are reinstated and the Party is once again committed to ending the rule of the bosses.

Yours fraternally  
Vic Dale  
Isle of Wight

## Hattersley—managing capitalism

Dear Comrades,

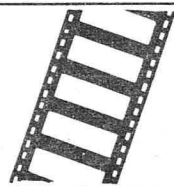
I was dumb-founded to read in your Left and Right article (*Militant* 783) about the Fabian Society Seminar, that the price of admission was £120 plus VAT per head!

I would like to point out to Roy Hattersley, the £120 plus he and his business friends are able to pay is £30 less than my family and I have to get by on over a period of a fortnight from social security or dole

payments.

The deputy leader of the Labour Party should be spending his time and money going round to meetings of working class people, showing the failure of capitalism and not trying to prove to the workers that the Labour Party can manage the capitalist system better than the Tories.

Yours fraternally  
Christina Seddon  
Sittingbourne Labour Party



## Film Review

# Revolution

A FILM about the American War of Independence, that flopped in America—that must be good!

*Revolution* has had so many bad write-ups and reviews, I thought it necessary to go along and see it for myself.

The critics have described the film as boring and chaotic. It certainly isn't boring although some of the more tender scenes are a bit slow and even idiotic in places (such as when the wounded hero looks as if he's about to be raped by the heroine in the middle of the battlefield!). It is also difficult to identify with any of the main characters.

Nevertheless, the charge that the film is boring is to miss altogether one of the main points of the film from the bourgeois point of view—the horror of war—

or more particularly, of revolution.

But what upsets the critics is that, in trying to say that revolution doesn't really change anything for the common people, the idea may be drawn from the film that the bourgeois revolution itself is not enough. The lower class American is left at the end of the struggle poorer than before and only with his dream of a better society, of liberty and equality.

At the end of the film, as the hero and heroine are picking their way through the dancing multitudes celebrating the victory of the revolution, a voice off screen is heard to say: "What are you doing here, nigger?" and the reply comes back "I want my freedom too!". It is in this way, in the background, that most of



the political points are made. There is no real explanation of what the struggle was all about.

There is no shortage of red banners floating across the screen, of Americans draped in red and white striped sashes, of revolutionary enthusiasm. Indeed, this is the strength of the film. For the first time, the realisation has

come upon me that it was not just an American War of Independence, but in fact, an American Revolution.

I have now bought some £15 worth of books on the event since watching this film. If that is the effect on others who watch it, then it must be worthwhile.

By Chris Herriot



## Positive discrimination

AT THE height of the campaign in Liverpool I had to use the lift in the council's municipal annexe. The lift was filled with council workers and stopped between floors. After about five minutes the caretaker came and told us to wait a minute. We heard his footsteps go upstairs and then he quickly returned to ask: "There's no NALGO members in there is there?"

## Appealing to the rich

THE LABOUR Party continues to appeal to 'wider' sections of society. The order form for their publicity pack called "Attack poverty, not the poor" welcomes payment by American Express and Diner's Club cards.

## Radical change?

DESPITE BOTHA'S 'revolutionary' speech last Friday, when he declared Apartheid "obsolete", little has changed in South Africa, even within the walls of its 'tripartite' parliament. Only four days after his speech coloured members of parliament were refused service in the 'white's' dining room. Contributors include: Gerry McKinley and Olive Edwards.

## Coal and steel feature

# Lessons of two steel struggles

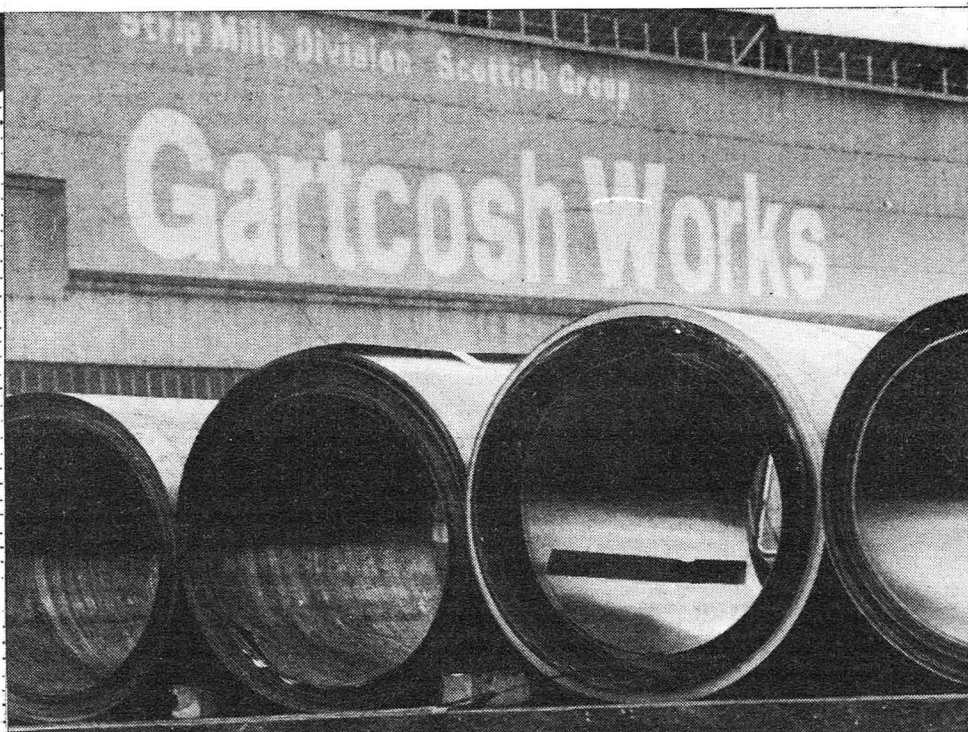
LAST WEEK we reported the victory of steel workers at Sheffield Forgemasters after 16 weeks on strike.

Starting at the Atlas plant where 700 workers were sacked after defying management intimidation, 1,500 River Don workers joined the strike shortly after Christmas.

It is a remarkable victory, won by

determined rank and file struggle despite sabotage by the ISTC leadership.

It has important lessons, particularly for the ongoing battle against British Steel's privatisation strategy. Arthur Millward a GMBATU steward talked to Alan Anderton about the outcome (in a personal capacity).



## FORGEMASTERS

MANAGEMENT wanted to stop any Health and Safety role of the trade unions despite one of the worst records in Great Britain (seven deaths in less than two years).

We've now won the right to have H&S committees on all sites and an H&S sub-committee of the Joint Consultative Committee overall, so that all trade unionists are properly protected.

On trade union rights, we've got the right to organise and meet on the company to carry out our representation to the full.

This was the main part of management plans—if they'd not given in on this, we would not have returned to work.

Although we have no full-time convenor, we have got both the chairman and secretary with proper facility time and union offices.

All 700 of the Atlas workers (those originally on strike) have been reinstated.

As well as all this, we've won increases and improvements on bonus payments and the sick pay scheme. I'm sure management didn't want this but they had to accept to get a return to work. Instead of worsening the sickness scheme at River Don (ex-BSC plant) to our level, ours has been improved to River Don level.

The lesson of this strike must be 'unity is strength' to get round the divide and rule tactics that management have used so often.

On the 2 January, after a mass meeting, workers at River Don decided to support Atlas workers in their struggle. This action led to the joining together of two well organised stewards' committees. It was a turning point in the strike.

Management would have wished that the two committees had been totally divided but because of their tactic this was not the case. They are now left with a shop stewards' committee that is more united and organised than ever before. I'd like to thank management for that.

### Just begun

As far as I'm concerned the strike's over but the fight has just begun. Workers now realise their strength as they never did before, they realise that we must unite to stop any management attempts to worsen conditions.

Six months ago this would not have seemed possible. The workers felt there was no way they could fight, they felt that they didn't have the strength. Now they realise that with unity and support from other workers anything is possible.

In this country we are not far short of a general strike situation, there are many struggles taking place today that aren't allowed to reach the pages of the press.

This strike at Forgemasters was a small dispute that will have national implications. It will show all other workers in struggle around the country



Roy Evans, new general secretary of the ISTC, speaking at Sheffield meeting against Phoenix Two privatisation plans. Unfortunately he appears to be following in Bill Sirs' footsteps, limiting the union's defence of jobs to negotiation and parliamentary pressure.

that if we stick together, if we learn the lessons, especially from the miners' strike of publicity, collections etc, and make the whole movement aware of the struggle, we can win.

This is a historic victory and an overdue one for rank and file trade unionists. We came out collectively, we are going back collectively, under one banner.

Forgemasters was the first of the Phoenix Schemes (BSC privatisation plan) and this strike was the first since Phoenix operations came into force. It won't be the last. Under the Phoenix Two

plans to come into force in April, the management at this new United Engineering Steels will attempt to achieve the same as they tried at Forgemasters. We have to prepare for this.

As trade unionists we must come together and make sure that these managements continue to fail in their attempt to smash trade union organisations, rights and conditions.

Finally I'd like to thank *Militant* for getting in my first victory pint—it tastes great. Next time I'll get one in for *Militant*.

## GARTCOSH

THE 700 men at BSC's Gartcosh steelworks have voted to take voluntary redundancy. They decided to surrender to BSC's corporate plan, meaning the immediate closure of Gartcosh with the longer term aim of closing Ravenscraig.

By Colin Fox  
(Motherwell South CLP)

It means the end of steel making in Scotland after 200 years. What a condemnation of this government's record, what a commentary on the state of the capitalist economy in the UK in the 1980s.

The Clydesdale and Imperial works in the nearby towns of Airdrie and Belshill, face complete closure next. Already on a three-day week, the work prospects look grim. The BL works in Motherwell, the only finishing plant now left to Ravenscraig has recently been rife with the rumour that BSC intends to close it in 1987.

If the end of BSC's operations in Scotland is to be avoided then clearly it is essential that the lessons of Gartcosh are learned and the mistakes avoided.

The strategy of "A broad-based campaign embracing all sections of the Scottish community" lies in tatters in the bin. At the cost of another 700 jobs it proved, as *Militant* had warned in advance, an expensive and dangerous political dead-

duck leaving the workforce as bystanders to events.

Its empty rhetoric alienated them and left them cold. The exhortations to 'save Scottish steel' plays into the hands of the SNP and brought out the worst aspects of the leadership's campaign.

The confidence of the steelworkers themselves in this type of leadership was always low. It is no lead at all which says "We have to remember that our members voted Liberal, Tory, SNP and even National Front at the last elections and we cannot be too closely tied to Labour" (uttered more than once on public platforms by Tommy Brennan, Bill Evans and George Quinn, the ISTC leadership of this campaign).

The response was felt in the record number of steel workers in all the remaining plants, including Ravenscraig, who have recently volunteered for these "pools win redundancy pay-outs" by the BSC. Recently, over 1,200 applications were received by the BSC at the Clydesdale plant when it asked for around 220 or so voluntary redundancies.

To convince the whole workforce not to take redundancy, to fight for their jobs and a future, requires leadership with guts, determination and above all clear political orientation.

The Tories can be forced to change their minds, not by polite requests for clemency or appeals from the clergy and small businesses, but a concentrated political campaign including industrial action to attack them where it hurts most.

## American future for British coal industry?

"REMEMBER THE outcry by the press during the miners' strike about an NUM official's visit to Libya?"

By a Derbyshire NUM member

At the height of the strike in November 1984 two officials of the NCB Derbyshire Area Mr KV Otter, Deputy Chief Mining Engineer, and Mr D Hotchkiss, then manager at Markham Colliery (since promoted to area level) visited private mines in the USA to observe working practices and management techniques and practices.

Their visit was arranged by Ian MacGregor and Jimmy Cowan.

Their report, in the form of an internal document is an eye-opening revelation of the attitudes of NCB management since the end of the strike.

Perhaps significantly, paragraph 27 of their report quite simply

states: "We visited both union and non-union mines, with a preference amongst management for the latter".

Whilst making some comments upon technology and safety their report deals heavily with industrial relations techniques and working practices.

For example, at the moment British mining legislation prevents the use of burning and welding equipment underground. It's use in close proximity to shafts is only allowed under strict safety procedures.

### Safety

The report's conclusions state: "Ability to burn and weld underground—tremendous savings in time and transport shifts."

At this moment there is considerable opposition inside the Mines Inspectorate to proposals to reduce safety standards in mining.

Perhaps this report and its recommendations played a part in

the formulation of those proposals. It is common knowledge that one of the drawbacks to any prospective privatisation of coal mines is the high standard of safety (itself inadequate) and its related costs when compared to private industry.

One of the observations directly implemented, and used effectively during this strike, is, "direct communication with the workforce".

Since returning to work the Derbyshire Area has been inundated with area booklets, bulletins, colliery newsletters and the *Coal News*, all mailed directly to employees.

And now team briefings are held with men being given talks by their officials (who are sent away on courses to learn effective management). All this is, of course, aimed at undermining the NUM. The summary of recommendations state:

1. In the UK we must continue to instill a sense of economic reality throughout the industry.

2. Concentrate on the places

where there are opportunities.

3. Concentrate the number of working places, raise performance expectations and be single-minded about achieving them.

4. Re-organise management structures so that Line management are geared towards production and freed from duties which interfere with the main objective.

### Privatisation

5. Try to achieve longer term agreements with the unions.

6. Allow management and young engineers to visit the USA (in preference to Europe) to see the operations of mines within a leading company.

7. Increase and improve direct management/labour communications and acknowledge good performance.

There can be no doubt that the "Americanisation" being introduced into the mining industry is aimed at preparing both the industry and its workers for privatisation



Ian MacGregor, American appointed by Thatcher to smash steel and then coal unions.

whilst undermining the NUM.

The NUM must use all its resources to campaign to defeat this process whilst making it clear that the only alternative lies in democratic workers' control and management of the industry.

**Miners**

# Coal Board attempt to isolate activist

**THE CLOSURE of St Johns colliery in South Wales just before Christmas marked the end of one of the most determined campaigns against pit closures seen in the British coalfield. The experience of that nine month campaign has now been transferred, along with the St Johns men, to the few remaining pits in South Wales.**

The warm reception they have received is an indication of the authority the men have built up during the strike and in their fight to keep their pit open.

The recent presidential election saw ex-St Johns Lodge secretary, Ian Isaac, win around 23 per cent of the vote against the sitting vice-president and ex-vice president.

## High price

This also reflects the growing support for the initiative, combativity and strength of the St Johns Lodge Committee.

However, the price of standing firm for the interests of their members has meant victimisation by the NCB of some of the best NUM activists.

The National Coal Board

# isolate activist

in South Wales have embarked on a campaign of blatant victimisation against ex-Lodge Secretary and South Wales NUM Executive member, Ian Isaac, in a deliberate attempt to drive him out of the industry.

One and a half weeks before Christmas Isaac approached the pit manager with a request for himself and five other miners to transfer to Blaenant colliery. This procedure was in line with an agreement reached with management on 23 November which provided for men to be transferred to the colliery of their choice.

Nevertheless, the transfer request was rejected on the grounds that a job had already been allocated for him elsewhere. This makes him the only miner in St Johns to be allocated a job by management.

The job on offer was in the methane plant at Blaengwynfi 30 miles from the nearest pit with only three men being employed there. One on mornings, one on afternoons and one on nights.

The prospect of Isaac

working alone day after day, prompted the manager to remark: "I can see you leaving the industry". To which he replied: "No chance—I want the same as everyone else and to be allowed the preference of a pit. The only way I'll leave the industry is if I'm sacked".

## Manoeuvres

The manager again rejected his request despite the fact that three local miners from the village wanted to work in the methane plant, which is on their doorstep.

The manager made doubly sure Isaac would not work in Blaenant by informing the other five miners that all transfers to Blaenant had been stopped, which resulted in another two men being forced to take redundancy.

After this abortive interview Isaac contacted the manager of Betwys colliery, West Wales, who was desperately seeking underground workers to replace the over 50s in the pit. Despite Isaac's known

trade union activity the manager agreed to sign him on, along with four other St Johns men, the following day.

Two hours after saying Isaac could start, the Betwys manager phoned back to say that there was no longer an opening for him, but the other four could start as agreed.

The NCB are determined to keep Ian Isaac isolated from the mainstream of members. The NUM in South Wales must now fight tooth and nail against the victimisation of one of its leaders.

The St Johns Committee have registered an official complaint through the conciliation procedure demanding he be allowed the same rights as other miners. Rank and file miners should protest vigorously against the Board's action and give full support to the union's efforts to allow him to work in a pit of his choice.

By a Militant reporter

**NUM (South Wales Area)  
BALLOT FOR AREA PRESIDENT**



**VOTE FOR  
IAN ISAAC  
A MINERS' PRESIDENT  
ON A MINER'S WAGE**

Ian Isaac's original election leaflet.

## Hem Heath bonus victory

**MINERS AT Hem Heath in North Staffs have forced a humiliating climbdown by the NCB management over bonus payments.**

Management tried their usual tactic of attempting to divide the men by altering the normal system of bonus payment.

Over 250 attended a meeting, despite threats by the pit manager that anyone attending the gathering would lose their Sunday work. Twelve members of the UDM voted with the rest to hold a demo on Monday 3 February.

As a result of the demo, management withdrew their proposals for changes to the bonus system.

Despite the ravings of NCB management, miners at Hem Heath have proved more than once since the end of the strike, that they are still prepared to carry on the fight.

Events such as this will also prove to the majority of the UDM members that only the NUM can organise the continuing struggle against the NCB.

By Andy Bentley

# Kinsley Drift adopts fighting tactics

THREE THOUSAND people marched from Hemsworth to Kinsley Drift pit on 25 January as part of the campaign to keep the pit open. It is currently in the review procedure.

Miners from Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire joined local supporters on the march to a rally at the Pit Club to hear Peter Heathfield, Sammy Thompson, vice-president Yorkshire NUM, Peter McNestry, national secretary of NACODS, and local speakers.

The Kinsley Action Group was set up after seeing the successful fight of Darfield Main Community Action Group in defence of Darfield Main

pit which borrowed much from St Johns in South Wales.

The group is made up of miners from the pit, 80% of whom are transfers from other closed pits, local village residents and miners' support group members from as far afield as Barnsley and Dewsbury, along with sacked miners.

The pit has 12 million tonnes of workable reserves, yet the NCB justifies closure by refusing to work them in the most economical way. They are making the men work in bad conditions in order to destroy morale. There is very little overtime and no bonus.

Under the review procedure the NCB must maintain the fabric of the mine but they are only doing so to the minimum and therefore investment and development are also at a minimum.

Coming events for the group include the march and concert for sacked miners in London on 2 March, a planned public meeting, a video and lobby of the National Review meeting when the fate of the pit is decided.

By Mike Gibbs  
(Wakefield Labour Party)



Demo in support of arrested miners at nearby Fitzwilliam

**EETPU**

# Rank and file say back the printers

**A MEETING a week last Tuesday on the print dispute organised at short notice by Southampton EETPU members attracted nearly 200 trade unionists.**

By Sue Atkins

The overwhelming feeling of the meeting was one of disgust at the role played by the EETPU leadership, and by the full-time officials in the Southampton office, who acted as the chief recruiting sergeants for Murdoch's Fort Wapping.

A resolution had been unanimously passed by EETPU shop stewards' committee at Fawley Oil Refinery on 27 January, deploring the attempts by Murdoch to split the trade union movement and the agreement reached by the EETPU executive with News International.

They believe that such

agreement threatens the whole structure of the trade union movement and the continued membership of the EETPU of the TUC. The resolution concluded that many disaffected members at Fawley may well reconsider their continued membership.

While many attending the meeting on 4 February could see the justice of the union being suspended from the TUC, the overwhelming feeling of those present was that EETPU members should stay in and fight.

As one of the leaders of the Southampton Branch put it: "Rank and file members are not scabs, are not a party to extending the four million on the dole."

"The members on the shop floor are the union's greatest asset, and it is they who will battle against the right wing and return our union to the fine traditions



Lobby of TUC meeting.

it had in the past. The EC have gone too far and will pay for their treachery".

The role of the EETPU Broad Left was outlined by a speaker from Portsmouth who explained the need to change the leadership of the

union and appealed to those present to get involved in building the Broad Left in this area to win the battle for democracy and accountability and return the union to its members.

# Build Broad Left

THE EETPU is now a by-word for all that is rotten in trade unionism. Our leaders are up to their necks in helping Murdoch's plans at Wapping. We stand on the verge of being suspended and possibly expelled from the TUC for the role of our leadership.

Last week's editorial on the EETPU makes all the basic points, but one small correction is needed. The 'unofficial' contracting branch in London, as far as I am aware, has not made any approaches to the TUC.

I have attended this branch regularly over the last four months. Enormous discontent exists within the membership over all that they have had to put up with for the past 20-odd years. Wapping is the final straw.

The union deserves to be expelled. Even if the TUC fudges the issue, the fundamental problems still remain. Many members are now thinking of looking for an alternative. Our chance is now! If the Press Branch

leadership were to give a bold lead, it would get an enormous response.

At the moment however this does not seem likely. The responsibility therefore lies with the Broad Left to launch a campaign to mobilise our members. We must fight to transform the union from a near 'company union' into a real fighting democratic EETPU with:

- ★ The election of all officials!
- ★ The right of immediate recall!
- ★ No full-time official to receive more than the average wage of a skilled worker, plus necessary expenses.

A meeting has been called for 22 February, 2pm at Friends House, Euston Road, London. All EETPU concerned members are urged to attend.

By Bob Faulkes  
(London Press Branch member, EETPU, personal capacity)

# Ford Halewood out

LAST FRIDAY 1,400 lineworkers at Ford's Halewood plant voted to continue their week old strike over up-grading. Shop stewards reaffirmed the decision at a meeting in Liverpool on Monday.

B-grade operators in the plants PTA section are demanding upgrading to C-grade. This, the workforce say, was agreed at a meeting between local unions and management at Halewood during the recent national wage negotiations.

## Spontaneous

However, at a national meeting Ford management annulled this local agreement. Martin Lee spoke to Willie Harper, a Ford worker:

ON MONDAY last, management refused to implement upgrading at Halewood. When this news was passed on to lineworkers

there was spontaneous action.

Over the past period line workers have suffered the most and gained the least because of Ford's drive for efficiency, and it's us who make the product!

Although the upgrading amounts to about £5 a week, for the 1,400 workers at Halewood, Ford's management are frightened that concessions will lead to a spate of similar claims at its other plants.

That's why they have been prepared to lose £6 million worth of cars at showroom prices, in one week, although this is twenty times more than the annual cost of conceding the workers'



Halewood strike in 1983

upgrading claim in full.

The mood is still defiant. Picketing of the other sections should be stepped up and workers sent to explain

their case.

There is still widespread opposition in Ford Halewood to the national pay settlement and a united

challenge by the workforce can secure victory for the line operators in their justified claim.

Photo: Carlos Guertta

## South Shields garment workers organise

AFTER 21 weeks on strike, members of the Tailor and Garment Workers' Union at Contracts Ltd, South Shields are as determined as ever to win their fight for trade union recognition, properly negotiated terms and conditions, and reinstatement of nine workers sacked at the start of the strike.

By Jen Pickard

Contracts Ltd is a subsidiary of the clothing firm French Connection. This factory opened in July 1984 with a £50,000 grant from the Tyne and Wear County Council. The council is now looking at ways of getting this money back as it understood that union labour would be employed.

Even though there have been over 100 trade union members out of about 170 since February 1985 the company has refused to recognise the union. It has advertised to contract the work out elsewhere and has advertised the jobs of the strikers.

The conditions at this factory are typical of those reported in other sweatshops recently eg Kay Wools, and are such that workers have been sacked for refusing to do overtime and have to use a disc system to visit the toilets. In February 1985 wages were slashed by £12 a week without any proper consultation.

So far discussions with management have proved fruitless, even though the strikers agreed to a ballot of all the workforce, including scabs, to elect a negotiating committee. This committee comprises 8 trade unionists and 4 non-unionists elected without nominations—blank bits of paper were issued for names to be written in.

At the time of writing there have been two days of talks this week with management. They insist on the final word and a member of the strike committee I spoke to, held out little hope for any progress.

It is imperative at this crucial stage in the strike that the workers from Contracts Ltd are given full support from the rest of the labour and trade union movement.

Groups of strikers have been travelling the length of the country, as far away as Portsmouth, to gain solidarity and financial support, and they have presented an 8,000 signature petition to 10 Downing St. It will, however, be the support from the labour movement, not Thatcher, that will win this dispute.

If you can organise regular collections at your workplace, union branch or Labour Party, or set up a support group in your area contact the strike committee.

A meeting is to take place in London 12 February, Conway Hall to set up a support group in the London area. Donations etc to: NUTGW Contracts Dispute Fund, c/o National Union of Seamen, 4 Coronation Street, South Shields, Tyne and Wear. Tel: Tyneside 456 1428.

## Pompey strike against apartheid

THE NUMBER of NHS workers refusing to handle South African goods in the Portsmouth Area has gone up from the 12 original storemen to 115, including kitchen staff at St Mary's, St James' hospital and the War Memorial hospital in Gosport.

By Alison Hill  
(Portsmouth Labour Party)

Management have brought in private contractors to move the loads that the drivers refuse to take. The storemen are refusing to load these lorries. Management then send the workers home early so they lose their bonus. The issue has now reached the District Health Authority, so the workers blacking the goods are trying to forge links with other health workers to provide a solid opposition.

There has been a magnificent response: money has been sent from TGWU branches, other NUPE branches, other stewards, plus the Greenham Peace Women and an individual donation from Dublin. The shop steward, Andy Lavendar, has even been invited to speak at the European Parliament!

They have also been invited to Norwich University and numerous local trade union branches and wards. Regular collections have been made at Portsmouth Poly Students' Union, where Andy Lavendar spoke at a general meeting last week.

The issue is much wider though, as one of the workers, Basher Benfield said: "The next battle is for our pay claim and against privatisation. We haven't really started yet, but what we've learnt from this will mean we can put up a real fight."

Further donations and messages of support to: Andy Lavendar, 72 London Road, Cowplain, Portsmouth.

## Right wing unions in rail merger manoeuvres

UNITY OF the three rail unions (NUR, ASLEF and TSSA, the white-collar rail union) has been the hope of rail workers for many years. Since the end of Sid Weighell the NUR and ASLEF have moved closer. However for some time there have been rumours of a possible amalgamation between the TSSA and APEX.

Railworkers will question the amalgamation of what is still a majority rail union with APEX. For years the Executive Committee of the TSSA has resisted a move towards the other two rail unions on the basis that TSSA is only 60 per cent railway, but APEX has no connection with British Rail.

The first circular from the TSSA on the possible amalgamation was issued on 13 January 1986. It cautiously reported an approach from APEX, being considered, but said if anything positive should emerge the final decision would rest with TSSA membership.

All TSSA members should be aware that nothing could be further from the truth. Discussions with APEX have been going on for some time. The date of the circular is important, the EC

waiting until the 13 January to issue it. 13 days after the closure date for resolutions to the 1986 TSSA Annual Conference.

Branches can now only make an amendment, which has no right of reply at annual conference. Already attempts are being made to rule out of order resolutions calling for the membership to decide the future of the union.

In particular one Birmingham-based branch which had got wind of the talks with APEX sent forward a resolution for the annual conference before Christmas last year calling for a ballot to the entire membership prior to any merger with APEX or any other union.

This resolution is being ruled out on the basis that its call for a membership ballot is nowhere covered by the TSSA rule book, despite the fact that the EC took the decision to hold just such a ballot over the political fund only recently.

The branch received notice that their resolution was being ruled out on the same day that TSSA sent out the circular admitting to an approach from APEX. The branch will of course be fighting to get the resolution onto the agenda.

## Left ahead—Bill Boyle reports on union elections

### NCU

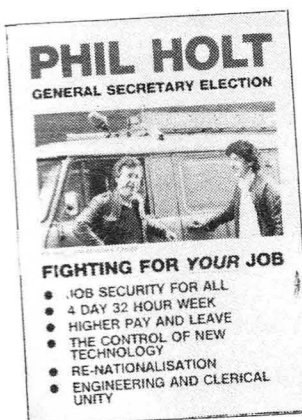
THE ELECTION for the new General Secretary of the National Communications Union is now underway.

The Broad Left candidate is Phil Holt. His main rival is witch-hunter general John Golding MP. The union's General Treasurer, David Norman, is also standing but has little chance of success.

A victory for Holt would be a major blow to the right wing and a major boost for NCU conference policies in defence of jobs and the introduction of new technology.

His tour of NCU meetings has been well received. His determination to refuse the massive salary of the General Secretary (£33,000) and to live on his present Technical Officers' wage has received a favourable response.

The result of the election will not be known until the 26 February. Until then it is vital that all Broad Left members urge support for Holt at all of the unions workplaces.



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

### CPSA

DOREEN PURVIS, branch secretary of Newcastle Central Office and leader of the 1984 shiftworkers dispute has been called-up to the CPSA NEC as a result of the resignation due to illness of a right winger.

She will be a real asset to the NEC as the only lay member on the left. The NEC decision to call her up was not a popular one with general secretary Alistair Graham who must now feel sick.

Neither has the result of the secret individual ballot at the Department of National Savings in Glasgow for the seven branch officers given any comfort to Graham and the Broad Left '84. Militant supporter Danny Williamson increased his majority in the branch secretary election from 12 in 1985 to 364, 58 per cent of all votes cast.



Doreen Purvis

Six out of seven branch of the CPSA Broad Left. This is a gain of three on last year. The poll was up from over 1,100 in 1985 to 1,400 this year.

The Broad Left now looks forward to the forthcoming Branch Committee elections for 18 ordinary members. DNS Glasgow has over 3,000 CPSA members.

# Militant

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## Maxwell attacks Scottish printers

**JOBS AND conditions in Scotland's newspaper industry are under further attack.**

Two weeks ago Robert Maxwell took over direct control of the *Sunday Mail/Daily Record* plant in Glasgow. This 'reasonable' man, who claims not to be like "Big, bad Rupert" but wanting to negotiate with his unions, has not been slow in moving into action.

He called in all the unions last week and gave them his proposals—a new north of England edition of the *Daily Record* to be produced with the same staff; a less than inflation pay increase; those on four-day week working to revert to five days; and agreement within three days or there would be massive redundancies—some reasonable negotiations!

### Preparations

A maintenance engineer from the plant explained: "He wants five presses operating continuously. That's impossible. He wants a five day week back. We negotiated a four day week as part of an earlier pay deal. We gave up money to get it. Now he wants it back and wants to cut our real wages as well. We must stand up. They think they have got print workers on the run."

Maxwell is preparing his ground. At his magazine and catalogue printing plants throughout Britain he has recently had installed tabloid capability.

Discussions are also underway at the *Scotsman/Evening News* plant in Edinburgh which will probably involve demands for job losses from the management.

Meanwhile on the Kinning Park picket line at Murdoch's Scottish plant, a rota of print workers asks everyone approaching the plant not to cross. On Tuesday morning paper rolls were



Pickets at Murdoch's Glasgow plant. Other tycoons like Maxwell are following Murdoch's lead.

driven in by non-union drivers in hired trailers.

An engineer from Lansing Bagnall turned away from the picket line only to return about one hour later to go into the plant. As he crossed he said: "I'm in the EET-PU, I've been instructed by the EETPU official Mr Devine of the Motherwell Office to cross the picket line and go in."

British Telecom engineers, also in dispute over an overtime ban with their own management over redundancies, have refused to cross the picket line. That is ap-

preciated by the pickets. "I hope it's the facsimile line that's at fault," said one picket.

### Solidarity

Some workers, who have never shown an interest before are turning up for picket duty. A large attendance at the print rally in Glasgow this Sunday is expected. The workers will want to hear what plans the print and other union leaders have to defend the print workers.

The activists have pushed

aside the 'divide and rule' stories of the bosses. They must be mobilised as never before to take the message to all other workers. As a small example, the LPYS in Scotland have already taken the union's leaflets to give out at newsagents around the estates and in the streets.

Solidarity action can be obtained if the issues are explained. Solidarity action must be obtained if the print workers have to fight off the bosses' attacks.

By Ronnie Stevenson

## Range Rover: strike against victimisation!

IAN SCHOFIELD, senior steward of British Leyland Range Rover, was suspended two weeks ago. The grounds were his failure to notify British Leyland on his application form in 1972 that he worked for them for two weeks in 1970.

British Leyland have also refused to recognise Ian as senior steward for the last ten months. Suspension, a prelude to sacking him, is a blatant attack on the rights of workers to elect their own representatives.

Management's moves seem connected with plans to sell Land Rover to General Motors. But workers need union protection, whether the bosses are British or American.

On Monday 10 February, the company stated that they expected Ian to stay beside the phone all day; he was instructed by the management to break an appointment with his full-time union officer and was given just an hour's notice to attend a meeting later that afternoon. This is typical of the way management treat their employees. Incredibly this is the first time the company have contacted Ian over his suspension.

### Stoppages

Two groups of workers stopped work last week in support of Ian. But although workers and shop stewards have been urging action to support his fight against victimisation, the convenor refused to call a shop stewards meeting straight away. "We'll discuss it at the statutory shop stewards meeting on Wednesday 12 February," he said.

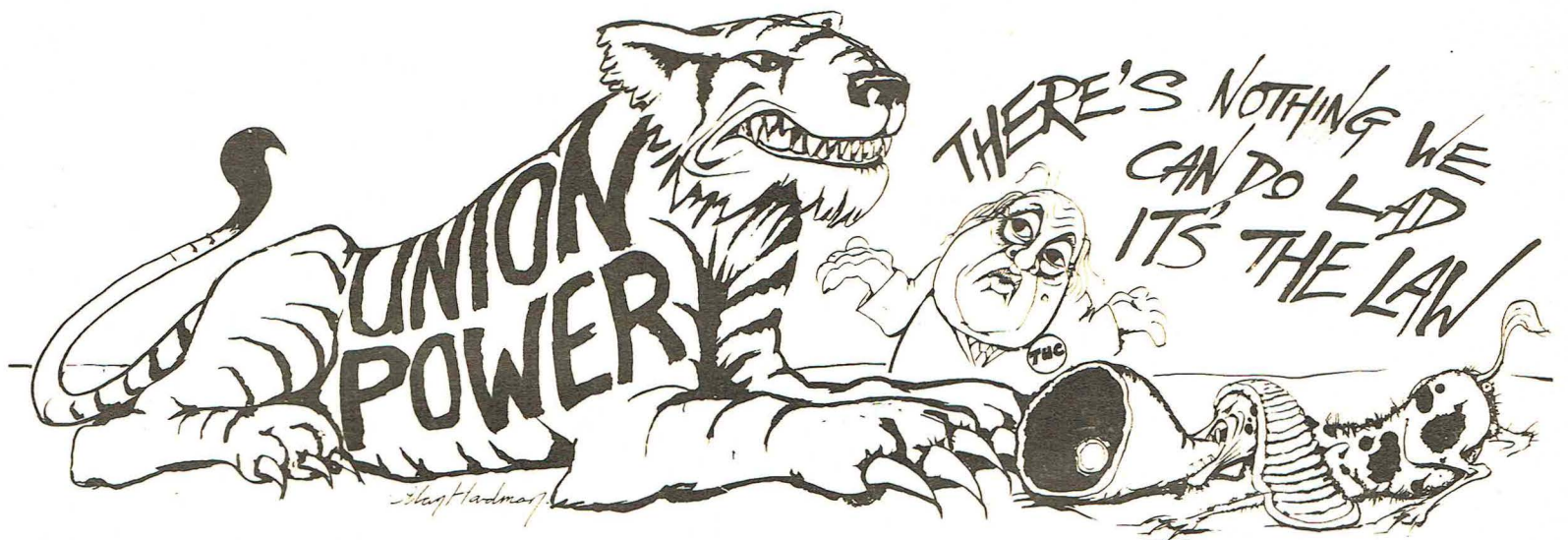
Workers are angry at this attitude. Two weeks have already gone by with no action taken. This cannot go on. The Vauxhall workers at Luton and Ellesmere Port showed the right response by taking immediate action in support of a sacked shop steward. This is the only weapon workers have to defend their elected representatives. After a day's stoppage he got his job back.

### Implications

The union cannot be seen to be doing management's job for them. At the stewards meeting on Wednesday Range Rover shop stewards will put a motion forward that: "This meeting calls on the convenor to hold a joint shop stewards meeting to discuss the case of Brother Schofield. If any further action is taken against him then we call upon the joint shop stewards for full support and all-out action."

The Range Rover workers and stewards are to be congratulated on their determination to defend their elected senior steward. They also see the implications of the company delving into the records of every other employee at Leyland. Today it is Ian, tomorrow who else?

- No to victimisation of Brother Schofield
- Strike to defend trade union rights



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