

## Expulsions-Liverpool Labour defiant

LIVERPOOL GARSTON Constituency Labour Party has voted by 46 votes to two to refuse to accept the expulsion of Tony Mulhearn. Delegates swept aside the objections of the unelected full-time organiser, Peter Kilfoyle, that the meeting would not be valid if non-Labour Party members were present.

After he had refuted all the accusations made by the NEC, Tony Mulhearn was given a three minute standing ova-

tion, the first time the party secretary could recall that happening.

Harry Leidan (70) recently re-elected as a councillor for St Mary's, the same ward that Tony Mulhearn himself represents, told the meeting that there were two reasons for his success in a very marginal ward—the policies of Liverpool City Council and the personal reputation of Tony Mulhearn. In all his years on the council he had not known

a councillor with a better standing in the area.

European MP Les Huckfield described Garston as a model constituency party and asked Kilfoyle why he was staying at the meeting if he believed it was invalid.

Liverpool NUR secretary Dave Evans expressed his disgust that the NEC had not made any statement about the British Rail redundancies and said he

would never accept Tony Mulhearn's expulsion.

The only two votes against the resolution were cast by delegates from the Co-operative Party. With 48 delegates and 29 visitors present, it was the biggest meeting of the general management committee ever held.

By Kath Lee  
(Garston Labour Party)

# 13 million in

**Tories never had it so GOOD**

# poverty

LORD YOUNG, minister for mass unemployment claimed this week that "the country has never known as good a time as it has today".

He has blurted out what, privately, most Tories think. This is what Britain looks like from his palatial country house in the Sussex Downs, or his exclusive London flat.

But try telling the millions on the dole or the eight million full-time workers officially below the poverty line that they are having a good time.

His noble Lordship has made a fortune from his property and building concerns and goes on Safari and Yachting trips, when many low paid workers and unemployed can't afford a trip to the next town. It has been estimated that the total number of people in poverty has risen to 13 million—twice what it was in 1979.

Yet there are now more millionaires in Britain than ever before and company directors' pay went up by 9.7 per cent last year. At the very top, director Richard Giordano of British Oxygen got £883,000 just for bottling fresh air. Yet British managers are complaining that their differentials over the likes of us are only marginally higher than they were ten years ago.

In contrast the lowest paid nurses are to get just £200 a year increase from the Tories this year. Consultants will be getting a £2,000 to £3,000 pay rise.

The lowest paid civil servants, behind a DHSS counter, are often so lowly paid they are entitled to Family Income Supplement, and worry about the next bill. The head of the civil service, though, will be contemplating what to do with his £77,400 wages.

Young himself has just introduced a white

paper which is a comprehensive assault on low paid workers' rights. Redundancy pay, unfair dismissal claims, health and safety, women's rights and union freedoms are all attacked. The low paid workers will become even more exploited.

No wonder there is seething anger amongst low paid workers—the first tremors of revolt before the abolition of the Wages Councils are being felt.

That could become an earthquake after July, as YTS trainees, young workers, women workers and the low paid follow the examples in fighting privatisation and low pay set by the magnificent struggles of the Adenbrookes' cleaners, the Silentnight strikers, Kay Wools and countless others.

### Join the demonstration

Low paid workers and the unemployed should join this Saturday's demonstration against low pay and privatisation in Manchester.

Marie, one of the Huyton cleaners on strike for nine weeks, told *Militant*: "The idea of the low pay demonstration is very good. It's about time people noticed us and this will get us noticed."

"It will help workers like us because more people might join the union. A lot of women think you've got to be full time—anyone can join a union."

"I support the idea of a national minimum wage of £120. Why shouldn't we? Part-timers should get the same hourly rate; you're often doing the same work, and often the part-time job needs to be full-time."

By Lesley Holt



Britain's rich . . .



. . . and Britain's poor.

Photo: Jacob Sutton (Reflex)

# Militant

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## Heresy-hunt will not succeed

LAST THURSDAY was a shameful day in the history of the Labour Party. While thousands of workers up and down the country were hurled into the uncertainty of redundancy and hundreds were lobbying Parliament to save the shipbuilding industry, the leadership of the party were obsessed only with expelling good socialists from membership.

For the first time in 30 years, leading public figures in the labour movement, elected and carrying the support of thousands, are being expelled by the NEC for their political views. Neil Kinnock and the right wing failed to achieve the quick, surgical removal of the 11 Liverpool *Militant* supporters from the party, but they are determined, whatever the financial and electoral price, to add more names to the three already kicked out.

The NEC have been at pains to dance an elaborate procedural minuet to give the impression they were abiding by the rules of natural justice, but the marathon NEC hearings that led to the expulsion of Tony Mulhearn, Ian Lowes and Tony Aitman were shot through with contradictions and inconsistencies.

Tony Mulhearn, for example, was refused the right to call a witness in his defence, and after he left the hearing, inadmissible 'confidential' evidence was introduced which he was unable to hear or answer. No NEC member has yet explained how it is that only some of the Liverpool DLP officers are arraigned before the NEC while other prominent officers, including the treasurer and one vice-chairman, are not.

It made no matter to the heresy-hunters that Tony Mulhearn answered point by point every one of the charges put to him by Larry Whitty, the General Secretary. The right wing and some former lefts had made up their minds to expel before they went into the hearing. David Blunkett even remarked that the defence put forward by Comrade Mulhearn was 'brilliant', but that didn't stop him voting with the other shameful crew for his expulsion.

For the sake of appearances—to give the impression of even-handedness—one of the 'accused', Councillor Harry Smith, was not expelled. Yet the charges laid against him and union convenor Ian Lowes were virtually identical—of being named as speakers at *Militant* meetings, although they had not organised them or sanctioned the leaflets given as evidence. Yet because it was Ian Lowes' scalp the right wing were determined to have, he was expelled, while Harry Smith 'escaped'.

Behind the farce of these hearings, the underlying aim of the right wing should not be forgotten. They are using the attack upon Marxists as a smokescreen to draw attention away from the fact that they are moving policy far to the right in anticipation of Labour coming into office.

There is no longer even a pretence of trying to debate with *Militant* in the realm of ideas and policies: that would be too revealing to the party rank and file. Neil Kinnock and the clique around him have drawn decision-making and policies further away than ever from conference decisions and the NEC itself.

It is no good now David Blunkett bleating about policy decisions being taken outside the NEC or complaining, as he does in last week's *Tribune*, about the "unfortunate" handling of the Liverpool inquiry. He and others on the 'wobbly left'—in reality the "New Right"—have been willing dupes all along: providing a 'legitimate', left-wing cover for the leadership's political stampede to the right.

When the history books are written, those good comrades who are being expelled will be remembered as martyrs and, moreover, they will in time be reinstated in the party. Those who have engineered their expulsion, and the tame, acquiescent former 'left' will be consigned to oblivion. Everyone remembers Nye Bevan's role in the 1950s, but who remembers the people who expelled him?

In Liverpool and nationally there will be a wave of revulsion at this new round of expulsions. The Labour Party's new organisers in Merseyside, appointed without any local support or credibility, like a political army of occupation, will have to fight every inch of the way to make even one expulsion stick.

In the long term the expulsions will increase the resolve of *Militant* supporters and an increasing number of party members to fight for a leadership prepared, for a change, to have a go at the Tories and not their own party rank and file. This day of shame for the right wing will come to be a day of pride for the genuine socialists in the Labour Party.

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# Socialism

**THE MEMBERS OF Labour's NEC who voted for the expulsion of Liverpool party president Tony Mulhearn and joint shop stewards chairman Ian Lowes will never be forgiven by the party membership.**

Labour group chief whip Jimmy Parry was allowed into the meeting as Tony Mulhearn's friend, but was prevented from speaking up as a witness. Emotionally he interrupted the meeting, "I have left a pensioner and an epileptic sister to come here from Liverpool to defend my friend Tony Mulhearn. I've been a ward secretary for 25 years. You won't even give me five minutes. I'll tell you something Neil Kinnock when I get back to Liverpool, the word McCarthyism will be replaced by Kinnockism."

What a travesty. Dennis Skinner moved on the first morning that the meeting adjourned at 1.00pm and that they all go to join the shipbuilding workers' march. This was lost 14 to 7, with Blunkett and Meacher voting against. The right and these former 'lefts' were far too busy expelling socialists to support workers fighting for their jobs.

### Farce

The meeting swung from high drama to low farce, as the accused fully answered every charge in the greatest detail, but also relentlessly insisted on their rights. A resolution from Dennis Skinner that they all be allowed legal representation was lost 14 to 6, yet the right wing majority were consulting the Labour Party's lawyers throughout the day. When Tony Mulhearn was refused the right to call a witness he demanded time to consult his legal advisor. This was refused and he walked out.

The NEC were quite prepared to continue to judge his case in his absence. But their lawyers said to do so they would have to read out word for word Tony Mulhearn's written submission. So Larry Whitty, heavy

with a cold, sucking throat sweets, spent the next hour reciting it.

Then having spoken to his solicitor, Tony Mulhearn came back. Despite Hattersley and others shaking their heads that he should now he kept out, the NEC had to carry on with their questioning of him.

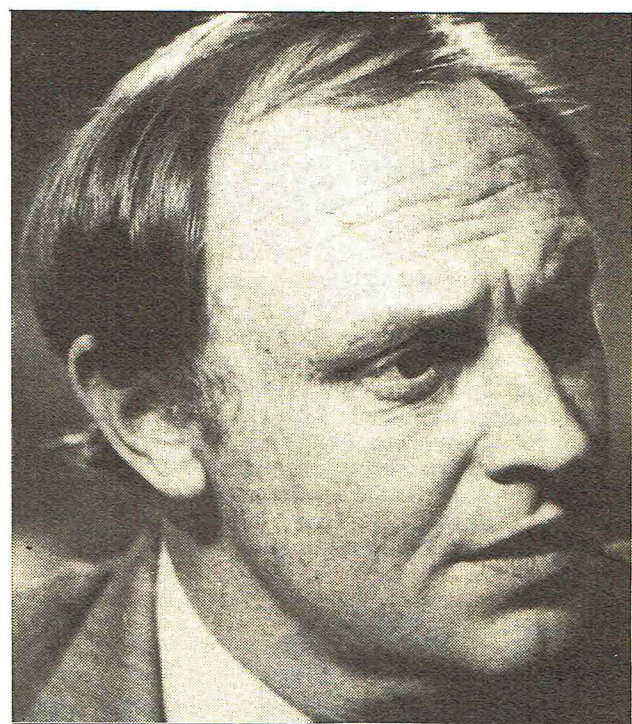
On the various charges of abuse of employment practices he explained, "when the Labour council came in it was the unions that approached us for full nominating rights. The TGWU even threatened industrial action over it... I am not guilty of organised scabbing like some members of the Labour Party such as Eric Hammond. We worked with and tried to help the unions in Liverpool."

But the union representatives there still voted for his expulsion, including Gordon Colling, the delegate from the NGA, Tony Mulhearn's own union, who could not even bring himself to speak throughout the many hours that the case was being heard.

But then when Tony Mulhearn withdrew for the NEC to discuss their verdict, Neil Kinnock, against all the norms of natural justice, introduced fresh evidence against him that he had no chance to answer. Kinnock took it from the LCC submission to the Liverpool inquiry, which had already been ruled inadmissible by the High Court.

Tony Mulhearn has now written to the NEC demanding the right to reappear to answer these extra charges thrown against him behind his back. Tony Benn warned "if you try to destroy the leader of the Liverpool Labour Party, you are taking on Liverpool."

But by 13 votes to 7 Tony Mulhearn was expelled twice; as a "member" of *Militant* tendency and for malpractice in the DLP. Blunkett and Meacher voted both times to expel. This is the same Michael Meacher who issued a May Day declaration stating he opposed expulsions and wanted to



deal with *Militant* by political debate.

The left had successfully moved on the first day that the meeting finish by 9.45 (that is after 12 hours). But Kinnock had urged that after Tony Mulhearn was finished with, they should move on to Derek Hatton if they had to sit all through the night.

So then after an adjournment during which there were frenzied arguments about how to proceed, Kinnock pressurised the chair, completely irregularly, to take the vote again. Sufficient votes changed, including Blunkett and Meacher, for the decision to be reversed. Unfortunately for them Derek Hatton had already gone. The meeting concluded on the Thursday at 1.30am.

### Not spoken

The following morning this mockery began all over again. Ian Lowes replied to all the allegations, including the fact that he had not even spoken at any of the meetings included in the evidence thrown at him. One of the right wingers admitted that "the issue is not whether he spoke, but that his name

was on the leaflet."

He was expelled from the Labour Party by 12 votes to 9 for not complaining sufficiently to take his name off leaflets for meetings he did not organise or address. On the further charge of malpractice arising from his position on the DLP Executive from the unions, and on the Labour Group from the DLP, the NEC by 14 to 7 found in his favour with Kinnock and Hattersley in the minority of hardened witch-hunters. On this charge, every union representative on the NEC, except Ken Cure, voted for Ian.

The minority on this occasion voted that the case was proven even though the evidence comprised of the minutes of six DLP meetings, at two of which Ian Lowes was not even present and at three he had not participated in the discussions under scrutiny. Larry Whitty introduced one of the sets of minutes for the meeting of 6 November 1984, but had to withdraw it in considerable embarrassment when Ian Lowes pointed out that his name was listed at the top among the apologies.

## Harry has last laugh

ONE OF the Liverpool 11 facing expulsion last week, Councillor Harry Smith, has a reputation of combining hard political work with a good joke or two.

On this occasion Harry did not let his reputation down. On first going in to the NEC hearing, he introduced his friend. "This is George Knibb" he said, "But that's only his pen name".

"I suppose you know everyone here" Larry Whitty asked him. "Yes", Harry replied, "I do watch *Spitting Image*".

To make sure there were no vital pieces of evidence missing, Harry had decided to start his political history at the very beginning. He began his submission by telling the NEC he had been born "at a very early age", and then proceeded to go



Harry Smith—relieved.

through his career in the cubs, and the boy scouts.

After 15 minutes, right-wingers were getting a bit ratty as Harry had only just begun his apprenticeship as an electrician. Five minutes more and Gwynneth Dunwoody could stand it no longer: "Hold on", she shouted, "Do we have to go

through all this?" "Just a minute!" Harry butted in quickly, "I'm getting married in three minutes..."

Harry Smith escaped expulsion, but not because of this comic performance—which only underlined the pantomime like character of the whole business—but because the NEC right-wing wanted, for appearance's sake, to look even-handed. As it happens Harry was found "not guilty" of having his name appear on leaflets for meetings he did not organise.

Despite the claim afterwards that Harry Smith had given "assurances" to the meeting, he made it clear on his leaving the NEC that he would continue to support *Militant* and appear at *Militant* meetings in exactly the same way as before.

## £35,000 per expulsion

COMMENTS FROM staff members going in to work at Labour Party headquarters indicated a great deal of anger and frustration at what was going on—not least the cost.

With legal fees, travelling and accommodation expenses, the inquiry itself, publication and circulation of the reports, additional NEC meetings etc., it has probably cost the Labour Party over £100,000 so far—that's £10,000 per person accused, or £35,000 per expulsion!

One of the Walworth Road staff representatives that sit on the NEC reported back to the full staff meeting that Tony Mulhearn "had no case to answer." If a court of law had decided on the case rather than the NEC he would never have been expelled.

# on trial



## Passers-by back lobby

A CHEERFUL and good humoured lobby was kept up throughout Labour's NEC meeting with some party members still there in the small hours of the morning, giving moral support to those being interrogated. The right were not allowed to slink away unnoticed after doing their dirty work.

One young unemployed worker heard about the lobby on the radio and came down to give his support. It turned out that his brother had done exactly the same at the last lobby.

A brother and sister stopped to buy a *Militant* and asked for ten copies to sell at the local festival on Bank Holiday Monday. One black worker stopped to give a pound to the fighting fund saying "Labour isn't Labour without *Militant*."

Hundreds signed the petition against the expulsions, and over 30 names were collected of young workers wanting to hear more about *Militant*. 5 agreed there and then to come on the next local public sale.

Two elderly ladies stopped and describ-

ed the conditions in the twenties and thirties and the struggle of their parents. "It's ridiculous to be expelling the *Militants*" they angrily exclaimed, "when Thatcher is destroying the unions."

If the right wing are out to destroy *Militant*, it is certainly having the opposite effect in Peckham.

### Petition provides pounds

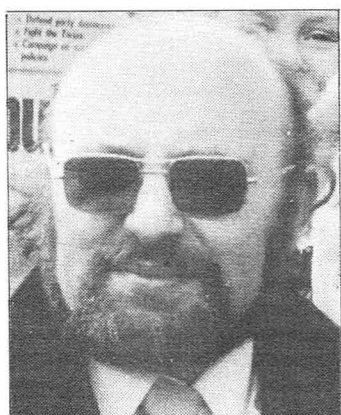
AT THE Northern Region Labour Party Conference £55 was raised from miners and shipyard delegates who signed the petition against the witch-hunt and expulsion of *Militant* supporters. Among those who donated were Frank Duffy, secretary of Murton Lodge and a member of the Durham Area Executive, £20; Dave Hopper and Dave Gay, respectively General Secretary and President of the Durham Area NUM gave £2.50 each; Colin Wear, Murton NUM, £5; Paul Oldham, Murton NUM £5.

## Liverpool's message: "It's a disgrace"

AS I was still feeling tired on Saturday after the NEC, I had a lie in. My rest was disturbed by banging on the front door.

Going down I met the postman with a data-post letter for me from the Labour Party. "Yes," he said, "we all know what that is." Sure enough, it was the notice of my expulsion. "What do you think of it then?" I asked. "It's a disgrace, they should be concentrating on getting her out, not you lot."

That is the overwhelming response from people in Liverpool to the expulsions of socialists from the Labour Party. It took me two hours to walk through the centre of Liverpool on Friday. I was being stopped all the time by people commiserating and pro-



Tony Aitman—expelled.

testing at our expulsion.

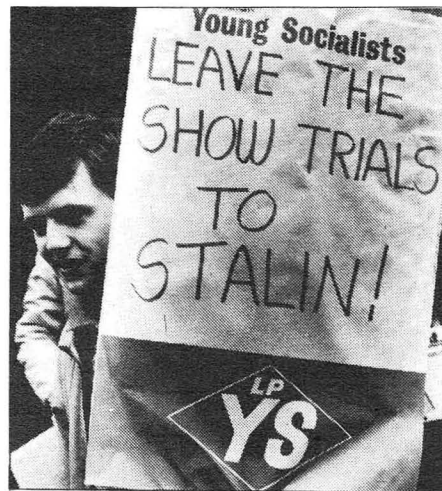
A typical example was the bloke in the second hand bookshop: "I think it is true,

some of you are hard-man extremists. But it is you that do all the work for the Labour Party. It's terrible expelling you after 22 years in the party."

### Join party

The lad I sometimes see in my local newsagent said: "I keep meaning to join the Labour Party. I guess I'm just lazy but I'll have to do something now. It's just not on, letting them get away with that after all the work you've done for the Labour Party."

The feelings of some young lads in the local corner shop were revealing too. To one the expulsions meant that *Militant* supporters should leave the Labour Party to set up on their own: "I



## Shame of the TU delegates

CLEARLY THE party leadership had told the right-wing union reps on the NEC that voting for the expulsion was the price they had to pay for a Labour victory.

Unbelievably, right wing COHSE delegate Cyril Ambler announced to the meeting that he was going to make his longest speech yet at the NEC. "I am about to explode the myth that I am the little man who sits in the corner saying nothing and putting his hand up at the right time."

It would have been better for him if he had stayed in the corner. One NEC left-winger interjected that Ambler was a "political pygmy" compared with Tony Mulhearn whose political future he was deciding on.

COHSE members will be wanting to know why Ambler has not come out of the corner before, over health cuts, nurses' wages, or privatisation.

Alex Kitson was not satisfied with voting for just a few expulsions, he warned that *Militant* was winning support in Dundee, Aberdeen and Strathclyde not just Liverpool. "You've got to do them, all of them before the next election." He did not seem too constrained by his union's (TGWU) opposition to witch-hunts.

Arguing for the expulsion of Ian Lowes, Sam McCluskie of the seamen's union gave the balanced assessment "he should be expelled. They are nothing more than a bunch of Trots."

## Bias for press

TONY BENN on the Thursday morning complained that the NEC had agreed not to speak to the press, but party press officer Peter Mandelson was continually taking notes from Neil Kinnock, and nipping out to brief the press. Benn said it was intolerable that a party official should be giving just one side's view to the press. He moved that the press be allowed to nominate two representatives (but not News International) who could be allowed to sit in to hear both sides. It was defeated 14 to seven. The right want to do their dirty work behind closed doors.

AT THE start of the proceedings Larry Whitty recommended that there be no recorded vote taken, but only three votes were cast for his suggestion, including Michael Meacher and David Blunkett. They both voted for the expulsion of Tony Mulhearn but obviously did not want anyone to know of their cowardly defection from the left.

mean in Liverpool you've got all the best socialists. You've got enough support from the people. Why not set up your own party and take over from the Labour Party?"

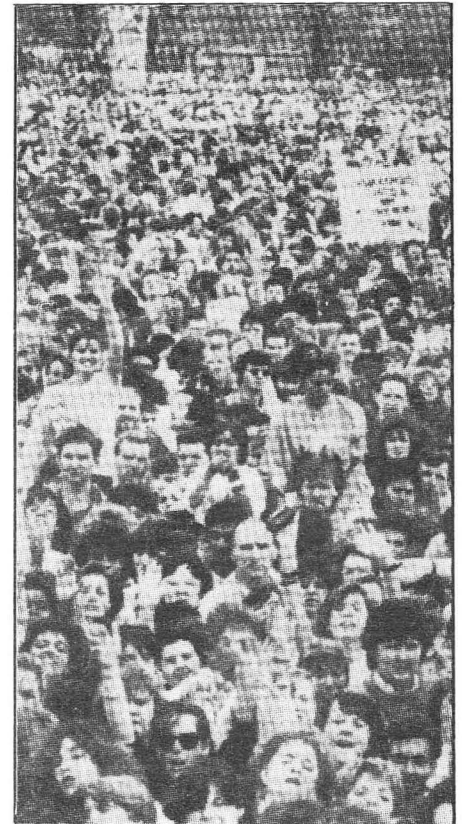
I explained that *Militant's* ideas were those that the Labour Party should adopt and about the democratic way that the Liverpool party worked.

"That's right," said the 13 year old lad, "I don't know much about *Militant* or Derek Hatton, but they told him not to put the rates up by large amounts and he didn't. He's the only one who did that."

By Tony Aitman  
(expelled Liverpool socialist)

## How the world is run

By Jeremy Birch



THIRTY MILLION people in Europe, India, the Eastern Bloc and in Africa itself, participated in Sport Aid's 'Race Against Time'.

For many of the predominantly young runners this represented a kind of political gesture. They are fired by a deep concern for the starving millions, and are appalled by the callousness of the world economy.

Sport Aid not only hoped to raise millions more, but to highlight the continuing food crisis in the week of the UN's special debate on Africa. There African nations will ask for \$450 billion in financial assistance and debt relief, the removal of trade barriers in the West and fairer prices for their commodity exports.

Africa, as one of the very poorest areas of the third world, is in a desperate position, which charities could never eliminate. The continent's foreign debt has reached \$200 billion. And to repay it many countries have to give over still more land to export crop production, at the expense of growing their own food. 36 of the poorest 40 countries export food to the USA. Just servicing the debt accounts for 35 per cent of Sub-Saharan Africa's export earnings.

### Prices collapse

Yet the prices of the commodities they export have collapsed so far with the international economic crisis, that the third world is 'donating' \$70 billion to shore up the West.

Already the American capitalists are expressing reluctance to meet the African nations' aid requests. 16 years ago the UN set the target for industrialised nations to allocate 0.7 per cent of their GNP to development aid. Today they average half of that, and the real value of aid is declining. Anyway most aid is in the form of loans, increasing the third world debt burden.

Capitalism internationally is based on the plundering of the developing countries. The starving masses have no jobs, income nor access to fertile land. They cannot afford to buy food, even though world-wide enough is produced to feed humanity.

Those who ran on 25 May wore tee-shirts emblazoned 'I ran the world'. But who does run the world, and can charitable events have any effect on them? What about the 500 multinationals that account for 80 per cent of world trade? This includes the food multinationals like Nestlé and Del Monte that are responsible for diverting locally grown products to western markets.

Only socialism internationally can alleviate the plight of the majority of mankind that lives in the third world. But it took even Bob Geldof to raise the slogan 'Change the World'. Youth do want to change society. But the Labour leaders with their dull, drab and grey campaigns cannot inspire young people with the vision of a better world.

To change the world, for socialist change in Britain, they will have to change the Labour Party first.

# L'pool-cuts will still be fought

LIVERPOOL City Council's continued crisis is directly the responsibility of this Tory government and their policies of cutting back on grants to local councils. Since 1979 a staggering £500 million has been stolen by the Tory government from the city.

Now the Tories' national policies are once again threatening to push Liverpool towards financial insolvency. The gap in this year's budget is £27m, which can only be found by either the government giving back some of the stolen grant money or by cuts.

Management have already drawn up what each committee needs to cut in order to meet targeted expenditure, and it makes horrendous reading.

In education as a very minimum 11 schools and six FE colleges are proposed for closure. At least 200 teachers would have to go. All nursery schools and classes would have to close. Some free school meals would have to be scrapped and charges increased.

## Rents up

In the housing Direct Labour Organisation, the deficit is £9m—here a minimum of 400 workers would have to go. Rents would have to go up by £3 per week.

Social services already decimated would be effectively dismantled in many areas to save its targetted £4 million. Residential care homes would have to be transferred to voluntary organisations. Home help charges would have to go up by £1. Staff cuts would involve a minimum of 208 and up to 430 staff. This in turn would mean closing 2/3 of APHs, 2/3 of homes for the

By Dave Cotterill

mentally ill, 1/2 day nurseries and 1/2 day care provision centres.

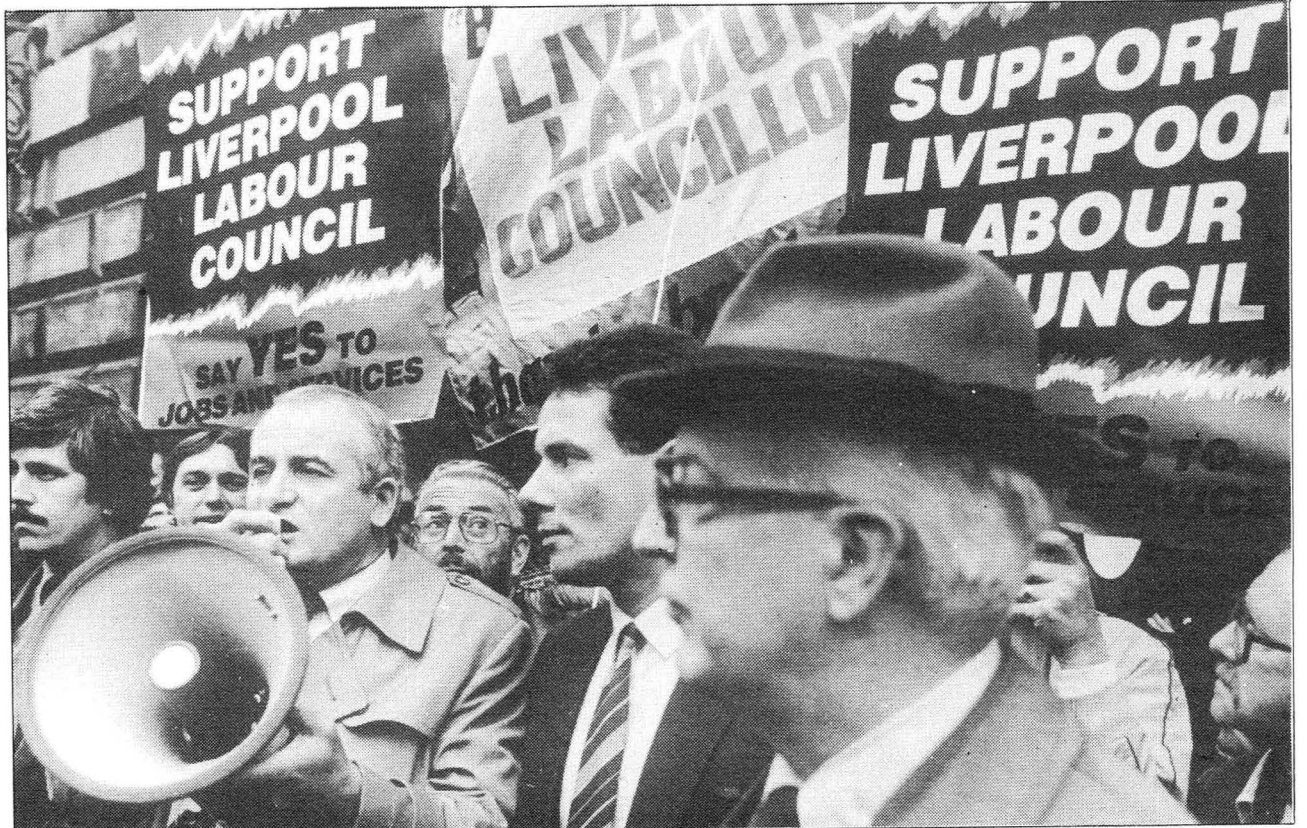
In every department there would be non-filling of vacancies and cuts in services.

The baths will have colder and dirtier water—the unemployed will be forced to pay for leisure. Funerals will be more expensive. Repairs will take even longer. Pest inspection officers, planning officers, inspectors will take longer to inspect premises—as a consequence dirt, disease and deterioration will all increase.

The Labour Group until now has resolutely refused to implement any of these proposals and instead has continued to fill vacancies and authorise expenditure.

On this course it is inevitable that fairly soon technical financial insolvency will loom large. Under these conditions Labour councillors if they refuse to carry out the officers' recommendations will be open to massive surcharge by the District Auditor.

If the Labour Group had the backing of the local authority unions, there is no doubt they would unhesitatingly take this road despite the risk to themselves. However, the reality is that the trade union leaders, with one or two notable exceptions, have



Tony Mulhearn addressing anti-cuts protestors occupying the Town Hall last year.

been unable to mount any support or action in defence of the councillors in their current round with the District Auditor and the High Courts. And the brutal fact is that the councillors' only hope lies in the judges seeing a mass movement of opposition to the removal of the councillors.

## Last battle

In the last budget battle, the councillors took the struggle as far as they could—they delivered all of their promises; unfortunately many of the local trade union leaders were unable to deliver their promises.

That is why it would appear unreasonable to ask the Labour councillors to travel down the same road—particularly when most of the local and national trade union leaders seem unconcerned as to the impending crisis and the effects on their members.

Yet incredible as it seems many of the councillors—even though they do not have the united backing of the trade unions are not prepared to deviate from the policy of no cuts in jobs and services.

Having come this far and having sacrificed virtually everything, many are not prepared to be remembered

for having made cuts in their final months in office. If only this type of leadership could be repeated within the trade unions. But most of the leaders seem afraid to do anything to help even their own members, for fear of being accused of helping *Militant*.

## Options

The options are either that by organising and fighting, the trade unions will force the Tories to give Liverpool extra cash or the cash will run out. Liverpool will come to a complete halt. The only other option is that Labour resigns and fights inside and

outside the council chamber along with the unions, against attempts by the Liberals and Tories to butcher jobs and services and do Thatcher's dirty work.

Labour was recently re-elected on its policy of defending jobs and services—of making no cuts. No-one is in any doubt anymore over this issue.

Either the trade unions take on a real campaign or the money will run out—not because Labour or *Militant* is playing politics with people's lives, or that the city has sought confrontation—but simply because there is not sufficient cash.

# Labour defeats Black Caucus

ONE OF the most important recent local election victories for Labour in Liverpool was in Granby ward. This is where over half the city's black population live, and where the Black Caucus stood an independent candidate.

The resounding victory for Labour was a vindication of the council's policies on race and of the appointment of Sam Bond as the principal race relations advisor.

For the last 18 months the Black Caucus have carried out an unrelenting campaign of slander against the council, which has been seized upon by all the council's enemies (including Thatcher and Baker) to accuse them of "alienating the black community".

It received widespread coverage in the national and local press which were all anxious to promote this group during the council's budget battle with the Tory government.

## Labour leaders

Unfortunately the national Labour leadership, as part of their attack on Liverpool Labour Party, also became embroiled in the dispute. In April of last year Neil Kinnock, totally ignoring the protests of the majority of local black organisations, met with the Black Caucus giving the impression that he endorsed their campaign. This was after several incidents of physical attacks on Labour Party members by supporters of this group!

The Black Caucus were in-

vited to give "evidence" to the NEC inquiry into the DLP. The same Black Caucus who went on to stand an independent candidate.

Some party members associated with the Black Caucus tried to justify their support for the independent candidate, on the basis of the refusal of Liverpool Labour Party to select black candidates.

Yet in October of last year a possible black candidate who had successfully gone through the DLP selection panel was turned down by the Granby ward, largely on the insistence of Black Caucus supporters in that ward. This was simply because she was not one of their supporters.

A subsequent resolution put to the ward by *Militant* supporters noted: "It is a matter of regret that the Granby ward has never selected a black person to stand for elections to the city council."

Leading Black Caucus member Liz Drysdale admitted that the independent candidate was selected to stand against Labour not the

Liberals or the Tories. This they hoped would split the Labour vote and let the Liberals in, as part of their contribution to what they imagined would have been an overall Liberal victory in Liverpool.

After all the first item dealing with race on the Liberal manifesto was not on black unemployment, discrimination, etc but the "sacking of Sam Bond". It would take little imagination to see from which group the Liberals' principal race relations advisor would have come.

## Increased majority

In the event Labour increased its majority to 938, more than twice that of the absolute vote of 427 for the independent candidate.

The victory was achieved despite what could at best be described as a low-key campaign by the local ward. They refused to distribute the Liverpool Labour Party broadsheet *Not the Echo*, or a joint statement by councillors John Hamilton and Derek Hatton answering the lies of the local press.

Yet John Hamilton is a councillor for the Granby ward!

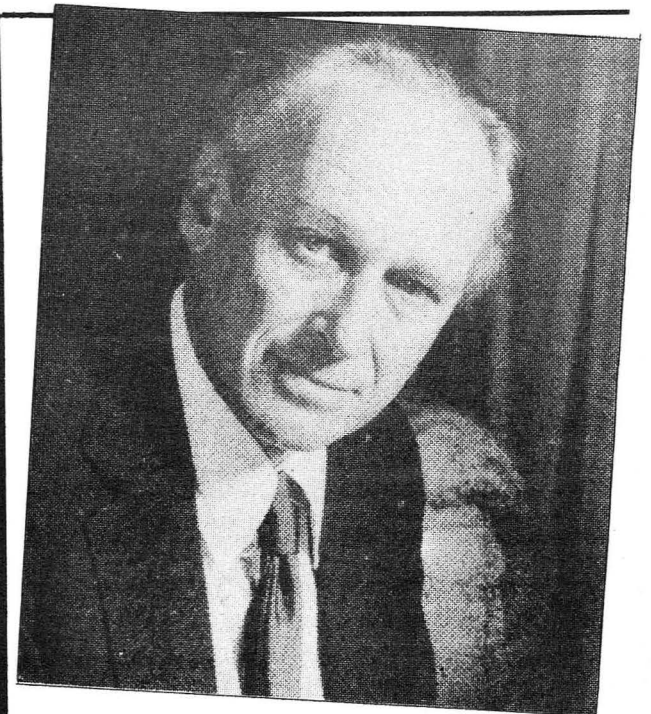
The campaign took a sinister turn when LPYS members were attacked in the presence of the independent candidate while fly-



posting the area. The attackers emerged from the independent candidate's campaign van, resulting in one YS member being slashed above the eye with a Stanley knife.

The tactics of intimidation and lies could not stand up however to the tremendous record of the city council in relation to blacks, or its achievements in the Granby area.

Much still needs to be done, however, particularly in the area of black unemployment. But the council's initiatives are constantly being hampered by the continuing boycott by NALGO of the Race Relations' Unit. The election result now shows that there is absolutely no basis for this boycott and it should be called off allowing the Unit to carry out its job effectively.



LOYAL THATCHERITE Nicholas Ridley (above) has been made Environment Secretary in the latest Cabinet reshuffle. That puts him in charge of local government, cutting council services, attacking Labour councils and sorting out Liverpool.

While other ministers were publicly urging some relaxation of spending controls, Ridley last week accused councils of deliberately cutting essential services to embarrass the government.

He is renowned for the infamous 'Ridley Plan'. Drawn up before Thatcher's 1979 victory, it turned out to be a virtual

blueprint for her anti-working class strategy. He advised that first an industry like steel should be taken on, which was duly done in 1980.

Only then could a battle with the miners be risked. To prepare the government should:

"Build up maximum coal stocks... encourage the recruitment of non-union lorry drivers... introduce dual coal/oil firing in all power stations... There should be a large mobile squad of police equipped".

Labour local authorities must nationally work out their plan to combat this monetarist union buster, and to protect services.

# Thatcher's reserve army

**TWENTY YEARS ago Harold Wilson justified his Labour government's wage freeze with the phrase: "One man's wage increase is another man's price increase".**

These days the Tories trust to mass unemployment rather than the law as their main weapon to drive down the living standards of those in work. Yet they justify their campaign against wage increases by the need to cut the dole queues! One man's increase is now supposed to be another's job.

The arguments may have changed, but the capitalists are being quite consistent. By the nature of the profit system they have to keep wages down. Capitalist policies follow the logic of their class interests.

## Class divisions

The Tories have had some 'success'. According to *Social Trends 1986*, the bottom 40 per cent got 10.2 per cent of national income in 1976 and only 7 per cent now. Meanwhile the top 20 per cent's share went up from 44.4 per cent to 48 per cent.

According to the Low Pay Unit more than 40 per cent of the adult workforce earn less than the £116 a week which is the European Social Charter's "decency level".

We live in a class divided society. The vast majority have to work for the capitalists to earn a living. The only way we can improve our standards is by taking action to improve wages or state benefits.

By Mick Brooks

Since the capitalist class make their profit from the workers' unpaid labour, they need to keep wages down to maximise profits. If you forego a wage rise, the money doesn't go to a low paid nurse or to give one of the unemployed a job. It just lines your employer's pocket.

Does that mean that workers can "price themselves out of a job" as the Tories argue? Between 1962 and 1972 real wages rose by 2.9 per cent a year, but between 1973 and 1982 by only 1.7 per cent a year. Yet unemployment went up much faster after 1973.

Between 1979 and 1983 manual workers' wages rose by 6 per cent, while manual jobs fell by 8 per cent. For non-manual workers, however, wages rose by 14 per cent and jobs rose by 12 per cent.

So in the service sector where employment has continued to grow, workers still in jobs can push up their real wages. The whole of Britain's job loss has taken place in manufacturing, and workers in declining industries are in a weak bargaining position. In other words the level of wages follows the accumulation of



Fast food, fast profits for the multinational, but low pay and poor security for the workers.

capital, as Marx explained; wages don't decisively affect the rate of accumulation.

Of the 188,000 new jobs created since last March 186,000 were for women. This, though, disguises a slight run-down in women's full-time jobs which was more than compensated by a 213,000 increase in part-time working women (who work less than 30 hours a week).

## Part-timers

Part-time employees don't have the same rights to sick pay, holiday pay and redundancy, so they work out even cheaper to employ. This is a simple redistribution of jobs from full-time to part-time. The end result is an increase

in profits against wages.

The YTS scheme is not just an attempt to massage the unemployment figures. It wants to make youth work for a lower proportion of adult wages.

The example held up is Germany, where youth wages are lower in relation to adults', and there is relatively less youth unemployment.

But a lower proportion of a higher basic rate of pay in Germany still provides a more comfortable existence than the poverty wages the Tories have in store for British youth.

In any case if young people accept a wage of £40 a week instead of £60 to pack supermarket shelves that does not mean Tesco will

employ twice as many—just that the difference will go to swell Tesco profits. If you do get more jobs for youth, that will be at the expense of adult workers' jobs.

The slashing of social benefits, apart from its obvious savings for the capitalist state, is aimed at driving workers to look for jobs at any rate of pay.

## Wage control

This cannot reduce unemployment, since there are no jobs to go to, but it piles the pressure on the employed to moderate wage demands.

In fact the unemployed are victims in the Tory struggle to keep down wages. As

the latest appalling jobless figures were announced, Lord Young berated 'greedy workers' as the reason, and pointed to unit labour costs which are currently rising at 8.3 per cent a year.

Unit labour costs in Japan and Germany are not going up at all. Yet German and Japanese workers are much better paid. They are also more productive. But the reason for the low productivity of British industry is the lack of investment over a long period.

Under the stewardship of the capitalist class British society is going to rack and ruin. From now on poverty line wages will be a permanent feature in capitalist Britain.

# Priced out of a job?

**DAVE NELLIST, MP for Coventry South East, put forward a national Minimum Wages Bill in 1985. Here he outlines his reasons for fighting on the issue of low pay:**

A million people in Britain today earn more than £20,000 a year, 8,000 of them are millionaires. These are the people that the Tory government represents.

As a Labour MP, elected by ordinary working class people in Coventry, I have attempted to represent my class in parliament by fighting on the issues which affect workers most.

Kenneth Clarke, Minister for Unemployment, introducing the Wages Bill in parliament, explained that the government was intent on "removing burdens on employers".

Tory MP, David Maclean, made even clearer the Tories' Victorian attitude to workers by his outline of the "proper legal definition of the relationship between employer and employee, which is that of a master and servant."

The Tories would undoubtedly like to see slave labour in Britain—it is up to the labour movement to make sure they don't achieve it.

Since I introduced a National Minimum Wages Bill, which called, in today's money, for £120 for a 35 hour week as a national minimum wage, I have received numerous letters from young workers, mainly young women, outlining their appalling pay and con-

ditions. A dental assistant from Hounslow in Middlesex wrote:

"My boss says he can't afford to give me a rise, which I think is stupid—he has a Rolls Royce. Last year I said to him I was looking for another job. He said "OK. Find another job then. There's 3,000 people on the dole in this area. I can easily get another little junior."

The Wages Bill is the government's latest anti-working class legislation. Under this Bill the Wages Councils, Britain's only system of legal minimum wages, will be seriously weakened and abolished altogether for half a million young people under 21. This would worst affect women, ethnic minorities, part-timers and young people—already the most vulnerable sections of the workforce.

## Propaganda

The government's propaganda on the Wages Bill claims that workers are 'pricing themselves out of jobs' and that if the 'free market' was allowed to operate employment would increase. This is nonsense.

The government's own figures show that since 1979, school leavers' wages have dropped by 12 per cent for boys and 13 per cent for



Dave Nellist.

girls. Yet youth unemployment has trebled. Eight out of ten jobs supposedly created by the young workers' scheme and other forms of subsidy and wage cutting, are replacing adult workers, maybe their own parents!

Whilst I have raised the scandal of low pay in the House of Commons at every opportunity, it will take more than a few speeches in parliament to get a better deal for low paid workers.

As joint president of the Youth Trades Union Rights Campaign I have been pleased to be part of the struggle YTURC has waged to achieve a better deal for youth and to get young workers organised.

The whole labour movement must take up this issue as a priority. In particular the trade unions must initiate a massive recruitment drive amongst unorganised workers to bring them under the protection of the labour movement.

# Fighting Fund

So far  
£4810

| Area                 | Received    | % of target achieved | Target       |
|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|--------------|
| 1 Humberside         | 253         |                      | 2300         |
| 2 London South West  | 157         |                      | 1500         |
| 3 Merseyside         | 571         |                      | 7000         |
| 4 South East         | 137         |                      | 2400         |
| 5 London North West  | 143         |                      | 2900         |
| 6 Scotland West      | 174         |                      | 3850         |
| 7 London North East  | 134         |                      | 3550         |
| 8 West Midlands      | 171         |                      | 4500         |
| 9 Eastern            | 87          |                      | 3450         |
| 10 East Midlands     | 88          |                      | 3050         |
| 11 Scotland East     | 87          |                      | 3200         |
| 12 Manchester/Lancs  | 68          |                      | 4150         |
| 13 Northern          | 86          |                      | 4550         |
| 14 South West        | 39          |                      | 2150         |
| 15 Wales West        | 75          |                      | 3350         |
| 16 Southern          | 23          |                      | 3100         |
| 17 Wales East        | 15          |                      | 2150         |
| 18 Yorkshire         | 82          |                      | 5600         |
| 19 London South East | 0           |                      | 2250         |
| Others               | 2419        |                      | 5000         |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>4810</b> |                      | <b>70000</b> |

PAT ROBERTSON, a fundamentalist TV preacher held a dinner party recently in Washington to raise money towards his campaign to become the US's next Republican president.

24 couples paid \$25,000 for their meal. Robertson's "little gathering" as he described it raised roughly a million dollars.

Not that he needs the cash—his Christian Broadcasting network, where he prophesies that Armageddon is just around the corner—brings in \$70 million a year.

But we need the cash—to tell the truth to workers, instead of the lies and distortion of the bosses' media. Why not organise a dinner or party like Pat

Robertson's to celebrate *Militant's* 800th edition? Or send us a donation to the Fighting Fund as a birthday present!

Nick Croome from Brent South LPYS sent us £120 "to fight the witch hunt".

## Support grows

Trade unionists also showed their support last week with a collection of £169 at the FBU conference. The tremendous £554 raised at Labour Women's conference shows how support for our ideas amongst every section of the labour movement is on the increase.

Local readers' meetings recently raised: Hackney £42; Stroud £17.20;

North Avon' £10. Has there been a readers' meeting organised in your area recently? Get on the streets with rattling tins and petitions—show the opposition to the witch hunt with lots of cash.

Thanks to M. Forster, S. Humberside NALGO expenses £20.00; P. Atkinson, Hackney £11.20; Dave Wardle, Bingley £16; Beverley and Tom Mahoney, Gillingham £2; Tim Hales, Bingley £4; Hull AUEW No12 branch members £4.50; Deborah Slot, Andrew Lambirth, Glen Anderson, Lesley Phillips, South London, £5 each; Harlow "witches" coming out party £16.45 and Joy Bindwales £1.20 making witches' hats!

# Sell Militant

THE BOSSES' papers united for once, in congratulating the Labour Party leadership.

Papers which in the general election will be urging their readers to vote Tory, are ecstatic that *Militant* supporters are being thrown out of the Labour Party.

The only way working class people will find out the real reasons for the expulsions is if they are given the chance to read *Militant*.

The best sale of the week was at the lobby of the NEC itself. Many passers-by stopped to find out what was going on and bought a *Militant*. Over 200 were sold.

Surrounding estates were also covered with 20 sold on the Rockingham Estate near Walworth Road. But good sales were not restricted to South London.

In Ruislip, 17 were sold on an estate. In Stroud, sellers are usually quite pleased with 10 sales—this week they sold 65 including 12 in a pub and 14 sold in 20 minutes door-to-door.

When *Militant* faces attacks from Labour's leaders, sales always rocket. But keep up these estate sales every week and support for Marxism will grow at a rate that Labour's right wing officials will never be able to deal with.

By Dave Fryatt

# Dangerous lunatics

THE SCOTTISH Federation of Conservative Students want a witch-hunt in the bosses' party. They want wet extremist Edward Heath expelled.

This moderate bunch want the complete abolition of the welfare state, and denationalisation of most public services including the police and the prisons.

These so-called 'Libertarians' want to legalise prostitution (a new definition of 'liberty' for women), and balance it up with demands for the castration of rapists, presumably in the privatised prisons.

They want the legalisation of incest—but don't marry your dad in a registry office; the Scottish FCS want them banned as "pagan and disrespectful"—you might get arrested by a free market cop.

"The Conservative Students have the reputation for vigorous originality" Malcolm Rifkind, Tory secretary of state for Scotland commented tactfully. But amongst all the rubbish you can see the outline of future large fascist groupings developing within the Tory party.

And however embarrassed the Conservative leaders may be, such extreme reaction is as much a part of Toryism as the whist drives or coffee mornings.

# A mortgage on your life

IN THE week that unemployment reached a new high, the Tories announced cuts in benefits to unemployed home owners.

By Heather Moore

They will cut by half the benefits paid for the first six months to cover the interest payments on a mortgage to an unemployed person. When introduced in the autumn, it will immediately affect 90,000 people.

Evictions and repossession by banks and building societies of households unable to keep up mortgage repayments are already running at 16,500 a year. The annual rate of repossessions has increased seven-fold since 1979—a total of 50,520 repossessions since Thatcher came to power.

In 1985 no fewer than 50,000 households were more than six months behind with the mortgage repayments (repossession procedures usually begin after four or five months of non-payment).

The Building Societies Association's 1985 report explained that only a very small percentage of mortgage non-payments were 'willfully dishonest'. The main causes are unemployment, financial overcommitment and marriage break-ups—all trademarks of Tory Britain.

The Tory vision of a nation of individual 'capitalist homeowners' was nonsense from the start. They eased lending restrictions and pioneered easy loans, certainly, but they also heralded the return of mass unemployment and declining living standards.

Sixty per cent of homes in the country are privately owned—but with four million on the dole and millions more on low pay this market cannot expand.

The Tories tried to stimulate the housing market by pushing down interest

rates. But this has the reverse effect in the long term. As lower interest rates and easier borrowing facilities tempt more people on to the market, this new demand makes house prices soar. The Tories have forgotten the most basic rule of capitalist 'supply and demand'!

The average annual rate of house price increases is currently 10.3 per cent, this will probably rise to 12 per cent by early summer.

## High speed debts

London house prices are becoming insane. In West London there are now one room bedsits with a bathroom 'annexe' (little more than a cupboard) going for £30,000. One bedroom pre-1914 flats in the 'cheaper' areas of London are now averaging £28,000. But despite these ridiculous prices, as councils cut back on building programmes and landlords push up the price of rented accommodation, people are forced into buying.

The banks and finance houses await their victims ready to squeeze them dry. The Tories' easing of lending restrictions has caused a rapid growth in the mortgage industry, spurred on by the arrival in Britain of wealthy American corporations like Bank of America, Chase Manhattan and Citibank with vast resources to undercut the home-grown money lenders.

The most recent arrival is The Mortgage Corporation who hope to lend £500

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million by the end of the year.

To undercut its British rivals, US companies promise the high speed mortgage. TMC say applications will go through in 24 hours, Chase Manhattan will take 48 hours. British companies are following suit—last month one complete mortgage went through in just five and a half hours.

Now in just one day you can sign away your life in hock to a bank or building society for some overpriced, sub-standard home. Young couples in particular, take on mortgages they cannot afford. The National Association of Homeowners estimate that 380,000 households are facing severe financial hardship trying to keep up repayments.

Add to this the instability of an ever-changing interest rate (which dictates the monthly repayments for mainly

first-time buyers), as the Tory government juggles with the economy.

In the four years that I have had a mortgage my repayments never stayed the same for more than three months, bouncing around between £125 and £200.

## Worry later

The whole bubble will burst eventually—the market needs sellers at one end but buyers at the other. Galloping house prices means the buyers' end is diminishing rapidly. The finance companies know this but they will screw as much money out of the market as possible today and worry about the consequences tomorrow.

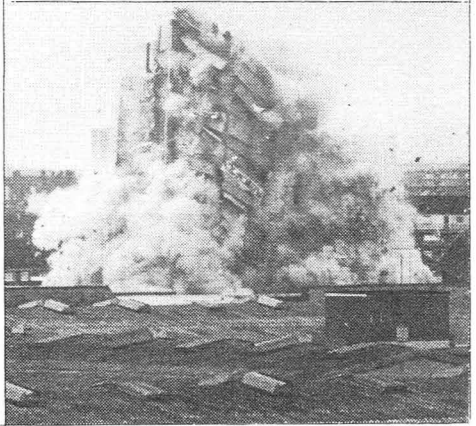
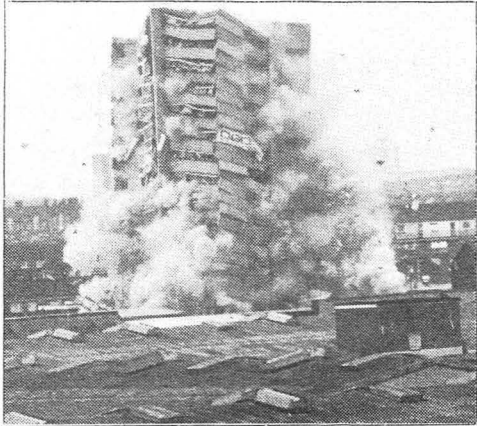
The only positive side is that the Tories are slashing away at what used to be their very own bedrock of support. The former traditional party of the small

homeowner is now the party of multi-national creditors, yo-yoing mortgage rates and soaring house prices.

In my area of Newham, where two-thirds of this London borough's homes are privately owned, Labour swept the board in the local elections, winning all 60 seats.

Labour must build on this support. But half measures will do little, and only provoke the powerful finance houses into inflicting chaos on the economy. The banks and finance houses must be nationalised, with the cancelling of debts for the millions of workers caught in the mortgage web.

A socialist planned economy would end the casino economics of capitalism, prices could be fixed at reasonable and controllable levels, and the millions of pounds currently creamed off by big business ploughed back into society for the benefit of all.



Another high rise block is knocked down. Poor housing stock, high rise monstrosities and government cutbacks have hit public sector housing and forced people into the private sector.

## Housing market paved with gold?

"FOLLOW THE work, get on your bike, go south and get a job" Tory experts on unemployment advise workers in the most depressed areas. The Nationwide Building Society's recent survey showed some of the difficulties.

In the North of England, workers made redundant would have to sell their houses if they are owner occupiers. They could get an average of £26,580, just two per cent up on last year. In London, where the Tories imply the streets are

paved with gold and job offers jump out at you from every corner, house prices jumped 16 per cent last year to an average £54,000, twice as much as you get up North. Oh, the beauties of a market economy.

# LEFT and RIGHT

## Where the rich stick their caviar

ARE YOU worried about losing your beauty? Life on the assembly line, picket line, dole queue or in the shops getting you down? Then how about a facial? The Fabulous Faces Boutique in San Francisco offers you a "Palatial Facial" for \$175 for "a day's pampering" or \$225 if you want a limousine and roses thrown in. The Palatial uses caviar and seasonal ingredients from the world's finest beaches. The Spacial facial gives you ion-iron bombardment and something called "seaweed flagellation". It couldn't happen to a nicer class.

## Feudal Aid

ROCK FANS who want to go up market from Glastonbury or WOMAD should look no further than the 'Business Connections' gig at Osterley Park. They'll be singing to celebrate the engagement of King John of Portugal to Phillipa of Lancaster. King who? Oh sorry, didn't we tell you, the engagement took place 600 years ago.

Phillipa, the Fergie of the medieval gossip columns, was the daughter of John of Gaunt. The lead singer of Business Connections 'Bunter' Worcester is a landowner who traces his ancestry back to the very same family. We're really impressed, Bunter.

There are still a few tickets left to see this Bob Geldof for feudal relics, at £60 a go. And it's such a good cause.

## World Socialist Books

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○ *Divide and Rule: Labour and the partition of Ireland*. New issue. £1.40 plus 20p post and packing from: World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB.

# 800 Militant

# From strength to strength

THE EXPULSION of Liverpool socialists from the Labour Party for their support of *Militant* has aroused greater interest than ever in the paper and the Marxist ideas it stands for. This week we celebrate our 800th issue with a special feature by KEVIN RAMAGE.

Below he looks at the history of the attacks which have been made on the paper's supporters, culminating in last week's move by the NEC.

*Militant* has consistently argued that these attacks are not about organisational irregularities but a response to the political ideas which *Militant* stands for.

On pages 8, 9 and 10, is a survey of the paper's coverage of the great events of more than two decades. They show how Marxists understand the processes at work in society, enabling them to anticipate

the course of events and give a perspective to workers forced into struggle.

It is the sharp contrast between the clear voice of Marxism and the muddled and inconsistent ideas of its opponents, which lies at the heart of the right wing's hatred of the paper. The attacks began just when the inadequacy of the right wing's policy was being demonstrated by the 1974-79 Labour government and when *Militant's* ideas were reaching wider layers of the movement.

The right know that when the mass of the party's ranks need a fighting programme to solve their problems, it is to Marxism that they will turn. *Militant* is proud to provide that programme and it will continue to do so, whatever attacks are launched against us.

THE FIRST salvo in the witch-hunt came in *The Observer* (31 August 1975) in an amateurish article full of elementary factual errors (even claiming the paper was published fortnightly when it was weekly!). A statement published in *Militant* (5 September 1975) explained the real purpose of the article: "Nora Beloff and *The Observer*, with the rest of the capitalist press, reveal their hostility to the shift towards the left which is taking place in the ranks of the Labour Party and the trade unions at the present time..."

"...The rank and file of the Labour Party have the temerity to demand that the Labour government carry out the programme on which it was elected!"

*The Observer* article prompted the infamous report by the then Labour Party National Agent, Reg (now Lord) Underhill. But his report died a death as the then left majority on the Labour Party NEC voted to "leave it on the table".

In early 1977 the witch-hunt took off in earnest as the right-wing, clearly stung by the appointment of the LPYS chairman, Andy Bevan, as the National Youth Officer passed a resolution setting up a sub-committee to investigate so-called 'Trotskyist infiltration' of the Labour Party.

## CIA entryism

*Militant* responded with a counter-offensive. Under the headline: "CIA funded Labour right", issue 342 (11 February 1977), showed how "leading right-wing Labour politicians (albeit no doubt unwittingly) worked for organisations and publications that were directly or indirectly financed by the CIA". "Stop the witch-hunt of the Marxists and the left", it demanded: "Open the investigation into the CIA entryism into the labour movement!"

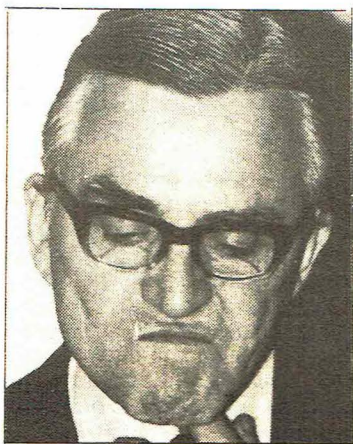
As a result of pressure from the labour movement, the report produced by the sub-committee fell well short of what Fleet Street and the right wing were demanding.

After the defeat in the 1979 General Election, pressure built up for democratisation of the Party, including the right of Constituency Labour Parties to reselect their MPs. This pressure led to renewed attacks on *Militant* which we explained were a preparation for attacks on the left as a whole. NUR leader Sid Weighell demanded at the union's 1981 conference: "I want an inquiry into whether they are financed separately and if they have a separate organisation—and if all this is established then they ought not to be in the party".

*Militant* 559 (3 July 1981) responded by showing the hypocrisy of this attack: "There is ample evidence that the right wing of the labour movement, including the right wing trade union leaders, have had associations with groupings financed by the CIA and



The five members of the *Militant* Editorial Board expelled in 1983.



Sid Weighell.

NATO bodies which are wholly opposed to the interests of the Labour Party and the working class in general.

"There is the example of the 'Labour Committee for Transatlantic Understanding' whose sponsors include Bill Rogers, David Owen and... Sid Weighell".

June 1982 saw the publication of the 'Hayward-Hughes' report whose main recommendation was that the Labour Party set up "a register of non-affiliated groups of members to be recognised and allowed to operate within the party". Some on the left argued that the register was merely a 'tidying up' exercise. But *Militant* showed how the real purpose of the register was made clear by the report which stated: "The *Militant* Tendency as presently constituted would not be eligible to be included on the proposed register".

Far from denting *Militant's* support, the witch-hunt and the publicity surrounding it led to anger against the right wing and

growing interest in *Militant's* ideas.

A letter from a councillor published in *Militant* 607 confirmed this: "Please find enclosed a cheque for £20 by way of a donation to *Militant*... I do find, as a socialist, that I agree with 90 per cent of what your paper stands for... I would appreciate that I may make a regular subscription of £1 per week."

"In part I have taken this decision as a protest against the right wing's attempts to ostracise *Militant*... I joined the Labour Party because of Clause IV, part 4, not in spite of it".

Labour's rank and file gave a massive answer to the stepping-up of the witch-hunt when over 2,000 delegates attended the Labour Movement Conference Against the Witch-hunt on 11 September.

## Block votes

However, the views of the rank and file were ignored at the Labour Party conference. The register was bulldozed through with union block votes, cast in many cases in direct opposition to the unions' policies against bans and proscriptions.

While the right were cock-a-hoop with their fraudulent majority, *Militant* 620 (1 October 1982) soberly responded: "... we are not impressed by the right's paper majority. We will not be intimidated by a register. *Militant* and its supporters will campaign tenaciously to reverse the decision on the register. We will fight all attempts to expel Marxists from the Labour Party. We will defend the right of CLPs to select their own candidates without the veto of the right.

"Neither *Militant* nor the ideas of Marxism will be separated from the labour movement. On the contrary, our support will go from strength to strength, and the success of the right wing will be short-lived."

The real purpose of the register was shown in February 1983, when the five members of the *Militant* Editorial Board, Peter Taaffe, Ted Grant, Clare Doyle, Keith Dickinson and Lynn Walsh, with 120 years of party membership between them, were expelled by the NEC after an 'inquiry' which bore more resemblance to a 'Kangaroo Court' than the democratic traditions of the labour movement.

The next day the 'popularity' of these expulsions was demonstrated when Labour lost the Bermondsey by-election to the Liberals.

In October 1983 the Editorial Board appealed to Party conference against their expulsion. Such was the fear of the right wing of the effect of socialist ideas, that they forced the conference to go into 'private session' to prevent cameras relaying the speeches of the five to millions of workers watching the conference on TV. The speeches were frequently interrupted by applause from rank and file delegates. Ted Grant said that it was "... a sorry day, when the party is discussing expulsions instead of ways of getting rid of the Tories."

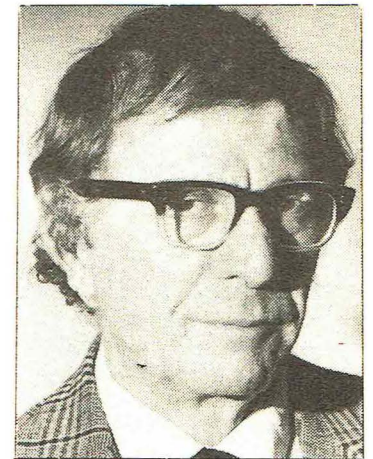
"It was a disgrace that the four or five NEC meetings before the election were taken up with discussing the witch-hunt instead of the Tories."

He concluded defiantly: "Marxism cannot be separated from the Labour Party. We will be back!"



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Ted Grant.

Although the appeals were rejected by the union block votes, a section of the conference showed their feelings giving the five a standing ovation as they left the hall.

Following the expulsion of the five, the right wing in Blackburn initiated the expulsion of six party members, in what was to be the opening shot of a guerrilla war of expulsion in right wing CLPs.

## Liverpool attack

Neil Kinnock's disgraceful attack on Liverpool City Council at the 1985 party conference, made at a time when the beleaguered council was locked in struggle against the government, opened the latest escalation of the witch-hunt.

The Labour Party NEC decided to send a team to Liverpool. To help the council in its struggle? To help the councillors fight the surcharge threat? No! Hours of party officials' time, and thousands of pounds of party finances have been squandered to produce a lying, distorted 'inquiry' report that would do justice to the 'balance' and 'democracy of the *Sun* or *Mail*.

The witch-hunt must end now—re-instate all expelled comrades! End attacks on the Liverpool Labour Party! Use all Labour's resources to fight the Tories!

# 8000

# Militant

# Marxist



Each 100 issue celebrated.

The first issue of *Militant* in 1964 boldly spelt out its tasks: "For conscious socialists the problem is to make the mighty labour movement aware of the impossibility of solving the national and international problems of our time such as peace and security, prosperity and abundance, without taking decisive measures against capitalism. Only through the most meticulous, scrupulous and patient arguing to convince the mass of the labour movement of the need for international socialism can a way be found to the broader masses of 'ordinary', 'non-political' people—above all the task is to gather the most conscious elements in the labour movement to patiently explain the need for these (socialist) policies on the basis of experience and events."

## 1964 government

*Militant* was launched on the eve of the election of the 1964 Labour government. During the long post-war economic boom, many of the left of the labour movement had adopted Keynesian methods of 'controlling' capitalism. At the same time the so-called Marxist sects turned towards students, and guerrilla movements seeking short-cuts in the struggle for socialism. *Militant* alone maintained confidence in the ability of the industrial working class to play the decisive role in the struggle to overthrow capitalism.

## France

This outlook was vindicated by a one-day general strike in France in June 1967. *Militant* posed the question: With 12 million workers out in serious struggle, with a full programme of action and a perspective of winning their demands, how long could De Gaulle, or capitalism, last?"

A year later, the French workers gave their answer:

"Ten million workers out! Hundreds of factories occupied and controlled by the workers... what a mighty demonstration of the invincible power of the working class when it begins to move! What a crushing blow to the cynics, sceptics and apologists for big business, who have written off the working class as 'apathetic', 'bought-off', etc... How clear it shall be to even the most politically underdeveloped workers that their French brothers would be in power today, but for the cowardly policies of the French labour and trade union leaders!" *Militant* 38 (June 1968).

## LPYS majority

June 1970 saw the defeat of the Labour government which came as a bitter blow to many activists. However defeat also gave cause for reflection especially amongst the politically advanced workers. Thus the shortcomings of the 1964-70 Labour government prepared the ground for the Labour Party turning to the left in the 1970s. Most immediately the lessons of the Wilson government's failure to change society were taken on board by the Labour Party Young Socialists, who in 1970 for the first time elected a majority of *Militant* supporters to the LPYS national committee.

These developments, and above all the social and political battles against the Heath government led

to the rapid growth of *Militant* from a four-page monthly in August 1971, to an eight-page weekly by September 1972.

## Labour victory

The industrial battles against the Heath government culminated in the miners' strike of 1974. Heath called an election on the issue: "Who runs the country?", which Labour won with a narrow majority, increased in a second election in October 1974.

Labour's manifesto in February 1974 promised "a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people".

*Militant* 194 (22 February 1974) supported this aspiration but warned: "History demonstrates, as the fate of the 1964-70 Labour government shows, this will not be possible unless the left Labour leaders are prepared to take crisis measures. An enabling act to take over the 250 monopolies, banks and insurance companies which control 85 per cent of the economy, with minimum compensation on the basis of proven need is a vital necessity.

"Then with workers' control and management of industry and the state, it would be possible to abolish poverty, insecurity and want and prepare the way for a planned, fully democratic and really civilised society".

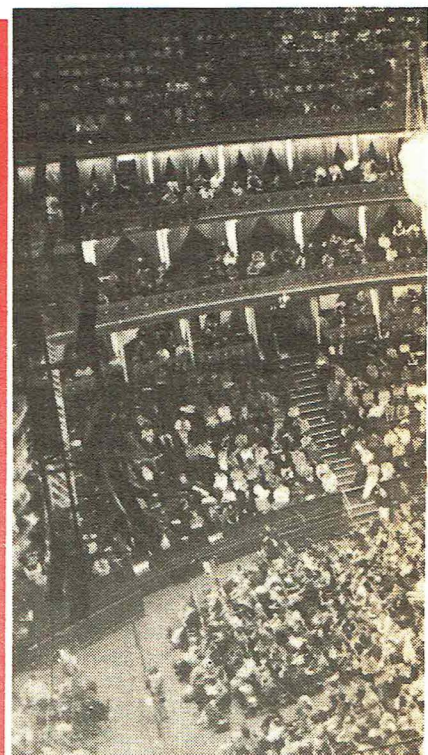
## SDP split

Four years of wage restraint and Healey's IMF-inspired cuts in public spending culminated in Labour's defeat in the 1979 election. Big battles rapidly developed against the Tories as workers, defeated on the political plane, turned to the industrial struggle. Although the Tories defeated the steelworkers after a long strike in 1980, it had opened up a deep mood of bitterness and hatred towards the government. In 1981, seeing Labour move to the left, and the Tories in disarray, the ruling class encouraged a string of right-wing Labour MPs to form the Social Democratic Party.

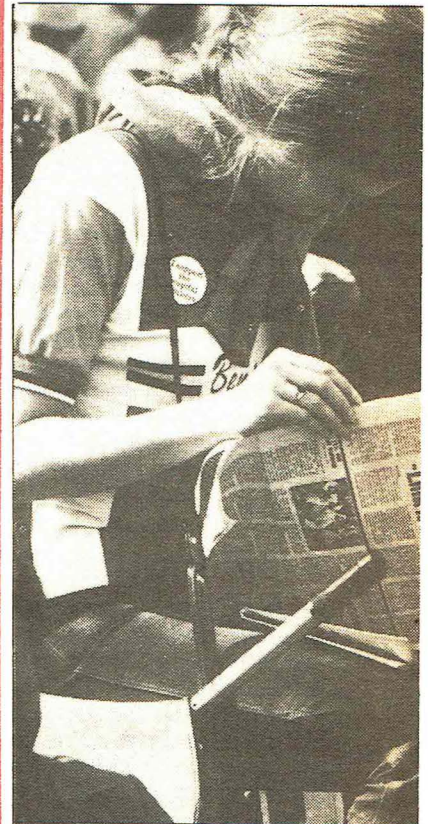
*Militant* 592 (12 March 1982) explained the SDP's role: "The capitalists have therefore decided to move heaven and earth in order to stop a new Labour government coming to power. The formation of the SDP was the result of the cold calculation and determination of the strategists of capitalism to do just that". The article went on to explain how the SDP could be defeated: "The sooner the Labour Party begins to campaign on bold socialist policies explaining the need for a fundamental transformation of society as a means for tackling unemployment, low pay, and other social ills—the sooner will be the demise of the SDP".

*Militant* 595 (2 April 1982) analysing the lessons of the Hillhead by-election, where the SDP won a seat held by the Tories since 1919, made comments that are especially true today: "The SDP, as *Militant* predicted, has taken most of its support from the Tory party".

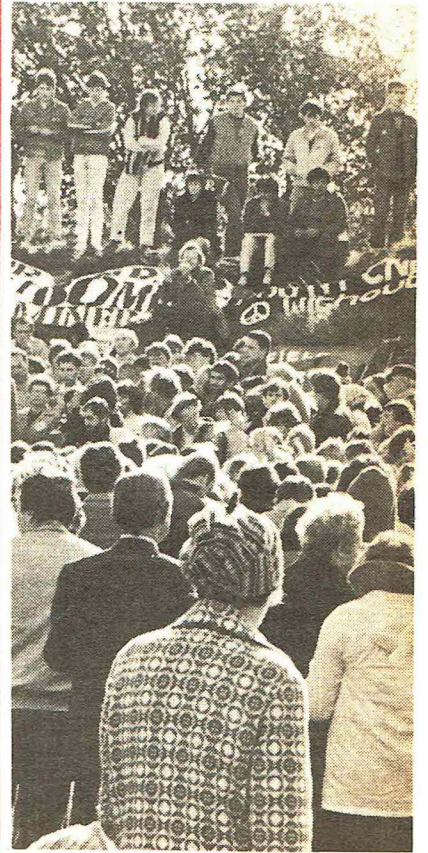
"Because of the renewed fear that the SDP will 'let Labour in' it is now clear that the ruling class have begun to re-assess their attitude towards the SDP. The virtual extinction of the Tory party is too high a price to pay for building up the SDP".



Last year's magnificent 21st anniversary



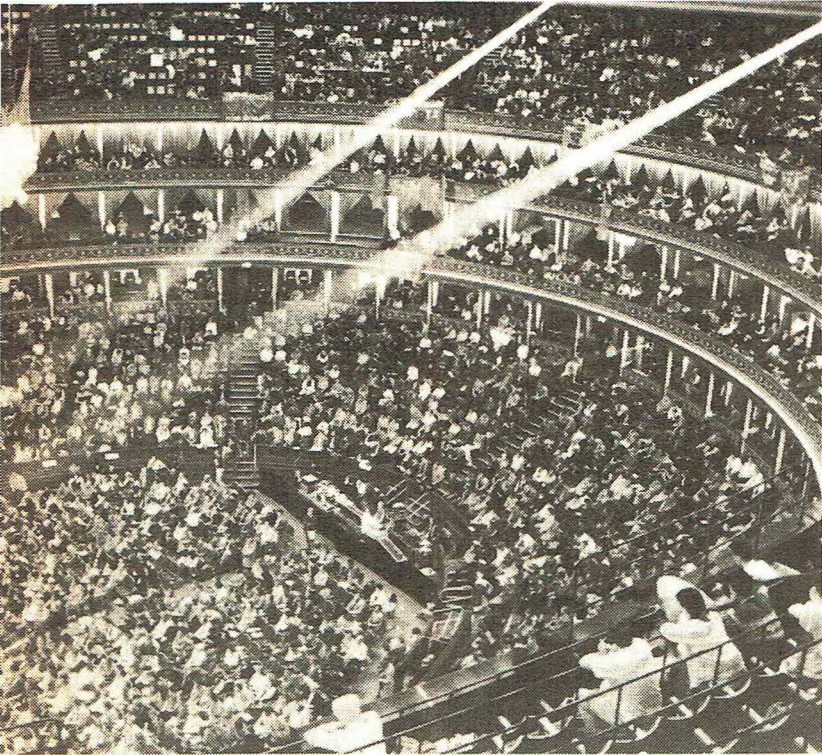
Reading Militant in 1982—the message



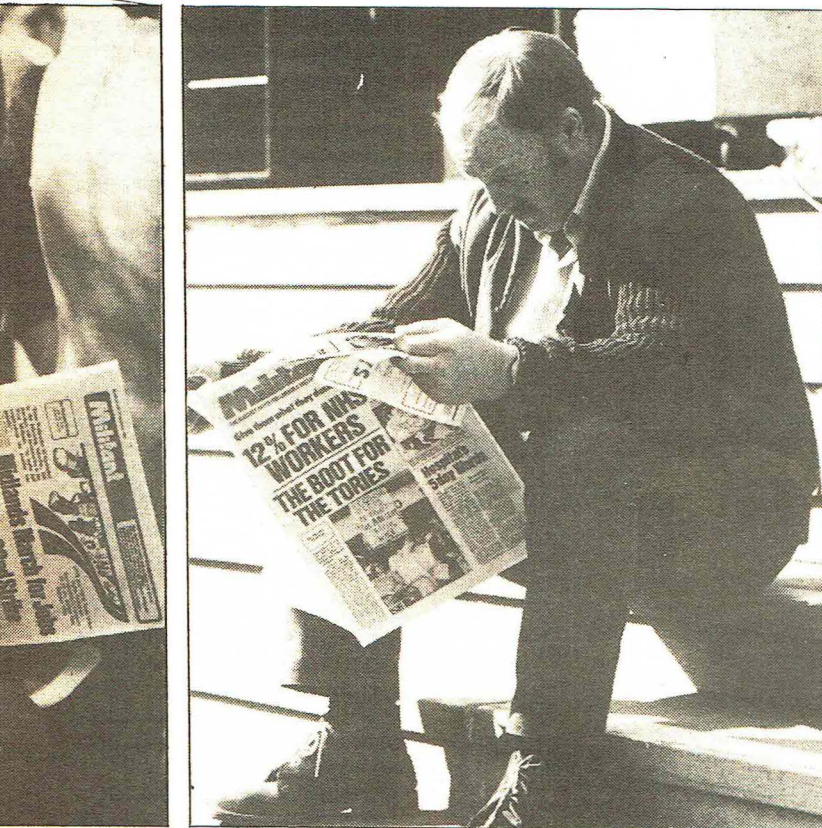
Militant banner in 1984 CND demonstr



# ism's record



ally in the Albert Hall, London.



the same today.



on.

## Two decades of workers struggles

The struggle of the French workers in 1968 inspired struggles across Europe and even found an echo in Eastern Europe. Mild 'liberalising' reforms of the Dubcek regime in Czechoslovakia whetted the workers' appetite and a mass movement developed which threatened to escalate into a full-scale political revolution.

The Russian bureaucracy sent troops in, claiming that 'counter-revolution' threatened. *Militant* 41 (September 1968) carried an eyewitness report from LPYS members, which destroyed this myth: "We spent two weeks in Czechoslovakia. We found no evidence of any sign of a return to capitalism, or of any desire by the people to return to a system of private profiteering. In a meeting and discussion we had addressed in Prague the students and workers made perfectly plain that the basic gains of public ownership and a plan of production were taken for granted; the point at issue was the best and most democratic manner of organising the people's property".

In August 1969 British troops were sent into Northern Ireland by the Labour government. Alone in the labour movement *Militant* 53 (September 1969) immediately warned: "The call made for the entry of British troops will be turned to vinegar in the mouths of some of the civil rights leaders". The same article outlined the need for workers' unity: "What is needed is to defeat Unionism and the system it represents and replace it with one which can solve the problem of low wages, unemployment and sectarianism...".

"This will not be done by a block of Catholic-orientated movements. This has clearly been shown by the experience of the civil rights campaign itself... its leaders are incapable of putting a clear programme which could solve the real problem of the jobless slum dwellers—Catholic and Protestant".

The end of the 1960s saw an intensification of the struggle in the ex-colonial world. While it would take until 1975 for the final defeat of US imperialism in Vietnam, as far back as May 1966, *Militant* anticipated the development of a Stalinist regime: "How will the revolution in Vietnam develop? In an isolated backward country, where the struggle is being waged on the lines of a peasant guerrilla war, and where there is no working class of any size nor any conscious leadership, it will inevitably take a distorted form once free of imperialist domination, South Vietnam would almost certainly unify with the North, and Vietnam as a whole would take the form of a state within a nationalised, planned economy, but without democratic control by the workers, which would require a new political revolution at a later stage".

Another feature of the struggle in the ex-colonial world, which *Militant* warned against, was

the development of "urban guerrillaism". *Militant* 65 (July 1970) carried an article: "Brazil: terrorism no answer", which held lessons that were to be painfully repeated in Argentina, Uruguay and other countries in the course of the 1970s and to this day: "Reacting to the viciousness of the military dictatorship and in despair at the opportunist policies of the leaders of the Communist Party—who support the mythical 'progressive' capitalist—the guerrillas have taken to the road of single armed combat against the regime."

"Motivated by the best ideas of socialism and democracy, and displaying tremendous heroism, the guerrillas and the policy of guerrillaism nevertheless will end in a blind alley. The conditions of Brazil and throughout Latin America are not solely the result of the actions of individual capitalist statesmen and their military hirelings. Their actions are determined by the capitalist system itself. One assassinated dictator will be replaced by another dictator and an even greater repression against the workers' movement".

### Middle East

Over the last 22 years and longer, one of the most graphic examples of the incapacity of capitalism to develop society has been the almost perpetual state of war in the Middle East. *Militant* 27 (June 1967) outlined a position which remains true 19 years later: "Only from an internationalist working class position can one analyse the shifting policies of the great powers."

"The Middle East and Vietnam are only the beginning of a whole series of crises and disturbances throughout the colonial world and the metropolitan countries as well."

"The sole solution would be the organisation of a democratic Federation of Arab Socialist States with full autonomy for Israel within it". The next issue written after the 'six day war' said: "In spite of Israel's overwhelming victory... the Israeli people can only look forward now to a new epoch of violence, revenge and war".

A profound example of the danger of attempting to reform capitalism by stealth was being prepared by the election of Socialist Party president Allende in Chile in 1970.

As early as March 1971 *Militant* (No 73) gave a warning which was repeated on many occasions during the next two years: "Chilean crisis: arm the workers against reaction". "The 'gradual' road to socialism is illusory. Without a once-and-for-all change in both ownership and control of the state, society remains under the domination of the owners of industry and the land. They will accept partial blows to their power now, knowing that the inevitable failure of the 'gradual road' will discredit the idea of socialism in the eyes of the workers and peasants, and pave the

way for the return of an openly conservative or reactionary regime".

Tragically the warning went unheeded by the Chilean leaders, ultimately resulting in the coup of 1973 which brought Pinochet to power and cost 50,000 Chilean workers their lives.

In March 1974 the strains of fighting unwinnable colonial wars in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea led to revolts among Portuguese army officers. *Militant* 198 (22 March 1974) explained the significance of the revolt: "For the conservative rulers of Portugal and their cronies in the army, the stirrings among the officers are terrifying because of the pressure from below that they represent. The real fear is not the officers but that such a movement will affect the students and most frightening of all, the working class!"

On May Day upwards of half a million workers marched in Lisbon, soldiers joining the march with red carnations sprouting from their gun barrels. Power was in the hands of the workers and the rank and file of the armed forces. *Militant* 204 (3 May 1974) spelt out what was needed for the revolution to succeed: "... to concretise and crystallise the chaotic and unformed demands of the mass of the population into a rounded-out programme for taking power and reorganising Portuguese society along socialist lines. They should be calling for and organising workers' 'juntas' (committees—KR) in every factory, street and town as the basis for a workers' government".

Six years later, *Militant* 517 (29 August 1980), wrote of the beginning of the general strike by the Polish workers: "The committee decides what will move in Gdansk and what will not move, where food will be supplied and so on."

"This is a situation of dual power in Poland: the power of the organised workers against that of the bureaucracy's totalitarian state. But this cannot last long."

"One or the other power will emerge victorious; either the workers will move to overthrow the bureaucracy—or the bureaucracy will re-establish its power, first by concessions, later by ruthless repression".

Warning against illusions in the possibility of reforming the bureaucracy, the article continued: "The present dual power situation demands that the strike leaders recognise that free trade unions cannot exist side by side with bureaucratic rule—and draw all the necessary conclusions. They could only exist in a healthy workers' state—a workers' democracy".

After 18 months of struggle, with the Solidarity leaders repeatedly pulling the workers back from overthrowing the bureaucracy, the bureaucracy waited for the struggle to ebb, then in December 1981, imposed military rule.

Continued on page 10

### Nuclear weapons

The recent bombing of Libya and the Chernobyl nuclear disaster have given a big boost to CND. Unlike some who have only discovered the issue since it again became fashionable, *Militant* has always fought for unilateral nuclear disarmament, at the same time explaining how peace can be achieved on a lasting basis: "It is fundamentally a political and economic question. It is the need to make the people understand that two world wars and the horrors of the present armaments race are not caused by the wickedness of this individual statesman or general or the short-sightedness of this or that group of people, but by the class structure of society... The struggle against war, the struggle against armaments is the struggle to change society". Issue 15 (April 1966).

# Cash for a workers' paper

1964 *Militant* started as a monthly with a few pennies in the bank, a typewriter, a shared office and no staff. A £500 Fighting Fund was launched in the first issue, which sold all 2,000 copies printed, £150 was raised in the first year.

1965 An editor was taken on 'full time' for £2-4 a week—dependent on what was available! Two rooms were taken in Kings Cross, and offered for hire to help pay the rent. Two special pamphlets were produced on the need for a Youth Programme and a Socialist Policy for Labour.

1969 A special Press Fund launched in 1966 had raised £1,000. Sales had doubled in five years.

1970 We began to acquire and rebuild a premises in Bethnal Green. Treasures were sold and hard labour engaged in so that we could move in.

1971 We bought a press and a camera for making

plates. In September the first fortnightly *Militant* came out. A fund for a weekly paper was launched, with a target of £1,000.

1972 Under the pressure of events—Bloody Sunday and the miners' strike—the weekly *Militant* appeared (four pages). By September it had eight pages. The annual Fighting Fund raised £4,680.

1973 *Militant's* annual Fighting Fund topped £10,000 by £49.

1974 New premises rented for use as a print shop.

1975 A fire destroyed the building, wrecked our press and ruined our new typesetting equipment. The magnificent response of readers to our emergency appeal at that time meant we were back in action within one month! By the end of the year we had taken on the Mentmore Terrace premises. In all, £27,378 was raised over the year.

1976 12 page paper and £32,600 raised for the Fighting Fund.

1977 The push for a new press raised nearly £50,000.

1978 Production started of the 16 page paper on a Web Offset press. (Without red masthead). We were now printing four times the number of copies produced in 1971. Fighting Fund—£66,200.

1979 Enlarging the press meant our red masthead was restored and capacity was expanded enormously to enable rapid production of leaflets, posters, pamphlets, etc. Over £80,000 was raised for the Fighting Fund.

1980, 81 and 82 saw further advances in equipping the typesetting, lay-out and and yet more premises. Collections over these three years raised over £347,000.

1983 *Militant's* successes were 'punished' with expulsions. But despite this, support went from

strength to strength. This was measured by a record £151,973 collected for the Fighting Fund.

1984 In August, the Marxist Daily Building Fund, launched in October 1983, reached £175,000. In November, *Militant* moved into new premises, now worth over £500,000. £130,868 raised for the Fighting Fund.

1985 Further expulsions could not stem the growth in *Militant's* support. Fighting Fund raises £197,121 for year, Building Fund £87,098. 5,000 attended, rally at the Albert Hall to celebrate 21 years of *Militant*. Fighting Fund collection raised a record £26,587.

1986 Our aim this year is to expand and develop. The witch-hunt has only encouraged our supporters to build our resources to be capable of producing a daily *Militant*. £70,311 already raised for the Fighting Fund.

## Marxism's record

(From page 9)

The 'Falklands' factor', combined with disarray in Labour's ranks caused by the witch-hunt and open attacks on party policy by Callaghan and other right wingers, led to the heavy defeat of Labour in the 1983 general election.

In the aftermath of the defeat, almost all of the left (then including Neil Kinnock) abandoned the working class, following the 'theories' of Eric Hobsbawm that Labour would never again win a clear majority. As in the dark days of the 1960s, *Militant* alone retained confidence in the working class. The main article in issue 655 (17 June 1983), written within days of the election, made some outstanding predictions, possible only by Marxist analysis:

"What then is the future that faces society and the labour movement? ... the strength of the Tory government is largely illusory.

"The real class balance of forces is not judged by parliamentary arithmetic, but by deeper, underlying economic and social developments".

### Miners' strike

"It will be less possible as the 1980s wear on to paper over the crisis of the British economy by means of oil revenues. The decline in the economy will inevitably force the Tories to put even greater pressure on living standards and to introduce deeper cuts in public expenditure.

"Increasing upheaval in industry will inevitably lead to major confrontation between the government and trade unions. ..."

These were not lucky guesses or unfounded optimism. The government was barely nine months old when the historic miners' strike began. With the intention of breaking the NUM, the Tories provoked the strike, imagining with summer approaching that they could gain a quick victory. How they underestimated the miners!

While they suffered a defeat on pit closures after 12 long months of struggle, the Tories' main aim—of breaking the NUM—was thwarted. Indeed the struggle has

created a new generation of class fighters.

The miners' strike was the 'crossing the Rubicon' for the development of the class struggle in Britain—social struggles, industrial struggles will never be the same again. The police will never be trusted by active workers as 'impartial bobbies' as the printers are now finding out. Despite the refusal of the Labour leadership to give clear support to the miners, it will be the miners' strike, which wiped away the Falklands' factor, and opened the prospect that Labour can win the next election.

In Liverpool where *Militant* supporters play a leading role in the labour movement, just weeks before the general election, Labour had made sweeping gains and won a majority on the city council on socialist policies of building homes, creating jobs and fighting Tory cuts. That outstanding result was surpassed in the general election when Liverpool was the only city that recorded a swing to Labour. In Broadgreen, Marxist Terry Fields won a seat expected to be won comfortably won by the Tories.

Last year, with the miners' strike over, the government confronted Liverpool. Isolated, then abandoned by sections of the Labour and trade union leadership, the Liverpool workers suffered a temporary setback. But the recent local elections results, with Labour holding its own in the city, despite all the attacks of the press, courts, Tories and Labour leaders, gives us renewed confidence in the ability of the working class to recognise and support a fighting socialist leadership when it sees one.

*Militant's* ideas and analysis have been proven correct time and again over the years. We are confident that these ideas will increasingly provide a fighting leadership in the class struggles that lie ahead.

By Kevin Ramage  
(Hackney South  
and Shoreditch  
Labour Party)



Top—*Militant* banner on Liverpool council demonstration. Below—Selling the paper to a Liverpool council worker.



## What we stand for

- The immediate introduction of a 35-hour week without loss in pay as a step towards the elimination of unemployment.
- Reversal of all Tory cuts and a massive programme of public works on housing, education, the health service, etc.
- A minimum wage of £120 a week for all, including pensioners, sick and disabled people.
- Opposition to the Tory government's anti-union laws and the reversal of attacks on the trade unions.
- Massive cuts in arms spending. Support for unilateral nuclear disarmament, but with the recognition that only a socialist change of society in Britain and internationally can eliminate the danger of a nuclear holocaust.
- Workers' management of the nationalised industries. These should be run on the basis of one-third of the places on the management board coming from the unions in the industry, one-third from the TUC representing the working class as a whole, and one-third from the government.
- Opposition to the dictatorship of the Fleet Street press who pour out their poison daily against the labour movement. We propose that a Labour government should nationalise the newspaper printing plant facilities, with access to these facilities being given to political parties in proportion to their votes at elections.
- Nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, including the banks and insurance companies which control 80 per cent to 85 per cent of the economy. This should be through an Enabling Bill in Parliament with minimum compensation on the basis of proven need.
- A socialist plan of production democratically drawn up and implemented by committees involving the trade unions, shop stewards, housewives and small businessmen.
- Opposition to the capitalist Common Market, the EEC. For a socialist United States of Europe as a step towards a World Socialist Federation.

If these policies were taken up and campaigned for by the Labour Party and the trade unions they would win overwhelming support.

Mobilisation of the labour movement on these policies would bring down the Tory government and return a Labour government committed to the implementation of a thorough-going socialist programme in the interests of working people.

## Pakistan, Belgium, Netherlands

# Revolutionary mood in Pakistan

ON 11 MAY Benazir Bhutto, leader of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), suspended her campaign against the Zia dictatorship until the end of the Moslem fast period of Ramadhan in the second week of June. In this report a Pakistani socialist draws a balance sheet of the campaign so far.



**THE FIRST** phase of the Pakistani revolution has passed with massive demonstrations organised by the PPP. In the first 27 days after her return from exile, Benazir Bhutto spoke at 15 rallies attended by five million people—a record in Pakistan's history.

This was the answer of the masses to eight years of repression by General Zia ul Haq.

In some cases the huge crowds waited many hours for a glimpse of Benazir. In Karachi it took her ten hours to move ten miles from the airport to the meeting place, surrounded by masses of supporters. Half a million attended the rally.

On the road from Lahore to Faisalabad thousands of people blocked the way to stop her to speak to them. At the meeting place, where this reporter was present, over 50,000 waited all night.

The gatherings have been overwhelmingly working-class youth and women, who have high hopes of Benazir.

A revolutionary situation has opened up in Pakistan. The masses were willing to take over power. Every leaflet with political perspectives was received with great enthusiasm. There was a tremendous thirst for political ideas.

Benazir herself confessed in her first press conference on 11 April: "We could have taken power if we believed in the politics of agitation. We could have taken control but the price would have been too high."

This revolutionary movement has had a tremendous effect on every aspect of life in Pakistan. Even the police at the rallies have been seen to greet Miss Bhutto openly. According to the daily *Business Recorder* in Karachi, "it was interesting to note that the police force on trucks started clapping and chanting when her truck passed their sides".

This was the case in all four provinces of Pakistan. Yet Benazir confined herself to "meeting the people and conveying the peaceful message of the PPP".

Now, after tremendous pressure from the masses, she has demanded that elections must be held this coming autumn.

At a press conference on 3 May in Karachi, with over two million present, she repeatedly stressed the demand for elections—but refused to give a deadline, in order to "avoid confrontation".

What Benazir's leadership is reflecting is the hesitation of the middle class, fear of revolution from below, and hopes of achieving political democracy without damaging the capitalist system.

Benazir declares that she wishes to create a substantial middle class. She has come out in support of US aid, no further nationalisation, no further land reform, and so on.

## "Realities"

She does not want to build up the expectations of the masses any further. She knows the "realities of power". For example, she has promised a minimum wage of only 1,000 rupees (£40) per month to workers, when they are already in struggle for 2,500 rupees (£100)!

Despite all this she is at the head of the mass party. For the people she is a revolutionary leader. She has even encouraged this image by reciting a poem *I am a rebel* in almost every meeting. This poem, first published in the *The Struggle* (socialist paper in the PPP), has now become the most popular slogan in the movement.

Socialists in the PPP support Benazir's campaign for the overthrow of the regime. But they have also put forward a concrete programme to achieve this, through a combination of demonstrations, strikes and mass revolt.

There is no doubt that Benazir's presence and the huge mass rallies have melted the people's fear of flogging, imprisonment and hanging like snow in Pakistan's hot summer.

But the question of elec-



Above and below: over two million turn out at Karachi airport to welcome Benazir Bhutto (inset) and show their hatred of the Zia regime.

tions, and the future of the dictatorship, depends on how far the PPP leadership are willing to fight in the "second round" of the struggle, that will gather after Ramadhan.

### Editor's note:

SINCE THIS report was written, Pakistan's prime minister Junejo has rejected the call for any elections before 1990. He claims that the regime is "quite

capable" of handling any "disturbances" the opposition might create.

The regime also passed an ordinance cancelling election laws which would have allowed 170 government MP's to be challenged, and forced by-elections.

In the meantime the chant at the mass rallies has been changing from "Zia go, go, go!" to "We will throw Zia out".

Read

## The Struggle

Voice of socialism in the Pakistan People's Party

Available from: World Socialist Books,  
3-13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB.

## Belgian workers can topple government

IT WAS 7 am on the picket line at the garbage depot in Antwerp. A policeman, called by the besieged scabs, got out of the van and approached the pickets.

"Nice weather for picketing!" he said. "Yes!" replied the workers. "Carry on shouting if you want, but keep it cool. Don't hurt anyone—unless it's a boss!" said the policeman.

This friendly rapport between police and pickets demonstrated the solid support for the one-day public sector strike called on 16 May to protest against the draconian spending cuts planned by the right-wing Martens government.

This was the second public sector strike within two weeks, and even more successful than the first. Throughout Belgium railways, trams and buses stopped. Civil servants, dockers, postmen, council manual workers, swimming pool instructors and even Catholic teachers were out.

The strikes have been preceded and encouraged by national school students' strikes against the cuts, led by Marxist youth.

These struggles have been precipitated by the attempt of the Christian-Liberal coalition government to cut the public sector deficit from 11 to 8 per cent of Gross National Product. This would mean drastic cuts in public services and tens of thousands of job losses among railworkers, teachers, postmen etc.

Martens and the capitalists have drawn entirely wrong conclusions from their election victory last year, which they took as a vote for more of the same—cuts and austerity. In fact, some of the angriest workers are among those in the unions linked to Martens's own party—Catholic workers who feel that their loyalty has been betrayed.

The Belgian working class has enormous concentrated power. 73 per cent of workers are unionised.

The unions are split between the Socialist, Catholic and Liberal parties, and each

union is subdivided into industrial, public sector and white-collar sections. On top of this are the national divisions between the French-speaking workers in the south and the Dutch-speaking workers in the north.

The strikes so far have shown the pressure for united struggle among the working class. Catholic workers have joined their Socialist brothers and sisters, in the north as well as the south.

If a clear strategy and call to action is put forward by the union leaders, the cocky Martens government could be brought down within days.

But the union leaders have adopted the limited tactic of calling periodic one and two-day strikes in different sectors, as gestures of protest. Already this is beginning to frustrate and dissipate the energy of the workers.

Public sector workers instinctively feel that private sector workers must be drawn into a united fight against the government. Not only that, but many workers are demanding "a fight to the finish", i.e. an all-out general strike in the tradition of 1961.

The Socialist party and its unions have a golden opportunity to force out Martens and return a majority Socialist government, provided they are prepared to put clear alternative policies forward in the interest of the mass of people.

The call for a token general strike of all workers, demanding that the government withdraw the cuts and call fresh elections, would have a huge response.

The present stormy outbreak of class struggle has finally shattered the myth of Belgium as a sleepy haven of peace and prosperity. It has catapulted Belgium into the forefront of the workers' struggle in Europe.

By Eric Berger

For a fuller analysis of the struggle in Belgium, see *Militant International Review* No. 25, Spring 1984.

## Dutch elections

IN LAST week's general election in the Netherlands, the Christian-Democratic and right-wing Liberal coalition government was re-elected.

The Labour Party, although increasing its number of seats from 47 to 52 (out of 150 in parliament), failed to make the big gains that had been expected.

The Christian-Democrats are now the biggest party, increasing their seats to 54 as a result of a big swing away from the Liberals, now down from 37 to 27 seats.

The small left parties were crushed. The 'Communist' Party lost its last remaining seat in parliament.

Labour was unable to mobilise the potentially huge mood of opposition to the government because of its vague programme and its

policy of coalition with the Christian-Democrats. This, together with the performance of many Labour councils which have carried out cuts—often in coalition with the Christian-Democrats and Liberals—undermined Labour's ability to attract new sections of workers.

The new government is likely to continue the policy of cuts, which will force workers to battle on the industrial plane.

The fact that 24 per cent of the electorate voted differently from the 1982 election shows the increasing volatility of the middle class. The election result in general reflects a deepening polarisation in Dutch society between the major parties of capital and labour.

By Steve Morgan

# Grey outlook of Labour's right-wing

Dear Comrades,  
Neil Kinnock's new 'grey' image for the Labour Party has realised a prophecy made by expelled left-wing MP Konni Zilliacus in 1949. "A little grey house in the west for pinks scared white by the reds" was how Zilliacus epitomised the anti-socialist stance to which the right were pushing the party. Zilliacus, a 'left-wing social democrat' as he

described himself (he was never a Marxist) was expelled and eventually readmitted to the party. But the real problem then was that the right were riding on the emergent post-war boom, with promises of the welfare state and improving living standards to keep the workers quiet. Today is different, workers are being driven in to struggle and want a

fighting party. They will not tolerate betrayal and purging by grey-faced pinks scared white by the prospect of struggle.  
Yours fraternally  
Ian Hunter  
Durham

this movement to form covert cliques with separate programmes, principles and policies."  
Later in the same speech he rejected Labour conference policy on nuclear power and announced his own policy. This is just his latest rejection of conference decisions.  
He should heed his own advice given in the same speech: "If people do have separate objectives, let them show a separate courage, separate convictions, go their own way in a separate party and meet their separate fate".  
Yours fraternally  
Sheila Hall  
Brighton Labour Party

Dear Comrades,  
Mr Kinnock in his speech to the Welsh Party Conference said: "It is no part of

# Police protection for electrician's conference

Dear Comrades,  
Last week the electricians' union EETPU held a series of one day conferences in Scarborough. I and several other comrades went down to the conference centre to sell some papers.  
The whole area surrounding the conference site was sealed off by a massive police operation. Local people were told that they would have to take alternative routes.  
The police maintained that a coach load of sacked printers had run amok around the hotels where EETPU delegates were staying, damaging the delegates' cars and smashing public telephone boxes.  
It turned out that these acts of wanton destruction consisted of a few bent windscreen wipers.  
Scarborough has never seen policing on this scale before but with the way things are moving in Britain at the moment, I don't expect it will be the last time.  
Yours fraternally  
Dave Pollock  
Scarborough

# Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism.

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

# Shipbuilding sabotaged



British Shipbuilders Sunderland, one of the shipyards falling under Thatcher's axe in the latest round of redundancies and closures.

Dear Comrades,  
As 2,000 shipyard workers marched through London last Wednesday, Sunderland MP Bob Clay asked Neil Kinnock's Parliamentary Private Secretary if the party leader would be able to meet the shop stewards. "It all depends how long the NEC goes on" was the reply. Remember the words of Nye Bevan that "socialism is

the language of priorities?" It took 15 hours to expel Tony Mulhearn from the Labour Party. Bill Jordan, the new president of the AEU has called for 10,000 expulsions. Even if it met Saturdays and Sundays, the NEC would run for longer than *The Mousetrap*.  
Yours fraternally  
Dave Nellist MP

# What industry?

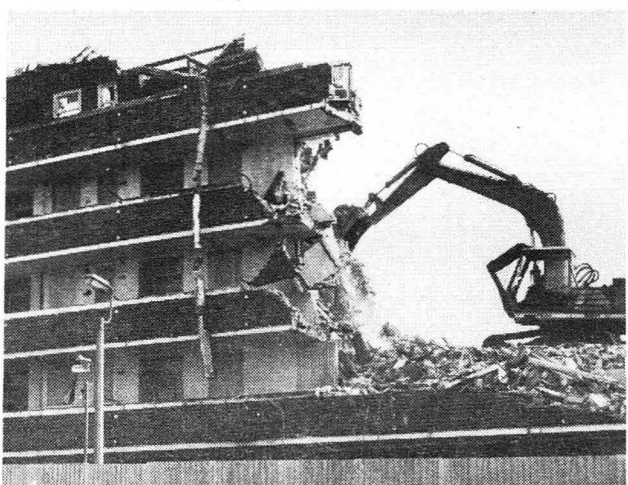
Dear Comrades,  
A week after the announcement that 3,500 jobs were to go in shipbuilding, 945 in Wearside, the new telephone directories for Durham and Wearside have been delivered. On the front cover of the telephone directory is a picture of a shipyard with the logo *Industry Matters!*  
Yours fraternally  
Michelle O'Neill Tyne and Wear

# Tories' double-standards

Dear Militant  
Recently we've seen another record rise in unemployment. Well over 4,800,000 people are unemployed.  
We also heard the feeble conservative excuse for this figure from Lord Young.  
He said the reason for it was high wage levels. He spoke on television as though it was nothing to do with him or the government.  
The majority of working class people get wages well below £110 a week. At the same time the upper class give themselves £20,000 a year rises for doing nothing. Lord Young says nothing about that!  
Yours fraternally  
Andrew Shepherd  
Cleveland

# Liverpool housing crisis

Dear Comrades,  
The following appeared in the *Liverpool Echo*, 29 April.  
"Increasing numbers of Liverpool's jobless are turning to council housing after running into difficulties with their mortgage repayments. Officials are urging owners to seek help from the city council's Homeless and Housing Aid service to avoid losing their homes. Nearly 700 owner-occupiers wish to 'give up' their homes and switch to council housing, and 34 per cent of them are unemployed. The two main groups seeking help are families and the elderly..."  
Nearly 42,000 home loans were in arrears 84/85 and 11,000 people lost their homes through re-possession during that period. The Tories are threatening to not cover interest on mortgages for the first six months of unemployment. This will inevitably mean more re-possessed houses and homeless families.  
Yours fraternally  
Cathy Wilson  
Granby Ward  
Labour Party



"Tommy Whites" slum clearance in Liverpool.  
Dear Comrades,  
The housing estates *Tommy Whites* have gone and the *Pigeries* are going, but still we have thousands of Liverpool people in sub-standard housing throughout the city.  
Yet we have the incessant bleating of opposition councillors, the *Echo* and some local union officials saying that the Labour councillors are being 'too dogmatic' over housing expenditure.  
These are the people who last year, urged capitalisation, supported the Stonefrost sellout and who make me feel a bit sorry that the slums are coming down.  
I'd make them live in a hovel for a few weeks—we would soon see who would be 'dogmatic' about building good houses for the people of Liverpool then!  
Yours fraternally  
Gary Baskott Anfield Labour Party

# Priorities of London's police

Dear Comrades,  
An old age pensioner on my paper round was burgled recently. The burglar cut a hole in the front door, took the money out of Arthur's trousers and ran off with the trousers over his head. This took place round the corner from Deptford Police Station.  
At the last meeting of our Tenants' Association, it was reported that the local police officer was unavailable to discuss Neighbourhood Watch because of the time he had to spend at Wapping.  
Police cannot rampage through Wapping and stop burglaries in Deptford at the same time. Nor can working class people be expected to substitute themselves for the police while they terrorise Wapping.  
Yours fraternally  
Peter Redfarn  
Deptford Labour Party

# 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 first post on Friday, the week before publication.

- 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.
- Littleton NUM strike plates. Price £10 each. All proceeds to sacked and victimised miners. Contact WE Jones, NUM Office, Littleton Colliery, Cannock, Staffordshire.
- Address Books 60p, Bookmarks 40p, Plastic sleeves 20p, Sew on badge 40p, plus post to Militant, 8 Woodside Court, Woodside Rd, Portswood, Southampton.
- For a national minimum wage. New sticker out soon. Order now for low pay demo in Manchester and low pay rallies. Cost £1 per 100 + 50p p&p from fighting fund department, 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB.

- Perspectives for the United States of America by Rob O'Neil and Tom Williams. £1 each or 10 for £8 (plus 20p p&p per copy). Available from LM Publications, 3-13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB.
- Militant 800th edition social. (After low-pay rally) Sat 31 May. Wakefield Labour Club 7.30 to 11pm. Entrance £1.

- ### Militant Meetings
- ☐ COHSE conference: 24 June, Winter Gardens, Blackpool.
  - ☐ Havant: "What we stand for" meeting. Thursday 5 June, 7.30pm. Focus 230 Community Centre, Dunsbury Way, Leigh Park, Havant.

# 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. Speakers include: Lynn Walsh, Brian Beekingham, Phil Frampton. 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.

**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, Ireland. Speakers include: Ted Grant and Jeremy Birch. Film: To Die in Madrid (Spain 1936), rally, disco, bar, crêche. Cost £6 (£4 unwaged), weekend, £3 (£2 unwaged) one day.

Address .....  
Course ..... Need Crêche? (Ages) .....  
Booking fee enclosed ..... (Cheque to MWES)

Northern return to: MWES, c/o 63 Lincoln Street, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF2 0EP.  
Midlands/South West return to: MWES, c/o 12c Samuel Vale House, St Nicholas Street, Coventry CV1 4LS

## Lessons of engineers' election

# Talking to John Tocher

John Tocher, AEU Divisional Organiser for the Manchester division and the Broad Left candidate in the recent union presidential election talked to Martin Elvin about the issues arising from his campaign.

FIRST AND foremost, I think that the campaign was very good, and I'd like to thank all the members who gave up a lot of their time in the campaign.

In the initial stages, we did find in some areas that they'd accepted Jordan because of the press campaign depicting him as the favourite.

But in other areas there was a really fantastic campaign. Some rank and file members worked exceedingly hard, and this was reflected in the vote.

For the first time in the history of the union, the senior position was decided between two Divisional Organisers. I think that reflects a disillusionment with the Executive Committee and the leadership of our union generally.

Midlands, I got management's permission for television to come in and film, no doubt to Central's surprise. But I had to virtually conduct the interview myself—which I didn't mind.

There were about fourteen approaches made to get that slot, right in the middle of it they banged in a picture of Jordan and started talking about him.

Visiting factories, I found a number that had Bill Jordan in, but where management refused me permission. It indicated we had the media, the establishment and the employers, all working for the right wing candidate. Despite that we got nearly 100,000 votes, which shows that we conducted a tremendous campaign.

## Postal ballots

ON THE voting itself; a lot of members didn't get ballot papers, they never do. But the poll of 27 per cent of the membership, just above a quarter, indicates that the membership are not getting involved in some of the most important elections. In consequence I think that we've got to start campaigning for workshop ballots.

If you look at the participation of trade union members, the highest ballots you get are work shop ballots.

This was reflected in the political levy ballots, where those unions that had them in the workshops had a far higher level of participation.

That's what it's all about, the participation of the members in the affairs of their union. What's the use of a democratic system where 20 per cent of the members don't get ballot papers and only just over a quarter participate. It's not really a true reflection.

## Right to strike

I'M VERY concerned at the amount of publicity being given to so-called 'non-disruptive' clauses, single union agreements and restrictions upon trade union members ever being able to take any form of action, even overtime bans or working to rule.

This is company unionism; we're going back to Mondism.

It's not the prerogative of trade unions to reach agreements that prevent their members from taking industrial action.

I'm not suggesting that people should go on strike at the drop of a hat. I have a family and I've been involved in strikes myself, so I know what it means to a working class family. So I do believe that you explore every avenue.

But when you can't get justice, or when you're being attacked, or when there's changes introduced by the employer unilaterally, or there's victimisation, you've got to have the right to take industrial action, to achieve your aspirations or to defend what you've achieved.

It's not a trade union's function to deprive people of their fundamental rights.

## AEU democracy

THE INTERNAL democracy of the AEU is in decline.

There's branch meetings going monthly instead of fortnightly, which has been disastrous from both the financial point of view and participation of the members in the union.

The District Committees have gone from weekly to fortnightly and now the right wing are proposing that District Committees should be quarterly meetings.

That will lead to a union which is very ineffective in terms of participation by the members; their democratic rights will go, accountability of officials will go and what's it all for?

It's because there are elements within our union seeking to build up a reactionary force within the trade union movement.

That is why there are discussions about the amalgamation of the EETPU and the AEU, which are primarily a political move within the trade union movement which could easily lead, in the future, to a split.

It's these same people giving comfort to the malcontents in the Nottinghamshire miners. Our



only power is our unity, our solidarity and responsibility to each other.

## Amalgamation

I DO believe in amalgamation. But amalgamation has to be done on the basis of democracy and accountability.

That means that if a union appoints its officials, as the EETPU does, as do TASS, we'd have to agree a moratorium with them.

We could never agree to amalgamation and officials getting the sack from their job after giving many years of their life to that organisation. You'd have to give them protection or generous severance, whichever they wish.

## How AEU members voted:

**Bill Jordan (right wing) 119,220**

**John Tocher (Broad Left) 95,511**

But as and when they retired or finished we would replace them, through election. That's how I see a proper amalgamation, safeguarding democracy and accountability.

But, because of our present leadership there's no self-respecting union wants to touch us. The Patternmakers, Metal Mechanics, Sheetmetal Workers, the Boilermakers and the Vehicle Builders have all gone with different unions. Yet their natural home was the AEU.

This position with TASS has to be sorted out. We need to develop unity and harmony throughout the engineering industry, and TASS is thriving and prospering while we're in decline.

There's only the trade union movement standing against Thatcher and the Tories, and it would be a grievous mistake if there were divisions between us.

## Face the future

PEOPLE SHOULDN'T become demoralised about the leadership in this union. During the election campaign I met some marvellous people. There are a lot of young members becoming involved and gaining experience.

Many members in this union are working might and main for change and they're first-class trade unionists. They know life's not easy, they are aware of the pro-

blems we face with a Tory government and the high levels of unemployment.

They're not expecting miracles. But they do expect a lead from the union. They expect a leadership that's honest and principled in its dealings on behalf of the members, not only with the employers, but within the Labour Party and the TUC.

on the day to day issues. I know it's not easy for everyone to come to a collective view, but they're difficulties that we've got to overcome with goodwill and fraternalism.

We've got to have a consolidation of the left and an understanding of the need for full discussion in first of all choosing a candidate, and unity when running that candidate.

The other thing we've got to get right is finance. We ran into difficulties with that. It's now permissible under rule to issue election material and therefore we've got to have the money to get our stuff out. But I'm sure that with the experience we've had, it will reflect in future campaigns.

Finally, I would like once again to thank all those members who worked very hard, not for John Tocher the individual, but for a candidate representing ideas for progressive change within the union, the TUC and the Labour Party.

I believe that the vote was a credible result and it's very encouraging. It's a warning to the right wing. Despite the efforts of the establishment and the media this vote shows the leadership haven't got an overwhelming mandate to carry on with their past policies.

I feel confident that as more and more members realise the problems we are faced with they will want a leadership to pursue their aspirations and defend their conditions.

I am confident in the future. I've met a number of young members who I'm sure will emerge as the leaders of the future—and will be equipped to deal with the problems which our people are facing.

## The media

The whole intervention of the press was to give the appearance that this was a one horse race; every article was "here's the favourite".

I wrote to the newspaper editors requesting an interview or right of reply. The answer from some of them was quite blunt. They were quite scurrilous in their attacks.

Television hasn't got quite the same license as the newspaper proprietors. They supposedly have a mandate to give fair reporting. But you'd be amazed at our experiences with it.

I approached Breakfast Television, BBC, ITV, Granada and in particular Central (Birmingham area) which was showing Jordan almost weekly. They said that I'd have to be in the area.

On a night when I was in the area to address a meeting of shop stewards at Austin's, I phoned and was told to clear off. They just hung up, when I offered to come to the studio that night.

I wrote and got half an apology, but when I suggested that they film the *Engineering Gazette* rally in Wolverhampton, they said they didn't do any filming on Sundays.

Eventually, when going round some factories in the



John Tocher meets the Convenor of Keighley Lifts near Bradford on a trip to the area organised by Steve Davison (centre), president of Keighley Trades Council.

# Industrial Reports

## Northern Ireland public services right wing manoeuvre

THE 1986 conference agenda of the Northern Ireland Public Services Alliance has been blatantly and bureaucratically rigged by the right wing majority on the union's council (executive committee).

104 motions are to be discussed, while 46, mainly motions from left wing branches, have been ruled out of order.

The main grounds for this manoeuvre are that these motions are said to contravene strict political guidelines drawn up by the Alliance Council during the year.

These prevent the union discussing what they call party political motions or from attacking particular governments or social systems.

In practice, these guidelines allow the union leadership to rule out motions they do not like. The reason is clear. For years NIPSA conference has been moving to the left.

As well as the crucial motions on pay, conditions and union democracy; motions on subjects such as South Africa, Sri Lanka, Chile, nuclear power and motions demanding clear socialist solutions to the problems of workers in Northern Ireland have all been passed.

Unable to answer the arguments which have swung past conferences on these questions, the right wing are now resorting to the bureaucratic method of stifling debate.



NIPSA members join protests against Tory attacks on union rights at GCHQ.

For example, last year a motion supporting the stand of Liverpool city council was passed. This year a motion which simply opposes surcharging the councillors in Liverpool and Lambeth has been taken off the agenda. The motion is not directly party political, but it has been ruled out nonetheless.

### Sectarianism

And of course these guidelines have been used as a device to prevent discussion of the current situation in Northern Ireland. No less than seven motions calling for a trade union campaign to counter increased sectarianism as a result of the Anglo-Irish agreement have been struck off.

Perhaps the supreme twist of bureaucratic logic is the ruling out of a motion calling for a ballot to establish a political fund on the grounds that this would require a constitutional amendment.

How come a similar motion has gone through many British union conferences, most recently that of the IPCS, without a constitutional amendment?

In fact the implementation of the motion would not mean the changing of the constitution this year, but next, assuming the ballot resulted in a 'yes' vote.

The NIPSA Broad Left is campaigning within the union against this stifling of debate. They have circulated branches and are planning a

special protest meeting at the conference.

Whatever the outcome of the conference the campaign by the left will have to be stepped up. If the right wing were to get their way NIPSA would be turned into a tame union prevented from taking up wider issues which affect its members.

Every branch should join the Broad Left in its campaign to maintain NIPSA's democratic traditions and develop a fighting union capable of protecting its members' interests and playing its part alongside the rest of the Northern Ireland trade union movement in the fight to eliminate poverty and sectarianism.

By Peter Hadden

## Fire Brigades' fight for jobs



Bill Deal.

DEFENCE OF jobs was the most important issue discussed at the Fire Brigades Union conference. After a year of campaigning this remains the biggest problem facing firefighters.

The Tories' record towards public servants shows that a major fight could blow up at any time.

Nuclear power and waste transport were other important issues discussed.

Conference praised the heroism of the Soviet firefighters during the Chernobyl disaster, at the same time condemning the western media and governments for their hypocritical exploitation of the tragedy.

It also demanded that all transport of nuclear materials be clearly marked, as with other hazardous materials.

There was unanimous support for a public inquiry into police violence at Wapping and support for the striking printworkers.

Larry Whitty gave fraternal greetings from the Labour Party congratulating the union on its result in the political fund ballots and stressed the need to build on it in preparation for the next election.

Whilst he was there concern was expressed at reports of Labour Party plans for devolution of power to local boroughs. It was forcefully pointed out that Labour should be talking to the FBU on such issues, and that the

policy of the union is for a nationalised fire service.

Bill Deal, union president, had a few words for Larry Whitty to take back to Neil Kinnock. He explained that the Labour Party was a party of tolerance and the traditional way of settling disagreements was through fraternal debate and discussion.

He said that during the late '60s and '70s Neil Kinnock had great influence on his own political outlook, but unfortunately Neil had drifted away from his earlier socialist principles. Bill's advice was that our new leader should get back to the ideas and principles which had won him respect in the labour movement.

Conference finished on a sad note, with general secretary Ken Cameron thanking Bill Deal for his years of service and wishing him luck in his coming retirement. Nevertheless his honesty and confidence in the member ship will continue to provide an example to the rank and file.

By Mick Cotter

# Tories' mining disaster

MINING UNIONS, the NUM, NACODS and BACM, have jointly condemned the current draft proposal for changes in Health and Safety Regulations for Mines and Quarries.

The proposals, drawn up by the Mines and Quarries Inspectorate (but opposed by the Inspectors' union, the IPCS) and issued by the Health and Safety Commission (HSC), would mean sweeping changes in safety standards.

Discussions have been held between the three mining unions and the NCB and it was reported at the NACODS Scottish Annual Mining School that the draft proposals may have been shelved for the time being. But some of the changes are due to come into force this year.

Most miners are not even aware that changes to Safety Regulations are being considered. Yet, the HSE proposals were published in 1985 and circulated by the Health and Safety Executive to "bodies which appear to be appropriate" in the form of a series of 'Consultative Documents'.

Now, NACODS Scottish Secretary, Jimmy O'Con-

nor, has announced that the deputies' union has drawn up a statement opposing the proposals and will be issuing this to Scottish branches in the near future.

Mineworkers will be angry that they have never been informed of any tampering with safety levels. The provisions of the Regulations and of the Mines and Quarries Act itself are the only safeguards miners have to ensure that the pressures of the market do not impinge upon safe working practices in coal mines.

The Board and the government obviously view the M & Q and associated regulations as a hindrance to their privatisation plans. The pits would be a more attractive proposition to private coal companies if freed from the restraints of existing codes of practice and safety.

The mining unions must publicise the draft documents and expose them for what they really are. The lead of NACODS in Scotland must be followed and extended throughout the coalfields.

By a Militant Reporter

MILITANT SUPPORTERS and activists in the NUM have long warned of the danger of privatisation of the most profitable sections of the mining industry. Now the big business interests which control the supply of energy for their own profit are getting ready to cash in.

BP and Shell are buying up mineable coal reserves—still in the ground—throughout the world. So far they have acquired 8.4 million tonnes.

Despite the fact that shipping costs make this coal more expensive in Europe than British-mined coal, they are prepared to sell it at a loss in Europe in order to provide Thatcher with the excuse to close so-called "unprofitable" pits and prepare the British mining industry for privatisation.

### Privatisation

The oil companies are counting on snapping up pits at knockdown prices, and becoming the sole suppliers of coal to Europe. This would give them even greater power to fix energy prices and exert massive pressure on elected governments to pursue the economic policies

they dictate.

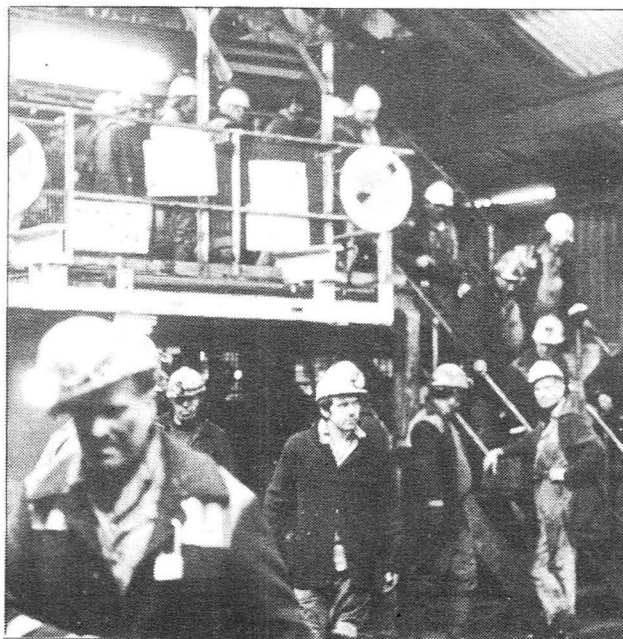
There is strong evidence to suggest that Thatcher's hand-picked NCB directors are already in the pockets of the oil barons. NCB directors sit alongside oil company directors on the boards of their subsidiary companies—no doubt guaranteeing themselves lucrative future employment in the private mining industry.

In 1983-84, the NCB through their "Overseas Developments" subsidiary, invested £40 million in an Australian opencast mine owned by Shell.

This shows the cynical way in which the monopolies are prepared to manipulate the economy for their own ends. The nationalisation of the mining industry must be defended. No way can control over the energy needs of this country be put in the hands of these pirates.

By bringing the oil companies into public ownership, a rational, planned integrated fuel and energy policy could be implemented to serve the real needs of the nation, not the profits of tinpot JRs.

By Charles Bell  
(Murton Lodge,  
Durham NUM)



## Broad Left success in North East NUM

FRANK DUFFY, a sacked miner and secretary Durham miners Broad Left, has been re-elected secretary of the Murton Lodge NUM despite the disadvantage of being banned from Coal Board premises by management.

He told *Militant*: "It's obvious I was elected by the younger members of the workforce because I was prepared to lead from the front. We faced some very controversial issues but I never dodged a question and never made decisions

to win votes."

"I believe the closure of Murton is imminent and sooner or later we will have to fight. That will be our biggest test. We have to prepare now."

In the same elections, which were the first since the closure of Hawthorn and Eppleton pits and the amalgamation of the lodges, *Militant* supporter Charlie Bell (see article on left), who had transferred from Eppleton, was elected to the Lodge Committee.

# Industrial Reports

## GMB - fight on the real issues

MEMBERS OF the General, Municipal and Boilermakers Trade Union will be lobbying their national congress in Scarborough on 2 June in protest at the expulsion of leading Liverpool GMB convenor Ian Lowes from the Labour Party and the lack of national fight against privatisation.

GMB members in the water and gas industries, local authorities and health service all face attacks on jobs, wages and conditions as a result of the Tories' plans to plunder the public services in the interests of private speculators.

A joint campaign with the other unions in these industries must be launched. The combined strength of the GMB and sister unions can stop the Tories.

Unfortunately, instead of concentrating

their energies on mounting such a campaign GMB leaders are wasting the union's time and resources backing the witch-hunt of *Militant* supporters in the Labour Party and attacking GMB members in Liverpool.

The members' lack of confidence in the leadership is reflected in the agenda. One resolution complains: "This union has no idea how to fight the battle against privatisation...because it has no real interest in members' views...pumping out literature is not enough."

The expulsion of Ian Lowes was even supported by the GMB representatives on Labour's national executive, Betty Boothroyd and Neville Hough.

And despite the fact that Ian was ex-

onerated of all charges that he had been involved in any abuse of Labour Party rules regional full time officials have announced their intention to conduct an investigation into Liverpool branch 5 and Ian Lowes' activities.

Last year's congress passed a resolution congratulating Liverpool GMB on its work. That is the real voice of the rank and file. Whatever the decision of this congress on the witch-hunt—the demands of branches around the country for Ian's reinstatement will flood into headquarters.

By Lawrence Coates

## Post Office strike ballot

THE UNION of Communication Workers gave a standing ovation before and after the speech of Leeds strike leader Ken Thompson and then voted unanimously for a ballot on a 24-hour national or regional strike.

The Leeds amendment toughened up the executive's proposals for a ballot to extend the action to ten other areas where the productivity deal is being tried.

The ten areas are Cardiff, Sheffield, Liverpool, Brighton, Derby, London (Western District Office and Romford), Norwich, Exeter, Edinburgh and Belfast.

A collection for the dispute defence fund raised £6,498—even after collections for sacked print workers and the Silentnight strikers.

The UCW is changing. Motion after motion was carried shifting policy to the left, often against the executive.

160 *Militants* were sold and £560 raised for the fighting fund.

By Bryan Beckingham

## Defend BREL jobs

Keith Saunders, a Marylebone ASLEF member, writes about the threat to even more jobs at British Rail Engineering Limited:

THE ANNOUNCEMENT of 7,000 jobs to be lost came as no surprise. The only thing that surprised me is where they are to come from.

Like Doncaster, where 1,132

will go. It got work from Swindon, which closed in March. This should have secured its future.

Stonebridge Park has just had £500,000 spent on doing the depot up. Cricklewood was even more surprising. This depot was totally rebuilt in 1981 at a cost of £1,500,000, including building two new sheds for High Speed Trains, which never came.

locomotives. There used to be 150 apprentices. Now there are only 40. A million pound training centre stands virtually unused.

Management over the years have stopped new building work, stopped major refurbishment and heavy repairs in a cynical attempt to demoralise the workforce.

But the works committee are determined to fight. They will unite with the workshops. The message from the Caley in Springburn is that no job is safe unless Brel workers fight back now.

By Ronnie Stevenson

## Glasgow Springburn

THE PLANNED closure of the British Rail Engineering workshop would destroy 1,100 of the remaining 1,300 jobs at the yard.

Combined with the proposed closure of the regional workshops in Scotland all that will be left for Scotrail will be one small depot employing about 150.

This is to be sited where once the Caley workshops stood. They built 80 per cent of the world's steam

## Coventry Labour anomaly

COVENTRY'S LABOUR city council propose to cut a week's pay from Nalgo members of the education department clerical staff.

It's to be done by reducing leave entitlement from staff who work only during the term. The council claim it's to remove an 'anomaly'—but the 'anomaly' has existed for 22 years.

A meeting of 200 threatened workers on 9 May showed their anger. They decided to declare a dispute, boycott new posts and lobby the council.

At the meeting the council leader met the union leader. But whether the decision will be reversed without further action remains to be seen.

## CPSA election

ON MONDAY 2 April the campaign to elect a new General Secretary of the Civil and Public Services Association begins.

Alistair Graham has departed to his new £50,000 a year job. He leaves behind him, in his own words: "... five years of lousy pay deals" and a Civil Service savaged by the Tories. No effective fightback has been organised. Graham leaves the union in a worse state than when he took over in 1981.

In contrast to the rank pessimism of the right wing, the Broad Left candidate, John Macreadie, has already shown that strong leadership and confidence in the membership can secure agreements on no job losses.

Contrast this with the deal Graham struck, in secret talks with the Treasury, which will lead to massive job losses.

John Macreadie and Eddie Spence, the candidate for General Treasurer, are standing on a programme of a campaign for a decent living wage, for the abolition of incremental (age) scales for young members, for a 35 hour week and the introduction of new technology to benefit members with no loss of jobs. If elected neither would accept the huge salaries and perks which go with the jobs.

Every activist in the country must urgently turn to this election and do what they can to ensure a Broad Left victory.

The contest will be between the right wing candidate John Ellis and John Macreadie. The soft right BL '84 group will confuse the issues. Geoff Lewtas and Chris Kirk, both full time CPSA officials, are standing on a bogus 'left' ticket.

If the work is done victory can be assured.

If you wish to help in the campaign please urgently contact one of the following members:

Martyn Jenkins, Work: (01) 305 0565, Home: (01) 291 6229.

John Ship, Work: (0908) 662626, Home: (0908) 318859.

Steve Dunk, Home: (01) 438 7031/6258, Home: (01) 690 6415

## Donaldson's Hull

A UNION recognition battle being fought at Donaldson's Filters in Hull was triggered by the behaviour of a new manager.

Two lads walked out after being threatened with the sack. They were joined by ten others and have been picketing since.

There are 35 TGWU members and over twice that number of non-union members on temporary contracts.

The strikers are demanding reinstatement and union recognition. In the past management have not negotiated, just put their announcements on the notice board.

By Keith Gibson

## Shipbuilding campaign launched

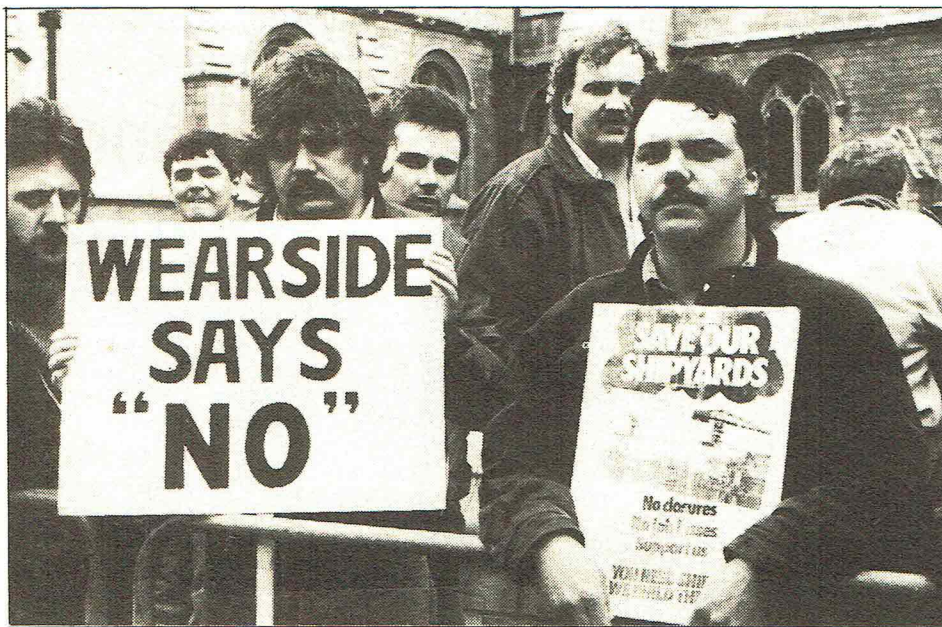


Photo: Howard Jones

THE CAMPAIGN to save the shipbuilding industry has really begun. There must have been 2,500 lads on the lobby of parliament last Wednesday.

Throughout the day the mood was good. Morale among the lads has never been better. We had at least 400 from Sunderland.

The delegations attended a meeting with Labour MPs James Tinn and Don Dixon and SNC officials.

Some of the remarks were promising. Dixon called for a sustained fight against the Tories. Ferry from the SNC called for a massive campaign of leafletting.

But Tinn, the MP for Redcar, who wasn't even on the march came in for a bit of rough treatment. Gordon Bagier, MP for Sunderland South, wasn't even there.

Naturally we won the argument in parliament but lost the vote. During the debate Channon sat back with his feet up, ignoring the debate. For many of the shipyard workers there it was a real eye-opener.

By Paul Errington

(GMBATU shop steward, Austin & Pickersgill)

## Glasgow BREL and shipbuilding

A ONE-day strike was the response of Govan shipbuilders to the threatened sacking of 400.

A demonstration in support of the shipyard and Brel workers in Springburn has been called in Glasgow this Saturday.

## National Communications Union jobs

THE SECOND annual National Communications Union conference, starting in Blackpool on Sunday, must herald the rekindling of the fight to defend jobs on a national scale.

The number of local struggles within the union are too numerous to mention, stretching from Bournemouth to Glasgow, from Swansea to Southend.

The Glasgow branch, for instance, has taken positive industrial action four times in two years.

However, with no national action taken, each individual section of the membership has been left to fight alone.

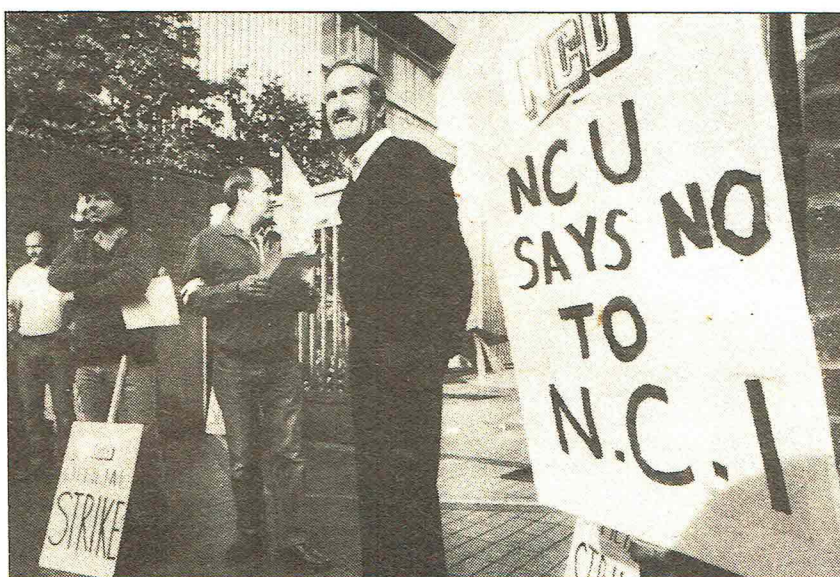
The union's own strategy against job losses, called the Broad Strategy, has not been used to link up the isolated struggles and to take the issues to the rest of the membership.

This conference must see the revitalisation of the Broad Strategy, and one of its central demands the 32 hour, 4 day week, as the response to the threat of uncontrolled implementation of new technology.

While the right wing will push for voluntary redundancy agreements the membership will be looking to the left to mobilise action in defence of jobs.

The clerical section, which came late onto the scene of the Broad Strategy, have a major role to play. The Broad Strategy cannot be kept as separate property by two groups of the union (Clerical and Engineering), but clerical delegates must not be too hasty to transfer responsibility to the national body.

The fact that many of the battles over jobs have involved both Clerical and Engineering members, clearly shows the need for a determined push to one industrial union instead of the two autonomous groups that current-



London victimisation strike in defence of jobs.

Photo: Jez Coulson (IFL)

ly exist.

Delegates to both group conferences must support all attempts to transfer policy-making issues to Main Conference. Management do not distinguish between clerical and engineering members when it comes to job losses; for the union to continue to do so will be a brake on any national struggle.

During conference week, the right wing will undoubtedly try various delaying tactics and manoeuvres. The left can no longer afford the luxury of slanging matches or risk major setbacks in the fight against job losses.

● **STOP PRESS:** Girobank management are attempting to restrict participation in the union conference by refusing the normal number of delegates time off, even refusing them leave without pay. Support the emergency resolution to clerical group conference demanding national backing.

By Dave Gorton  
(West End District Branch,  
personal capacity)

## Asian workers out at Kenure

FIFTY ASIAN workers at J F Kenure Plastics at Central Way, Feltham, Middlesex are locked out.

Management have tried to change their shifts from eight hours a day to 12 hours a day without consultation. They refused to accept new conditions and were sacked.

The workers joined the AEU two days after the dispute started—they are now members of the Feltham and Kingston No 2 branch.

Wages are currently £94 per week basic. Their hourly rate before the dispute was £2.35 per hour and they were asking for £3.00 per hour. Management refused saying they preferred to sack them all.

Scabs are being provided by a company called Olympic Staff, 8—11 The Mall Ealing, W5.

Contact: Kenure Workers Support Fund, c/o 18 Staines Rd, Hounslow, TW3 3JF.

# Militant

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John Tocher Page 13

# 'No deal, Murdoch'

**THE WORKERS'** reaction to Rupert Murdoch's latest 'final' offer to 5,500 sacked print-workers was summed up by a picket: "If he has got £50 million to give away, he can give the scabs their redundancy money and give us our jobs back".

This strike has never been just about money. It is a fight for the jobs and trade union rights of all workers. Murdoch is trying to buy these off with a miserable pittance of redundancy pay to the workers who have made him a millionaire.

"My members are disgusted with the offer", said Jim Brookshaw, AEU, FOC at *The Times*. "We struck for jobs and the principle of trade unionism in Wapping. The offer amounts to no more than we have lost in wages. We are willing to fight on."

## No strategy

While not accepting the offer, union leaders have hedged their opposition to it. "I am not going to recommend it", said Brenda Dean of SOGAT: "It is for the members to decide. Personally I doubt that if they reject it Mr Murdoch would re-table a better offer". That is as good as saying that this is the best that her members can get and they had better accept. The alternative is posed of a long, drawn-out strike which the leaders have no strategy for winning.

The demand must be raised that the SOGAT ballot be



Wapping pickets are overwhelmingly against the offer

held at mass meetings where the issues can be discussed, rather than in the isolation of members' homes.

"This deal must be rejected" said Jackie Hylett, wife of a striker and an active participant. "A mass meeting must be called and I certainly want to be there and speak, because we are part of this dispute."

The fact that Murdoch has made an improved offer shows that he feels vulnerable. But the sacked printers have lost confidence in their union executives' ability or willingness to lead them to victory. It is now up

to the rank and file to take control of the strike into their own hands. They should send out pickets to convince fellow trade unionists that they are fighting for basic trade union principles and must be supported with action. A conference to rally support should be organised.

This applies especially within the print industry. It is now vital that action be spread to Fleet Street and all the firms handling Murdoch's titles.

If the picket line activists take the message to every corner of the trade union

movement and mobilise action to force Murdoch to give back the jobs he has stolen, this dispute can still be won.

★ **Reject Murdoch's offer.**  
★ **Step up the action—a 24-hour all-out strike on Fleet Street and in the general trade.**

★ **Meetings of MOCs/FOCs of strikers to run the strike.**

★ **Mass meetings to discuss and ballot on the offer.**

By Peter Jarvis  
London Region NGA

## BLOC

BROAD LEFT ORGANISING COMMITTEE

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Birmingham  
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## Bemrose Picket

SOGAT LONDON branches have placed a picket at the Bemrose printing plant in Liverpool which produces the colour magazine *Sunday for the News of the World*, and colour inserts for other papers.

A filthy smear campaign has been conducted against Tony Mulhearn, recently expelled president of Liverpool Labour Party, who works at the plant.

Tony Mulhearn has been accused by some supposed lefts of crossing the line and even climbing the fence to avoid the pickets. This is a disgusting lie. Tony Mulhearn has refused to cross the picket line. *Militant* fully supports his stand and calls on all Bemrose workers to honour the line.

Unfortunately, due to complete mishandling by the union leaders, no more than a handful are honouring the picket.

At the beginning of the dispute national officials made it clear that they wanted no action at Bemrose. Ted O'Brien, a SOGAT official on Labour's NEC who voted for Tony Mulhearn's expulsion, urged that no action should be taken. "On the supplements we thought it best to keep Bemrose and Purnells going", he said. This was then used by those opposed to the strike to defeat resolutions of support.

Then a month ago, out of the blue, SOGAT announced that a ballot would be held. No preparation was made to ensure a 'yes' vote, and no leaflets were produced explaining the need to

back the sacked printers in London. As a result the Bemrose printers voted heavily against any action.

Many of the strikers at Wapping believe now that this vote, and the failure to get support from the wholesale workers outside London provided the union's leadership with the excuse to purge their contempt and try to wind the dispute down. They will no doubt blame others for their own shortcomings.

Questions have also been raised as to why the picket has been put on Bemrose at this stage in the dispute when a ballot is being conducted on the latest offer from Murdoch, and there is no attempt at escalation elsewhere.

At this stage in the dispute the picket can only succeed in winning support from the most class conscious Bemrose workers. If the offer is rejected then serious escalation would be the way to proceed.

Then at the very least further action by Fleet Street workers to black the colour inserts, which they are still handling, would give a boost to the strikers at Wapping and to those who have seriously attempted to give effective support.

It is basic trade unionism that if the London branches place picket lines outside Bemrose then the Bemrose products should be blacked by London SOGAT members. This should have been done at the beginning of the dispute.

By a Bemrose worker

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