

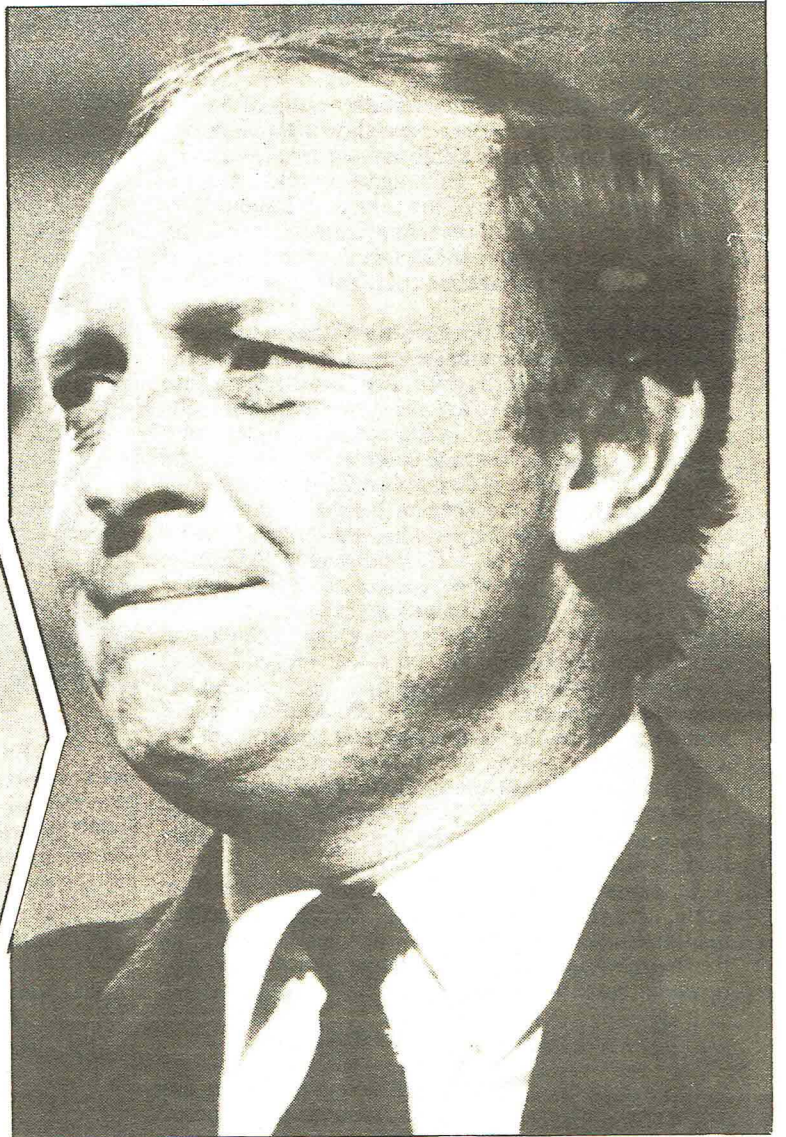
Liverpool

says

NO

EXPULSIONS

Voters in Britain have given their verdict on Thatcher—a big No. Voters in Liverpool have given their verdict on the Labour council—a big Yes. Their message to Neil Kinnock and the Labour leaders is: Get rid of the Tories, not the socialists in Labour's ranks.



Labour's election triumph

THE TORIES have been rocked by their defeats in the local elections and their humiliation at Ryedale and West Derbyshire. Thatcher and Tebbit have fallen out and John Biffen, leader of the House of Commons, has publicly criticised the direction of the government.

Labour's victories in the town halls are the first clear signs that the Party can win the next general election. But it is Labour's triumph in Liverpool that Neil Kinnock should heed. The voters of Liverpool have given the Labour council a clear vote of confidence.

The Labour Party could hardly be better poised for victory at the next general election after Westland, the Libyan raids and now the local elections. It makes the decision of the Party's national executive to go ahead with the hearings of the 11 Liverpool members, still charged with 'membership of *Militant*', even more ludicrous. The NEC's preoccupation with disciplinary measures is irrelevant to the ma-

majority of workers in Liverpool and elsewhere, compared to the big issues facing Labour.

The Liverpool Labour Party won victory in the teeth of the most vicious slander campaign seen against any political party for decades. Leading party members, councillors and *Militant* supporters have been accused of corruption and intimidation, without a shred of evidence. This may be expected from Labour's enemies but there can be no excuse for Labour's leaders to use this mud-slinging for a political attack on the ideas of one section of the party.

Homes and jobs

Labour won in Liverpool because of the reality of new homes, sports centres and more jobs. Before the election the press and the Liberals were gloating that Labour was finished, but workers in Liverpool couldn't face a return to the misery of Liberal rule and the cuts and job losses which would result. The feeble commentators of the 'serious' press try to explain away the result, and kid themselves

that once the councillors are disqualified then *Militant* will be a spent force in Liverpool.

But these ideas are deeply rooted in the organisations of the Liverpool labour movement, and it is these ideas, in practice, which have helped to ensure that the Liberals and Tories are kept at bay.

Next Wednesday the NEC has the chance to stop the madness of expulsions. They won't in any case be accepted by the Liverpool Labour Party. They aren't acceptable to the voters of Liverpool.

More importantly the high morale of Labour activists all over the country would be shamefully wasted away in the internal fueding which would follow the purge.

Expelling *Militant* supporters is not a prerequisite for winning the next election—Liverpool shows it is not. In fact it is a recipe for losing. What is necessary is the campaign against this disastrous Tory government on Labour's socialist policies agreed by the whole party. Labour's leaders should get on with this task.

By Ben Eastop

Mass lobby of the NEC

Wednesday
21 May 8am

150 Walworth Road, SE17

All Labour Party members, trade unionists and young socialists urged to attend. Bring your banners.

Militant

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Tories heading for electoral disaster

THE MAIN feature of the election results of 8 May was the crumbling of Tory votes, showing an increasing momentum towards a Labour victory at the coming general election. But against that general background, the success of the Liverpool Labour Party in retaining control of that city, represents a triumph for its councillors, a slap in the face for the Tories and Liberals, and a blow against the witch-hunters in the Labour Party.

The collapse of the Tories' vote nationally, including the loss of the Parliamentary seat of Ryedale and the near loss of West Derbyshire, has thrown them into a panic. Projected on to a general election, the results would mean their certain defeat. The by-election results, if repeated across the country, would leave the Tories with between a dozen and 92 seats.

Some sections of the Tory party, like the Leader of the House, John Biffen, realise the huge electoral liability in the hateful, strident figure of Margaret Thatcher. There is now a deep-seated hatred shared by millions of voters, including large numbers of former Tory voters, of her policies, her manner and her outlook. Biffen's comments last weekend about the need for a 'balanced' Tory ticket and his suggestion that Thatcher might be replaced as leader sometime during the term of the next government are a polite way of telling her to move now.

The tide of opposition to Thatcher will only grow the longer she stays. If the Tories are to have any chance at all of winning the next election, the Iron Lady will have to be melted down.

As things are, there will be an increasing trend up to the next election for a Labour victory. The prominent attempts of the press and the Tories to play up the 'evils' of Labour's left wing cut no ice at all, and nowhere was that clearer than on Merseyside.

Liverpool triumph

In Liverpool, no-one could have been under any misapprehension about what a Labour vote meant: it was a conscious act of support for the courage of the Labour councillors and their 'illegal' stand against Tory financial cuts. The Liverpool councillors, especially the supporters of *Militant*, have been vilified in the media for three long years; they have been pilloried as 'criminals' in the courts; they have been slandered repeatedly even by their own party leadership and they have been hamstrung by the suspension of the District Labour Party and the unbalanced 'investigation' into it.

The Tories, the ruling class and their echoes in the labour movement thought they had a wonderful strategy mapped out: the councillors would be surcharged and banned from office; the DLP would be purged and re-modelled to minimise rank and file influence; the prominent *Militant* supporters would be expelled and the whole Labour council—if it remained Labour—would be re-established on 'moderate' lines. It would be demonstrated, as with the miners that "militancy doesn't pay".

But these 'strategists' reckoned without the views of the Liverpool working class. The whole plan blew up in the Tories' faces. Hateful of Thatcher and sceptical of Neil Kinnock, Liverpool's workers turned out in their tens of thousands to back their own Labour councillors for defending the city's jobs, services and housing. Environment Minister, Kenneth Baker, was reduced to remarking that the vote was a "sad day for democracy", reminiscent of the East German Stalinists in 1953 who "lost confidence in the people"—whereupon Bertold Brecht answered, "why don't you dissolve the people?"

Within the working class at present, there is a growing mood of hope and expectation in a Labour general election victory. The present record low number of industrial disputes is partly a reflection of the fact that workers are turning their attentions to the electoral struggle to solve their problems.

But that mood can still be cut across by the 'mad dogs' on the extreme right wing of the Labour Party who will stop at nothing to purge the left. If they are allowed to have their way on the NEC and in the constituencies, it is not ruled out that the resultant civil war in the party could snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

The best thing that the NEC and the party leadership could do now to increase yet further the chances of a Labour victory, would be to call off the threat of expulsion against the 'Liverpool 11' and stop the witch-hunt.

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LIVERPOOL SENSATION— MANAGER TO SACK WINNING TEAM



NEC's sham trial continues

DESPITE THE marvellous opportunity given by the local election results to have a bash at the Tories, the Labour leadership are pressing ahead with their much-publicised attack on their own party ranks. This week sees the beginning of a new series of NEC sham 'hearings' to provide a thinly-veiled legal cover for expulsions.

There have already been six NEC meetings in the last four months, all dominated by disciplinary matters. The result has been to create an atmosphere of McCarthyism in the party, with a consequent effect on morale, at least up to the elections. For the first time in many years CLPs have been unable to fill many of the voluntary officerships of the party. Attendances have been falling.

The regional organisers have not been immune to this. The NEC document discussing the new proposed appeals procedures, comments: "...concern about these (present) procedures has also been expressed by regional staff on

their role in carrying out the appeals enquiries. Their primary concern is the disproportionate amount of their time now taken up by dealing with appeals for which they have no training or indeed inclination. It can sour their relationships with parties..."

Heresy hunters

The new appeals procedure will include a national panel of "assessors", who will be given a brief training course. Party members will hope this will end the present disgraceful 'Star Chamber' approach of the present 'Appeals and Mediation Committee' which has become a rubber-stamp for the heresy-hunters. This committee has accepted evidence in the past even from a Labour renegade who subsequently joined the Liberals because it 'rang true'.

But the unanimous applause given by the Tory press to the right wing, for their hounding of Marxists in the party, has been bought at a price. In every area where sup-

porters of *Militant* have been attacked, their support has grown stronger.

After the expulsion of the *Militant* Editorial Board in 1983, 45 protest meetings were held, attended by an aggregate of 5,000 people who raised £6,500 for the fighting fund. This year over 200 meetings have been held so far with 37,000 attending and £28,000 collected.

Big rallies have been held in the following places (1983 figures in brackets): Islwyn 600 (80); Glasgow 1200 (220); Edinburgh 1000 (Dundee 50); Birmingham 900 (70); Liverpool 1200 (200); Lambeth 400 (100); Newcastle 1000 (115); Sheffield 1000 (Wakefield 40); London 1100 (600).

There has been a big increase in the sales of *Militant*, but most importantly, the ideas of Marxism have been brought to thousands of workers throughout Britain.

By Mike Waddington

Purge fever back in Wales

THE WALES Labour Party annual conference meets just a week after the Tories were hammered in the local elections.

It is therefore unfortunate that conference will be debating divisive resolutions calling for the expulsions of *Militant* supporters in Wales, led yet again by the leadership of the Transport and General Workers' Union which "congratulates the Welsh Executive Committee's stand against the *Militant* tendency".

The Welsh Executive unconstitutionally suspended itself for several months last year because its right-wing majority refused to sit with two democratically elected delegates who support *Militant*. It faces censure by Cardiff City Labour Party for not holding monthly meetings and therefore failing to carry out conference instructions, such as calling a conference to discuss the deterioration of housing in Wales.

Resolutions reflect an obvious shift to the left amongst the rank and file. Conference must ensure that we spend the next 18 months campaigning against the Tories and not our own party.

By Alex Thraves

Closed minds

TWO RECENT experiences brought home to me the two faces of the labour movement in South Wales.

A fortnight ago I was selling *Militant* in Abertillery. On a grey Saturday morning we sold 43 papers, on a not particularly busy corner. It was one of the most pleasant street sales that I have taken part in. No silly jokes or cold stares, but a warm welcome to the heart of this working-class community. "After what you did for the miners, we've got to buy it, haven't we?"

In contrast, I saw the Labour Party right wing in

action at Cardiff West GMC. The graveyard vote was out in force. The atmosphere was like nothing I have known before, like Trotsky's description of the hounding of the opposition by Stalin's party fodder. Closed minds and open mouths is the most generous description possible.

The first attack was on last month's GMC decision to support Tony Wedlake against the expulsion moves prompted by TGWU baron, George Wright. Incredibly, the right moved to delete this decision on the grounds, that, since Tony has not so far been expelled, last month's resolution was not a genuine emergency.

The second attack was made much easier by the chairman's 'spontaneous' decision to alter the order of the agenda—"We do sometimes run on, and George Wright is always concerned that we are out of Transport House at 9 o'clock". So we did have time to discuss a resolution

that called for "appropriate action" to be taken against a young socialist alleged to have spoken on a *Militant* platform without asking the advice of the local ward party.

The right-wing bulldozer pushed through a call for an executive committee investigation by 35 votes to 23.

As an encore, at 9 o'clock, the right wing announced that the TGWU had already given permission for a 10 minute extension which was enough for the right wing to overturn an executive committee resolution to the Wales Labour Party conference against the witch-hunt.

The sooner this witch-hunting atmosphere is ended the sooner something can be done to end the curse of unemployment, bad housing, bad schooling and bad health care that blight South Wales.

By Mike Newman

Labour's mandate to fight cuts

IN LONDON, Labour won control of Brent, Hammersmith, Ealing and Waltham Forest. They stayed firmly in control in Lambeth, but a poor campaign in Wandsworth left the borough to suffer more Thatcherite poison.

Hackney

HOPES OF a Liberal breakthrough were hammered in Hackney, Britain's poorest borough, with Labour taking back two Liberal seats.

Labour increased its seats from 50 to 53, the Tories losing one to Labour—cutting them to two seats, whilst the Liberals dropped from seven to five.

The Labour Party and Group have moved to the left over the past five years though contradictions were revealed during the budget crisis when a soft left/new right wing majority emerged in the Labour Group.

Nevertheless a hard left leadership, who remained firm during the 'no rate' campaign last year, were elected at the borough conference last Saturday.

Problems remain, however. The District Auditor is pursuing councillors over setting a late rate and their refusal to increase rents. At the moment there is a majority on the Group willing to defy the Tories.

In the longer term the growth in the Liberal vote in Hackney South must be taken seriously.

By John Barr



Victorious councillors, John Bloom, Hackney (left) and Brian Kelly, Southwark.



Lambeth councillors marching to the High Court to appeal against surcharge and disqualification. The replacement team of Labour candidates swept to victory in Lambeth last week.

Tower Hamlets

TOWER HAMLETS saw a continued swing to the Liberals.

They took eight seats to give them a majority of one over Labour, with a solitary SDP win probably reflecting a racist abstention against a Labour Bangladeshi candidate.

The old right wing have clung on to control of the Labour Group and council longer in Tower Hamlets than in other inner London boroughs. This is the result.

The Liberal 'Focus' campaign has been gradually creeping across the north of the borough since 1978. Labour's response has been blunted by right wing control of the Group.

Internal conflicts culminated in the establishment of a new official

Group and ex-Labour Leader Paul Beasley and others standing against the official party candidates. The split vote in one ward handed three seats to the Liberals.

There are positive features, however. Labour won a seat back from the Liberals. In one ward the Liberal challenge collapsed, in others revitalised ward parties are on the way back.

The Liberals are now on trial. Council trade unionists in particular will be gearing up to fight privatisation and other attacks.

It is also a critical time for Labour. It can re-build its working class base by a serious commitment to the borough conference's socialist policies and a mass campaign with the trade unions. Or it can get bogged down in the council chamber and in-fighting.

By Ian Illet

Southwark

THE SWING to Labour in London continued through Southwark, one of the councils which delayed setting a rate last year for several months in opposition to the rate-capping laws.

The Tories were reduced to a rump of 6 council seats, losing two to Labour in Dulwich. Labour remains in control, with a 21 seat majority, despite losses in Bermondsey. However the new Labour Group may be less committed to confronting Tory cuts than previously.

Militant supporter Brian Kelly was re-elected in Dulwich with a 19 per cent swing. But good results for Labour in Dulwich and Peckham (which stayed solidly Labour) was soured by Liberal gains throughout

Bermondsey.

Although the Liberals won a further 10 seats from Labour in Bermondsey, their overall lead in total votes is dropping compared to the 1983 general election. (See page 7)

By Ben Eastop

Greenwich

THE EXPECTED SDP gains in the Woolwich part of the borough failed to materialise, despite having Owen and Williams speaking at meetings.

In Ferrier ward, where Marxist Eddie McParland was one of the candidates there was an 11 per cent swing from the SDP to Labour. But elsewhere results for Labour were patchy.

However in Abbey Wood and Thamesmead Moorings wards,

Liverpool triumph and Militant supporters' victories — See page 8-9

where the Labour Party failed to respond to the SDP campaigns, seats were lost.

In the ILEA elections Labour gained the Tory-held parliamentary seat of Eltham and the SDP held Woolwich.

Despite the Labour gains, the group has moved to the right with a number of left wingers standing down. Already attempts are being made to water down the radical manifesto, especially the demand to build 400 homes a year.

By Samantha Uden

Brent

IN BRENT Labour took eleven seats from the Tories to regain control.

Even with the Falklands influence Labour just held Brent in '82. Unfortunately it was lost with the well-publicised defection of black councillor Ambrosine Neal to the Tories.

They have done nothing, however, with three Liberals holding the balance of power. The big swing to Labour, with the Tories trounced in previous marginals like Cricklewood, reflects the national anti-Tory mood.

Significantly the Tory and Liberal propaganda against 'extremism' had no effect. Reality is slightly different. The left is in a majority on the Labour Group but is split, with Ken Livingstone's behaviour at the GLC having created two clear camps.

Controversial issues could emerge fairly quickly. There is talk of Labour sacking the head of social services who the Tories took no action against over the Jasmine Beckford case. The council is not in a good state. Manual workers have struck recently over being paid late.

Above all the Tories appear to have used reserves to keep the rates down whilst not making major cuts in order to boost their election chances.

How Labour will try to deal with its difficult inheritance remains to be seen. There is still an old right wing group and the soft left would shy away from confrontation.

By Leo McDaid

Tories routed nationwide

Glasgow

THURSDAY 8 May was a historic day for the people of Glasgow. When all the votes were counted the city had become a Tory-free zone. The Tories were left without a single seat. Of Glasgow's 31 seats in the Strathclyde region, 30 are now Labour and the Alliance has one.

The scale of the Tory defeat was emphasised by the fact that candidates polled less votes than the Alliance or even the Scottish Nationalists. The last three Tory strongholds were taken, in each case with comfortable majorities.

See also pages 8-9

Lothian

AFTER FOUR years of Tory/Alliance coalition, in which the Alliance voted with the Tories for 80 per cent of the time, Labour

swept to power in the Lothian Region, winning 32 seats out of 49. They polled 42 per cent of the vote, to 23 per cent for the Tories, 19 per cent for the Alliance and 13 per cent for the SNP.

As an immediate priority, Labour leader John Mulvey, has promised a mini-budget to restore some services cut by the Tories. However with the council inheriting spending proposals from the previous administration which are £23 million above government guidelines, the labour movement faces a struggle to secure more resources if its election pledges are to be carried out.

Grampian

THE TORIES also lost control of the Grampian and Tayside, where they lost seven seats to Labour and five to the SNP, to make Labour the biggest party. In Scotland as a whole,

Labour won 44 per cent of the total vote, with the SNP second with 18 per cent, the Tories third with 16 per cent and the Alliance trailing behind with 14 per cent. On the basis of these votes in a general election, six Tory MPs would lose their seats, including Defence Secretary George Younger. This weekend's Scottish Tory conference will be a grim affair.

Coventry

THE TORY party in Coventry City Council has been reduced to an irrelevant rump. They now hold only 13 seats, with one Liberal and 40 Labour councillors. Five Tories seeking re-election were defeated, including one who had been on the council for 33 years, in a seat they had never lost before. It was the worst result for the Tories since before the Second World War.

Not only the Tories are worried. The Alliance's hopes of a band-wagon effect after winning a council by-election in November have been shattered. They failed to win any more seats and only came second in one of the 18 wards. In 11 wards, Labour received more than half the votes.

This was a vote of working-class people for the party of their class and a vote of hatred against Thatcher.

Brighton

IN BRIGHTON, Labour gained two seats to give it exactly half the council seats. The Tories ceased to be the biggest party for the first time since 1852! Tom Forrester, the first SDP candidate to win a council seat anywhere in the country this time polled 1,700 votes less than Labour.

Withers to resign?

AFTER WEEKS of scabbing at Wapping Malcolm Withers, NUJ FOC at the Sun, has finally offered to resign as Labour prospective Parliamentary candidate for Stevenage.

What is nevertheless a disgrace is the fact that the Labour Party NEC did not see fit to sack Withers as a PPC before he was pressured into resigning himself.

Supporters elected

THE WITCH-HUNT in the Isle of Wight Labour Party suffered a set-back at the party's AGM, when two Militant supporters were elected to the executive committee in the face of the most hostile anti-Militant secretary's report.

Inquiry deplored in Hull

HULL NORTH Labour Party has passed a resolution deploring the decision of the NEC to investigate Liverpool Labour Party members and another criticising the reduction in

the budget of the LPYS.

... Bristol

BRISTOL SOUTH Labour Party's general management committee convincingly carried resolutions against the Liverpool inquiry and attacks upon Militant supporters.

and Norwich

NORWICH HEALTH Service NUPE branch has written to head office to express its opposition to witch-hunts in the Labour Party and in NUPE, in line with policy agreed at the 1985 conference. It also expressed its concern at the failure of Tom Sawyer, Deputy General Secretary, to put forward this policy.

Labour women's conference 1986

THE LABOUR Party Womens' conference meeting on 17-19 May, should be an essential part of the campaign to rebuild Labour's support and prepare for an early general election.

Millions of working class women are enraged by the Thatcher government. They have felt the full brunt of the Tories' uncaring cuts in education and health.

Women have been alarmed by Thatcher's sabre-rattling and her backing of Reagan in his attack on Libya. They are concerned about the safety of nuclear

power. They are anxious for their children, and will not be placated just by soothing words from Tory ministers, who seem prepared to support the nuclear industry come what may.

But Labour must offer policies that will materially benefit women who want homes, jobs, the restoration of all Tory cuts and a future for their families.

Will Labour leaders deny their responsibility or will they take full control of the economic wealth, and provide the resources to meet working people's needs. Conference must itself elaborate a clear socialist alternative, and argue to commit the party's leadership to implement it.



Miners' wives demonstration in London. Labour's women's organisation must recruit working class women.

Militant stands for:

- ★ Equal pay for work of equal value.
- ★ Minimum wage of £120 a week with pro rata payments for part-time workers.
- ★ A 35 hour week.
- ★ Trade union control of grading schemes. No pay deal or grading scheme to be agreed that discriminates against women workers.
- ★ One year maternity leave on full pay.
- ★ Free daycare and educational provision to be available for all under-fives, enabling women to pursue active working, educational and political lives.
- ★ A Labour government committed to introducing a socialist planned economy to provide the resources to transform the lives of women and men.

Campaigning - the first priority

THE DAY-to-day concerns of working class women and opposition to Tory attacks, will be dominating the agenda of Labour Women's conference far more than in the past.

By Margaret Creear

The Fowler Reviews, cuts in other services, especially local authority services, will pauperise a large section of the working class and throw the extra burden onto the shoulders of women.

The organisational resolutions should be looked at in the light of how they help the struggles of working class women.

The agenda will include resolutions supporting shadow elections for the five women's seats on the NEC and attempting to give the results some authority in the movement. This will be difficult however as all but one trade union (ACTT) have refused to participate. Many Women's Sections disagree both with the policy of electing the five seats at Women's conference at this stage and with the tactic of holding shadow elections.

Only 66 Women's Sections have nominated anyone (a small number considering the size of the campaign by the Women's Action Committee (WAC) on this issue) and there are 23 candidates for five places. The vast majority are WAC supporters, which does not reflect the make up of the Women's organisation.

The first resolution (as amended) which calls for parity with the LPYS should be supported to give the Women's Organisation a direct vote on the NEC immediately.

Resolution 11 from NUPE shows a general desire to increase participation of working class women, especially trade union women, in the Labour Women's organisation. Unfortunately it does not call for more campaigns around issues affecting them, but for more constitutional changes.

It is suggested that consultation between the NEC and the National Women's Committee should include the five seats on the NEC and, in spite of continuing opposition from the largest region of the Labour Women's Organisation, changing the basis for election of the National Women's Committee.

Recruit workers

It also calls for involving more young Labour women in the party's youth work however, it doesn't mention consultations with the LPYS!

Fortunately this year there will be a debate on campaigning work and building a mass Labour Women's Organisation based around Bootle Women's Section Resolution 43 and 41 and 42 which suggest specific campaigns to recruit working class women. This should be the number one priority for the 1986 Women's Conference.

Victims of slave labour

A REPORT issued this week by the Northern Region Low Pay Unit reveals the extent of Low Pay and poverty among NHS ancillary workers.

The position of these workers has steadily deteriorated as a direct consequence of Tory cuts in public spending and privatisation. In ten years the earnings of male full time ancillaries have fallen from 91 per cent of the national average for male manual workers to just 75.5 per cent.

For women ancillary workers the situation is even worse—their wages have slipped from 69 per cent to 58 per cent of the average. This is at a time when price rises have raced ahead of their wage increases, with most ancillary workers receiving wage rises 10 to 15 per cent less than price rises between April 1980 and April 1985.

Cleaners at the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle get a pittance of £1.81 an hour. For a forty hour week this makes a great total of £72! The Low Pay Unit definition of low pay is less than £115 per week. For NHS cleaners, cooks and porters this would mean a weekly pay rise of £42 to even reach this poverty line level of income.

Living wage

These workers in the public sector cannot afford to wait until the next Labour government for a better deal and a living wage—the day to day worries over feeding and clothing the family, paying the rent and other bills is with them now. The Gas board won't wait for a Labour government to get the bills paid!

The demonstration in Manchester on 31 May is an excellent opportunity to show ancillary workers how

a fightback for both jobs and a living wage should be conducted. The fight must be around a programme of a massive increase in spending on services like hospitals and schools, getting rid of the cowboy private contractors and improving standards, wages and conditions.

It is not only workers in the public sector who will want to come to Manchester on 31 May, for although NHS ancillaries are near the bottom of the wages league, the Low Pay Unit survey showed that workers covered by Wages Councils eg. shop workers were even worse off.

Half of all firms in the Northern Region visited by the Wages Councils inspectorate were found to be paying less than the legal minimum wage for that industry, yet there has not been one single prosecution of an employer in the last three years! So much for the great upholders of Law and

Order—they aren't so keen to take to task law breakers when they belong to the same class as this Tory government!

One young cafe assistant was found to be receiving £33 for a 48 hour week. This is £35 below the legal minimum. Yet the Tories are pushing the Wages Bill through parliament to remove under 21's from these minimum guidelines.

Campaign

A look at an area like the North East, devastated by unemployment and more redundancies threatened at Swan Hunters shipyards, clearly show that the argument 'one person's wage rise is another person's job' is without foundation. Not only is there record unemployment in this region but the North East also boasts the highest proportion of illegal underpaying.

The demonstration in Manchester can provide a focus for all sections of workers, public and private sector, men, women and youth and lay the basis for a national campaign for a minimum wage of £115 for a 35 hour week as a first step to the elimination of grinding poverty in Britain.

By Jen Pickard
(Chair, Gateshead Women's Council)

North West Region Labour Women
Demonstration and Rally
End Low Pay
Fight
Privatisation

Saturday 31 May

Speakers from:
Women Against Pit Closures
Silentnight
Tailor and Garment Workers Union
USDAW

Assemble: All Saints (near Mancunian way) Manchester 11.30am
Rally: Crown Square, Manchester 1pm to 1.30pm

Creche available at the start of the march

MILITANT Readers Meeting, Sunday 18 May, 7.30pm. Speakers: Felicity Dowling (Liverpool councillor) Jane Hartley (expelled member Sheffield Attercliffe Womens Council) Chair: Frances Curran (LPYS rep on NEC-personal capacity). Royal Hotel, Albert Place, Rothesay

End production line delivery - defend Wendy Savage

Tight fisted Tories

WENDY SAVAGE, an obstetrician in the East End of London, has been suspended and faces a disciplinary inquiry (see Militant 785).

She is alleged to have 'inexcusably' delayed the performance of caesarean sections and endangered babies lives, in situations where her close colleagues would have ordered their performance as a matter of routine.

Caesarean section is the most drastic form of surgical intervention in childbirth. The baby is delivered through a large incision into the mother's abdominal wall and womb.

Wendy Savage is among those obstetricians who believe that surgical intervention in childbirth, particularly caesarean section, should only be performed in those cases where the life or health of the mother or the baby is at risk.

Matter of routine

Establishment obstetricians perform caesarean sections before labour, as a matter of routine, if they feel that a woman's pelvis is too small to let the baby through; if the baby is in a breech (bottom first) position; or if the mother is suffering from a condition such as severe high blood pressure.

Staff shortages in busy labour wards and junior doctors left to cope on their own obviously mean that

By Julie Morgan
(Tower Hamlets Women's Council)

the use of high-technology and defensive caesarean sections provides more certainty, speed and convenience than being on call to supervise sometimes lengthy periods of natural labour.

This conveyor-belt attitude, also clearly demonstrated by the 20 per cent hospital rate for artificial induction of labour is the main reason that Britain is presiding over a fast rising caesarean rate. In England and Wales, despite a fall in the birth rate, caesarean section rates have risen from 3.1 per cent in 1963 to an average 10.4 per cent in England and Wales and 12.9 per cent in Scotland last year.

A caesarean birth means that the woman is ten times more likely to die. Caesarean sections are now the highest cause of women's death during maternity due to possible complications. There can be no justification for any doctor to say that a caesarean operation is completely safe.

A caesarean section is a painful major abdominal operation which carries the same risk of infection and complications as any other

major operation. After a delivery by caesarean section a mother is left weak and in pain and unable to contemplate heavy work, such as carrying shopping or lifting a toddler, for several weeks.

A woman who has been wrongly forced into having a caesarean section may suffer psychologically after being deprived of the physical and mental satisfaction of giving birth naturally and this may affect her relationship with her baby.

Shortages

Caesareans are much more expensive to perform than natural births because an anaesthetist and a team of doctors need to be present. This fact seems to be ignored in the NHS because of pressure on beds and staff shortages and because time means money to many NHS obstetricians who are also heavily involved with private practice.

Pre-planned caesareans are very convenient for many establishment obstetricians. Caesarean sections are much quicker than normal deliveries.

Another medical fashion among establishment obstetricians is the practice of inducing birth in order to ensure that babies are not born during 'unsociable' hours. All but 2 per cent of British births take place in



Wendy Savage.

hospital. In 20 per cent of them labour is artificially induced.

Independent experts say that there is no case to be made for use of caesarean section in more than six per cent of cases, which means that Britain is performing nearly twice and in some hospitals, three times as many as would be clinically advisable.

After July if Wendy

Savage loses her case, many British obstetricians may feel obliged to go on the defensive and against their better judgement, rigidly follow the arbitrary guidelines that urge them to routine use of high technology and surgical intervention in childbirth. The next Labour government should conduct a thorough and public investigation into obstetric provision and practices in the NHS.

THE GOVERNMENT is ignoring the recent advice by the Advocate General of the European Court that Britain is in breach of the EEC equality rules by not paying the Invalid Care Allowance to married women.

The House of Commons voted on 1 May not to begin immediate payment of the meagre £23 allowance to married women looking after a disabled relative.

Cheaper

At present the benefit is payable to anyone of working age who is looking after a disabled relative—except married women. An estimated 5.5 million people (mostly women) look after the disabled as a result of the government's policies of closing down day centres and hospitals.

Barney Heyhoe, the Health Minister pointed out that extending the allowance to cover married women would cost about £100 million a year. If the final ruling, due next month, confirms that the government is in breach of the equality rules, the government has threatened to take the cheaper alternative—scrap the payment altogether, putting the entire burden for looking after the old and infirm on to the family.

By Anne McKay

Charter for women workers



Margaret Crear speaking on the Charter at LPYS conference.

A CHARTER for Women Workers is a fighting programme for campaigning work in your area. Published by Liverpool, Manchester and Rochdale Labour Women's councils. It deals with many problems facing working class women, such as low pay, lack of childcare facilities, sexual harassment and privatisation.

Get your copy now! Bulk order available from A Banner, 55 Lunt Road, Bootle Merseyside L20 5EZ or single copies from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB. Price 40p + 15p p&p.

Women's rights - a political fight

LABOUR MP Jo Richardson has recently circulated a document for discussion on the NEC which takes up the idea of a ministry for women's rights.

Militant supporters would whole-heartedly back reforms put forward in the document such as a national minimum wage, improved child benefit, free education and other facilities for 3-4 year olds. These would be a step forward in the fight to end the inequality and disadvantages faced by the vast majority of women.

But legislation by itself will not alter the lives of many working class women. The right to maternity leave has already been granted by law but it is undermined by a lack of child care facilities which forces many women into part-time, less organised, less skilled work when they return.

Real reforms require real money and the Tory government are hell-bent on slashing public spending. They are intent on scuppering any serious increase in spending on 'friggeries' such as nursery education. Their vindictive attitude to Liver-

pool council should be proof enough of that.

There can be no non-political struggles for equality for women. Capitalism will try to stop every reform, even under a Labour government, through its control of the purse strings.

Socialist women who want to see an effective ministry for women's rights must build up the groundwork now. Labour's women's organisation must start to build links amongst trade unionised women, campaign to organise non-union women workers and to build membership in the home, on the working class estates.

Enforcement

Campaigns around clear socialist policies will build the movement to kick out the Tories and confront big business. If we don't campaign using the strength of the working class and campaign for enforcement by the labour movement once new laws are passed, the bosses will treat our gains with contempt.

The ruling class will use every method to erode real reforms. We must have an answer to them.

Women have been to the fore in many recent

battles—to save jobs, communities and local services. Labour women must be in the forefront of the battle to liberate working class women along with the rest of their class.

MILITANT will carry a fuller analysis of Jo Richardson's proposals in a future issue. You can help to make Militant by far the best paper in the movement by sending us your views, your experiences of life for working class women under Thatcher and details of the campaigning activities in your area.



Every advance working class women have made has come from struggle. The spirit is still there as shown in the school students' strike in 1985 (above) and the print strike (below).



Photo: Militant



Police duties are increasingly turned away from fighting crime to fighting the organised working class. Left at Wapping. Right in the miners' strike.

Only doing whose job?

A RECENT book *Policing Industrial Disputes 1893-1985*, published by Cambridge University Press, puts the police riots at Wapping into historical perspective.

By the beginning of the survey in 1893: "there was (already) a relatively sophisticated network of Home Office spies, plainclothes policemen, the army, and local officials" ready when major industrial disputes were discussed at the highest government levels.

In 1910, for example, when the great Cambrian coal strike began, the Home Secretary and Under-Secretary, the War Secretary, the Adjutant-General, and the Metropolitan Police commissioner were all immediately consulted. The Met was already a national strike-breaking force.

Police tactics

The recent further centralisation of control to get round Labour-controlled local authorities, and the National Reporting Centre are merely later refinements.

The specific police tactics on the picket line have a long pedigree too. The author, Geary, relates how in the great strikes of 1911-13 police tactics were deliberately calculated: "to maintain law and order (in a manner) that would ensure the strikers' defeat".

Strikers were told that more than six pickets would constitute an obstruction. Heavy-handed methods were deliberately encouraged in-

By Ian Hunter
(Sacriston Labour Party)

volving "indiscriminate violence".

The intention was to make picketing ineffective or to provoke pickets into retaliation to 'justify' police repression. The guise of law and order 'impartiality' avoided the direct criticism which using the army would have brought.

A present-day officer is quoted on how they harass picket transport: "The trick is to stop them before they get there, and go through all their documents; with public service vehicles there's an incredible list of documents they've got to have and then we can always say this vehicle is unfit".

Churchill was quoted at the peaceful end of a strike in 1911: "I'm very sorry to hear it. It would have been better to have gone on and given these men a good thrashing". He had prepared well for that thrashing; offering a complete Bill of Indemnity to the authorities in Liverpool for any illegal actions taken to break the strike there!

From 1919 workers faced the development of the Special Branch to collate and co-ordinate the intelligence gathering activities. This was based on previous 'successes' such as the CID action in a 1917 munitions dispute. "The policy of arresting

Conspiring with the bosses

THE USE of police in industrial disputes has never been 'impartial', they are there primarily to undermine a strike's effectiveness. The instructions below come from a Bramshill Police College training course.

- "Reconnoitre scenes to see:
- (a) What points will need protection.
 - (b) Problems of getting workforce in and out.
 - (c) How much room can pickets be allowed to move around in?
 - (d) Are there any objects at the scene which should be removed?
 - (e) Is there any vantage point for observation by police and for police CCTV (Close Circuit Television)?"

- "Contact management to ascertain:
- (a) Whether normal working is to be maintained.
 - (b) Whether it is intended that deliveries and collections should be made.
 - (c) What is the attitude of the workforce.
 - (d) Will there be any advantage in providing buses for employees temporarily.

strike leaders... was only possible because the CID kept a list of 'the most dangerous men' and accumulated 'evidence' against them.

Labour governments

What is most shameful, however, is the role of past Labour governments.

Referring to the whole home intelligence and 'anti-strike planning' network, Geary tells how the first Labour Chief Civil Commissioner was instructed by his Tory predecessor that: "it was his duty to protect the constitution against a

(e) Identification marks for vehicles". Strategy and tactics are finally decided locally by police and management in collusion. In a local newspaper strike a couple of years ago a Chief Superintendent said:

"I had regular meetings with one person who was the Circulation Director... we formulated plans weekly... and instead of the... *Evening Post* say, being circulated from this office block here which is just round the corner, we had perhaps half a dozen very large vehicles going to various points on the perimeter of the City, and the small vehicles distributed them from there. This is just one of the things we did. We used various entrances and various methods".

But to cover up the degree of collusion, the Bramshill course warns officers not to use facilities owned by the firm in question. It then goes on to the need to estimate each day "if many prisoners are expected", and to arrange the necessary back-up for their processing, photographing, etc.

Bolshevik-inspired general strike", and was begged: "not to destroy all I had done and not to inform his Cabinet of it".

When that first Labour government left office that same Tory was reassured that his plans were safe. His 'Labour' substitute confessed: "I haven't done a bloody thing about them".

No liberal hand-wringing about violent policing will solve these problems. A socialist Labour government committed to fundamental social transformation must remove from power these capitalist interests which manipulate the rest of society for their own profit.



Buttering the upper crust

LABOUR'S LEADERS have dyed every fold of the red flag a dingy grey and gone in for designer socialism. They think this will win the middle class.

But why stop there? *Militant* would like to help readers woo the upper classes by getting into 1986's glittering social season.

Become a 'man about town'. The *Daily Express* told the world recently that you can get a good selection of made to measure suits, shirts and ties for £12,320. It's even cheaper if you shop outside Saville Row. But who wants to slum it?

Do you want to be a deb? Do they still exist? You can find out. Rig yourself out

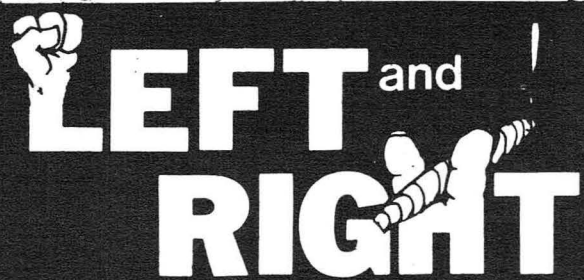
Sell Militant

WHAT A week for Liverpool. Supporters of the Labour council had a lot to cheer about, whether they wore Anfield red or Goodison blue scarves on Saturday. But hot on the heels of the nationwide vote of no confidence in the Tories, Labour's leaders seem to want to score an own goal by going for expulsions.

That has put the name *Militant* once again in the front of workers' minds. Now is the time to get out on the streets and explain what we actually stand for.

On Wednesday evening, 21 May, every *Militant* supporter should be going door-to-door after the Six o'clock News with the petition against expulsions and this week's *Militant*. Keep up the sales initiative the following week as well.

Why not establish a sale where none has been before? In Edinburgh, sellers have started a new sale outside the university selling 28 one week, and 30 the next. Students as well as workers have learnt the lessons of seven years of Thatcher rule.



A loyal Labour man

GEORGE WRIGHT, Welsh Regional Secretary of the TGWU does not like *Militant* and that's putting it mildly. He wanted to make sure this paper was not sold at a recent Wales TUC meeting. But in order to do that, this 'moderate' Labour man also had to ban the *Morning Star*, *Tribune* and even *Labour Weekly*. A witch-hunt is like a

nuclear melt-down, once it's started, it's hard to stop.

Moonlight becomes you

THE RUSSIAN government paper *Isvestia* has estimated that 'moonlighting' workers, a small part of the unofficial parallel economy in the USSR make 5 billion roubles (£5.3 billion) a year. Not surprisingly. Labour productivity has increased quite rapidly in the last year or so in Russia but the bureaucracy manage to cream off the bulk of the wealth for themselves.

The pressure for such 'informal arrangements' would be less if the USSR became a workers' democracy where the working class controlled the economy for the good of the mass of the people. Informed sources tell us this is not one of Mr Gorbachev's planned reforms.

Bermondsey

Putting the Liberals under siege

BERMONDSEY Labour Party is now recovering from the body blow of the shattering by-election defeat in 1983. We are preparing to regain the Parliamentary seat from the Liberals in the next general election, despite losing seats to the Liberals in last week's borough elections.

In the council elections the Liberals took 14 seats to Labour's 8 (although Southwark council remains Labour), and Marxists John Bryan and Bob Law, standing in Bricklayers ward, were both defeated.

But the results show the beginning of a recovery for Labour since Peter Tatchell was defeated in February 1983. This was followed by defeat in the general election and subsequent council by-elections.

The Liberals' big breakthrough in Bermondsey three years ago was a direct result of the vendetta by the press and Labour's enemies against Tatchell and

By Shareen Blackall
Bermondsey LPYS

the left, coupled to the simultaneous expulsions of *Militant's* Editorial Board. Labour's leaders couldn't have done more to ensure the routing of the Party in Bermondsey.

But the Liberals' success, as in other parts of inner London, has its roots in past failures of the Labour Party. In Bermondsey the party's dwindling support rested on the personality of ex-MP Bob Mellish (now a Lord), and a handful of right wing councillors who had become increasingly detached from



John Bryan.

the majority of local people, and maintained the party machinery for their own functions.

Bermondsey's new generation owed these people no favours and in bleak Tory Britain were prepared to break with decades of Labour tradition. Ironically, voting for the Liberals was a



Canvassing in Bricklayers' ward. Fighting an energetic socialist campaign to stop the Liberal bandwagon.

vote for change, and a break with the past.

Since then, in the local election Labour's share of the vote has increased from the low point in 1983 of 35 per cent to 45 per cent now. The Liberals share is now 51 per cent and the Tories now a miserable 3.5 per cent.

What is clear in the local elections is that the Tories and Liberals collaborated with each other to maximise the opposition to Labour. It can be assumed that 10 per cent of the Tory vote went to the Liberals, as the Tories only stood candidates in 4 of the 8 wards.

One of the main features in the Bricklayers ward campaign was to expose the Liberal-Tory pact. On 25 March this year the Liberals, led by MP Simon Hughes, met with local businessmen to discuss the campaign. In a special Liberal broadsheet *Business Focus*, local Tories were told to support the Liberals in Bermondsey because "the Tories cannot do it on their own".

An energetic political campaign by Labour in Bricklayers, which resulted in one of the highest turnouts in Southwark (51 per cent) brought 65 new recruits to the party and another 45 still to be followed up who are interested in joining. A large, active Young Socialists branch has been created.

Red scare

The campaign pushed John Bryan's vote up from 776 last time to 1,199 this time. Labour was only defeated by the opposition of the Liberals with the backing of Tory voters.

If the Tories had stood a candidate then almost certainly Labour would have won.

The Liberals are now feeling the pressure. The day before the local elections, MP Simon Hughes said: "We are under siege". They concentrated their fire on Bricklayers with Simon Hughes himself collecting members from the polling

stations. David Steel's son was also shipped into the ward, along with some American students, members of the Democratic Party.

The Liberals tried on the tired old red-scare tactics in leaflets headed '*Militant Exposed*', declaiming 'Don't let Southwark become another Liverpool'. But these had little effect.

The Liberals should be concerned. They only won the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) seat in the whole constituency by 50 votes after a recount.

More importantly, the eleven hundred votes for Labour in Bricklayers ward are far more consciously Labour than those who voted in the past, out of habit.

If this can be repeated across the constituency then Bermondsey will be won from the Liberals, and it will be on Labour's best traditions of socialism.

The campaign to elect John Bryan as Bermondsey's Labour MP begins now.

Bad start for Lawson

THE CHANCELLOR of the Exchequer Nigel Lawson is 'helping' the unemployed. He claims that the Jobstart and Restart, job creation pilot schemes are "producing results already" and has allocated funds to develop them into a single programme covering the entire country.



Nigel—making plans for youth.

Restart offers the long term unemployed 'special counselling' at local Job Centres and advice in how to 'market themselves' to employers.

Jobstart gives £20 a week subsidy from the Manpower Services Commission for six months to anyone who takes a job paying below £80 a week.

'More attractive'

Tory employment spokesman Kenneth Clarke calls this "making low paid jobs more attractive."

But during the first three weeks only ten people in the whole country had taken up the job subsidy.

In Preston, one of the nine original pilot scheme areas, twelve people have taken up the schemes. This is despite the fact that the 4,000 long term unemployed had letters telling them about the schemes and saying that benefit could be withdrawn

if they failed to co-operate. An interesting job offered by the schemes in Kirklees, Yorkshire, was running Jobstart!

The unemployed clearly see the schemes for what they are, just another way of trying to guarantee the bosses an endless supply of cheap labour.

Instead of Lawson's planned, single programme, Britain's unemployed want to see the creation of real jobs, where the wages and conditions are enough for a decent standard of living and don't require a government subsidy.

By Gail Tattersall
(Withington LPYS)

"Cheap labour is our business"

BRITISH GAS has said it won't be taking part in the new two-year YTS which started officially on 1 April. Instead it is running its own one-year version of YTS.

Could the Gas Board be following the example of Liverpool City Council, who have taken on 100 YTS trainees at trade-union rates of pay and with a guaranteed job?

Unfortunately not. The Corporation has in fact been careful to point out that its decision is not in any way critical of the Manpower Services Commission.

The British Gas YTS which will be available to about 500 youngsters, offers a training allowance of £35 a week. As for the guaranteed job, a spokesman has said: "Some oppor-

tunities of transferring to permanent employment may arise". To dampen any remaining hopes, they added: "The fact that we have decided not to operate two-year YTS this year does not necessarily mean we will stay out in the future."

By Neelam De Freitas

Fighting Fund

New chart next week

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 London East	4145		3500
2 London South West	1681		1500
3 London West	2703		2900
4 London South East	2031		2200
5 South East	1532		2400
6 East Midlands	1844		3050
7 Humberside	1382		2300
8 Merseyside	4163		6900
9 Eastern	1950		3450
10 Manchester/Lancs	2153		4200
11 Scotland West	1937		3850
12 Yorkshire	2720		5600
13 Scotland East	1511		3200
14 Southern	1430		3100
15 South West	993		2150
16 Wales East	930		2250
17 Northern	1583		4550
18 Wales West	1201		3400
19 West Midlands	1545		4500
Others	4217		5000
Total	41653		70000

ly need to ask them.

Ann Price from Acton who donated £200 and Bob Sulatycki from Fulham who gave £100 show the sacrifices our readers are prepared to make.

Make sure you use your collecting tin this quarter. It is the key to success. If you don't own one then buy one straight away. Use it on every street and estate sale. Pass it around your mates at

work and college. Plan your socials and other fund raising events well in advance.

There are many different ways to raise money but the easiest and most important is simply to ask your friends. They will surprise you with their response. So get cracking now. Build on last quarter's result and show our opponents once more that nothing can stop us from growing.

THANKS this week to:

D Harris South Normanton LPYS £2; Mansfield Labour Party members £5.05; J Long Streatham £40; C Butterworth Walthamstow STE £25; M Arkwright Walthamstow CLP £10; Ernie Roberts MP £2; Orrell Ward Labour Party Crosby £25; J Muller Newham South CLP £8; Paul NGA Nottingham £1; M Quinn Nottingham SOGAT £3; R Ballard Nottingham NUM £5; V Gelston Leicester £20; Adam and Ruth Northampton £4; Cumberland LPYS £8.07; Hull busmen £1.60.

Militant

Liverpool

Labour's

triumph



Part of the 1,200 audience at the Liverpool *Militant* rally on 4 May.

Gangsters run our Town Hall

Right: Even Labour's worst enemies could not disguise the scale of the victory.

This is what Roy Hattersley said about Liverpool's Militants

'We know there has been political corruption. We know there has been literal corruption'

Ex. Hon. Roy Hattersley M.P. 20.11.85.

Extracts for a Liberal election leaflet which shows the kind of dirty campaign Labour faced.

THE ELECTION results last week were a disaster for the Tories and a triumph for Labour. But they were also a vindication of *Militant* and its supporters. In Liverpool especially, the charge that *Militant* loses votes for Labour was answered resoundingly.

Candidates who openly proclaimed their support for the paper not only won, but achieved outstanding results, while counter-campaigns to scare voters with anti-*Militant* propaganda rebounded with a vengeance. Against a background of vitriolic abuse from the Tories, the Alliance and the media and the opposition of the Labour Party leaders, these election victories were an historic success.

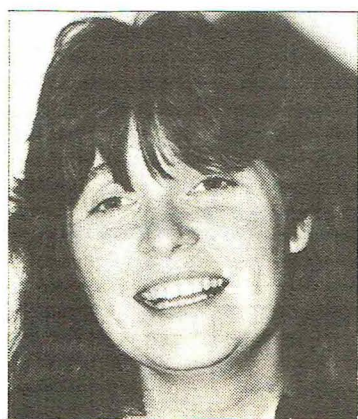
"HOWEVER EXPERTS may analyse the votes, there is not a shadow of a doubt that Liverpool's Town Hall election results were a success for *Militant*. . . Nowhere else were the local issues more sharply defined and more important than in Liverpool. . . No scouser could have been under any illusion that a vote for Labour in this city yesterday was a vote for *Militant*." Editorial in the *Liverpool Echo* 9 May.

Despite all the hopes and confident predictions of Labour's enemies, last Thursday's election results represent a massive vote of confidence by the Liverpool working class in the 48 councillors who face surcharge and disqualification for their magnificent stand in defence of jobs and services.

Three years of abuse, lies and slander against the Labour councillors, orchestrated by the *Liverpool Echo* and *Daily Post* and their Liberal and Tory cohorts was unable to undermine the tremendous bedrock of support which exists in the city for Labour's policies.

There has been a virulent and relentless campaign against the council. The rallies of the middle-class 'Liverpool Against Militant' were blown up out of all proportion. Personal insults were heaped on councillors, especially Derek Hatton in TV programmes like *World in Action*.

It was alleged that 'evidence' for the Labour Party NEC's inquiry into Liverpool District Labour Party was to be taken "in confidence", in "safe houses", etc. Yet without a single shred of evidence, all the allegations of intimidation have



Felicity Dowling — 71 per cent of the vote.

burst like bubbles of hot air.

As Councillor Tony Mulhearn said: "We said we would be judged on jobs, services and houses. The courage shown by councillors was not lost on the people of the city."

New houses

To the press, the Tories and the Liberals, the vote for Labour came as a real surprise. They had begun to believe their own lies. To the workers in Liverpool the new houses, sports centres and nurseries could not be erased by the mountain of filth heaped upon the Labour council.

For the Tories in Liverpool, as elsewhere, Thursday was an absolute disaster. On TV the next morning, *The Observer's* Adam Raphael made the contemptible comment that "you could put up a cow and have it elected for Labour". Yet this city had a ma-

ajority of Tory MPs up to 1964. It now has none and only seven Tory seats on the council.

On Thursday their vote was halved with six of the seven seats they were defending going to Liverpool's new Tory party, the Liberals. The only Tory to hold his seat was the leader Chris Hallows, and even he saw his 3000 majority slashed to only 300. The policies of Thatcherism have virtually obliterated the Tory party in Liverpool.

For the Liberals also, Thursday's elections represented bitter defeat. Their inability to make inroads into the Labour vote came as a deep disappointment to their leader Sir Trevor Jones.

Three weeks before, the Alliance were confidently predicting Labour would lose control. But their dirty smear campaign backfired. This included quotes from the *Echo*, accusing Labour of "gangsterism" and scandalously, they were able to use the words of Roy Hattersley who a few months ago accused councillors of "political and literal corruption".

But this failed to cut across the magnificent achievements of the Labour council in the eyes of workers. Of the seven seats the Liberals won, only one was taken from Labour, in Dingle ward. Even there Labour only lost by 31 with the 'Communist' Party taking 44 votes!

Had a sufficiently vigorous campaign of counter-information been organised in Dingle, Labour would have won. Unfortunately, certain ward members there seemed too preoccupied with policing *Militant*

canvassers and using the *Echo* to attack the council, to concentrate on the real enemy, the Liberals.

Since Thursday Labour's enemies have fallen over themselves in attempting to undermine the extent of Labour's victory in Liverpool, suggesting the Alliance is poised to take power should Labour councillors be removed from office. They cite the increase in the Alliance vote to 45 per cent to cover up the collapse of the Tory vote and their own forecast that Labour would lose overall control.

Liberal failure

The fact remains, however, that even with their highest-ever vote, the Liberals have been unable to make any real headway into the Labour vote or win control of the city council. It is little wonder that the Liberals now advocate proportional representation to beat Labour in Liverpool!

Neil Kinnock's office are trying to argue that on the basis of these results Labour MPs in Liverpool would be vulnerable to the Alliance. It is true that the Labour vote has gone down from 90,755 (46.5 per cent) in 1984 to 71,131 (41.4 per cent) in 1986. But the main explanation for that fall is the huge drop in the turnout, from 195,000 (51.1 per cent) to 171,704 (45 per cent).

Over the same period the Alliance vote rose from 67,173 (34.3 per cent) to 77,270 (44.6 per cent), but this is largely due to the collapse of the Tory vote from 36,991 (18.9 per cent) to 21,348 (12.7 per cent). There has been a

mass desertion of Tories to the Liberals and thousands of former Labour voters abstaining.

But 1984 was an exceptional year for Labour. In 1983 they polled 75,687 (47 per cent) and in 1982, in exactly the same seats as this year, only 54,318 (38.5 per cent). In 1978 it was as low as 43,589 (32.3 per cent). It is thus impossible to conclude that there has been a serious erosion of the Labour vote this year. In a general election there would be far fewer Labour abstentions and the Tories would recover some ground, as the national vote polarised.

Coming after the defeat of the council's budget campaign in November last year, with the impending disqualification of 48 Labour councillors, the threatened expulsion of leading party members and two years of unparalleled vilification, Labour's vote is little short of marvellous.

While the party leadership nationally were behind all other Labour councils, Liverpool won, as Tony Mulhearn said, "without any help from Kinnock and the party leadership". At public meetings leading councillors were rightly asked: "Why won't Kinnock back you?"

No other Labour Party in the country fought these elections without a District Labour Party and against the divisive remarks of their own party leadership, who *in private* hoped for the defeat of Labour in the city.

Seen in this context, Labour's vote was magnificent. It is a warning to the High Court judges and Labour's NEC, should they try and

Pin these pages up on your union notice-board.



DAILY POST

May 9, 1986

Price 18p

Labour maintains grip in Liverpool

MILITANTS' VOTE OF CONFIDENCE



Sir Trevor Jones

A BID by the Liverpool Federation of Black Organisations (a group associated with the Black Caucus) to unseat Labour in the Granby ward of Liverpool failed. Their candidate polled 427 to Labour's 2,287.

While the Labour vote rose by 400, the Liberals, with 1,351 polled 550 fewer than last time. Unfortunately the Labour victor, David Leach, has a record of opposition to the appointment of Sam Bond as the city's race relations advisor.

remove councillors from office.

In Speke, Felicity Dowling, one of those threatened with expulsion, romped home with a majority of 1,800. "Everyone knew exactly who I was and what I stood for", she commented, "I have been identified by the party leadership as undesirable, and 71 per cent disagreed".

In Valley and Fazakerley wards, Marxists Paul Astbury and John Linden were returned with large majorities. And in St Mary's ward *Militant* supporters were instrumental in returning a majority of 410 for Councillor Harry Keidan. One Kinnock supporter in the ward was forced to concede to *Militant* canvassers: "You lot are bloody good workers".

Famous victory

One blot on Labour's tremendous campaign, aside from the loss of Dingle, was the failure to capture Liberal seats in Broadgreen constituency. The Tory press has suggested that on Thursday's showing, Labour would lose Broadgreen in a general election. This is what they said in May 1983 after the Liberals polled more votes in the local elections in that year, but in June Terry Fields was returned as a Marxist MP.

The turn-out in Broadgreen on Thursday was down on the general election, and undoubtedly Labour's vote would increase were a general election called. However, the decision to suspend sales of the *Militant* in Broadgreen ward during the campaign and the rejection of extra canvassers in the Old Swan

ward the weekend before the elections undoubtedly affected the Labour vote in these wards and the morale of a number of party members.

Thursday's election results represent a famous victory for Labour in Liverpool. Not only is it the end of the old Tory party in Liverpool, but the stand of the 48 Labour councillors has inspired and enthused thousands of workers. The 75,000 workers and youth who voted Labour did so conscious of the programme and policies that Labour stood for, as the *Echo* grudgingly admitted.

It represents a tremendous foundation for the building of a mass labour movement in the city. If the vote for Labour in Liverpool was reflected across the county, we would have a landslide majority for a Labour government.

Far from being an electoral liability, *Militant* is an inspiration to thousands of workers. Labour's NEC had better beware. Expulsions will not be accepted and the party leadership should abandon their purge immediately.

Removal of Labour councillors by the courts will only result in 48 men and women of similar beliefs being elected on a massive wave of support for Labour.

A new tradition of militancy and fighting Labour representatives has been forged in Liverpool. The potential for the rapid growth of Marxism in Liverpool is tremendous. In the estates and workplaces on Merseyside and in Liverpool in particular, growth for the ideas of Marxism, of real socialism, is becoming unstoppable.

In Brief

Militant supporters victorious

ALL OVER the country, supporters of *Militant* were playing a major part in Labour's local election triumphs on 8 May. The results are a crushing answer to the charge that *Militant* is an electoral liability.

Gateshead

KEN BUCKINGHAM, a 'Rent and Ratepayer' on Gateshead Council for 19 years was defeated by 27-year old *Militant* supporter Neil Waites, standing for the first time. In a 43 per cent poll (very high for council elections thanks to the Labour campaign) Neil Waites polled 1,936 to Buckingham's 1,153.

It was the highest Labour vote ever in the ward apart from 1979 when the local elections were held on the same day as the general election.

Buckingham went out of his way to stress that his opponent was a Marxist: "If you vote for Labour," he shouted through his loudhailer: "You are voting for the *Militant*".

In his leaflet headed "Ken Buckingham v The *Militant*", he declared that "my opponent is a supporter of *Militant*" and quoted Neil Kinnock's comment that the Young Socialists who handed out leaflets urging school students to strike were "a bunch of dafties".

Brighton

IN BRIGHTON, *Militant* supporter Gordon Wingate increased the majority in his ward from 887 last year to 961, on a programme of support for the policies of Liverpool council and the socialist transformation of society.

North Tyneside

LAST YEAR 13 right wing councillors were expelled from the Labour Party in North Tyneside. The seven of them who had to stand for re-election this year, including the previous Labour group leader, called themselves 'Labour Against *Militant*' and were thoroughly thrashed.

Unfortunately Labour still does not control the council because the remaining six, who were elected as Labour councillors, have not had to stand for re-election. But on the basis of this year's results, they will not be re-elected.

Amongst the Labour victors with substantial majorities were *Militant* supporters Dave Corkey and Max Marsh.

BUCKINGHAM

RENT & RATEPAYER



The front of Ken Buckingham's election leaflet (see Gateshead story).

Glasgow

PARTICULARLY pleasing in Glasgow was the result in the Pollokshields/Shawlands area where the victor was Margaret Dick, "a self-confessed *Militant* supporter". The local press, the Tories and the Liberals joined in denouncing the candidate and the *Glasgow Evening Times* believed it would be a political shock if she was returned.

In the event Margaret Dick overturned a Tory majority of 1,612 into a 643 Labour majority. Both the Liberal and Tory vote dropped and Labour increased its vote by a staggering 65 per cent, well above the regional average.

Pollok's parliamentary candidate described it as by far the best result of the night. Who says *Militant* politics scares off voters? the campaign was greatly supported by the local Asian population and was financed by donations from the local branch of the Pakistan People's Party and by the Barony Colliery branch of the NUM.

Wirral

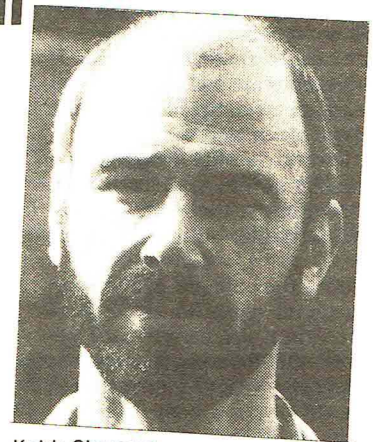
THE TORIES lost control of Wirral Council after both they and the Liberals ran a poisonous campaign against Labour and *Militant* in particular. The Tories lost two seats to the Alliance and two to Labour in Morton and Liscard. If Labour can achieve the same vote in the next two years in these wards, they will get a majority on the council.

Coventry

IN THE Coventry South East constituency of Dave Nellist MP there is just one Tory councillor and her future looks bleak. Labour won two Tory seats and easily held the two it was defending.

Dave Chater, a member of the GMBATU, defending Binley and Willenhall, won 58 per cent of the votes, nearly quadrupling a majority of 339 to 1,560. Over 500 Labour posters were displayed in the ward, 80 per cent of the ward was canvassed and dozens of potential party members were noted. This is the kind of campaign which will ensure victory for Labour in future elections.

KEN BUCKINGHAM
-v-
THE MILITANT



Keith Simpson.

Musselburgh

IN MUSSELBURGH where *Militant* supporter Keith Simpson was standing for Lothian Regional Council, the Alliance had struck a deal with the Tories, who did not stand a candidate for the first time in decades.

Despite this and the hostile local press and an attack from his own Constituency Labour Party leaders, Keith Simpson increased his majority over ex-Musselburgh Labour Party Chairman Andrew Coulson from 700 to 1,700.

London

FOUR *MILITANT* supporters were elected in Hackney—John Bloom and Lynne Faulkes, who won over 70 per cent of the vote, Ian Rowe and Jim Chrystie, who has been elected as Chairman of the Public Services Committee.

In Southwark, no Alliance stood in the Waverley Ward, leaving the Tories a clear field. Yet *Militant* supporter Brian Kelly achieved one of the best results, with a majority of 650 and a 19 per cent swing to Labour in what was previously a marginal ward in which last time Labour held one seat by only two votes. (For a full analysis of the results in Southwark, Bermondsey, see page 7).

In Greenwich, Eddie McParland, Richard Norris, Nick Smith and Steve Smith were successful, as was Paddy Little in Tower Hamlets, and Dave Barnes in Islington, who topped the poll in his ward. (See below)

Elsewhere, John Byrne was elected in Manchester, Bob Boyd in Stockport and John Kelly in Southampton.

Who 'let down the left'?

THE ANALYSIS of the local election results by *Tribune*, now the organ of the Kinnock 'soft right', should make interesting reading. Can we expect the usual tortuous attempts of the local government correspondent Phil Kelly to pour cold water on the magnificent achievements of "*Militant* influenced" Labour in Liverpool?

For over a year, this worthy Islington Labour councillor, a leading light of the Labour Coordinating Committee and refugee from the Young

Liberals with his mentor Peter Hain, has denigrated *Militant* in the columns of *Tribune*.

Every dirty smear has been faithfully reproduced by Kelly... "Merseyside left accuses *Militant* of intimidation and abuse"... "Left calls for shake-up of local party"... "Liverpool City Council has systematically discriminated against members of the National Union of Public Employees".

Kelly echoed criticisms of Liverpool's decision to borrow

from the Swiss banks. Three months later his own Islington Borough Council borrowed £200 million from City banks!

In last Thursday's election, Kelly unfortunately lost his seat to the SDP. His council leader, Margaret Hodge, earlier this year supported union leaders in attacking *Militant* and accused Liverpool of "letting down the left". In the local elections, 16 Alliance candidates were elected in Islington, a jump of 13, while in Liverpool, the Alliance were trounced.

Which way for the

THIS IS an epoch of storm and stress, especially in the colonial world—of revolution and counter-revolution and local wars. In the Philippines we are left with three possibilities:

1. A return to Marcosism and a new military-police dictatorship of a savage nature—Marcosism without Marcos.

2. Socialist revolution, which is still possible on a classical model based upon socialist ideas and the working class, and

3. Overthrow of landlordism and capitalism on the model of China and of Cuba based upon a successful guerrilla war and a peasant army.

Before the collapse of the Marcos regime, the NPA (New People's Army) was active in 80 per cent of the 73 provinces of the Philippines. Now they are active in them all!

According to official admissions, at least 20 per cent of all villages are CPP-influenced and its armed wing, the NPA is now a formidable guerrilla army. In a panic, the CIA has declared that unless reforms are carried out they could be in power within two or three years.

All the objective conditions are there for a classical development of the revolution on the lines of the Russian revolution as outlined in Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution.

Poverty and riches

The Philippines demonstrates graphically the Marxist law of combined development. Central Manila is a modern city with a population of at least four million. Surrounding it are the usual shanty-towns of the Third World—slums and poverty for the overwhelming majority of the masses, glittering riches for the ruling class.

The revolution, like that of Spain in the 1930s, has begun relatively peacefully. But the example of Spain is not encouraging to those who imagine that it would be possible to settle the process in the Philippines without the development of a capitalist reaction.

The agrarian question is the dominant problem. It cannot be solved by the regime that is now in power, which more and more will become, like that of Marcos, a regime of landlords and capitalists under the domination of the multinational monopolies that control the economy.

The revolution began as a capitalist revolution. In Russia and other countries the capitalists actually opposed the beginning of the revolution. But because of the bonapartist character of the Marcos regime based on the looting of the state, the opposition capitalists in the Philippines supported change from the Marcos regime to Aquino. They hoped, through a policy of reforms from above, to stave off revolution from below. They intended no fundamental change in the system, just the removal of the monster who was running the Philippines as his own private property.

It is this that gives some the illusion that it will be possible to go forward on the basis of an agreement between the fundamental classes of the nation.

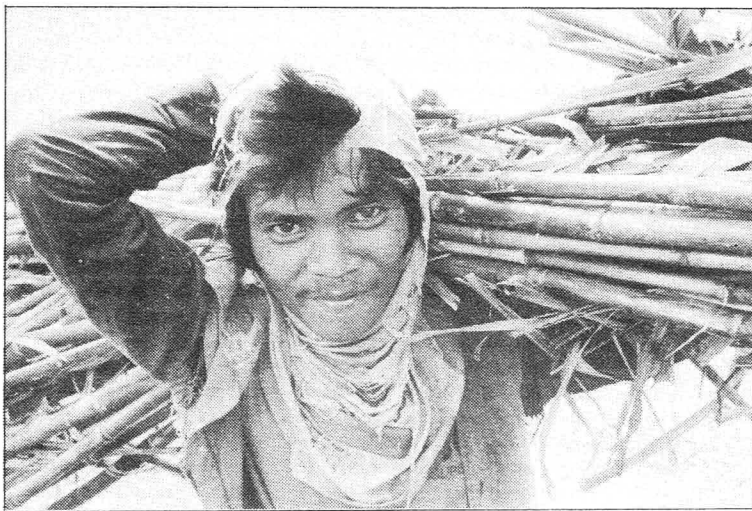
Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution was based on the supposition that the capitalist class, linked to the banks, landowners, monopolies and foreign capital was incapable of carrying out the tasks of its own democratic revolution. This has been demonstrated over

This is the final part of a three-part article by TED GRANT

Philippines?



Above: US military presence in the Philippines.
Below: Sugar worker on Negros Island.



and over again in the history of the Philippines, not only under Marcos but previously, and now again with the cabinet of bankers and Marcos generals.

Even the removal of the Marcosites from the government will not make any fundamental difference to the process. Even in Britain and France the big capitalists did not support the democratic revolution. It had to be carried out against their opposition.

But the capitalist class in the backward countries like the Philippines could not begin to play the role of the capitalists of the West over the last two or three centuries. They have come too late on the scene.

Trotsky's idea was that because of the incapacity of the capitalist class to carry out the tasks of the revolution, the working class could lead the nation and carry out the tasks of the democratic revolution—the expulsion of imperialism, giving the land to the peasants etc. The working class having come to power would then go on to carry out the tasks of the socialist revolution.

But society is international. The

failure of the 1917 revolution in Russia to spread, the coming to power of the Stalinist bureaucracy, and the degeneration of the 'Communist' Parties internationally, brought enormous confusion to the working class and the forces for social change throughout the world. This development still has an impact in countries like the Philippines today.

The revolution is just beginning. It will probably extend over a number of years—three, possibly, more likely five to seven, as in the case of Spain in the 1930s.

But the whole history of the past 70 years has shown that what Marxists call 'the subjective factor' is decisive. That is the question of leadership, of a party which understands the basic ideas of Marxism and can orientate itself to the problems that face the masses. The 'Communist' Party, which could have played this role had it stood on the ideas of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, is not capable. The Moscow-line Stalinists were actually legalised by Marcos and are now in ruins.

It was not an accident that the only government in the world to

congratulate Marcos on his 'victory' in the elections was that of the Soviet Union!

The only thing the Kremlin could see in the revolutionary situation in the Philippines was the possibility of taking advantage of the friction between Washington and Marcos. They had no desire for the collapse of the Marcos autocracy and the development of a revolution in the Philippines because of the problems that this would bring them in their relations with Washington, and the elaborate attempts at some sort of a compromise between the superpowers which Gorbachev is undertaking at the present time.

Now, with the collapse of the Marcos autocracy, this programme is in ruins. The revolution in the Philippines will be just one of the first of a series of revolutions in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Marxist tendency

If there existed in the Philippines a genuine Marxist tendency of even a few hundred, then revolution in the Philippines would be possible, and even inevitable, on the lines of the classical development of the revolution in Russia of 1917. If such a tendency were to be created, the possibility would still exist of a revolution in which the working class plays a decisive role in the economy and life of the country.

The working class in the towns, supported by the working class in the countryside, who are not strictly peasants, but largely agricultural labourers, could have laid the basis for the socialist revolution to take place on classical lines. The possibility of such a tendency being created during the course of the next few years is implicit in the situation. Without it the revolution will take the form of a caricature of the permanent revolution.

The pro-Moscow PKP adopted a reformist programme and even made an agreement in 1974 with

Marcos, who legalised them. These traitors have eliminated themselves from the development of the revolution. In fact they were trying to do the dirty work for Marcos by undermining the NPA guerrillas, by splitting off the nuns and priests who were supporting them.

In this they had enthusiastic support from Moscow and the hard-line pro-Moscow elements around the *Morning Star* in Britain.

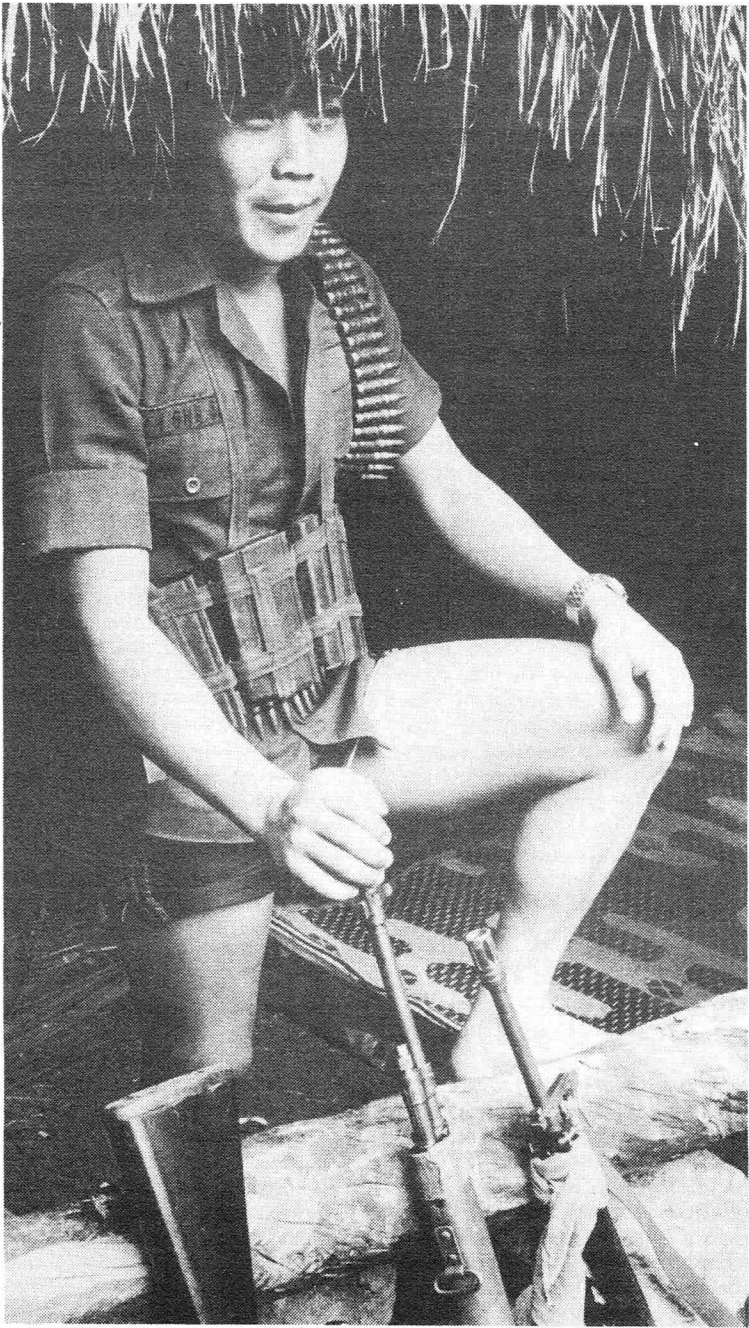
The PKP's policies led to a split in 1967 and the formation in 1968 of the Communist Party of the Philippines. The CPP, the NPA, and its legal fronts in the cities, base themselves on the development of the revolution which has taken place in China and other backward countries since the Second World War. It has a programme of what would amount to Popular Frontism, at the same time demanding wholesale land reform, the expulsion of the multinationals and nationalisation of their property, removal of elements of the Marcos dictatorship still in place, and the removal of the Marcos generals who are still in control of the army and the police.

The carrying out of such a programme would mean the nationalisation of 80 per cent of the economy and the expropriation of the landlord class. If the guerrillas are compelled to wade through blood in the implacable struggle against the regime, which will quicken during the course of the coming years, it is clear that despite their confused programme they would not be prepared to support the continuation of control over 20 per cent of the economy by the native capitalists of the Philippines.

In 1969, when the guerrilla war began, the Communist Party of the Philippines were supporters of the ideas and methods of Mao Tse Tung. With the degeneration of Maoism in China they have broken away and now pursue an independent policy. But their whole at-



Above: Peasants in Belwan village. Below: NPA guerrilla. The NPA's forces are now active in all of the Philippines' provinces.



titude and tactics are dictated by the same considerations which developed during the course of the Chinese revolution.

They now have an army of 20,000 guerrillas and are extending to every province of the country. As could be expected, they have refused to call off the guerrilla war unless Aquino is prepared to carry out their programme, which of course would be impossible for a capitalist government to do. Therefore the guerrilla war will go on.

'Two stages'

They stand for the 'Two Stages' programme—the development first of 'national' capitalism and then over a number of years, even decades, the development of the socialist revolution. That also was the programme of Castro in Cuba and Mao in China—"a hundred years of capitalism" and then to move towards what they called 'socialism'. In reality, in China, having taken the power, they could not hand it back, and proceeded to

expropriate the capitalist class and establish a regime in the image of Moscow—not the workers' democracy of Lenin and Trotsky but the Stalinist totalitarian dictatorship established by Stalin and continued by his successors.

Victory for the NPA and ex-Maoists is possible over the course of the struggle over a number of years. They are waging a war on the classical guerrilla model. Their army is composed of ex-agricultural workers, ex-peasants, lumpen proletarians and even criminals, together with ex-students and workers who have fled from the towns. Their programme has immense appeal, not only to the semi-starved peasants and workers in the ruined Philippines economy, but also to the workers in the towns, for lack of an alternative.

If the NPA come to power it is inevitable that they will carry out the same programme as Mao carried out in China after the collapse of the Chiang Kai Chek oligarchy, which was strikingly similar to the regime of Marcos in the Philippines. They would expropriate the

capitalists and prepare for the establishment of the same system that exists in the other Stalinist states. Their programme will be determined by pragmatism and not theory. Having come to power they would not be prepared to hand over to the capitalists, but would inevitably come into conflict with them.

Without an international perspective, without an international programme, inevitably they would move onto the lines of a national Stalinist economy and very rapidly degenerate into the same totalitarian system as exists in other Stalinist states.

Step forward

Nevertheless, the collapse of capitalism and of landlordism in the Philippines, even in this eventuality, would mark an enormous step forward. The productive forces would be liberated and there would be an enormous development of the economy. That is the acid test which Marxists apply to all regimes, whether they are capable of developing the economic forces of production.

Thus Marxists would give critical support to such a regime's progressive manifestations in the elimination of landlordism and of capitalism which now is an enormous fetter on the development of society on the Philippines.

But in the end, as in the Soviet bloc now, the regime will become a fetter and impediment on the productive forces. This will prepare the way also for a political revolution and the establishment of a workers' democracy on classical Marxist lines. But that in its turn would depend on the international developments on a global scale, especially in the advanced capitalist countries and in the Stalinist bloc in Russian and Eastern Europe.

A third possibility would be the development of chaos. The incapacity of the Aquino regime to solve any of the problems means that they will have to merge with the Marcosites, which is partially taking place already, and end up with a short-lived attempt at a new dictatorship, which in its turn would lead to absolute chaos and the collapse of civilisation.

A long period of Marcosism without Marcos is no longer possible. The masses of the population in the city and the countryside have vomited out the Marcos regime and there is no way, even with the support of American imperialism, that it will be possible to thrust it down their throats once again. The consequence would be the possibility, as in pre-war China, of a virtual break-up of the Philippines into various island fiefdoms, with the

Some facts about the Philippines:

Population: 55 million, spread over 7,000 islands. One-third live in the cities and towns. 20 million belong to the working class (urban and rural). 70 per cent live below the poverty line. 60 per cent of workers have no work, or work only part of the time.

Foreign debt: US\$26 billion. Servicing this debt swallows up half the country's export earnings.

The land: 22 million acres are under cultivation. 15 million acres lie idle, with no resources to develop it.

Marcos party merging with the party of Aquino. But this seems a remote possibility.

If a new military dictatorship were to be established on a capitalist or a landlord basis it would make Marcos look like a humanitarian moderniser in the light of the monstrous crimes and repression that it would commit. It would be on the Indonesian model, in which the failure of the Communist party to carry through the democratic revolution resulted in the slaughter of at least a million communists and ended up not in a capitalist democracy, but a military-police state. In reality there is no social or economic basis for stable capitalist democracy anywhere in the colonial world.

The present Aquino government will not last long—rather a question of months than of years. There can be no turning back. It is true that the counter-revolution still has a formidable base, in the gangsters and retainers controlled by the Marcos satellites in the provinces, amongst the landlords and plantation owners. But it would not be possible to use the army as it was used in the past. The effect of the collapse of the Marcos regime had enormous consequences in the psychology and attitudes of the rank and file of the army who in the main come from the

general strike of the workers supplementing the army of the peasants and semi-agricultural labourers. It would mean that the working class would not be the leading force in the revolution but act as a subordinate and auxiliary to the development of the revolution.

Where the tasks of the socialist revolution are carried out by other class forces, that in itself has profound social consequences in such a country. It would mean the development of bureaucracy on the same lines as in Russia and in China. It would be enormously progressive in the elimination of landlordism and capitalism but reactionary in the sense that there would be no real workers' democracy. Power would be taken into the hands of the officials and of the bureaucracy itself.

If the revolution takes this distorted form, it might throw back the movement elsewhere. But the victory of the workers of such countries as Chile, Brazil or Argentina and the establishment of a healthy workers' state based on real workers' democracy would in its turn react on the Philippines.

On the other hand, if there were no development of the revolution on those lines in the countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America or Europe, or in the Stalinist bloc,

The present Aquino government will not last long—rather a question of months than of years. There can be no turning back.

agricultural labourers and the peasantry.

Far more likely under present circumstances would be a victory for the NPA with all the consequences that would flow from it. This would be the first of a whole series of revolutions in the third world. It would have profound consequences in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

If the Philippine revolution were victorious on the classical model of the permanent revolution advocated by Lenin and Trotsky, then it would lead to the development of the socialist revolution led by the working class all over Asia, Africa and Latin America. In the last few years the working class has become the decisive factor in most of these countries, as evidenced by the movement of the workers in South Africa, Chile, Pakistan, and in other countries. If the Philippine revolution took a classical form, it would have an enormous effect in stimulating the working class as the main force in the revolution everywhere.

On the other hand, as seems most likely because the weakness of Marxism in the Philippines, the revolution could develop as in China and Cuba, with a movement in the countryside leading to the collapse of the army and, in the last stages, a march on Manila, with a

this victory of ex-Maoist guerrillas would inevitably strengthen illusions in the ideas of guerrillaism, in the same way as Maoism and Castroism had enormous attractive power, unfortunately, for the students who abandoned the towns and organised rural guerrilla movements in Latin America, leading in many cases to disaster.

Upheavals

However, in this epoch of upheavals and of revolution many events will take place which will shake the destiny of all countries including the Philippines. The main task of Marxists is to keep the ideas of Marxism alive. *Militant* will publish articles from time to time at each stage of the development, charting each stage of the revolution in the Philippines and other countries.

It is only by understanding the processes in other countries that we can understand also the developments in our own country and our own labour movement.

What is decisive in all countries is the creation of Marxist cadres who are rooted in the history of the movement, understand the modern developments of the movement and can prepare the way for the victory of the workers and the overthrow of world capitalism.



Photo: Dave Sinclair

Brenda Dean, General Secretary of SOGAT, on the march in Wapping.

Dear Comrades,
On 12 May 1926 the leaders of the labour movement turned their backs and walked away from the general strike that they had called. The miners, isolated and demoralised were finally starved back to work six months later.

Almost 60 years to the day later, Brenda Dean and the national executive of the print union SOGAT '82 have decided to purge the unions contempt of court, effectively turning their backs and walking away from the 4,800 SOGAT members sacked by Rupert Murdoch.

To quote Brenda Dean from the SOGAT journal March 1986: "We would not desert our members, their union are the only friends they've got. Our members come first. We cannot walk away from them. If we do we do not deserve to be called a trade union."

As Leon Trotsky once wrote, "Betrayal is inherent in reformism."
Yours fraternally
Roger Hearn
SOGAT '82

Dingle Labour Party reply to Militant

Dear Comrade,
Having just read an article regarding one of our Ward members. In last week's issue of *Militant* (issue 795) I felt that I had to write to you on behalf of the Ward to express our concern with the article's content and also to correct the article.

Your paper has consistently and quite correctly criticised the LCC submission to the inquiry into Liverpool DLP, which has since revealed itself to in fact be a witch-hunt into *Militant* members in Liverpool.

It causes us great concern therefore that you not only choose to accept an unproved allegation made in that document, but you also change it to suit your article on Peter Lennard.

The original statement reads: "at a recent Dingle Ward meeting, a GMBATU convenor said that opponents would 'be visited'." In your article you name Peter Lennard instead of 'a

GMBATU' convenor."
As the ward secretary for Dingle WLP for the last two years I can state quite clearly that the allegation made in the LCC presentation is totally unfounded.

I am therefore saddened that your paper chooses not only to now accept the LCC's statement, but that you also doctored it and insert the name of one of our Ward members to fit into your attack on Comrade Lennard.

I would be interested to know if *Militant* now accepts ALL the LCC's allegations, or are you being selective in your acceptance of the evidence presented by the LCC?

I look forward to either your correction or your statement of acceptance of the LCC's submission as being totally correct in your next issue.

Yours fraternally
Alan Dean
Secretary Dingle WLP
Liverpool

Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism.

Militant,
3-13 Hepscott Road,
London E9 5HB

Sexist incentive

Dear Comrades,
Rolls Royce recently put out a leaflet to their workforce to explain their latest patronising 'incentive scheme'.

It describes a poster campaign which "Offers you a visual reward when scrap and rectification falls below the 1985 level... We have selected a Samantha Fox lookalike who, dependent on your achievements will either lengthen or lower her attire...".

But one worker at least, didn't react as they expected and wrote to the Coventry local paper denouncing the campaign as "Pornography for quality... What next, stripograms for the highest producing sections?"

Yours fraternally
Tony Cross
Coventry NW
Labour Party

Willis preaches 'unity'

Dear *Militant*,
A few comrades from Stafford recently travelled over to Telford to take part in a May Day rally.

One of the speakers was Norman Willis. I was amazed and amused to hear him talk about unity, he said "We don't always win but when we are divided we will never win. The only way we

can win is if we are united."
If he is really bothered about unity couldn't he have a word with some of his trade union leader friends, where the majority of the witch-hunting is coming from.

Yours fraternally
David Simpson
Stafford LPYS

Classless capitalism?

Dear *Militant*,
I was under the impression that Marx had envisaged a classless society, yet in your paper you consistently refer to the 'working class'. Surely this would be turning the present situation on its head, from upper class rule to working class rule, which is not what Marx wanted.

As a student I know many people who have very definite sympathies with the left, but they are certainly not what one would call working class.

Furthermore you refer to the Labour Party as if you do not agree with anything they say or do. Your criticism often looks as though it is written by an outsider, ie. not a member of the Labour Party. If this is the case how can you justify your membership of the Labour Party?

Yours faithfully
N Backhouse J Aitken University of Lancaster

Defeat for right in Carmarthen

Dear Comrades,
At Carmarthen District Labour Party meeting a right-winger put a resolution condemning the seven left wingers who walked out of the NEC on 26 March.

Out of the 40 who attended, LPYS members were prominent in opposing the resolution. One person couldn't understand why LPYS members in Carmarthen supported the ideas of the *Militant* newspaper and called on them to help in jumble sales.

The local party had a recruitment drive in another town recently to re-start a ward there. How did they set about recruiting to the Labour Party? Yes, you guessed it...they held a jumble sale. Needless to say, they didn't recruit anyone.

The resolution fell by 24 votes to 15—our Prospective Parliamentary Candidate voted for the resolution, but did not speak—the second defeat in two months for the right wing.

Yours fraternally
Wyn Griffiths
Carmarthen Labour Party
Young Socialists

CP prop up system

Dear Comrades,
I recently had an interesting conversation with a longstanding member of the 'Communist' Party who is now a supporter of the Eurocommunist faction.

He remarked that capitalism had proved to be a lot tougher and more resilient system than he'd thought when he joined the CP 50 years ago. This I admitted, arguing that the main prop of support for capitalism has been the betrayals of the Stalinists and the reformists.

He argued that capitalism has maintained itself because it has always been able to solve its problems. Quoting "comrade Gorbachev" he

argued that within capitalism there was always plenty of scope for growth and securing reforms in the interests of workers. In fact, it seems, we don't really need socialism at all!

It's no wonder that another CP member recently quoted in *New Society* said: "We're not going to change anything. People know that the Communist Party is about as threatening as the boy scouts."

Why don't these "Communists" just drop the pretence of being Marxists altogether and join the SDP instead?

Yours fraternally
David Turner
Gillingham LPYS

Violent society

Dear Comrades,
The frustration and anger which is bred through having no hope for the future is causing ordinary workers to fight people with whom they have everything in common.

My next door neighbour beat his wife for months on end through her pregnancy gay friends of mine are under constant attack from 'queer bashers'. Sectarian gangs prowl the streets.

Racial violence is everywhere. What's the answer? How can we begin to live together in mutual respect?

There is a way, one war to end all wars, class war! War on the system of one class exploiting the other. War on the power of the multi-nationals.

Yours fraternally
Christopher Barnes
Newcastle East LPYS

Classified ads

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.

○ Address Books 60p, Bookmarks 40p, Plastic sleeves 20p, Sew on badge 40p, plus post to *Militant*, 8 Woodside Court, Woodside Rd, Portswood, Southampton.

○ Perspectives for the United States of America by Rob O'Neil and Tom Williams. £1 each or 10 for £8 available from LM Publications, 3-13 Hepscott Rd, London E9 5HB.

○ BURGE Ian (1939-80) Ideas and policies still fresh and still holding the line. East London Health Workers.

○ *Militant* pamphlet on the General Strike—articles by Trotsky, Grant and Taaffe. Special anniversary offer. Single copies £1 post free. 5 for £4. From World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscott Rd, London E9 5HB.

○ The annual report of the Zimbabwe Trade Union Defence Campaign is available now. Price 25p (plus 20p p&p). From ZTUDC, 28 Martello Street, London E8 3PE.

○ *Divide and Rule* special offer. £1.50 post free. 4 copies £5 post free. From World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscott Rd, London E9 5HB.

Militant Meetings

○ Swansea *Militant* Public Meeting 'Fight Labour's Purge'. Friday 16 May 7pm. POEU Club, St Mary's St, Swansea. Speakers: Cheryl Varley (one of the Liverpool 11) and Alec Thraves.

○ Airdrie "Expel the Tories, not the socialists" public meeting. Thurs 22 May 7.30pm. Tudor Hotel, Airdrie. Speakers: Bob Wylie, Patricia Moore (LPYS).

○ 800th Issue Rally. Friday 30 May 7pm. Speaker Ted Grant. Trades and Labour Club, Beverley Road, Hull. Music—Videos—Bar.

○ Halifax *Militant* Readers Meeting. 'Fight Low Pay'. Tues 27 May. 7.30 AEU Club. St James St (near bus station). Speakers from shop workers and textiles.

○ Penge. Penge East Community Centre. Station Rd, SE20.20 May 7.30pm.

○ Leicester Fight Low Pay Rally. Saturday 17 May. 2-4.30pm. West End Neighbourhood Centre, Andrewes St., Leicester. Speakers: Angie Donisthorpe (Joint Union Co-ordinating Committee, Leicester City Council), Dave Nellist MP (promoter of anti-low pay bill).

○ Newbridge Marxist Discussion Group, every Monday 7pm. Newbridge Miners Institute, High St, Newbridge.

○ Stroud *Militant* Public Meeting 'What We Stand For'. Stroud Subscription rooms, Stroud. 7.30 Thurs 22 May. Speaker Roger Thomas.

○ Sheffield, Chapeltown *Militant* public meeting. Newton Hall, Chapeltown. Tues 27 May. Speaker Brian Ingham.

○ Southwark Thursday 22 May, 7.30pm, North Peckham Civic Centre, Old Kent Road, London SE15.

Marxist Weekend Schools

NORTHERN Leeds 7-8 June 1986

Courses on Russian revolution, Popular Frontism, Marxism and the trade unions, The theory of Marxism, Ireland.
Film: To die in Madrid (Spain 1936), International rally, disco, bar, crêche.
Cost £5 (£3 unwaged) weekend or £2.50 (£1.50) for one day.
Bookings to 'MWES' c/o 63 Lincoln Street, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF2 0EP.

MIDLANDS/SOUTH WEST Birmingham, 14-15 June 1986

Courses on: Marxism and the trade unions, Theory of Marxism, Russian revolution, Colonial revolution and imperialism, Women and the struggle for socialism.
Film: To die in Madrid (Spain 1936) International rally, disco, bar, crêche.
Cost £6 (£4 unwaged), weekend, £3 (£2 one day).
Bookings to 'MWES', c/o T Cross, 12C Samuel Vale House, St Nicholas Street, Coventry, CV1 4LS.

○ Sittingbourne Marxist Discussion Group. 27 May and every second Tuesday after that at 29 Waterloo Rd, Sittingbourne. For further information contact: 0795 72632.

○ Bristol East *Militant* Marxist discussion groups (held fortnightly). Wed 28 May. "What road now for the Nicaraguan revolution?". Start 7.30. For details of venue etc ring Bristol 650318.

Tokyo conference, Nigeria, Zimbabwe

Bosses move closer to trade war

THE POLITICAL leaders of the seven major capitalist nations met in Tokyo last week.

They concentrated on issuing communiques supporting 'the fight against terrorism' (meaning backing US action in Libya) and condemning Russian decisions over the Chernobyl disaster (while reaffirming support for their own nuclear programmes).

But the Tokyo summit also discussed what to do about the world capitalist economy. Their main decision was to promise 'close and continuous co-operation' in monitoring and controlling world economic trends.

Why this sudden desire to work together (apparently) from the leaders of economies that they believe work best with no 'government interference'?

This new mood of 'co-operation' is primarily because the American capitalists are worried. Over the last few years under Reagan they have desperately tried to revive a flagging US economy, while avoiding inflation.

They have run up a massive government budget deficit in paying out billions of dollars on expanded arms programmes. At the same time they have maintained high interest rates, to attract borrowers to finance this spending.

US trade deficit

This has kept the value of the dollar high compared to other currencies. That has kept inflation down, but has generated an unprecedented deficit on the balance of trade with other countries: it has made US exports expensive in other countries, and foreign imports cheap in the USA.

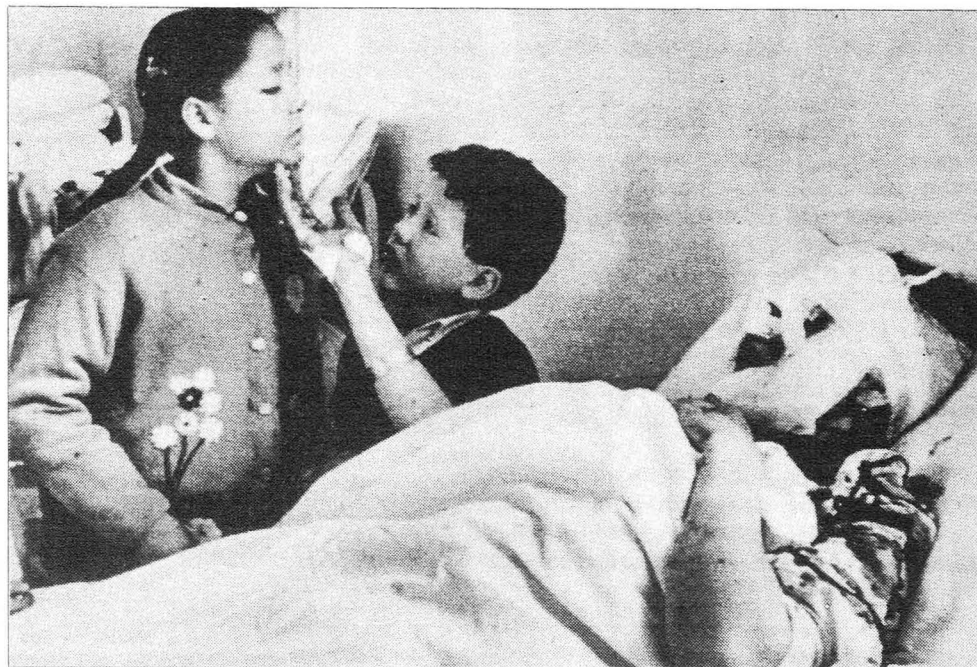
Because the dollar and interest rates have been high. Japanese, West German and British companies have been prepared to reinvest their profits in the US, and finance Reagan's budget deficit.

But all this spending still has not boosted the US economy. Manufacturing production has actually been declining, as foreign imports and high domestic interest rates destroyed markets and investment for US capitalists.

As a result they have been demanding import controls and a cut in government spending—both of which would seriously curtail world economic recovery as well as home expansion.

Since last September the US government has been trying to revive its economy by trying to make the other capitalist nations 'help'. It has encouraged the dollar to fall in value against the yen and the mark (nearly a 50 per cent fall), by lowering its interest rates. In this way it hoped to boost US exports by making them cheaper in dollar terms, and help home industry through lower interest costs.

But the plan is not working. The US economy is still



Victims of Reagan's "fight against terrorism" in Libya

only growing at a miserable rate of around 2 per cent. The budget and trade deficits still remain staggeringly high. And there is increasing difficulty in financing them at low interest rates and a low dollar value which no longer attract foreign borrowers.

Now interest rates are in danger of rising again and inflation may pick up as foreign goods still flooding into US markets become more expensive, because more dollars are needed in exchange to buy them.

So the US capitalists are demanding more help from the other capitalist nations. They are trying to force other countries to increase their government spending and lower their interest rates so that the world market can expand.

This would allow US capitalists, now with a cheaper dollar, to gain a bigger share to revive their home industry.

This is what US Treasury Secretary Baker calls 'co-operation', a thinly disguised threat to the West German and Japanese governments that: 'unless you start spending more so that we in the USA can sell more, we will lower the dollar further to undercut the prices of your capitalists' goods on world markets even more'.

And if you do not play ball, they implied—then there is the even greater threat that the US government will impose import controls on all foreign goods. As Baker put it recently: "frankly I must tell you that protectionism in the USA is not dead".

What was the reaction of Japan and West Germany to this threat of 'co-operation' from the USA? The Japanese premier up to now has been the most amenable to Reagan's demands. But this has brought him a shower of criticism and his very position has been under threat.

In recent weeks Japan and West Germany have been making it clear that they think the dollar is low enough and have even been attempting to keep it up (without success).

Helmut Kohl, the West German leader, said: "we will be sticking to tight

monetary and fiscal policies"—no extra spending to help the Americans there. The Japanese too made it clear that they had no intention of boosting their home economy any further to help US exports, as their share of world trade had already been suffering.

This response has prompted the *Financial Times* to comment that 'in fact there has never been so much international disagreement on economic policy since the Versailles summit of 1982'. And that was when the US wanted to keep the dollar up to lower home inflation and the others wanted it lower to reduce their own costs!

What now? The US economy is clearly not going to revive and the other major capitalist powers are not going to bail them out. As a result, world economic growth is unlikely to increase and may even fall back below the predicted growth rates of 3 per cent for 1986 and 1987.

Financial collapse?

The desperate efforts of the USA to revive its debt-ridden and import-flooded economy are driving the capitalist nations towards a dangerous trade war, as each national economy tries to protect itself from its rivals.

Even more seriously, the prospects could be cut across by a serious financial crisis, perhaps beginning in the USA. The big nine US banks have loans worth more than 60 per cent of their total capital out to the four major oil-exporting nations. Those nations are facing ruin because of the drop in world oil prices and may yet default on their loan repayments, so threatening the collapse of some major US banks.

What is more, the oil price collapse has devastated the oil states of Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma, threatening further defaults on loans as oil-related companies go bankrupt.

As it is, domestic energy loans account for over 10 per cent of all loans by US banks. With rising interest rates further hitting these and the manufacturing sector, there is a real danger of



The dangerous demand for import controls has gained support even amongst workers in Britain and the USA.

banking collapses in the USA. In 1985, 120 banks collapsed, with assets totalling over \$3bn!

A financial collapse in the USA would reverberate around world money markets and precipitate a worldwide entrenchment, with sharp rises in interest rates, heavy cuts in government spending and eventually a world slump in production.

The Tokyo summit demonstrated that co-operation is needed to increase production, trade and investment, and so lower unemployment and improve conditions for working people. But it also showed that such co-operation is impossible if the economic system remains based on private ownership and cut-throat competition.

Only a world socialist plan of production could really achieve "close and continuous co-operation".

By Bob McKee

Zimbabwean trade unionist released

VETERAN Zimbabwean trade union leader Phineas Sithole, according to reports, has been released from detention.

But former trade union organiser Norman Zikhale is still being held in Chikurubi maximum security prison. Pressure should be kept up for his release.

Copies of resolutions etc. to Zimbabwe Trade Unionists Defence Campaign, 28 Martello Street, London E8.



Reagan asking for co-operation or else.



Kohl, the German Chancellor; no extra spending to help US capitalism.

Nigerian workers ready to struggle

ON 1 MAY Nigerian workers joined the world working class in celebrating the centenary of May Day.

Thousands of workers attended rallies and demonstrations in different parts of the country. Posters showed the desire of the workers for a socialist transformation of society: "Down with capitalism, forward to socialism!" "After wage cuts, retrenchments etc., which way forward labour leaders?"

The mood of the Lagos workers was generally quiet at the beginning of the rally. This was because of the conscious efforts of some labour leaders who discouraged placards, slogans etc.

"We will win"

In spite of this the appearance of music star Fela Anikula Kuti (who is popular for his anti-establishment records and had just been released from jail) raised the workers' spirits.

The workers started singing songs like "Workers will win". At this stage the Minister of Labour, who was speaking, was forced to sit down.

The musician, whose pro-worker position could be predicted, was then

prevented from speaking. Police used tear gas to disperse a defiant crowd of workers surging after Fela at the end of the rally.

The mass support which the musician enjoyed among workers on that day cannot be separated from the fact that he expresses the feelings of millions in calling for elections to end the military dictatorship.

The May Day events in Nigeria have once again confirmed the readiness of the rank and file workers to struggle in spite of the role of their leaders.

As a result of the deepening economic crisis which has engulfed Nigeria, there has recently been a series of strikes and demonstrations which have shaken the banks, flour mills, automobile plants, docks and railways. In Benin State, civil servants brought the government machinery to a standstill.

Out of defeats and successes a new set of leaders will be produced in the heat of concrete struggles. Increasingly it will become clear that a socialist revolution is necessary to abolish the misery that the workers and peasants are suffering under the present system.

From a correspondent in Nigeria

Industrial Reports

National action in Post Office

NATIONAL ACTION is necessary in the Post Office after Leeds management imposed compulsory patterns of evening and night work as part of a national offensive. Chris Hill, Leeds Central Labour Party, talked to Ken Thompson, secretary, and John Hodgson, President of Leeds UCW about the background to the dispute.

Leeds was chosen for a trial run of a national productivity scheme (revised revision procedures) and on 28 April the management introduced the new arrangement without union agreement.

The deal involves up to 120 job losses and a 50 per

cent increase in the number of part-timers (without actually increasing the part-time hours worked).

On top of that, relaxation periods were squeezed and workers are put on new jobs and shifts without being consulted.

The union response was to call a ballot for industrial action and strike if necessary, which was supported by 1,216 votes to 527 and is valid for six weeks.

An overtime ban was implemented immediately. The ban is having an effect, only

200 post offices are open in the city, they are down to one delivery and the parcels service is beginning to clog up.

Casuals

However, the effectiveness is damaged by management using over 300 casuals to keep the post moving, and the union will consider escalating the action if the post office doesn't move.

A problem with picketing-out the casuals is that they are being told by the dole of-

office that they will lose six weeks money if they don't accept the job.

The union at the moment is only demanding that implementation of the productivity deal is stopped until negotiations are completed. It's vital that the UCW win this dispute otherwise the remaining 1,000 sorting offices can expect the same MacGregor-type treatment.

A fighting-fund is being set up and messages of support would be welcome. Please contact the union office: Royal Mail House, Wellington Street, Leeds LS1 1AA. Tel: (0532) 447648.

Renew NUPE's militant tradition



Photo: (Report).

Rodney Bickerstaffe, NUPE general secretary, dishing out leaflets against the privatisation of water. Unfortunately the union leadership's abandonment of past militancy goes hand in hand with their support for the witch-hunt in the Labour Party, attacks on Liverpool city council and *Militant* supporters in the union. The members, however, understand the need for unity around a fighting programme. This year's conference must re-affirm the 1984 decision to oppose the witch-hunt.

THE LAST 12 months has seen a continued onslaught on the jobs, wages and conditions of NUPE members. Tory councils and district health authorities have been only too keen to attack the weak and lowest paid.

By Steve McKenzie
(Secretary, NUPE Broad Left)

The water industry faces its entire privatisation. The City financiers are hovering like birds of prey to buy and then sell water for profit.

Private contractors are reportedly now losing many new contracts in the National Health Service. But at what price?

Figures just released show that at 31 December 1985: Contracts awarded in-house: 396: £23.7 million savings; Contracts awarded to contractors: 123: £18.2 million savings.

These "savings" are being made almost exclusively from labour costs. From the jobs and wages of NUPE members. Health authorities have learnt how contracts operate. By reducing hours below National Insurance thresholds, by employing staff for weekend only work—thus saving on enhanced rates. And by reducing standards. The £4m 'savings' represent lost income and jobs by thousands of NUPE members.

No wonder that NUPE membership dropped again in 1985 by some 10,000. Membership has now fallen to its lowest level since 1976. We are really being pushed backwards by this Tory government.

The membership fall is despite the tremendous recruitment efforts which have been put in all over the country. We are losing members faster than we

are recruiting them.

Yet NUPE members have still been prepared to fight back. On Wirral, in Newcastle, not forgetting Barking, Scardale and Addenbrookes, our members have struck—sacrificed—in order to defend not just jobs but the services in which they worked.

On paper NUPE policy has been good. At NUPE's 1982 national conference Ron Keating, assistant general secretary (negotiations), told delegates (to applause) that:

"No-one in the public service should be under any illusion that our members will be a pushover. When it comes to hard-won rights that have been built up over very many years I want to say that the executive council will give official support for industrial action by our members seeking to fight off contractors. And we will not fight with feather dusters either".

Privatisation

Fighting words. We must, however, admit that reality has been rather different. So much so that NUPE itself has produced a series of recruitment leaflets for various groups of contract staff. And has negotiated agreements with various contracting firms.

It has also been rumoured that national officers have had discussions with major contractors about granting recruitment recognition and DAS facilities. How much easier would it be for the contractors to gain contracts if NUPE could be assured that they would still have members if the contractors took over?

We must ask if these sort of national discussions have blunted the edge of

many national officers.

NUPE members, in many cases frightened of losing their jobs, can lack confidence in their ability to defeat their employer. Our members can see that the fight is a national one, they sometimes have mistakenly believed that local struggle is futile.

In fact, though the national lead is needed it is still possible to win struggles locally with determination, organisation and leadership.

But our national leadership should be giving assistance to the activists locally. We want our leaders to be travelling the country whipping up enthusiasm and confidence for a national struggle by the union. We must fight as one union.

At the moment we are being picked off one by one. And the feather dusters have hardly been touched—let alone used!

In 1985 the union spent £284,644 on dispute pay. Compare that to the one million pounds spent in 1982 and 1983.

Contrast these payments to the £860,392 spent on lawyers' fees. A massive £290,000 increase in the past 12 months!

NUPE has been a radical and fighting union. A union which inspired low-paid and downtrodden workers by its militant action. Every major strike has brought thousands of new members into the union.

Ten years ago NUPE brought out a pamphlet entitled *Time to change course*. 1986 is an appropriate year for the rank and file of NUPE to say to its executive council and office: now is the time to change course. Not by abandoning struggle but by rekindling it.

UCW/NUPE Militant Readers' Meeting

Terry Fields MP
and Brian Ingham

(Militant industrial correspondent)

7.30pm Tuesday 21 May
Mon Ami Hotel, St Michael's Road,
Bournemouth

Communication workers conference

THIS YEAR'S UCW conference at Bournemouth, finds the union confronted on all sides by a Post Office management determined to increase profits at the expense of the workforce.

Endorsement of productivity schemes and closures of Crown Post Offices by the UCW executive council in past years have laid the foundations for further and more damaging attacks on the union by a Tory-backed Post Office management.

Despite a willingness shown by UCW rank and file members to fight back the leadership have continued to bargain away the strength of the union by pushing through "deals", grade by grade, on the basis of "there is no alternative".

Bad deal

Last year's acceptance of a business efficiency package on the postal side containing compulsory productivity deals, work measurement, part-timers and casuals has resulted in walk-outs and unofficial action throughout the country as management put the boot in.

Not learning anything from the past year the executive attempted to recommend a similar deal to postal officers which was overwhelmingly rejected.

Faced with the prospect of industrial action if the Post Office carry out their threat to go ahead without agreement instead of organising a campaign of resistance, the leadership have done a deal.

It includes none of the important amendments, such as the refusal to work with casuals, passed by conference. The "New Deal" is to be put to the membership individually on a yes or no basis.

The special report on reorganisation will prove a controversial debate as the guarantee obtained by the executive does little to alleviate the fears of the membership on this issue.

By John Johnson
(UCW WDO C&CS
branch personal capacity)

It will not be missed by conference delegates that motions condemning the expulsion of Labour Party members in Liverpool have been given a B category and stand little chance of being heard.

As the deputy general secretary, Tony Clark, was a member of the infamous Labour Party inquiry team and was consequently banned from the executive meeting by a high court judge, his role, in the name of our union, needs to be discussed.

Composite amendment 2A on amalgamation with the NCU, setting out clear guidelines, needs the support of conference. The need for one amalgamated rank and file postal and telecoms union has never been greater.

Right to action

Again this year there are motions of no confidence in the executive and a leading national officer. This dissatisfaction will also be seen in the key debate on the right to call industrial action. Amendments under this section which increase branches' right to take industrial action must be supported.

The union is faced with the threat of privatisation now that the Post Office has been split into four separate businesses.

All these attacks on our jobs and conditions, including this year's pay claim, need to be fought on the basis of a united union not individually, grade by grade.

COMMUNICATION WORKERS

Broad Left meeting

7.30pm Sunday 19 May

Mon Ami Hotel
St. Michaels Rd, B'mouth

Industrial Reports

Police violence

AN EYE-WITNESS reports of last Saturday's violence at Wapping and her arrest, by a female member of Hampstead and Highgate Labour Party Young Socialists.

IT WAS about 1 am when I got my first taste of police methods and brutality down at Wapping.

I remember 40 or 50 riot police suddenly charging towards where I was standing with other pickets. I started running and kept running until suddenly there were about seven cops on me kicking and beating me with their truncheons.

Eventually my cap fell off and I looked up. One of them said: "F... it's a girl—cool it!"

Room for one more

They thought one of them could manage me but when he grabbed me by the collar so I could hardly breathe I bit his hand and didn't let go so another one grabbed me and gave me a kick for good measure.

When we got down the alley I saw another LPYS member being bundled into a van. They asked if there was any room in there for one more and they said no.

I thought they were going to let me go, but they didn't. They put me into a long van with cubicles in until another transit van came and they moved me into that.

There were six coppers, me, a printer and his brother. His brother was beaten up so bad he could



Photo: Andrew Ward (Report)

hardly move. They would not let him sit on the seat because he was bleeding so much, so they dumped him on the floor where he lay with his eyes shut.

When we got to Bethnal Green station they had to practically carry him out. During the journey they kept asking me if I was a Militant. In fact my sister is in SOGAT, but I didn't bother answering anyway.

Inside the station they puzzled over what to charge me with. The one I had bitten wanted to do me for assaulting a police officer but they finally settled for threatening behaviour.

I asked what I had done and they said I'd been throwing bricks. The fact that I was at the front of the crowd when arrested and the bricks were coming from the back did not deter them.

Beaten-up

The man who had been so badly beaten up refused to give his name so they kept swearing at him and kicking him.

He called out for a witness so I made sure I was near him and could see what was happening. They stopped kicking him and eventually they put the injured man in

a cell—but refused to let him see a doctor.

They put me in one of the women's cells, which was cleaner, although they would not let me go to the toilet all night. "We don't want you escaping" the cop claimed despite the fact the only toilets are located within cells.

At about 5 am they took my prints and photograph and gave me a date for my court case. They said it was nice to have me and let me go. I never saw the man who was so badly beaten up—but if he does need a witness I will certainly come forward.

The state and union strategy in Wapping struggle

ONCE AGAIN the pickets outside Fortress Wapping have been victims of untrained police violence.

Much of it is out of view of the cameras and even when filmed is hardly shown.

One cameraman admitted to me that they have filmed the police as it did not reach the news.

Every trade unionist who witnesses these scenes must be appalled—and increasingly understand the strike-breaking role of the police.

Militant has warned for years that the methods used in Northern Ireland would be imported to the mainland and used against the labour movement—which poses the greatest threat to the profits and rule of the bosses.

Right to picket

The weekly, sometimes twice weekly, beatings at Wapping only continue because the leadership of our movement stand by and do nothing.

The TUC must respond to these latest attacks. Inaction will allow the police to continue with impunity. The right to picket must be defended.

A call must be issued for a mass demonstration and all night picket at Wapping. 15,000 attended on 3 May and that was insufficient. Those numbers must be doubled—and more.

Such a mobilisation is the only way to stop the

violence. Appealing to the good nature of the police is useless. Declarations of our peaceful intent are fruitless.

It is their task to ensure a safe and clear passage for Murdoch's scab papers. To achieve this every single picket, man or woman, must be removed and rendered ineffective.

Many pickets are now raising the demand for the unarmed pickets to be defended. A mass picket is the best defence.

Leaders a brake

We are fighting with one hand tied behind our back. Fleet Street must be stopped and marched to Wapping.

The union leaders have begun distancing themselves from this battle. Sogat have purged their contempt. Murdoch's paltry offer has been examined seriously. The leadership have been prepared to abandon the effectiveness of the picket.

The strikers need to act now. A conference must be convened immediately to rally support.

We must step up picketing at Wapping and the distribution points, ensure adequate finance is collected to maintain the strike, and organise the required industrial action in Fleet Street and throughout the print.

By Peter Jarvis
(London Region NGA)

News in Brief

Bristol NGA

FLEET STREET isn't the only place printers are under attack. NGA members at Robert Maxwell's Purnell printworks at Paulton, near Bristol, have been on strike for a month.

In January, following the loss of the contract for the *Observer* colour magazine Maxwell demanded the workers accept 185 redundancies or he would shut the works.

Right up to the deadline the union held firm, but with hours to go Sogat officials agreed to 86 job losses. The NGA refused to accept the loss of 66 of their 184 members. The next day they received dismissal notices.

Initially, Sogat workers were sent home on full pay but have since been sent their P45s and presumably are sacked. AUEW and EETPU members have been locked out throughout the dispute.

Now Maxwell is demanding changes in conditions from the 200 workers at the separate Parnell Books, not previously in dispute. He has also taken out an injunction against the NGA leadership, instructing them to withdraw calls for blacking.

At the moment nothing is going into the Paulton works. There is 24-hour picketing, but work has been transferred.

Messages of support and

donations to Bristol Graphical Society (Parnell appeal), 65 Baldwin Street, Bristol B51. By Angela Anderson

TASS conf.

ENGINEERING UNION Tass took an important step in amending its policy on South Africa, backing the direct links between British and South African trade unionists in COSATU.

Unfortunately a sour note was struck over uncertainty about the union's continued funding of a fellowship at Ruskin College for Tass member Dave Kitson recently released, after 20 years imprisonment in South Africa.

He has been suspended from the African National Congress, despite his public statements that he supports the ANC, accepts its discipline and continual requests for a meeting to resolve any problems (which are ignored).

Many felt the union executive's view that their support for Dave was conditional upon his membership of the ANC was wrong, that the union should support all its members, particularly someone who has suffered as Kitson has.

Another change in policy came in support for an amendment, moved by Mick Cotter of the Metal Mechanics,

recognising the need to organise young people on YTS schemes (whilst continuing to oppose the schemes themselves), fight for trade union rates of pay and a guaranteed job.

Halewood

BAR STAFF at the Halewood British Legion on Merseyside are on strike. The Club Steward talked to Leslie Holt.

"We've been out for six weeks now because Dave, the head barman, was told by the committee he was sacked as it was cheaper to employ part-timers.

"So the rest of the bar staff decided to come out on strike in support. With that the committee sacked the lot of us. There are eight of us altogether, nearly all women and the sole earners in families with children.

"One of the women is pregnant and has had a nervous breakdown with all the pressure. We picket the club from 7 in the morning to 11 at night. Last Friday they organised a big night. We had a mass picket and there were only 15 people at most in the club."

Coventry

A MASS meeting is taking place on Monday at the Massey-Ferguson factory in Coventry against proposed redundancies.

The unions have an agreement that no one is made redundant without the agreement of the gang they work with.

The canteen workers agreed

that two could take voluntary redundancy. A third, who'd been off sick for some weeks also agreed to go, in conflict with the agreement.

They then threatened a strike. Management responded by locking them out. The shopfloor replied with an overtime ban which resulted in 2,000 being laid off.

Now the lock-out of canteen staff has apparently been lifted. However, the ban continues and the view on the stewards' committee seems to be one out, all out, if a deal for canteen workers cannot be negotiated.

On the other hand many workers consider they should continue with layoffs as that means at least they are being paid.

By Tom Smith

Textiles

WOOL TEXTILE workers are to hold their first strike in the industry in fifty years on 21 May. They are also putting an overtime ban on two days earlier. Membership of the textile group of the TGWU voted two to one for rejection of a pay offer of 5.25 per cent. The union claim is for £12 per week.

By Mick Fallon

Blackburn

BLACKBURN'S LABOUR council have chosen to implement Tory cuts, chiefly in the local bus service. But with privatisation and de-regulation looming the busmen are in no mood for job cuts. Mike McKenna spoke to Doug Thor-

nhill, Convenor of Blackburn T&GWU 6/330.

The Labour group have a majority with the casting vote of the major in the council chamber (before the election, now increased—Ed). They did have a majority of one until Michael Gregory—whose "Report" was the excuse for expelling six Militant supporters in 1984—crossed the floor to join the Liberal Party.

They have chair and vice chair of every committee. The right wing clique around Councillors Doherty, Kaye and Blackburn have ignored the local trades unions and taken on the workforce.

They proposed cuts in jobs, pay by cutting earnings for six days from £175 to £125. And in conditions by cutting holidays with longer serving busmen (over 10 years service) coming off worse.

They want to remove locally agreed working practices,

meal breaks and implement them immediately on de-regulation on 26 October. Platform staff come off worst.

The Trades Council, Joint Shop Stewards Committee and the District Labour Party have backed us. The right wing Labour group have acted on their own and disregarded the unions.

We're so disgusted with the right wing that we've refused to canvas for them in the local elections.

Huyton

HUYTON DOLE office contract cleaners, striking against the demands of the firm newly awarded the contract for lower wages, hours and workforce, have been out for six weeks. Please support the picket.

By Leslie Holt

BLOC
BROAD LEFT ORGANISING COMMITTEE

Fight privatisation

12 July, Digbeth Civil Hall, Birmingham

Invited speakers:
Arthur Scargill and Tony Benn

Only bona-fide trade union delegates accepted. Apply to BLOC, PO Box 464, London E5 8PT. Coaches from London: advance bookings only. Fare £6 return. Contact: J Grikaitas, 25 Stirling House, Simmonds Road, London SE18 6UP.

Militant

North West Region Labour Women
 Demonstration and Rally
 End low pay — Fight privatisation
 Saturday 31 May Manchester
 Assemble All Saints 11.30am
 Rally Crown Square, 1pm

Shut down Silentnight

**Ship
 yard
 jobs**

3,500 JOBS in the North-East and Scotland's merchant shipbuilding yards are under threat.

A massive campaign must be launched immediately to save the British shipbuilding industry. 40,000 jobs have been lost since nationalisation.

In a spontaneous protest 350 workers from Austin and Pickersgill and Clark Kincaid yards demonstrated outside the Newcastle headquarters of British Shipbuilders.

Their response shows the hardening of the mood in the shipyards and the growing realisation of the need to fight. The Confed unions must be forced to mobilise and organise that anger.

By Billy Richings
 (GMBATU, Austin & Pickersgill, Sunderland)

A CLEAR warning to the Tories and bosses is being issued on Saturday in Keighley, where over 5,000 are expected to demonstrate their support for the Silentnight strikers.

By Gerry Cumiskey
 (FTAT shop steward)
and Alan Ideson
 (FTAT Silentnight striker)

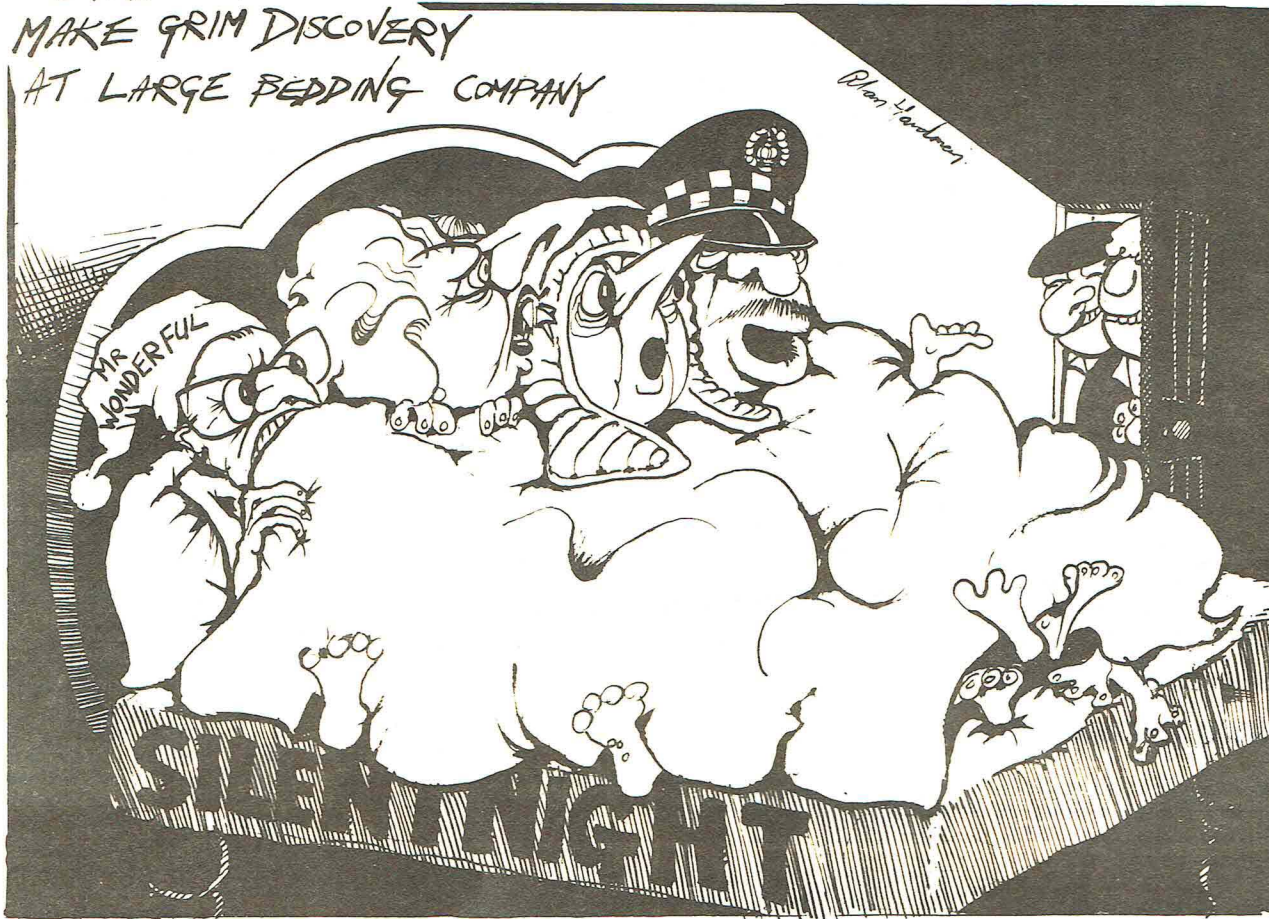
We have now been on strike for nearly a year, and during this time we have seen how the Tory anti-union laws attack ordinary working people like ourselves, and how they encourage employers like Silentnight to treat their workers.

As far back as 1979, Silentnight management and their Tory friends were discussing plans to crush any resistance by the workforce to proposed cuts in pay and conditions. Armed with the anti-union legislation, the Thatcher government are attempting to smash trade unions, bring about a return to Victorian-style bosses like Tom Clarke at Silentnight, and grind us down to nineteenth-century living standards.

Our first strike was in 1984, after cuts in piece rates reduced our earnings by as much as £30 a week. The strike that began in June 1985 was provoked when we were asked to forgo our annual pay rise for three months in return for no further job losses.

The company broke the agreement by announcing redundancies and we were

STRIKERS
 MAKE GRIM DISCOVERY
 AT LARGE BEDDING COMPANY



then told that the rise would not be paid to piece workers—the majority of the production workforce.

In July last year 500 of us were sacked for taking industrial action, and a recent tribunal has upheld the dismissals. This only confirmed our knowledge that the legal system is biased against the working class.

The annual results of the Silentnight group, published last week, show a £2m fall in

profits since last year, despite a good performance by other factories in the group. Inside the Silentnight factories there is short-time working as a result of orders lost through our dispute.

Scabs

Some of the present scab workforce have been sacked since the strike began, and piece rate workers have still not had a rise for over two

years.

Silentnight is now moving in the same direction as many other local firms, who keep a small regular workforce and then take on extra workers on a seasonal basis. As there's no security in the sort of jobs that are coming up locally, there is little incentive for us to abandon our dispute now.

In the wake of the miners' strike, the Tory government felt confident to take on

other unions. It is significant that even the more moderate and smaller unions like FTAT are now involved in industrial struggles. This shows the extent of the Tories' attacks and the fact that people are increasingly prepared to fight back.

Unions are getting picked off one at a time. If each union is taken on and then virtually smashed, there will be nothing for the TUC to lead. Therefore, instead of

letting each individual union struggle on on their own, the TUC and Labour leadership should call all-out action.

And the leaders of individual unions under attack, including FTAT, should recognize that, because of the Tory anti-union laws, employers no longer need to negotiate with unions but can simply sack the workforce.

In the meantime, we must win the battle at Silentnight, which is a small but very significant part of the struggle.

Our campaign throughout the country has gained enormous support, from not only the rank and file but also the leaders of the trade union and labour movement.

Workers have shown that they are prepared to fight—at Silentnight, at Wapping, at Addenbrooke's, in Liverpool and elsewhere. This must be the signal to our leaders to launch a counter-attack on the Tories and their laws, and to mobilize the movement nationally.

Donations and support: FTAT Cravendale 92 Branch Strike Fund. A King, 10 Rainhall Crescent, Barnoldswick, Colne, Lancs. Tel: (0282) 813662.

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