

Militant

The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth 30p

ISSUE 805 4 July 1986

BLOC

BROAD LEFT ORGANISING COMMITTEE

Hear John Macreadie
CPSA general secretary,
12 July
Details-page 6

South Africa - British unions must act



Elijah Barayi, president of COSATU, at its launching conference where he challenged the regime, calling for a mass pass-burning campaign and the nationalisation of big industry. He is now in jail.

Defend workers' leaders

"COMRADES, the workers of South Africa are calling on you: if Thatcher is against sanctions then we call up the working class in Britain to impose sanctions." These were the stirring words of James Motlatsi, president of the South African National Union of Mineworkers, speaking at last week's British NUM conference.

Encouraged by Thatcher's veto of even the mildest EEC wrist-slap, Botha has stepped up his attack on the trade unions—the strongest fortress of the black majority in the fight for democracy and socialism.

Last weekend Elijah Barayi and Jay Naidoo, president and general secretary of the 650,000 strong COSATU, were detained under the state of emergency.

Also detained on his return from a visit to Swedish unions was Moses Mayekiso, general secretary of the Metalworkers Union. Mayekiso, who spoke at this year's LPYS conference, said, in an exclusive interview with *Militant* two weeks ago: "The workers will not be crushed by Botha's state of emergency. The international labour movement must be serious and take action to turn the screws on the South African regime."

It is not enough for the TUC and the Labour Party leadership to moralise about apartheid, to pass resolutions, or urge Thatcher to agree to half-hearted and easily evaded selective government sanctions. They must now turn their words into action.

On 19 June Ron Todd said: "We should say loud and clear that if Mrs Thatcher will not apply sanctions, we will." As leader of the largest union and chairman of the TUC International Committee, Ron Todd has a particular responsibility.

An emergency meeting of the International Committee could launch a campaign for a workers' blockade to cut the apartheid regime's economic lifelines. Workers' sanctions by the T&GWU members in the docks, airports and in industry, could have a big impact.

From South Africa, latest reports are that 920 trade unionists are in detention: 183 shop stewards and officials, and 740 shop floor workers; 21 per cent from the Metal Union and 11 per cent from CCAWUSA (shopworkers' union).

Lightning strikes

These workers have been in the vanguard of the fightback against the emergency. CCWAUSA members have called lightning strikes and sit-ins in supermarkets. 80 per cent of MAWU members took part in stoppages on 19 June, also in support of their wage claim.

Now the South African NUM is organising for strike action. The COSATU executive has called for a one day national strike on 14 July.

The latest arrests were an attempt to start a challenge to Botha by the COSATU executive, who had declared their intention to meet openly on 1 July.

Over more than 13 years, the democratic trade unions have been built

from the shop floor. Botha can detain leaders, but not crush this solid base at this stage.

The session on South Africa at the BLOC conference on 12 July provides an enormous opportunity for solidarity with the South African workers, and for working out clear proposals for workers' sanctions and pressure on the TUC and Labour Party leadership. Every activist will be working for the biggest possible attendance.

★ We must demand that the TUC and Labour Party leadership mobilise, and support, industrial sanctions by workers against the South African regime.

★ Whether or not the leadership acts, workers can follow the example of Dunnes supermarket workers in Ireland in taking direct action. South African Airways can be grounded; dockworkers can halt the flow of cargo to and from South Africa—particularly of machinery etc.

★ Through the LPYS, the youth can take many initiatives, exposing Tory links with apartheid, taking the issues to the factories, etc. (In Brighton, the LPYS picketed the surgery of Julian Amery MP, a director of the South African monopoly, Anglo American).

★ Union and youth organisations can adopt individual South African trade unionists detained (for more information on how to carry this out contact SALEP, 28 Martello Street, London E8).

By David Hemson
(banned Natal trade union organiser)

Marxist victory in union election

JOHN MACREADIE has been elected CPSA general secretary.

At the press conference to announce the result John said that he would lead by example. He would not be accepting the full wage of the general secretary, and he would live up to the pledges he made during the election campaign to vigorously defend jobs and wages and to fight for a living wage for all civil servants.

Alistair Graham, outgoing general secretary, was clearly stunned by the result. He made it clear that in his time as general secretary he had waged an unceasing campaign against *Militant* supporters in general and had put his personal weight and authority behind attempts to stop John Macreadie being elected.

It has been the common practice in CPSA for the right wing, having lost elections, to immediately manufacture charges of "irregularities" and "ballot-rigging". Any such attempt on this occasion will be absolutely transparent to CPSA members.

But the defeated right



wing now intend using the election complaints procedure, in a desperate attempt to defy the democratic wishes of the membership.

John Macreadie has been elected general secretary and the ranks of CPSA members will demand that he takes office on 14 July 1986 without the usual manoeuvrings of the right wing.

One lesson comes home starkly to CPSA members—the need for left unity. Geoff Lewtas, the Broad Left '84 candidate got 14,740 votes. Had the left been united around John Macreadie his majority over the right wing candidate would have been enormous, such is the opposition to the manner in which the right have run the union.

Continued on back page

Poplar 1921 Liverpool 1986

March to the Court

Called by Liverpool Labour Group of Councillors

Wednesday 9 July Assemble:
8am Temple Lane (by Temple Tube) March 9am via Fleet Street, to lobby High Court, Stand.

Militant

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In place of strife, Mark II

A NEW statement on industrial relations legislation is the clearest sign yet that the Labour Party leaders who are expelling *Militant* supporters are also trying to steer the party sharply to the right on policy.

The statement, *People at work: New rights, new responsibilities*, from the TUC-Labour Party Liaison committee representing the TUC, the National Executive Committee and the Parliamentary Labour Party, has many echoes of *In place of strife*, the 1969 White Paper which aroused such opposition within the trade unions that the Labour government was forced to abandon this attempt to use law to discipline the unions.

Now, as then, there are parts of the statement which will be welcomed. It commits the next Labour government to extend protection against unfair dismissal to cover part-time and home workers, to reintroduce the 'fair wages' resolution for government contracts, to end 'crown immunity' from health and safety laws and guarantee the right to peaceful picketing.

But as a *Militant* leaflet in 1969 said of *In place of strife*: "the trade union and labour movement must not fall for the so-called 'sweeteners'. The White Paper as a whole constitutes an attack which must be repulsed immediately". Exactly the same applies to the 1986 version. The barrel of honey of reforms is ruined by the spoonful of tar in the form of laws to police the unions.

The statement proposes "laying down statutory principles for inclusion in union rule books". It retains one of the key features of the Tory law—compulsory pre-strike ballots. It would give any individual member the right to challenge the union in "a new independent body, presided over by a legally qualified person, who would have the power, after conducting an investigation, to issue an appropriate instruction to a union". Thus a 'court' in all but name would have the final say in judging whether a union is complying with its rule book. An individual management stooge within the union membership would have the power to challenge the collective decision of the majority.

Militant has always demanded greater democratic control of unions, including the election of all officials and the right of recall over them. But that democracy must allow every member the chance to discuss the issues at meetings, not in a postal ballot where the 'debate' is conducted in the pages of the Fleet Street tabloids.

The statement also hints at continued curbs on the kind of industrial action which the unions will be able to take. It says cryptically that "Labour is committed to enacting clear and comprehensible measures to establish fair boundaries within which effective industrial action can be organised."

This talk of 'boundaries' suggests that solidarity action in support of other workers will be outlawed. This is reinforced by the formulation that "it will be lawful for workers to organise or take part in a strike or other industrial action in defence of their interests". This implies that the 'courts' could be the arbiters of what constitutes workers' 'interests'.

The fundamental flaw in this statement, as with *In place of strife*, is that it tries to reconcile the unbridgeable interests of employers and workers. Its proposals are said to "point the way to a more unified society based on co-operation rather than conflict and division". It aims to tackle "the 'them and us' attitude which by common consent still permeates our industrial life".

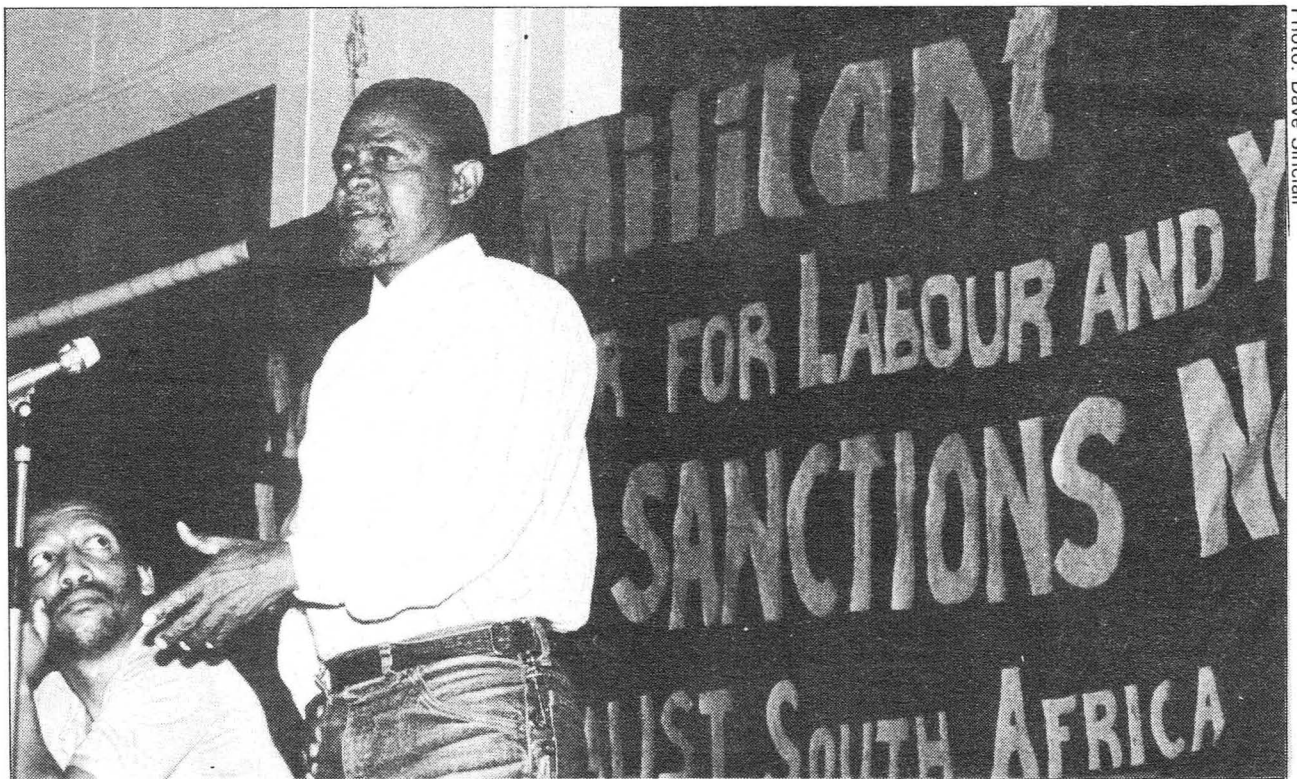
But 'them and us' is a fact of life in a capitalist society. The measures taken by Thatcher to cripple the unions were not dictated by her personal preferences but by the same employers that this statement seeks 'partnership' with. In the present long-term crisis of the British capitalist economy they have no alternative but to use the law to weaken the power of workers to resist their attacks on jobs and wages. As the 1969 leaflet explained: "It is impossible to painlessly pull out the claws of the tiger".

No laws can force employers to provide job security, health and safety, no discrimination, participation in decision making and access to information when these conflict with the need to increase profits.

The authors of this statement have learned nothing from the attempts of left-wing governments in France, Spain and Greece to implement similar measures to create a 'new partnership'. In every case, it has turned out to be a 'partnership' between horse and rider, which the employers have used to hoodwink the union leaders into becoming enmeshed in the state machinery, while they remain in charge of the economy.

Having already retreated from any commitment to nationalise the major monopolies which dominate the economy, the Labour and TUC leaders are now preparing measures which will leave the unions at the mercy of laws designed to perpetuate the rule of capital. In a capitalist society, the only protection for workers is the strength of their organisations and the whole movement must unite to keep the law out of industrial relations and defeat these plans to weaken the unions.

Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office.
Published by Militant.
Printed by Militant Publications, 3-13 Hepscoth
Road, London E9 5HB. ISSN 0144-9275



£2,000 was raised at the *Militant/Inqaba* public attended by over 350 people in London on Tuesday. It was addressed by Derek Hatton, Dave Nellist MP and exiled South African workers, Nimrod Sejake and Tyrone Simpson.

Photo: Dave Sinclair

Mulhearn wins arguments but judge rules for NEC

TONY MULHEARN'S High Court action (27 and 30 June) to halt his expulsion from the Labour Party was unsuccessful.

He was applying for an interim injunction, pending a full trial, restraining the National Executive from enforcing his expulsion, backed by the NEC majority at the disciplinary hearing on 26 March.

The court found that there had been procedural irregularities and that on two of his four complaints Tony Mulhearn had an 'arguable case'. In the 'balance of convenience', however, the court ruled that the expulsion should stand.

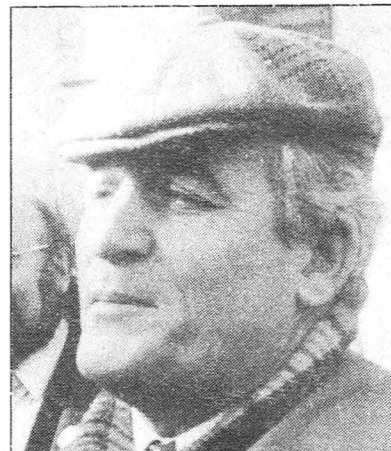
The judge, the vice-chancellor Sir Nicolas Browne-Wilkinson, reluctantly accepted many of the points put by Tony Mulhearn's counsel, John Hendy. But he evidently felt very uncomfortable about the prospect of having to issue an injunction against the majority of the NEC.

On the most important point, that during the NEC's discussion of the case Neil Kinnock had brought up a number of new, highly prejudicial allegations, which had not been put to Tony Mulhearn during the hearing, the court found in Tony's favour.

The judge completely rejected the efforts of the NEC's counsel, Alexander Irvine QC, to explain away the introduction of new evidence because everyone in the Labour Party knew about the allegations anyway.

The judge accepted that on the DLP charge of procedural malpractice the NEC should have voted separately on the different allegations, so that Tony Mulhearn knew which were proved and which were not.

The court did not accept that Tony had a case on the issue of legal representation or calling witnesses, even though the judge accepted there had been confusion about the NEC's attitude to witnesses' statements.



Tony Mulhearn leaves Walworth Road after February's NEC meeting.

In considering an injunction, the court did not have to make any final decision about the issues involved. Having decided that on two important points Tony has an 'arguable case' the judge had to decide on the 'balance of convenience'—who would suffer most damage, Tony or the NEC, pending a full trial.

Acknowledging Tony's long record in the party and the serious consequences of expulsion, the judge found the balance very even.

Political factors

When it came to weighing relative 'convenience', however, there were clearly political factors on the scales.

During the hearing the vice-chancellor referred several times to the political tension surrounding the case. Sir Nicolas recalled a cartoon which had appeared after his ruling on 25 March which had portrayed it as: "a judgement given on behalf of the Conservative Party". Questioning John Hendy's submission about the extreme consequences of expulsion for Tony, the judge said: "If I am allowed to

read the newspapers, it is a very great embarrassment to the Labour Party to have a long-running saga of this kind".

The legal justification for refusing an injunction was that, in his view—though he conceded he might well be wrong, Tony Mulhearn did not have a very strong chance of reversing his expulsion at a full trial. The procedural irregularities, in his view, were confined to the DLP charge, and guilt on the *Militant* charge was enough to justify expulsion.

Tony Mulhearn's lawyers do not accept this. They consider that the new evidence introduced by Neil Kinnock after Tony left the room did affect the NEC's decision on the *Militant* charge. In court, John Hendy pointed out that the NEC was relying on "indirect evidence" on membership of *Militant*, and their three points of evidence were 'flimsy and unsubstantial'. They therefore had a particular obligation to act fairly and observe the rules of natural justice.

After giving his judgement, the vice-chancellor ordered a speedy trial so the full case can be heard in October.

Tony said he would continue to fight for reinstatement in every possible way. "My expulsion was an undemocratic political move by the right wing, and the hearing was totally unfair. The purge in Liverpool was justified on grounds of malpractice in the DLP, but my action has further exposed the phoney charges and totally unfair procedure in relation to the alleged evidence of malpractice".

"The importance of my legal action," said Tony, "is to make it clear to the right wing that everyone on the list for expulsion will fight every inch of the way against the witch-hunters who temporarily have a majority on the NEC".

Coalition fails to legalise divorce

A REFERENDUM to amend the Irish constitution to allow for divorce has been defeated by the substantial margin of 63 per cent to 37 per cent.

The amendment, proposed by the government, dominated by right wing Fine Gael in coalition with Labour, was denounced by an alliance of the Catholic Church and Fianna Fail, the other main right wing party. Using the pulpits every Sunday, the Anti-Divorce Campaign played on the alleged ef-

fect on the transfer of land, and more particularly on the fears of married women that they would not be provided for financially in a marriage break-up.

Church

At schools children were handed leaflets to bring home, saying that they were frightened of being abandoned.

The campaign of lies and distortions had its effect, particularly because of the government's unpopularity.

It has presided over soaring unemployment and savage cuts in social spending, and opinion polls show that Fianna Fail would sweep in with a clear majority if there were an election.

Yet the amendment could have been passed if a campaign had been launched seriously for it. Only Labour and the Divorce Action Group actually worked on the ground, canvassing and leafletting to counteract the church propaganda. Fine Gael despite its daily press statements, did nothing and

indeed many of its supporters actually oppose divorce.

For Labour activists the lesson is clear, fundamental change will not fall into our laps, it has to be fought for. Nor will coalition with Fine Gael produce even the minimal social reform promised. Labour must break from the shackles of coalition and go it alone on socialist policies.

By Pat Smyth
(Dublin Labour Party)

Thatcher puts profits before sanctions

THATCHER'S stonewalling of the Common Market's limited sanctions will be seen as virtually condoning the white supremacist South African regime. Her recent comment on television that for blacks, apartheid "must be so irritating", sums up the Tories' indifference to the detentions, torture and killings that the black workers suffer.

The European leaders last week were preparing a gentle slap on the wrist for Botha, to nudge him towards their illusory 'solution' of negotiations. Thatcher succeeded in watering this down, to dispatching Geoffrey Howe to administer a stern lecture to the apartheid government. (Dennis Healey once

remarked that a verbal assault from Howe was like "being savaged by a dead sheep"). If Botha does not listen, then in three months perhaps Thatcher will consider sanctions again.

Death toll

Meanwhile the Emergency continues, more workers' leaders are rounded up and the death toll mounts. No doubt Thatcher hopes that within three months the movement will have run out of steam, the black workers will have been cowed into accepting the status quo, and it can be business as usual.

British capitalism is the biggest single investor in South Africa. And it is those companies with interests there, grouped together in the British Industry Committee on South Africa, which are pushing hardest against sanctions and disinvestment.

BICSA has the nerve to declare that "foreign-owned companies are at the forefront in bringing improvements to the working and living conditions of the black and coloured peoples", yet according to the Ethical Research Group report the majority of the black employees of British firms could be receiving "significantly less" than the Common Market's target minimum

wage. Quinton Hazell in 1983 was paying 351 workers below the EEC minimum. One of its directors is Dennis Thatcher.

Under Commonwealth and EEC pressure Thatcher may in the end be compelled to fall in line with mild sanctions. But she would not be any more concerned for the rights and interests of the black majority than she is now.

Unpopular

Thatcher's stand is also unpopular at home. 66 per cent in a British opinion poll consider her "more on the side of the whites", and themselves to be "more with

the black population". A majority in the opinion polls now favour sanctions.

The Labour leaders have an open door to tap the anti-apartheid feeling and to expose the Tories' cash-register callousness. Labour must give every assistance to the black South African working-class. The black workers, with the solidarity of workers' sanctions imposed by the international labour movement, will settle the scores with apartheid and capitalism.

By Jeremy Birch

S African coal imports go on

AS THE demand is made for sanctions on South African goods, a closer look should be taken at the dealings of National Coal Board boss Ian MacGregor.

30,000 tonnes of cheap South African coal pour into Britain each month. There have been attempts to conceal this by bringing the coal in via Holland.

Bosses group

Eight months ago MacGregor set up a new international pressure group of coal bosses, including three private South African companies. The three companies are TransNatal, Douglas Colliery Ltd, and Goldfields Coal, all based in Johannesburg. Two other multinational companies are involved, Shell Coal International and British Petroleum.

Both companies have investments in South Africa and in 1985-86 signed deals allowing for 5.5 million tonnes each to be exported. Shell also has a 50 per cent holding in a South African mine called Reitspruit. Last year, during a dispute at the mine, several workers were killed and 80 are still locked out.

Coal was imported from South Africa throughout the miners' strike. It was used, as now, in steel production and was shipped in at small non-union wharfs.

When questioned about the imports, the general secretary of the international institute, Michael Gilpin (who was the NCB's former marketing executive) claimed that the institute knew nothing about the imports. He said that the institute did not arrange the purchase and sale of coal and that it was a trade association whose objective was to increase the world market for coal (but not presumably to sell it!).

At the NUM conference miners' leader Arthur Scargill warned that another 42 pits could be closed with the loss of 60,000 jobs. Already 27 pits have been closed and 43,000 jobs lost in British pits since the end of the miners' strike.

Thatcher's excuse for avoiding sanctions is her concern for the increase in unemployment that this might create—sanctions on the importing of South African coal would leave her with a clear conscience.

By Soraya Lawrence

Speaker censored

WHEN EREWASH Constituency Labour Party, Derbyshire, called a public meeting for 18 June on South Africa, they were warned by Nottingham Anti-Apartheid not to allow veteran South African trade union leader Nimrod Sejake from SALEP to speak. They even got in touch with the party's regional office to get the meeting called off.

Constituency officers ap-

pealed for Nimrod to be allowed to speak, but the regional officials said that Walworth Road had phoned to say that "under no circumstances must this man speak at a Labour Party meeting". Yet they were unable to provide an alternative speaker in this crucial week when the whole of South Africa was under a state of emergency!

Stoke debate

OVER 50 people listened to Nimrod Sejake of the Southern African Labour Education Project speak on the struggles in South Africa at a *Militant* readers' meeting in Stoke.

There was a lively debate and many *Militants* were sold before and after the meeting. A financial appeal, divided between the *Militant* fighting fund and SALEP raised £56 with donations from several unemployed.

The Shelton Arts Centre where the meeting was held donated £5 and also allowed free use of the room. Many wanted more information on

the struggle to achieve socialism in south Africa. Further events have been planned and a Marxist discussion group is to be set up as soon as possible to debate further various subjects including South Africa.

Video

for hire on the rise of COSATU, the May Day strike and occupation of metal factory.

Available from SALEP. Phone: (01) 241 0434.



THE ANTI-APARTHEID demonstration on 28 June was one of the biggest protests ever in London. Around 100,000 marched the long hot miles from Hyde Park to Clapham Common where they met another 150,000 at the Artists Against Apartheid festival.

As soon as the demonstrators left Sloane Ranger land and marched through Battersea the public sympathy was obvious as local people served out endless cups of water to the marchers.

Although the organisers said the demonstration was not party political, the rally in Hyde Park showed their hatred for Botha's friends Thatcher and Howe. The rally cheered all demands for workers to take action against apartheid. Rodney Bickerstaffe of NUPE praised the action of Portsmouth hospital workers who had refused to handle South African fruit. Mary Manning who was sacked from Dunnes in Dublin for

refusing to handle South African food showed how their battle had led the Irish government to take tentative steps against Botha's regime.

The young audience mostly wanted to go beyond pop concerts and individual decisions not to buy Outspan oranges. It is up to the labour and trade union movement leaders to show how effective solidarity with the struggle in South Africa can be built.



Edinburgh LPYS backs strikers

KEEPING TRUE to the internationalist traditions of the Labour Party Young Socialists, Edinburgh LPYS have launched a campaign in support of a group of workers struggling in South Africa for union recognition. The 1,000 members of the Metal and Allied Workers' Union have been on strike for 14 months, living on £1.50 a week from their union.

Their courage and determination have not been marred, despite attacks from their employers, BTR Sarmcol, who sacked all 1,000 strikers.

A rally was held in Edinburgh city centre on Tuesday 24 June. Over 220 young people listened intently to Keith Simpson (Lothian regional councillor), Nimrod Sejake (exiled South African trade unionist) and a representative from the Labour Party Young Socialists, who spoke on the conditions facing the strikers at BTR Sarmcol.

Nimrod Sejake received rapturous applause after he outlined the conditions facing trade unionists in South Africa pointing the way forward for socialism. Young people came up to shake his hand and show their respect after the meeting finished.

A financial appeal was made from the floor which, after expenses, amounted to £1,000 to be sent to BTR workers.

On Friday 25 June the LPYS organised two successful performances of "The Press Gang" by Rank and File Theatre at the Mandela Theatre. Over 150 people attended. Another appeal raised money for the strikers.

By Valerie Ferguson
(Edinburgh LPYS)

Poplar 1921 Liverpool 1986

Defying the law to defend the poor

ON WEDNESDAY 9 July, 47 Liverpool councillors will be at the Court of Appeal to contest the decision of the District Auditor, upheld by the High Court, to impose massive surcharges and disqualify them from office.

Their legal fight to defend their right to run Liverpool city council in the interests of the working-class voters who elected them has many parallels with that of the Poplar borough councillors in the 1920s. PETER WATSON looks at these Labour councillors who were determined to "put socialist principles into operation".

"They desire extravagant expenditure not because of their sympathy for the poor and unemployed, but because they believe that ruinous finance will produce a state of chaos which would lead to the destruction of the present social organisation of the country."

Readers could be forgiven for believing that this is a quotation from *The Times* attacking Liverpool or Lambeth councils. In fact it was written in 1922 and its target was Poplar council in East London. The story of Poplar in the early nineteen twenties is of a council prepared to fight for its class even if it meant prison and surcharge, and it bears many parallels with the situation in local government today.

George Lansbury

Liverpool's slogan of 'Better to break the law than to break the poor' echoes the words of George Lansbury, leader of Poplar council, who said: "We have got nothing by being passive and quiet, and we are going to be passive and quiet no longer. If we have to choose between contempt of the poor and contempt of court, it will be contempt of court."

Poplar council's confrontation began in 1920 with the launching of an ambitious road and sewerage scheme. The Tory/Liberal coalition government refused a grant to fund this. In response the council refused to levy rates for central London bodies such as the County Council, complaining that the poorest areas had to pay out the most in poor relief. This course of action, incidentally, was not followed until a meeting of local trade union representatives had endorsed it.

The councillors were summoned to court and marched five miles to the court rooms at the head of a



Collecting free bread from the Poor Law guardians.

demonstration of two thousand, with a large crowd waiting for their arrival. Despite an appeal, in September 1921 30 Poplar councillors were imprisoned.

The ruling class hoped that that would be the end of it, but workers thought differently. A huge campaign developed across the country and every night a demonstration gathered outside the prison, including bands and on one occasion a Welsh choir.

The coalition, in conjunction with right wing Labour leaders, attempted to force a compromise, but the councillors refused to negotiate until they were all released. And released they were, to mass meetings and demonstrations. New proposals were accepted whereby councils with the highest unemployment gained large amounts of cash. Poplar was the best off, gaining an extra £350,000.

The government then tried to strangle Poplar through a financial squeeze. In 1920 the council instituted a £4 minimum wage for all its employees, men and women, and in 1922 they brought local unemployment benefit to a reasonable level. These reforms were fiercely fought by the capitalists. Local bosses even call-

ed for the disenfranchisement of the unemployed as they would be 'kept voters'!

A man called Cooper, the Stonefrost of the 1920s, was sent in to investigate Poplar's finances. Lurid stories of corrupt practices and drinking orgies circulated in the press; like today's stories they came to nothing. But like the Stonefrost Report into Liverpool city council, Cooper's report stated that with 'careful administration' £100,000 could be saved; this could be achieved through such things as making food handed out to the unemployed less 'liberal' in quantity and quality!

Against this report Poplar council produced a 2d pamphlet called *Guilty and Proud of it*, and launched a mass movement, threatening to use all the rate levied locally for local use. The government backed off and this defeat was definitely a factor in its fall in October 1922.

'Overpaid' workers

The new Tory government's approach to Poplarism was of course no different. In May 1923 the District Auditor threatened the councillors with a surcharge of £17,000 because he declared that the council workforce was overpaid! Such battles carried on until the first Labour government came to power in January 1924.

The new minister of health was left winger John Wheatley, and he immediately lifted the surcharges hanging over the Poplar councillors—a fine example of 'retrospective legislation'!

The right wing, however, put forward the idea of 'constitutionalism', that it was wrong to break the law as it would encourage the Tories to do the same under a Labour government. Herbert Morrison, secretary of London Labour Party and later cabinet minister said, "I am very very determined... only to uphold constitutional action and action within the law."

An early version of Neil Kinnock's attack on 'impossibilism' was a London Labour Party leaflet which stated that the party "does not associate itself with demands for public assistance of a character which cannot be regarded as practicable in existing circumstances." Morrison had powerful allies in the labour bureaucracy. Jimmy Thomas, leader of the



Poplar councillors leading a march of 2,000 to the High Court in 1921.

Railwaymen's Union and later betrayer of the general strike, stated that Poplar's victory in 1921 "is a bad thing for the constitution"!

Against 'constitutionalism' was put the idea of 'direct action', including breaking the law, in order to achieve the goals of the working class and of socialism. One Hackney councillor summed it up by saying that "when men are hungry they do not care much about constitutionalism". The law was rightly seen as class law and as such stood against the interests of working people.

Morrison and Thomas declared that Poplarism was ruining the Labour Party. As in Liverpool today, the facts speak differently. In the 1922 elections the turn out in Poplar was the highest in London (43.2 per cent) and Labour gained five seats while over London there was a net loss of eighteen. Later in the year every Labour seat was lost in Hackney, Morrison's own borough.

In South Poplar alone there were 2,800 paid up members of the Labour Party. It was easy to see why the support was there. By breaking Tory laws in defence of their class, Poplar council had made workers better off in comparison with other areas for most of the 1920s.

Unfortunately few councils followed the same course and Poplar was forced to backtrack on a number of reforms. Eventually following the defeat of the general strike in 1926, the Tories passed legislation which banned councillors from office for five years if they were surcharged.

The fact that today Liverpool and Lambeth councillors face the threat first brought into law against Poplar shows the iron link between the struggles of today and those of

the socialist pioneers. But there are differences. Conditions are far more favourable today for 'Poplarism' to flourish across the country because the working class is a far stronger force than it was in the 1920s.

The development of Marxism today makes conditions much more favourable for victory. Marxism was also a strand of opinion in Poplar, Edgar Lansbury for example was Mayor of Poplar while also being on the executive of the British Communist Party. But Marxism in the early years became the Stalinism of the late 20s and 30s.

'Artful dodgers'

There will be many Poplars, Liverpools and Lambeths in the future. Our Labour leaders, while attacking Liverpool, may talk with nostalgia about Poplar, but the reality facing local councils and the real role of Labour leadership was stated by George Lansbury.

The Tories, he said "Do not object to a Labour government if it is a nice pleasant Sunday afternoon government that is content to leave untouched the sacred ark of the covenant of capitalism... Our governing class... allow the workers to retain all the outward signs and symbols of democracy. We elect municipal councils and other authorities, but after election if they are to put socialist principles in operation, then the 'artful dodgers' who rule us scheme and plot to overthrow Labour majorities. The attack on Poplar is a direct result of Poplar's endeavour to do the things that others only talk about."

By Peter Watson

Liverpool parties reject expulsions

THE LIVERPOOL labour movement has reacted with almost universal indignation to the expulsion of its members, as the following indicates: Garston Constituency Labour Party voted by 46 votes to 2 against recognition of expulsions.

Netherley ward (Derek Hatton's ward): unanimous against recognition of expulsions.

Valley ward (Tony Mulhearn's ward): unanimous against recognition of expulsions.

Speke ward against expulsions.

Woolton ward 6 votes to 3 in favour of not recognising expulsions.

Saint Mary's ward (Tony Mulhearn councillor to this ward) unanimous against recognition of expulsions.

Broadgreen Constituency Labour Party against recognition of expulsions with only eight votes against.

Broadgreen ward 9 votes to 5 against recognising expulsions.

Old Swan ward unanimous against recognising expulsions.

Kensington ward against recognising expulsions.

Childwall ward (where Derek Hatton is party member): 13 votes to 5 against recognising expulsions.

Mossley Hill Constituency Labour Party GMC policy against recognising expulsions.

Grassendale (Peter Kilfoyle's ward) in favour of NEC recommendations.

Smithdown ward against expulsions.

Church ward no policy.

Aigburth 23 votes to nil against recognising expulsions.

Picton ward (Ian Lowes' ward) against expulsions, but voted 8 to 7 in favour of accepting reluctantly NEC decision.

West Derby Constituency Labour Party CLP 32 votes to 15 to congratulate all those constituencies refus-

ing to recognise expulsions (West Derby does not have any expellees in its constituency).

Croxteth ward unanimous against recognising expulsions.

Riverside Constituency Labour Party against expulsions on paper but reluctantly accepted NEC decisions.

Arundel ward against recognising expulsions.

Walton Constituency Labour Party, 30 votes to 8 to refuse to recognise expulsions. Councillor Felicity Dowling, also threatened with expulsion has been elected delegate to LP conference by Walton.

Anfield ward against recognising expulsions.

In total five out of the six constituencies in Liverpool have passed resolutions to Labour Party conference forwarded by *Militant* supporters, and four out of the six constituencies stand in outright opposition to recognising expulsions of party members.

Militant speaking tour

DEREK HATTON, Tony Mulhearn and Terry Harrison, as part of the campaign against expulsion from the Labour Party will be speaking at venues around the country, explaining the campaign of Liverpool City Council and the ideas of *Militant*. Speakers from the *Militant* Editorial Board will also be attending these meetings, aimed at increasing the support for *Militant's* ideas in the labour movement.

Terry Harrison

Luton 4 July
Peterborough 8 July
Kent 12 July
(Miners' Gala)
Hastings 15 July
Portsmouth 16 July
Chesterfield 21 July
Exeter 22 July
Plymouth 23 July

Durham 11 July
(Miners' Gala)
Swinton 15 July
Lancastrian Hall, 7.30pm
Bradford 16 July
St George's Hall, 7.30pm

Tony Mulhearn

Woolwich 10 July
Thames Poly, Main Hall,
Calderwood St, 7.30pm
Bridgend 16 July
Neath 17 July

Derek Hatton

Coventry 3 July
Sunderland 9 July

The cheap labour generation

Tories' alternative—low pay or dole

CLEVELAND HAS 23 per cent of the workforce on the dole, according to official figures, one of the highest unemployment rates in Britain.

Over the past decade the decline in manufacturing industry has hit the area hard with ICI, BSC, Shell and now British Shipbuilders, making thousands redundant. Where once young people could walk into apprenticeships there are now simply none available.

On one day in April there was only one job advertised in the county's careers offices, which was chased by thousands of applicants.

Youth unemployment hits 50 per cent in many areas and almost half this total have been on the dole for over

a year. Two-thirds of those on YTS end up back on the dole queue.

Clive Cray aged 21 and married with a two-year old daughter has been on the dole for four years since leaving college. He spoke to *Militant*:

"No life for young"

"It's the Tories' fault, we were told at school to go to college to get more qualifications, to get us better jobs, I have had one job in four years, and that was labouring for a water-jetting firm that took me all round the country at a moment's notice. It was no life for a young lad to lead. I hardly ever saw my wife and kid.

"You look for jobs at the Job Centre but there just aren't any, with industries closing down it doesn't look

like there will be any either. We've got to get Labour in and the Tories out, but Labour must provide jobs and not be like the Tories."

For the lucky few with jobs low pay is the norm. An apprentice mechanic in Middlesbrough told me he earned £1.40 an hour whilst the garage charged labour rates of £13 per hour.

"It's a rip-off, I do the same work as a full-time served mechanic and I pick up £45 per week".

Young people in Cleveland as in the rest of the country need jobs and a future, all eyes are on the Labour Party to provide that.

By Andy Walker
(Redcar LPYS)



Youth training schemes, the nearest the Tories can offer to real wages?

Victorian hours threat

THE TORY government wants to abolish legislation which restricts the hours and times of work for young people.

The Wages Bill will remove all young people from the protection of the Wages Councils, which set basic minimum wages and maximum hours. Young people cannot at present work more than 48 hours a week.

Wages Council rates are already even lower than the general scales for young workers: the 17 year old rates for manual workers are £6.50 a week below the average.

The hardest hit by the legislation would be the 18 to 20 year olds, under most Wages Councils, employers are legally bound to pay them adult rates. This obligation would be removed.

The Department of Employment argue that: "job security and conditions regulations contribute to high unemployment", so

young workers should be prepared to risk their lives in dangerous conditions and then receive a pittance for their troubles.

This is already the case with the YTS schemes. In fact most 16 year olds in the workplace are not even protected by the Wages Councils. They are YTS trainees earning the £27.30 allowance instead of £50-60 under the Wages Councils.

Youth up chimneys

The Tories fail to say that if young workers "priced themselves into jobs", then the bosses would want to get rid of older workers who expect better wages and conditions. That would only lead to higher unemployment.

Is this what the Tories mean by a return to Victorian values? Watch out for their new proposals, the Youth Up Chimneys Scheme!

By Soraya Lawrence

Bosses show contempt for workers

BY MASSIVELY increasing unemployment the Tories have succeeded in creating a pool of ready, cheap labour for employers. As a result many bosses have an increasingly contemptuous attitude towards their workforce and the unemployed.

B Carney, an unemployed 17 year old from Staffordshire, relates her experience.

"I've been for job interviews with the same employer three times. On the first occasion I was told that I actually had the job, but the factory was waiting for benches on which to seat employees and would soon be in touch. I phoned them after a few days and was told I didn't have the job after all.

"Shortly after, the company phoned up and asked me if I wanted to try for a new vacancy. While I was waiting to be interviewed I was told it was all a mistake,

but they would put "next intake" on my application.

"So when I was called in for yet another interview after Easter I really had my hopes pinned on getting a job. After the interview I was told I'd be phoned later. I wasn't contacted and when I inquired I found out there'd been a mistake with the vacancies, but was told we will keep you in mind.

"Some consolation!"

BEVERLEY JONES an 18 year old from Watford, tells of conditions at her workplace until she was eventually made redundant.

"The small firm I worked for, like many others had no union. The office was always so cold that we had to wear coats while working. At one stage the temperature in our workshop dropped to as low as 47°F. Last November when the boiler broke down a calor gas heater was plac-

ed directly under the office thermometer, to boost it to the legal minimum of 60°F, even though the rest of the office was still freezing.

"When the cleaning lady left, the company decided it was 'unnecessary' to replace her. Instead the job was offered as overtime to other employees. Now the extra hours have been cut and the employees have to do the cleaning with no extra pay."

Young Socialists lobby the BBC



Labour Party Young Socialists members lobby the BBC over their refusal to broadcast details of trade union detainees in South Africa.

Grand debate on Wapping

THE LPYS has organised a debate on the Wapping dispute between Sir Eldon Griffiths MP, Parliamentary spokesman for the Police Federation and Dave Nellist, Labour MP for Coventry South East.

This follows a scathing attack on the Labour movement by eight right-wing Tory MP's who signed a parliamentary motion on 12 May calling on Neil Kinnock "To disown those representatives of local Labour Parties and Young Socialists who took part in attacks which resulted in more than 140 Metropolitan policemen being injured".

Full support

Mick Moore, a member of the Labour Party Young Socialists Regional Committee has replied to the attack.

"Every Saturday night since Murdoch sacked 6,000 printworkers, we have marched behind the LPYS banner on the Wapping picket line. The only crime the LPYS is guilty of is giving full support to the sacked printers fighting for their jobs.

"The Tories will never succeed in driving a wedge



LPYS members at Wapping.

between Labour's youth organisation and the mass of the Labour and Trade Union movement."

Sir Eldon Griffiths has refused to debate all the issues behind the Wapping dispute but has agreed to move the following motion: "This House fully supports the role of the Metropolitan Police in the Wapping dispute."

Wapping Print
Dispute Debate
Sir Eldon Griffiths MP
(Police Federation)
v
Dave Nellist MP
Wednesday 9 July
7.30pm, House of
Commons Committee
Room No 14 (St
Stevens Entrance)

LPYS Summer Camp

THE LABOUR Party Young Socialists' Summer Camp 1986 will be a week of excellent discussions on past, present and future workers' struggles, both nationally and internationally.

Jim Mason, SOGAT FOC of *The Sun* will open the camp with an appeal to the

Labour and Trade Union movement to step up support for their heroic struggle.

Bob Edwards, Labour MP for Wolverhampton South East will recount his memories 50 years on as a member of the International Brigade in Spain in a major commemorative rally on

Monday evening entitled, "The Spanish Civil War".

Terry Fields, Labour MP for Liverpool Broadgreen will be outlining the present and future struggle of the Liverpool working class against the Tories.

Union's initiative

LPYS NATIONAL chair John Ellen has written to the Transport and General Workers Union congratulating their initiative in offering union membership to unemployed young people under 21, for ten pence a week.

In a letter to the T&G deputy general secretary, Bill Morris, John Ellen offered the help of the LPYS to distribute material to young unemployed people up and down the country "to try

and channel the anger of youth through the Labour and trade union movement and away from rioting and general despair."

John Ellen asked to meet Bill Morris to discuss his proposal and also LPYS plans to try to involve young trade unionists directly in the YS. A resolution passed at this year's LPYS national conference proposed opening discussions in the Labour Party on representation of union bodies in the LPYS.

Come to LPYS Summer Camp

Summer Camp the greatest political event of the year. Saturday 26 July to Saturday 2 August 1986. At the Bracelands Campsite, near Coleford in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. Only £35 for the whole week! Book now, write to: Andy Bevan, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT. (Tel: 01-703 0833)

How to fight privatisation

MARGARET Thatcher pledged, in her Queen's speech last November that: "My government will pursue vigorously their programme of privatisation".

By Mick Barwood
(Treasurer, BLOC)

What a programme it was revealed to be. It included selling-off of British Gas, bringing private money into the British Airports Authority, selling-off of NHS staff accommodation and encouraging the sale of council houses and council estates to be privately managed.

The government estimated that their privatisation plans will bring in £14.25 billion over the next three years. Money which they hope to use to buy votes, through tax cuts prior to the next general election.

The Tories have claimed that privatisation is all about improving efficiency and giving freedom of choice. But it has benefited only one section of Britain—the owners of capital and the city sharks who live off the proceeds.

The Tory government has faithfully carried through a programme of redistribution of wealth. They have acted vigorously on behalf of the class interests they represent. Before privatisation 55 million people owned 100 per cent of Jaguar. Now 192 shareholders own 79 per cent of the car company. Five Tory Lords own 13,200 shares between them.

No strategy

But the Tories have been given a free hand in implementing these anti-working class policies. There is no nationally planned strategy to defeat privatisation. Any fightback is left to local initiatives, which inevitably causes isolation and often leads to demoralisation. National trade union leaderships are increasingly seeking compromise solutions to end disputes.

COHSE withdrew support for the Addenbrookes strikers fighting against privatisation on the grounds that they were a 'Trotskyite front'.

TGWU official Jack Dromey asked convenors from the Royal Naval Dockyards whether "anyone seriously expected that some form of privatisation wouldn't come in". Dromey later denied this when it was reported to a Rosyth

Dockyard mass shop stewards' meeting by convenor George Aitchison.

These leaders use fiery speeches as a smokescreen to hide the lack of any real strategy to fight for jobs. The only hope they hold out is the return of a Labour government. Nothing must stand in the way of that.

The trade unions are unpopular, we are told, so to fight for your job through industrial action could damage Labour's image.

But the threat of job losses, wage cuts and privatisation is here now. The fightback for working class people cannot be put off until a later date. In any case Labour hasn't made renationalisation of privatised industries one of its major priorities.

Workplace

The strength for any successful fightback is the strength of the union organisation in the workplace. Many workers at the moment are lacking in confidence because of the persistent onslaught of the Tories, and the weak-kneed leadership of many of the trade unions.

The self confidence of working people needs to be built up. Despite the attacks of the Tories the trade union movement remains strong. Paradoxically the Tories' attacks have underlined in workers' minds that union organisation is the only defence. In the absence of a national fightback the role that the local activist assumes is very important.

We publish below a campaign guide for local activists fighting privatisation.

- ★ Aim to achieve 100 per cent union organisation in every workplace. Every non-union member strengthens the employer's hand in any bargaining and potential confrontation.

- ★ Make sure that every workplace however small, has at least one shop steward. Shop stewards are an essential link between workers locally and the rest of the union organisation.

- ★ Ensure that union members are kept informed and that meetings are held at a time when all workers can attend.

- ★ All shifts should be covered by meetings, so that all members have the opportunity of participating in decision-making.

In many of those industries facing privatisation women and black and Asian



Rally against privatisation plans at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Newcastle last year.

Photo: D Pearson



Sylvia Burton, Addenbrooke's striker.

workers are particularly affected.

- ★ Crèche and child-care facilities should be provided. Special attention should be paid to the needs of women with very young children.

- ★ Leaflets should be written in different languages and at meetings interpreters should be provided.

- ★ Don't be involved in co-operating with management in the preparation for tenders for jobs and services. Don't submit workers' tenders for jobs and services. The workers would then become contractors. To win

BLOC
BROAD LEFT ORGANISING COMMITTEE

Fight privatisation

Saturday, 12 July

Digbeth Civic Hall Birmingham

Speakers include: John Macreadie
(CPSA General Secretary)

Only bona-fide trade union delegates accepted. £3 per delegate. Apply to BLOC, PO Box 464, London E5 8PT. Coaches from London: advance booking only. Fare £6 return. Contact: J Grikeitas, 25 Stirling House, Simmonds Roads, London SE18 6UP.

plus major session on trade union support for South African workers

the contract wage reductions and job cuts would have to be made.

- ★ Counter lies in the media about privatisation with your own material. Produce regular newsletters and leaflets for members.

Media

- ★ Use the media to your best advantage—contact the NUJ for any sympathetic journalists who may support you. Local scandals concerning contractors, etc have good news value.

- ★ Get your case across to

other workers by going along to Labour Party meetings, Trades Councils, trade union branches, district committees, etc.

- ★ Also try to involve all those in the community who are affected by privatisation. Tenants' groups, youth clubs, ethnic minority organisations, etc.

- ★ Refuse to co-operate in any way with management consultants who may well have been brought in to review services or carry out feasibility studies for possible privatisation.

- ★ Prepare the members

for industrial action—including all-out strikes to keep out contractors, organise demonstrations, lobbies and pickets of meetings where privatisation is on the agenda.

- ★ Apply pressure on consultants and contractors themselves with lobbies and pickets.

- ★ Joint Shop Stewards' meetings are an absolutely essential facet of any struggle. Do not be deflected by old inter-union rivalry. Always encourage the best shop stewards in these other unions to widen your base of support.

- ★ Contact other areas affected by privatisation—other hospitals, local authority depots, etc.

As the threat of privatisation spreads in the NHS and local authorities, successful and well organised local opposition will increase the pressure on the union leaderships to organise an effective campaign.

A few leaflets and hot air balloons are not enough. The harsh reality of life in Britain is that the Tories and their friends in industry only understand the language of force.

The job of the trade union broad lefts is to channel the anger of activists into a positive force, back into the unions as part of the campaign for a fighting socialist leadership.

Left and Right

Igor Blimey— the mouth of the Thames

THE TORIES are the party of Law and Order, aren't they. However, some of them, particularly those who have been in Parliament, are so bent they couldn't lie straight in bed. Yet Peter Bruinvels, a Tory MP for one of the Leicester constituencies complains:

"There are far too many people on jury service—mainly housewives and people from the lower classes—who have no faith in the law". I think he means the likes of us.

Of course Mr Bruinvels conveniently forgets that so many Tory

parliamentarians—and their shadows in the City and other areas of public life—break the law with impunity when it suits them: Lord Lambton, (drugs), the wholesale sanctions-busting of Rhodesia, and the shady financial dealings occurring daily in the City to name but a few.

A Liberal Stalin

LIBERAL LEADER David Steel recently spoke on the Inner Hebridean Isle of Skye.

Gaelic speakers did him a back-handed favour by translating his name from the English into the native and ancient tongue of the Celt. He was less than delighted to

discover that *Davaigh Stalaighn* is pronounced 'Divey Stalin'.

Bloody profitable

WHILE MOST of British capitalism's exports go down the pan, one business is doing very well—arms sales. Last week's British Army Equipment exhibition allowed 350 companies to sell to countries all over the capitalist world. The British government celebrated the seventieth anniversary of the bloody battle of the Somme by offering new weapons for Iraq's World War One trench-style war with Iran.

Military exports from the UK were worth £3 billion, 17 per cent up in real terms on the previous year. Britain's share of the world arms market went up from seven per cent to nine per cent.

Miners slated

MILITANT recently received a copy of a circular from the Department of Employment to all senior officers of Unemployment Benefit Offices. The circular, signed by Mr Glen Leat, instructs officers "Under no circumstances should advice be given (to redundant mineworkers) on whether or not to claim unemployment benefit... the enquirer should decide for himself to claim."

It goes on: "These enquiries will not be restricted to offices close to mining communities therefore all staff must be made aware of this circular."

Not content with depriving miners of their livelihoods, the Department of Employment is, on government orders, now kicking them when they are down.

A ministry for women's rights?

LABOUR MP Jo Richardson has recently circulated a discussion document, proposing a Ministry for Women's Rights.

By Margaret Creear

Pointing to the inequality and disadvantages still suffered by women, particularly working class women she calls for stronger Equal Opportunities legislation and for a commitment to equal opportunities to be built into government at Cabinet level through a well-resourced Ministry for Women.

The document outlines specific areas of policies the Ministry would seek to implement through work with other governmental departments. Particularly welcome is the commitment to a national minimum wage and improved child benefit which would go a long way to raising working class women out of poverty and making them financially independent. It would have to reflect what is needed—around £120.

Child care

The document also proposes free education and other facilities for 3-4 year olds. The issue of childcare more than any other highlights the problems the Ministry will face. Any socialist will welcome the extension of legislation which protects and improves the conditions of women.



Campaign around socialist policies to free working class women.

Photo: Militant

But it is also a case of ensuring legislation is backed by facilities to enable women to take advantage of it. For example, the right to maternity leave has been seriously undermined by the lack of childcare facilities.

Many women are also forced into part-time work—and less skilled work—when they return after having children.

Childcare raises very sharply the question of financing reforms. The only reference to the Treasury deals with inequalities in taxation. Nowhere is financing

reforms discussed.

Good quality, flexible childcare for all children whose parents want to use it should be a basic right. Otherwise the burden carried by individual women is a major reason for continuing inequality. Good facilities on the scale needed could only be financed by a planned economy under democratic workers' control.

Toothless

The document refers to the experiences of governmental bodies in other coun-

tries. It refers to a: "lack of decision-making powers, lack of resources, lack of teeth." But this is not just the result of prejudices and backward ideas. The reforms necessary to free women from their double exploitation at work and in the home are expensive and will meet with opposition from capitalism.

This is well illustrated by a similar Ministry in Australia where 47 per cent of the labour force are women. According to an EEC report the Australian government has quadrupled

spending on childcare since 1983 and the number of places has doubled twice.

Minister Sue Ryan admitted to us that there was still a crisis in childcare with only 9-10 per cent of pre-school children catered for. **Maximum fees for a place have just been raised in an attempt to find more money for more places.**

Part time work

One of the consequences of this failure to rapidly increase childcare and to find the finances for it beyond the

parents themselves, is the widespread permanent part-time working in the public sector. One of the criteria for switching to part-time working is "combining work with family responsibilities".

This policy produced a split among Australian women. Some regarded it as a welcome 'trend-setting' measure. Others more realistically saw it as reinforcing women's segregation and disadvantage in the workforce. It was felt a shorter working week/day was what was really needed.

Britain faces a worse economic situation than Australia. Unless the Ministry for Women's Rights and its policies are closely linked to the need to transform society it will not radically alter the lives of most working class women.

The whole experience of legislation so far is that it gives the official "stamp of approval". Without organisation, campaigning and enforcement by the labour movement it remains a dead-letter. As long as big business remains in charge of industry it attempts to avoid legal obligations.

The way should be paved now for a Ministry of Women's rights by the labour movement's women's organisation organising campaigns around clear socialist policies to build a movement which will confront big business and ensure the socialist transformation of society to liberate working class women along with the rest of their class.

Another equal pay loophole

LAST MONTH the Employment Appeal Tribunal dismissed an appeal by a woman worker that her employers should implement an award for equal pay for work of equal value.

Julie Hayward works in a Cammell Lairds shipyard canteen. Although her work was held by an Industrial Tribunal to be of equal value to that of her male colleagues, they decided that did not necessarily mean that she should be paid the same basic wage or overtime rates.

This decision provides yet



Fords women workers fight for equality.

Photo: Carlos Guarita (Reflex).

another loophole for employers to use against women workers fighting for equal pay. Employers can show that when a woman's working conditions are considered 'as a whole', her terms and conditions of employment were not 'less favourable' than those of her

male colleagues.

Women workers cannot rely on equal pay legislation, we must organise and fight for even the most basic recognition of our skills and the implementation of the existing Equal Pay Act.

By Anne McKay

Tories forced to pay for caring

AN EEC directive has forced Thatcher's government to back down and pay married women to look after elderly or disabled relatives at home.

Previously this benefit was only paid to men or single women. According to organisations for the elderly and disabled the government saves £5.5 billion because of the large numbers of disabled cared for privately.

In March last year Mrs Drake became the first married woman to be awarded the allowance, to look after her mother who suffers from senile dementia. The appeal tribunal which heard her case decided that if it failed to pay her the benefit, it would be breaching the EEC code which banned such sexual discrimination.

The Department of Health

and Social Security appealed against the decision and in January the case went to the European Court of Justice, which has now upheld the previous judgement.

Saving face

In a last minute attempt to save face the government ordered the allowance to be paid, to up to 70,000 married women, the day before the final decision was announced. The new policy will quadruple the net cost of paying the £23 per week benefit to £55 million.

A campaign will now begin to press the government to back date benefits paid to qualified claimants to December 1984, when the relevant EEC directive should have come into effect in Britain.

But the Tories are determined not to pay out one penny more than the European court forces them to. They will now save £35 million by no longer paying dependants' allowances to people looking after disabled relatives. Nor will the benefits be payable to people claiming supplementary benefit, retirement pensions, sickness or invalidity benefits.

The Tories will still be saving millions of pounds. Michael Meacher remarked that the government had only agreed to pay the allowance as they realised that: "the alternative of residential care would cost a minimum of £170 a week."

By Neelam De Freitas

Fighting Fund

This week £3432

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 Humberside	1036		2300
2 South East	820		2400
3 London West	802		2900
4 London East	901		3550
5 London South East	567		2250
6 Manchester/Lancs	977		4150
7 East Midlands	636		3050
8 Scotland West	812		3850
9 London South West	304		1500
10 Merseyside	1258		7000
11 Southern	532		3100
12 Wales West	556		3350
13 West Midlands	784		4500
14 Yorkshire	981		5600
15 Eastern	513		3450
16 Scotland East	295		3200
17 Northern	384		4550
18 Wales East	145		2150
19 South West	139		2150
Others	7364		5000
Total	19805		70000

AT THE huge anti-apartheid rally in London, over £1,000 was collected by Militant supporters selling 'For a Socialist South Africa' stickers and using collecting tins.

Our sticker dominated the length of the march, and some passers by paid £2 cash for them. One couple from North London collected £90. £170 was raised at the Militant meeting at the end of the march.

This money will help pay for our campaign in support of workers in South Africa, and for workers' sanctions. The stickers are still available and could raise hundreds of pounds in the areas.

Some of the whizz kids in the City of London who gamble on the money markets take home £250,000 a year—£4,800 a week—by avoiding tax. There have been no donations from these city slickers but over £1,360 was donated to the fighting fund at NALGO conference representing low paid local government clerical workers.

If you too are suffering at the hands of the Tories why not make a donation to the fighting fund and then organise a collection at work or among your friends to finance Militant's ideas.

Thanks to Steve Logan an unemployed

Quarter ends: 31 July

supporter in Newcastle who donated £50 and to John Elliot from Coopersale who sent £10.

With only five weeks to go to the end of the quarter, sellers in Sheffield plan to take tins and petitions on a big drive to raise cash. Why not follow suit and get orders in for new stocks of tins and petitions now. Wirral are still raising £15-£20 a week this way.

Bradford and Halifax supporters made £18 selling locally produced posters of Trotsky, and £20 was raised by a supporter giving up smoking. In Southampton £40 was raised in a jumble sale. Bermondsey comrades collected £145 at a public meeting. £57 was made at the Kensington social in Liverpool, and a NUPE steward donated expenses of £4.11.

Thanks also to Ian Humphreys Tuebrook LPYS; J Marquis Liverpool GMBATU £2; Mr Barton Sheffield £4.70; J Leech an OAP from Waterhead 70p; Ivan Rodriguez Acton CLP £1; NGA meeting Sittingbourne £24; Mansfield Woodhouse LP £2.50.

Poland 1956

When workers rose to fight for their rights

THIRTY YEARS ago last month the workers of Poznan, Poland, took up arms against the Stalinist bureaucracy. Ten years ago last month, workers in several industrial towns across Poland moved into action against price rises and for control over their own lives.

This week, PHIL HUTCHINSON looks at the events of 1956, in the context of Poland's post-war history. Next week, he turns his attention to 1976, the prelude to the explosive events of 1980 and 1981.

An appraisal of the experience of 1956 and the other waves of struggle of the Polish workers, starting from the beginning of the seventies and culminating in the Solidarnosc movement of 1980 and 81, can help prepare the workers of Poland and the whole of the Eastern block for the coming battles of the political revolution. These tremendous struggles of the past are an inspiration to the present generation of workers because they reaffirm the best traditions of the Polish working class.

It is nearly five years since Solidarnosc was suppressed under the martial law regime of Jaruselski. Yet the arrest, in May, of Solidarnosc leader Zbigniew Bujak, who had been operating in hiding in the underground since December 1981 is an indication of the fear of the bureaucracy at the continuing activity of the opposition and the spirit of defiance that exists

amongst the working class.

Within the underground thousands of workers continue to pay dues to Solidarnosc. Strikes occur repeatedly, despite all the intimidation and victimisation of the state and the management. Thousands of workers demonstrated in Gdansk against the arrest of Bujak. The movement will not lie down. The Jaruselski regime has been unable to consolidate its counter revolution.

Hundreds of opposition papers are circulated secretly, read by tens of thousands of workers, although they risk being sacked and beaten up by the militia if they are caught with copies. Very significant is the fact that within the opposition over the last few months there has been a conscious attempt by a number of groupings within the underground to develop a clearly socialist opposition, reflecting the attitude and the pressures of the workers.

Parasitic bureaucracy

DURING THE period immediately after the end of the second world war, when the capitalist class of Poland fled with the retreating Nazi armies, most of industry was nationalised by the new regime. Yet this nationalisation was carried through in a bureaucratic way, without the participation of the workers in the control and management of industry or the running of society. Poland 'liberated' by the Red Army, was modelled on the same lines as the USSR, a deformed workers state.

Yet even despite the lack of workers' democracy, the figures for the subsequent development of the economy clearly show the superiority of state ownership and a plan of production. GNP per capita even by 1947 in Poland had recovered to the level of 1938, whereas in Britain it remained 14.3 per cent lower, in Holland 18.5 per cent lower, and France 19.5 per cent lower.

Industrial production in Poland rose 112 per cent between 1951 and 1955. Over the period 1946 to 1982 on the basis of a nationalised economy, it was transformed from a backward nation in which agriculture accounted for 70 per cent of national income, to a modern industrial economy in which agriculture only accounted for 16.5 per cent.

These achievements would have been absolutely impossible on the basis of the old class relations which existed pre-war. For workers the world over, they are a devastating argument against all the fairy stories created by the capitalist class about the superiority of private enterprise.

This development made its mark on the lives and conditions of the



General Jaruselski

population. Production of radios increased from 166,000 in 1950 to 2,175,000 by 1982. Similar figures could be given for TVs, telephones and many other household goods.

In 1945 20 per cent of the population over 7 were illiterate, a hangover from the appalling conditions of national oppression, deprivation and backwardness that existed in capitalist Poland. By 1980 only 10 per cent were illiterate, and in the towns it was down to 2.4 per cent. A new generation had grown up with a higher level of education.

Great advances for the mass of ordinary Poles flowed inevitably from the development of the economy on a planned basis. Yet at the same time the Polish workers, through such movements as 1956 and those of the 70s and 80s, had to fight for, win and defend improvements in living standards against the increasingly greedy, parasitic, and incompetent bureaucracy, who strove to appropriate for their own comfort and luxury as much as possible of the national income.



Queuing for food—shortages and price rises have often been the spark which ignited the uprisings of Polish workers.

The Poznan uprising

THE BACKGROUND to 1956 was the low wages, terrible living conditions, and extremely high cost of living facing the workers.

However, a new generation of workers was growing up. They had not had their spirits crushed by the conditions of the 1930s and the horrors of Nazi occupation. They had initially had high hopes with the establishment of a new regime based on the elimination of class exploitation. They had enthusiastically welcomed the nationalisations, despite the lack of workers' democracy.

Terrible injustices

With the death of Stalin in 1953 and the subsequent hints by Krushchev that changes were coming, in his famous 'secret speech' at the twentieth party congress, these workers began to discuss how to get rid of the detested bureaucracy. They were determined that the economic development should result in an improvement in their own living standards and that changes would result in substantial improvements in their daily lives.

They wanted to end the terrible injustices they were suffering. For example under the tax system, it was later admitted by *Gazeta Poznanska*, an official publication, 6,500,000 zloty (half a million pounds sterling) had been 'unjustly collected' from the workers of one factory alone! This was Zispo, where 5000 were employed. Of course no explanation was given in this publication as to why it had been collected, or why it was only

later discovered.

In June 1956 an international trade fair was held in Poznan. The presence of numerous western journalists was a factor adding to the workers confidence. A delegation of workers from the big Poznan engineering factories went to the government in Warsaw to air their grievances. They felt they had been talking to a brick wall. Frustration spilt over into action.

Discussions took place in the factories, especially the big armaments works where at 7am on 28 June the workers came out on strike.

The most advanced sections of the workers instinctively understood that it was going to be a fight to the finish with the bureaucracy. Amongst these layers there was a gut feeling, flowing from their own experience of the inflexibility of the bureaucracy, that there would be no room for compromise. The revolution which was beginning needed to be extended as quickly as possible if it was not to be crushed.

They sent out agitators to the other Poznan factories, where these inarticulate half starved representatives of the political revolution immediately struck a chord with other workers, all of whom felt the same hatred for the regime. 'By midday', according to a worker who participated, 'the whole of Poznan was on the streets'.

The workers attacked the detested CP headquarters, which symbolised everything that was most rotten about the way society was run, and the prison, from which they released a number of political prisoners. They attempted

to seize the radio station, the railway station, the central bank and the post office. They took over and ransacked the main police station and public security office, where the hated secret police tortured anyone who actively opposed the regime, and into which many workers had disappeared never to be seen again.

Barricades

The panic stricken authorities sent in a contingent of troops. But the workers set up barricades. They obtained arms, which was not difficult considering many of them produced them! The first wave of troops fraternised with the workers

Troops re

THE READINESS of the troops to come over to the side of the workers in struggle is a common feature of the struggle in Eastern Europe. In East Germany in 1953, when a strike of Berlin building workers sparked off a movement of workers in every industrial town, the first soldiers sent to deal with them refused to fire. In Hungary in October 1956, the first wave of Soviet troops sent to crush the revolution came over to the side of the workers.

In the Baltic ports of Northern Poland in 1970 and 71 one of the workers' leaders, Edmund Baluka recalls: "There were scenes of fraternisation. We painted slogan: on the tanks and exchanged cigarettes with the soldiers.... Only by dressing policemen up as soldiers did the authorities manage



Polish agriculture has remained one of the most backward in Europe.



A unit of the hated 'militia' which has brutally put down demonstrations against the regime.

and joined them in the attack on the headquarters of the security police.

The workers of Poznan threw everything they had into this battle. It is one of the most inspiring events in the history of the international working class. The Polish workers have never shied away from a violent confrontation with their enemies.

In 1956 they showed undreamed-of bravery. Ill prepared and ill equipped they took on the state forces. New waves of tanks and troops were brought in. They sprayed the streets where the workers were gathered with machine gun fire. Official figures admit that 53 workers were killed

and 300 wounded in the slaughter. In reality the figures are much higher.

The tragedy for the workers of Poznan, who could not be faulted for their energy, determination and heroism, was that they did not have within their ranks a leadership with clear ideas, perspectives and a programme to spread the revolution to the rest of Poland and internationally. Even at this stage in the development of Stalinism it would have been possible, given the prior existence of a revolutionary organisation within the ranks of the workers for such a struggle to have been victorious.

Totalitarian caste

In full panic at the uprising of the workers, the bureaucracy declared it was the work of imperialist agents and provocateurs. These self satisfied and smug bureaucrats must have been taken totally by surprise. It was their first glimpse of the political revolution.

Even for the western journalists and commentators the movement was frightening. There was no hint from the workers of a desire to return to capitalism. Only a determination to rid society of the totalitarian caste of parasites and murderers who claimed to rule in the name of Marx and Lenin.

Only the teachings of Trotsky, and the ideas added to it by genuine Marxism since his death, could explain these developments. It was the beginning of the political revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy and replace it by genuine organs of workers' democracy. This movement in fact was a pointer to the future of mankind.

Later, however, when the

elemental movement of the workers had been drowned in blood, and the bureaucracy was beginning to recover its lost nerves a little, Ochab, first secretary of the party blurted out the truth:

"In assessing the reason for these incidents it would be an error to concentrate attention on the machinations of provocateurs and agents of imperialism. The social roots of these incidents should be sought for in the first place. The improvement achieved in living conditions during the six year plan was most inadequate. The conviction arose that the party and the government were not doing all in their power to alleviate the situation. From an analysis of the events in Poznan it appears that a considerable part was played by bureaucracy and the soulessness of the authorities both central and local..."

He even admitted that the official figure of 27.6 per cent increase in workers living standards during the six year plan had been a lie and that in reality it was about 13 per cent. This, it must be remembered, was from a base of the slave conditions the Polish workers had suffered during the Nazi occupation which drained the Polish economy for the Nazi war effort, condemning the mass of Poles to live on the verge of starvation, especially during the last years of the war.

Ochab described the uprising as "a grave warning to us" and the bureaucracy henceforth took heed of the necessity to raise workers living standards in order to prevent further unrest.

This warning was heeded in Moscow as well, where the bureaucracy changed its policy towards Poland, Hungary and East

Germany in the aftermath of 1956.

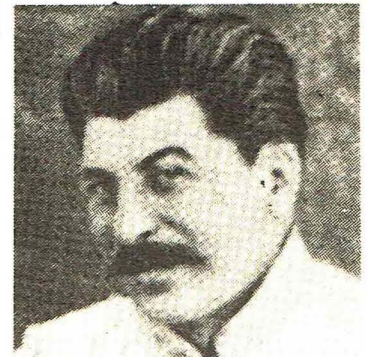
In the period that followed the workers gained substantial improvements in their living standards and conditions. These concessions flowed directly from the fear of the bureaucracy of a repeat of the uprising of 56. Thus the heroic struggle and sacrifice of the Poznan workers was not in vain.

Such is the strength and militancy of the Polish workers that under appalling conditions of repression and intimidation they have, within the last thirty years, forced the bureaucracy three times to replace one head of state by another.

1956 was the opening round in this series of humiliations for the bureaucracy. On 5 August Gomulka, imprisoned since 1951 on charges of 'Titoism', was readmitted to the party.

Gomulka had always kept a certain distance from Moscow. His nationalist outlook made him, at this stage, extremely useful to the bureaucracy, because they could use his prestige as a leader who had always stood up for Polish interests as a way of transferring the discontent of the masses away from revolution into support for nationalism.

The broader layers of the masses, who sympathised with the revolutionary movement of the workers, nevertheless held out a hope that reforms could be achieved through changes within the bureaucracy. As always with the masses in the initial battles of a revolution, they took the line of least resistance. After the crushing of the uprising when revolutionary aspirations had been shattered and



Stalin

the struggles of the workers were ebbing, these illusions could be played on by the bureaucracy.

One of the main criticisms of the the Ochab regime by the workers had been its blatant collaboration with the Kremlin in the systematic pillaging of the country for the purpose of bolstering the Russian economy.

In October Gomulka was made first secretary of the party, replacing Ochab as head of state. There was panic in Moscow. Khrushchev flew to Warsaw, without warning, to discuss the dangers of this move and to stress the need for caution in any moves towards change. His fears were well founded because, although this was no more than a manoeuvre on the part of the bureaucracy to deflect the discontent of the masses, any change could again have sparked off a new movement of the workers.

The Polish events of 1956 had another consequence also. The Hungarian workers who faced similar conditions saw in these events and example to follow. A few months later Budapest erupted.

Strikes against price rises

1956 MARKED THE beginning of a new period of rising living standards for the workers of Poland. For the same reasons, the workers of Hungary and East Germany also won substantial gains over the next decade and a half.

These gains were possible because the nationalised planned economies were playing a relatively progressive role at that time and because the soviet economy, already developed on a nationalised basis, gave massive support to the Polish, Hungarian and East German economies. By the end of the 1970s in Poland, 350 industrial plants had been built or reconstructed using soviet machines and equipment. This was because the soviet bureaucracy understood the necessity of developing these countries and allowing the masses some concessions, in order to avert the threat of a repeat of the events of 1956.

Another new leader

But by the 1970s, that period of social gains was already coming to an end. In 1970 and 71 there was an enormous movement of the workers in the Baltic ports and other big industrial towns against price rises. This was the most significant development in the history of the Polish workers since 1956 and marks a turning point in the struggle between the workers and the bureaucracy.

Over 300 workers died in the repression and thousands were injured. But the power of the workers was enough to force out party leader Gomulka, to be replaced with another bureaucrat, Gierek. So terrified were the bureaucracy of the workers' movement that Gierek had to pretend to be a 'reformer' who was going to listen to the workers needs and grievances.

The Gierek era ushered in a new period of increasing participation of Poland on the world market, which demonstrated the falseness of the idea of Stalin that it is possible to develop socialism within a single country. The bureaucracy were casting around desperately for

a way of overcoming the economic bottlenecks and shortages caused by their own incompetence, mismanagement and strangulation of all initiative.

Particularly they turned to the west for imports of quality scientific and technical goods, crucial in overcoming productivity problems. One by one all the Stalinist countries of the Eastern Block have, over the past thirty years, been forced to participate more and more in world trade.

However, because of this very crisis of mismanagement caused by the bureaucracy, production fell short of targets. The backwardness of Polish agriculture was another factor. Since 1956 it had largely been handed back to the private sector, in an attempt by the bureaucracy to dissipate opposition by appealing to the anti socialist prejudices, as they saw it, of the peasantry. The result was that whereas industrial production grew in the 5 years up to 1976 by 73 per cent, production on the land only grew by 22 per cent.

Thus it was impossible for the bureaucracy to export on the scale they had planned. In the period 1971 to 1975, imports from the advanced capitalist countries increased by 452 per cent whereas exports to them only rose by 167 per cent. Poland entered a spiral of indebtedness. Meat and other foods, according to the calculations of the bureaucrats, were luxuries the Polish workers would have to forego in order that the Polish economy could raise foreign currency to pay for its imports.

The bureaucracy thus planned to make the workers pay with cuts in living standards for the crisis that had been caused by their own bungling. The best way of cutting consumption of these items was to raise the prices astronomically.

Unfortunately for the bureaucrats, their calculations were messed up by the movement of the workers against the price increases.

Next week, Phil Hutchinson looks at the events of 1976.

use to fire

to create an army which would obey orders."

In the summer of 1980 when the Polish bureaucracy considered sending in troops against the workers in Gdansk to crush the strike wave, they shrank back, under the advice of Jaruzelski, then chief of the army, who warned they would lose their whole army to the side of the revolution. Even in September 1981 sections of the police were setting up branches of Solidarnosc.

This is the answer to all those faint hearts who say that the workers cannot fight because they will be crushed by the armed forces. If the revolution is determined enough, and armed with a leadership that understands how to extend the movement to the broadest layers of society it will win over the armed forces.

Australia, Peru, Chile, Brazil

International notes

Peru

DELEGATES AT last month's congress of the Socialist International in Peru were confronted with the harsh realities of the colonial revolution.

Imprisoned *Sendero Luminoso* guerrillas staged uprisings in jail to coincide with the SI congress. This, they thought, would force the government to negotiate their release.

They miscalculated badly. The security forces were sent in, and up to 400 political prisoners were slaughtered, many after they surrendered.

The SI delegates were shocked—but ended up welcoming President Garcia's promise to punish "those found responsible for any wrongdoing".

Now some policemen have been singled out as scapegoats. But the 'democrat' Garcia has endorsed the military and the operation as a whole.

Garcia, like the SI leaders, is not prepared to challenge capitalism. He cannot control the brutal military elite who want a 'final settlement' with Sendero. Neither guerrillaism nor reformism can offer a way forward for the working class in Peru, or internationally. There is no substitute for the struggle for workers' rule to abolish the built-in savagery of the present society.

Chile

ON 16 JUNE Chilean students launched a national strike against the military regime, in preparation for the workers' general strike of 2-3 July.

The police reacted by raiding three universities and arresting 180 students.

But strong-arm methods can no longer intimidate workers and youth. A day later 1,000 students staged an occupation. Lorry owners, who supported Pinochet's coup in 1973, threatened to blockade the roads.

One student expressed the general mood: "It's incredible, but I think the rule of terror is failing. Students are getting used to it. I can't deny that the first time (troops attacked) we were afraid. But this time we weren't. And next time I think we're going to react strongly."

Brazil

IS FORTELEZA (Brazil's fifth-largest city) turning into a Liverpool?

Forteleza has 20 per cent unemployment and debts of \$44 million. Maria Luiza Fontanelle, the Workers' Party (PT) mayor, takes the position that the federal government is responsible for the chaos she has inherited, and demands that they write off the city's debt. She supports municipal workers on strike.

In her election campaign she transformed the PT vote from 0.1 per cent in 1982 to 32.5 per cent—"with practically no support from the PT national leaders", says the *Financial Times*.

The difference with Liverpool is that Maria Luiza is not a conscious Marxist but an individual campaigner. At this stage there is not a single PT representative on the city council.

The gains of her election can only be safeguarded through the struggle to commit the PT to bold socialist policies, and transform every city of Brazil into a Forteleza.

Stop press:

THE AUSTRALIAN dockworkers' union, the Waterside Workers' Federation, has called an indefinite strike against the derisory pay increase they were awarded by a wage authority ruling. This followed four months' negotiation.

Employers are afraid that this strike will open the way to what they call "union blackmail"—i.e., force the government to retreat on its austerity programme.



Sydney skyline—symbol of the "Lucky Country".

Labor government attacks workers

BRITISH WORKERS have long seen Australia as the ideal place to start a new life.

Today, with Hawke's Labor government presiding over the country's most severe crisis since the 1930s, the picture has changed. As Paul Keating, Labor's right-wing Treasurer, warned, Australia is in danger of becoming a "banana republic".

MATT HAMMOND reports from Sydney.

THE HAWKE government came to power in the wake of the 1983 economic boomlet. More than Western Europe, Australia experienced a short upswing, with seven per cent growth in the economy.

On this basis the Labor government could afford a few reforms, such as a national health service and the re-introduction of wage indexation. Also 700,000 new jobs have been created.

However, even in a boom, these reforms could only be achieved through sacrifices by the working class. The centrepiece of Hawke's policy is its "Accord" with the unions, similar to the Social Contract under the Wilson and Callaghan governments in Britain.

This Accord is supposed to have created "consensus" between business, government and the unions. With wages indexed to inflation and prices controlled, the union leaders have promised not to press for wage increases.

Like any incomes policy, the real purpose is to hold real wages down while profits are free to rise. These increased profits, it is naively hoped, will then be invested in industry and create new jobs.

But this whole strategy has proved a dismal failure. In fact, real wages have fallen by four per cent while prices increased by nine per cent!

Profits have increased to a massive 15 per cent rate of return, yet the capitalists have refused to invest this in new production. Instead they have gambled on the stock exchange, used it for company takeovers, or invested it abroad.

The underlying weakness of Australia's economy is its dependence on agricultural and mineral exports ("commodities"). Its weak manufacturing sector cannot compete with its South-East Asian neighbours, especially Japan and South Korea.

But commodity prices are hopelessly vulnerable to swings in the world market. In the recent period, the stagnation of world capitalism has knocked the bottom out of them.

At the same time, the prices of manufactured products from the industrialised countries have continued to rise. For Australia, this has meant a current account deficit of A\$13.2 billion.

Australia has aptly been described as a country with first-world living standards and a third-world economy. To make the comparison complete, it now has a foreign debt of A\$75 million—higher *per capita* than Mexico or Brazil!

With each new twist in the crisis, the government has further wound back its programme of reforms.

The government has renegotiated the Accord with the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) to include a two per cent "discount" (i.e., cut) in the half-yearly wage adjustment due in April 1986.

Hawke's "discord"

This is still under arbitration. But already the government is hoping to soften the ACTU up for another attempt at wage discounting once the April case has been settled.

The ACTU president has had to warn that he may not be able to hold back the rank and file if the government continues down this road.

On 12 May, a meeting of 20 left-wing unions (representing 800,000 workers) threatened to withdraw from the Accord.

The ACTU was forced to call a National Day of Support for the pay claim on 28 May. Wherever action was allowed, it had unanimous support. The more militant the action, the more enthusiastic was the response from the workers.

Stopwork meetings were held by thousands of public sector workers, teachers and transport workers. The Waterside Workers' Federation held a 24-hour strike. There was a rally of 30,000 metal workers in New South Wales alone.

However, the real turning point came with Prime Minister Hawke's address to the nation in early June.

The immediate pressures on Hawke were the balance of



Hawke and the building workers. The militant Building Labourers' Federation has been attacked and deregistered with the active connivance of right-wing trade union bureaucrats.

payments crisis, and Keating's "banana republic" comments. But the capitalists had been insisting for some time on cuts in public spending and real wages. Keating had proposed \$1.4 billion spending cuts. Seven left-wing ministers had publicly rejected this in a letter to Hawke.

In his address, Hawke responded by throwing out any pretence of reform, and committing the government to a programme of austerity. Keating has promised the capitalists that the August budget will be "the toughest yet—for sure", and is now pressing for cuts of \$2 billion!

From a position of reform, the Hawke government has been forced by the logic of the capitalist crisis to outright counter-reform, and head-on collision with the workers.

Increasingly, Labor's Accord with the unions is turning into discord. Already this is reflected in the opposition of ALP and union activists to Hawke's

speech.

In Victoria, the left and right of the ALP unanimously rejected it!

The relevance of these experiences will be clear to British workers. A future Labour government will come to power in Britain under much less favourable conditions than in Australia. Even more sharply than in Australia, the alternatives will be posed of implementing savage austerity measures demanded by the capitalist class—or implementing socialist policies to bring the economy under working-class control and management, and abolishing capitalist crisis forever.

In Britain as in Australia, activists will need to campaign against the ideas of the pro-capitalist right-wing, for working-class policies and a leadership that will fight for the workers' interests in the battles ahead.

Austria, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden

Austrian dream fades

DENIS HEALEY, recoiling from the workers' struggle in Scandinavia, has pointed to Austria as the last remaining example of the stable, prosperous capitalist society which he imagines could be built in Britain.

But Austrian dreams are going the same way as the Scandinavian dream. Waldheim's victory in the presidential election marks the beginning of the breakdown of Austria's 'consensus politics'.

AUSTRIAN POLITICS since the war has been based on the "social partnership"—i.e., class compromise—between the trade union leaders, the bosses and the state. This was made possible by Austria's huge prosperity during the post-war economic boom, which enabled the ruling class to extend concessions to the workers.

But the "social partnership" will be blown apart by the sharp crises which the Austrian economy will face in the coming years.

Austria is still relatively prosperous, with two to three per cent unemployment and low inflation. It was able to ride out the recessions of 1974-75 and 1979-81 because of its special position as an exporting nation linked to the world's third largest economy, West Germany.

It also has considerable trading links with the Stalinist states to the east.

But Austrian big business is dominated by West German and US multinationals. This will expose the economy all the more as West Germany follows the USA into deep recession.

By Steve Morgan

Moreover, the years of reform have been years of massive state spending, which has led to a huge budget deficit. But the capitalist system cannot sustain this indefinitely. Pressures are building up for severe cuts in the public sector and services.

The Social-Democratic Party (SPO) has been in power for 16 years, lately in coalition with the liberals (FPO). But its support has been weakening. Bureaucracy and favouritism are undermining confidence in the SPO—for example, it is difficult to get a council flat unless you are a party member.

Scandals have also emerged involving the running of nationalised industries.

The failure of the SPO to put its house in order, and its failure to offer a clear programme for the future, laid the basis for the defeat of Steyrer, its candidate in the presidential election.

With 46.1 per cent of the vote, the SPO kept the bulk of its working-class support. In some working-class areas,



Austrian workers will rediscover their revolutionary traditions.

Steyrer got 67 per cent of the vote.

But a crucial section of workers abstained, and a large layer of the middle class switched their support to Waldheim. Significantly, the 5.9 per cent which the Green Party got in the first ballot went by and large to Waldheim in the second round.

The scandal surrounding Waldheim's Nazi past was viewed by many Austrians as

unnecessary muck-raking. Hundreds of thousands of Austrians had been forced to do wartime service in the German army. With, reportedly, four ex-Nazis in the SPO-FPO coalition government, this could clearly not be turned into the main election issue.

In essence the vote represented a protest against the right-wing policies of the SPO and their history of scandals and bureaucracy.



Waldheim—Nazi turned UN Secretary General, now President of Austria.

The election result has raised the prospect of a defeat for the SPO in the coming general election of April 1987. As a result, a minor crisis has developed in the right-wing SPO leadership.

'Coalition'?

The leader, Sinowatz, and a few other ministers resigned, and have been replaced by a new layer of younger, even more right-wing 'technocrats'.

Within two days of taking office Vranitsky, the new leader, stated that they would go into opposition if their present policies failed—but added that they might consider a 'Grand Coalition' with the main capitalist party, the OVP (which backed Waldheim), in the event of a hung parliament.

In other words, he has no confidence in winning, and may not want to win. He has reason to be nervous at the prospect of imposing future cuts alone, and would prefer to hide in a 'Grand Coalition'.

On this basis the spectre of an OVP victory hangs over Austria, or—more likely—an OVP-FPO coalition. This would mean sharper attacks on the working class, and accelerate the crisis.

But whatever its character, no future government in Austria will be able to continue the "consensus politics" of the past within the context of a developing world crisis.

New and ferocious class battles will erupt. The Austrian workers will relearn their revolutionary traditions, and struggle to equip their movement with the leadership that it needs.

.... Scandinavian dream shatters

ALL OF Scandinavia has been convulsed in the past year by the biggest strike wave in thirty years.

By Eva Eriksson

In Denmark, the conservative government's latest austerity measures were met with spontaneous strikes and demonstrations, involving over 100,000.

Sweden, Norway and Finland are becoming more and more like Denmark. The prosperity and class peace of Scandinavia are fast turning into their opposite.

Scandinavia's legendary wealth was based on natural resources, cheap energy and small populations. This enabled them to take special advantage of the pull of the world market during the 1950s and 1960s.

An extremely strong trade union movement forced the bosses to make more concessions than anywhere else in Europe. But those 'golden years' are ending.

Norway has lost 36.5 billion kroner through the falling oil price, and has entered its most serious economic crisis in many years. The Danish capitalists find it harder and harder to compete with their big brothers in the Common Market because of the weakness of their industry and their failure to invest in new technology.

Finland, like Sweden, depends on paper and pulp and other heavy industries. Both will be hit hard by the fall in the value of the US dollar, which will cut the price of paper and pulp from their biggest competitors, the USA and Canada. Sweden went through its worst

industrial crisis ever during 1974-82, when production fell by seven per cent. The present recovery has not been enough to compensate for this.

The capitalists and the governments—Labour as well as conservative—have tried to solve the crisis through redistribution of wealth from workers to bosses, through devaluations, wage restraint and cuts in the public sector.

But no problems have been solved. The internal market has been cut further. Exports have increased, but this will change with the onset of world-wide economic slump in the next year or two, and the collapse of the American market.

Strike wave

The result will be mass unemployment in Sweden and Norway, and even worse in Finland and Denmark.

In Denmark, the bourgeois government's attacks on working people were met by a general strike last spring. More big strikes have followed this year.

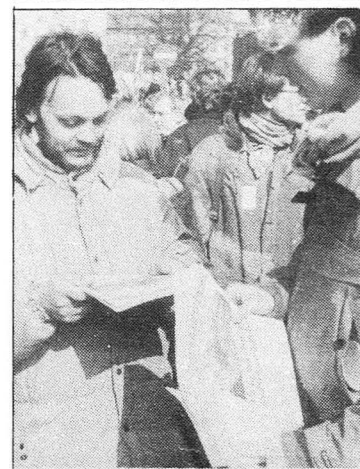
This has led to a deep radicalisation among active workers, and a leftward trend in society. The left parties are now likely to win the elections next year.

In mid-March, the Finnish LO (TUC) called out 250,000 workers on strike. After two days the employers conceded a cut in working hours to 37.5 by 1990, and agreed to negotiate the unions' wage claims.

A seven week strike wave follow-



Denmark: on the picket lines during the strikes of April 1985.



Activists reading *Socialisten*, Danish Marxist journal.

ed among different sections of workers. 42,000 public sector workers crippled the railways, airways, post office and state administration. They won a 20 per cent wage rise over two years.

In Norway, conflict was sparked off by catering workers in the oil industry. The employers locked out 100,000 workers—but after seven days, frightened by the workers' combativity, they retreated. The workers won a 37.5 hour week from next January, plus an 11 per cent wage rise.

But this was not yet the end. 50,000 state and municipal

employees came out on strike against the conservative government's austerity programme. This led to the fall of the government, and brought Labour to power.

But Labour's honeymoon with the workers turned out to be one of the shortest in history. The leaders' promise of more jobs and an expanded public sector was immediately forgotten. Once in power, it became their overriding aim to nurse the capitalist economy back to "health".

They have devalued the currency by 12 per cent, cut public spending and increased taxes massively. The Labour leaders also decided to outlaw strikes in the public sector! This was met by a political protest strike on 10 June.

Turning point

In Sweden there have been strikes by doctors, teachers and students. But the main thrust of the movement will be political criticism of the Social-Democratic government, after the respite they gained as a result of Olof Palme's murder.

Before Palme's murder, trade union leaders with over 100,000 workers behind them opposed the

government's wage restraints and spending cuts. This radicalisation will deepen in the next period.

The last year has been a turning point. Not since the Finnish and Danish general strikes of 1956 have there been such strike waves in the Nordic countries.

This is just the beginning. These strikes have taken place during a boom. The unions will be the main obstacle to ruling class policies in the coming slump, and they will come under savage attack.

But the bosses' provocations will be answered with even greater force. With a movement leading to a general strike, the workers could defeat the ruling class, if the labour leaders provide clear direction.

Not even Labour governments will be able to hold back the workers' movement for any length of time if they persist in their attempts to put the bosses' crisis on the workers' backs. More and more workers will realise that they have no future under capitalism and will have no alternative but to fight.

The need will become clear for a Labour government that will defend the workers' interests and break the bosses' system.

Slave Drivers' Party

Dear Militant,
According to the *Sunday Times* Peter Burton, Watford's SDP candidate at the last election is one of Britain's top 100 paid directors, with an annual salary of £135,000.
The company of which he

is managing director, Case Communications Ltd, has increased profits by 155 per cent.
Yet at the same time his company is still taking on youngsters on the YTS cheap labour scheme paying them a meagre £27 per week. This

year less than 50 per cent of these trainees will receive a permanent job.
This shows that an SDP boss is no better than a Tory boss.
Yours faithfully
Simon Rogers
Watford

Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism.

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

Inspiring programme

Dear Comrades,
I am not one to praise the media but I confess the Channel 4 programme on the General Motors strike was fantastic. The courage and inspiring enthusiasm shown, particularly by the women, is an example to us all in the labour movement.
The organisation of the workers against the giant General Motors who resorted to bringing in the national guard, machine guns and all, was I felt, comparable to the miners strike.
Yours fraternally
Mike King
Southampton

Who's the ignorant one?

Dear Comrades,
It appears the Labour Party is about to launch a free news magazine to be sent to party members' homes. Apparently there is "widespread ignorance among party members about the party's policies."
Ignorance of the party's policies seems to predominate amongst members of the shadow cabinet. In an interview with the *New Statesman*, John Smith, shadow trade and industry spokesman, was asked how an incoming Labour government would deal with the multi-national corporations. His reply?
"We're busy talking about this now and we're scratching about looking for methods of control and influence".
My advice to John Smith—look at the back of your party card.
Yours fraternally
Martin Lee

Vote loser

Dear Comrades,
The letter from Allan Fisher (*Militant* 803) raises the old chestnut that a witch-hunt means more votes for Labour. This is certainly not our experience in Coventry.
In the city council elections in May the two wards in Coventry where we had the highest swing to Labour, were Lower Stoke and Binley and Willenhall, both in the constituency of Marxist MP, Dave Nellist.
The fact is that the leadership of our party are obsessed with the idea that if they appear moderate enough the capitalist press will urge workers to vote Labour. It won't work because no matter how many they expel, it will never be enough for the Tory-owned press.
Yours fraternally
Pete McNally
Secretary, Coventry SE
Labour Party

Coast to coast for miners

Dear Militant,
On 19 July, four trade unions will be starting on a sponsored walk from St Bee's, Cumbria to Robin Hood's Bay, Yorkshire (coast to coast walk), 190 miles to raise money for the many miners still requiring financial support after being victimised.
There are still some 500 miners who have not been given their jobs back.
I would ask each reader to consider sponsoring the walk and/or taking a sponsor form to collect sponsors. I would also ask readers to ask their union branch or Labour Party branch to sponsor the walk.
Phone me any morning or evening with your pledges or requests for sponsor forms: Bishop Auckland 720733.
Yours fraternally
Paul Thompson
Spennymoor and District
Trades Council



Drug addicts in working class areas have no hope of finding £900 a week for a cure.

Drugs cure—for rich only

Dear Comrades,
According to a recent article in the *Observer*, if you are a drug addict you can recover by going to a very smart private clinic for £900 a week for a six week course.
Who better to attend such a clinic, than Marquis of Blandford, heir to Blenheim Palace and a mere £50 million fortune, while awaiting trial on drugs charges.
However, if you are living in a high rise flat, in the deprived inner cities with no pro-

spects of a job and have turned to drugs, your chances of going into a private clinic are nil.
You just have to turn to the NHS clinics which are run down due to cuts and staff shortages. You will be prescribed a heroin substitute, and then seen weekly as an outpatient.
Yours fraternally
T Patel
Swansea (NUPE)

Hard fight for union recognition

Dear Comrades,
I agree with every word of Ruth Campbell's article on the American Labour Struggle (*Militant* 803).
I have also seen the programmes on Channel 4 and in one respect, the working conditions in some places today differ very little.
I work in a (non-union) factory, and whilst conditions are adequate, the word 'union' brings a blank stare and a deadly hush.
Overtime is plentiful but the wages are so poor that most of the men do all hours God sent.
Being a socialist and a union member, I feel that programmes such as these bring home to us how hard the fight was for union recognition.
I look forward to Thursday 3 July on Channel 4, *The Wobblies*, this is a 'must'.
Yours fraternally
Anne Ursell
Sittingbourne
Labour Party



Living rough on Merseyside.

Kicked out by caring Tories

Dear Militant,
When I was 18 I was kicked out of care because of government cut backs. I didn't have a clue how to cope in the outside world.
I slept in derelict houses, park benches and telephone boxes. It was not very nice at all.
This was in a rich area, people looked down on me

and expected me to look up to them. One morning I was sleeping in a telephone box with my head on the floor and my legs up in the air (it was a bit cramped!) when this bloke opened the door and asked "How long are you going to be?". I thought he was going to ask me for the rent!

There are many youth like me. The only advice I can give is—stay off drugs, don't let people bother you, and hang on because you will win in the end. Join *Militant* and help us fight for a decent life.
Yours fraternally
John A Worrall
Peckham

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.

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

○ **New Marxist Study Guide** out now—Introduction to Marxist philosophy. Notes, reading guides, questions and articles on dialectical and historical materialism—40p each. Orders up to £5 add 25 per cent postage, £5-£10 add 10 per cent. Over £10 post free. From World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB.

○ **Inqaba ya Basebenzi** journal of the Marxist Workers Tendency of the African National Congress. Price £1 plus 20p postage. Subscriptions: £4 for 4 issues (surface mail—all countries) £7.90 airmail—all countries. Order from: *Inqaba*, BM Box 1719, London WC1N 3XX.

○ **Wanted Co-op Stamps.** Loose, part, or full books. Proceeds to FF. Send c/o Circulation Dept. 3-13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB.

○ **Brighton and Hove Militant** supporters send socialist greetings to Dudley Edwards on his eightieth birthday.

○ **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.

○ **Come to LPYS Summer Camp** the greatest political event of the year. Saturday 26 July to Saturday 2 August 1986. At the Bracelands Campsite, near Coleford in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. Only £35 for the whole week! Book now, write to: Andy Bevan, National Youth Officer, 150 Walworth Rd, London SE17 1JT. (Tel:01-703 0833).

○ **Irish YS Summercamp.** July 18-25. £40 week (£30 unwaged) £20 weekend. Details: Kevin McLoughlin, 16 Gardiner Place, Dublin.

○ **History of the Russian Revolution** Leon Trotsky. Special offer £5 single copy (£6.25 including postage). Normally £9.50. Limited period only. From World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB.

○ **Alan and Amy Runswick** are pleased to announce the birth on 22 June of Katherine Ann—a sister for Mandy.

○ **Militant poster blanks** (A2 size). Order yours now—cash in advance. £20 per 1,000 (inc. p&p). Box 5, 3/13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB.

Militant Meetings

□ **Sittingbourne** Marxist discussion group. Every second Tuesday at 29 Waterloo Rd, Sittingbourne, Kent. For further details ring Sittingbourne 72632.
□ **Hurst Green** near Oxted. St Augustas Hall. July 10 8pm. Speakers: Terry Fields MP and an NGA speaker.
□ **Wroxhall** Marxist discussion group. 2 Mountfield Rd, Wroxhall, Isle of Wight. Every Sunday. Phone Vic Dale on IOW 854759 for details.

□ **Sunderland** Thursday 10 July. 7.30 pm. At 'The Continental', Sunderland. Speakers: Derek Hatton (deputy leader Liverpool City Council) and Alan Mardghum (secretary Wearmouth Lodge NUM).
□ **Halifax** "Fight back against privatisation". Tuesday 8 July, 7.30pm. AEU club, St James' St (near Halifax bus station). Speaker: Kevin Mullins (COHSE personal capacity).

Past failures

Dear Comrades,
The letter (*Militant* 803) from Allan Fisher of Gravesend LPYS appears to congratulate Kinnock and co. on reaching the figure of 40 per cent in a recent poll. Why then hasn't Kinnock overtaken Thatcher in the popularity of Party leaders poll?
Why hasn't the Labour Party got anywhere near the 56 per cent and upwards that the socialist parties of France, Greece and Spain achieved several years ago? The fact is, of course, that people are cynical about the ability of Labour to improve their standards of living, because of the betrayal and failure of the Labour governments of the 60s and 70s.
Yours fraternally
Kevin Blake
Folkestone

Silentnight determination rocks 'Mr. Wonderful'

STRIKERS AT the Barnoldswick and Sutton factories of Silentnight Bedding—owned by a man Mrs Thatcher once called 'Mr Wonderful' for his entrepreneurship—have been out for over a year. And they intend to win. Linden Stafford reports.

Management worried

IN RECENT weeks, Silentnight management have been showing signs of anxiety.

After months of silence, and total refusal to negotiate with the union, company chief executive Chris Burnett, visited FTAT head office in May to put a proposal to general secretary Ben Rubner.

Management attempted to make this look like an offer to reinstate the sacked strikers. However, all that was proposed was that "the company would give priority in connection with any vacancies that should arise in the future" in the Group as a whole, to those who were dismissed last July—"subject to the strike being called off."

No compensation was offered, no third-party arbitration would be considered, and obviously there would

be no guarantee of jobs, even elsewhere in the Group.

Burnett later told the local press that, because the company had invested £20 million in new plant and equipment during the past five years, they wished "to return to normalisation as quickly as possible."

They were anxious to "remove the blot caused by the picketing, the abuse which some workers and management have had to endure, the repeated attempts to get their customers not to trade with the company, and so on."

Despite having sacked 500 workers last year, they claim they cannot sack 200 scab workers (who have signed a no-strike agreement) in order to reinstate the strikers. But scabs have already been asked how they would feel about working alongside

strikers.

And management's breaking of their self-imposed silence about the dispute suggests that it is hitting them hard, and they are not confident of being able to face another year of industrial action.

The recent frenzied bout of statements to the local media, and a long letter from chairman Tom Clarke to shareholders, would be unnecessary if the dispute was not taking its toll.

Tom Clarke himself, who for the last year has kept his press statements to a handful of words, has suddenly felt the need to write a letter to a local paper, defending himself against strikers' accusations.

Over the last year, strikers have been taking a whole series of actions calculated to hit the company's profits—



from halting raw materials and deliveries, to getting products blacked in the shops.

In addition to constant signs of low production in the factories, and falling profits, Silentnight management's sudden willingness to talk indicates that the strikers are now in a very strong position.

Striking shareholders

SILENTNIGHT strikers' pressure on the Co-operative Wholesale and Retail Societies (CWS and CRS) to introduce national Co-op blacking of Silentnight Group products has been taken to trade union conferences around the country during June.

While trade unionists are still in dispute at Silentnight after more than a year, it is disgraceful that Co-op blacking continues to operate only on a local basis.

Many individual Co-ops have refused to stock Silentnight goods—including beds from firms such as Buoyant which are part of the Group. All Labour Party and trade union members should add their weight to the campaign by boycotting any Co-op shops that sell these products.

Print workers and London FTAT members joined the strikers' lobby of the Silentnight shareholders' annual meeting in London on 17 June. Tom Clarke was re-elected as chairman of the Group. But his unpopularity was demonstrated when only ten shareholders voted for him and the majority abstained.

The meeting was severely embarrassed by the presence of two strikers attending as shareholders. One of them described it: "As I arrived, one of the directors was saying the dispute was over and the company was on its way back. I was able to tell them otherwise—that the dispute is continuing and that there are still 200 workers on strike."

Management have recently felt the need to deny that they deliberately provoked the strike in order to obtain dismissals and smash the union. They are also denying that piece rate workers were ever entitled to across-the-board pay increases—the increases the workers were asked to forgo in February 1985 in return for no redundancies.

A 'striking shareholder' at the meeting asked: "If you didn't intend to pay us across the board at all, why did you bother asking us to forgo our pay increase for three months at the beginning of last year?" No answer was given!

Silentnight have a lot of questions to answer—including why millionaire chairman Tom Clarke, who "couldn't afford" to pay his workers their wage rise, has managed to find some company money to sponsor a team of policemen from North Yorkshire to compete in a yacht race, in a boat 'Silentnight'. Police from the same force are more usually seen harassing pickets outside the factory at Sutton.

The Silentnight Group is clearly in stormy waters, having lost £2 million profits last year, and, as they report, facing 'fierce' competition within the bedding trade. Two managing directors in the Group—from Sealy and Lay-E-Zees—have left for rival firms, Slumberland and Dunlopillow, announcing that they have taken business (and sales reps) with them. Meanwhile, lorry-loads of substandard beds are returned to the Silentnight factories every week!

With Silentnight on the rocks, it is vital that FTAT takes immediate action to escalate the dispute. As FTAT assistant general secretary Colin Christopher recently told FTAT conference, the Silentnight strike has forced the National Bedding Federation to hold back from further attacks on other FTAT members in the bedding industry. The union must repay its debt to the Silentnight strikers by bringing the dispute to a speedy and satisfactory conclusion.

All donations to: FTAT Cravenale No. 92 Branch Strike Fund, c/o Ann King, 10 Rainhall Crescent, Barnoldswick, Colne, Lancashire.

Tom Clarke's money

COMPANY CHAIRMAN Tom Clarke, Mrs Thatcher's 'Mr Wonderful', has exposed his attitudes to workers in an astonishing outburst in the local press.

After a year of almost total silence he has written to the local *Craven Herald* in response to an open letter sent to him by the Silentnight Strike Committee. With typical arrogance he assumes his workers are ignorant enough to be deceived by his distortions.

Although management have decided not to reply to the strikers' letter, Tom Clarke feels he must defend himself and his family against allegations that they are very rich!

According to FTAT general secretary Ben Rubner, Tom Clarke has a personal fortune of £50m to £60m. As Labour MP Dave Nellist told the House of Commons last December, Tom Clarke paid himself and his family £644,771 in dividends in the year 1984-5.

Yet Clarke denies that "a substantial amount of dividend is paid to the Clarke family". Instead, he writes, "it is paid to a company." What he doesn't say is that this 'company' is Famco, the family company set up and owned by Tom Clarke, members of his family and "trustees of a settlement made by Mr T Clarke" in 1982 to "amalgamate their shareholdings."

Famco's shareholding represents 52% of the issued share capital of the Silentnight Group. Over half the

dividend is therefore paid to Famco, whose shareholders are Tom Clarke, his wife Joan, his sons Peter and John, and his daughter Mrs J Burns.

Tom Clarke's story is that Famco apparently squanders the family's dividends in loss-making but charitable enterprises. Famco "invests the money in new start-up companies in the North of England. As anyone interested in the workings of capital will know, this is a risk.

"One in three new start up companies" he writes, "go bust and the money goes down the drain. The remainder take time and more money to prosper, but I believe that hard work and investment create jobs." This is especially ironic, coming from Tom Clarke, who is better known for putting workers out of jobs.

No villas

The multi-millionaire then goes on to catalogue his family's poverty. "We have no villas in the South of France," he complains (omitting to name the countries where he does own property). "We have no yachts on the Mediterranean, no Rolls Royces."

And the final tragedy: "Mrs Clarke doesn't even have a cleaner to assist her with the housework." Many workers will sympathise with their plight!

Tom Clarke's true resentment soon becomes clear. He has learnt—the hard



way—that it is the workers who create the wealth, not the bosses. And when they stop working, he finds he loses money.

If the strikers "had worked as hard at creating wealth instead of its destruction," he pleads, "there might have been a few jobs more". This can fool no one: before the strike, when everyone was sweating hard at their work, Silentnight kept announcing redundancies, and it was over the issue of job losses that the dispute first began.

Again, before the strike, workers were told that pay cuts would save jobs. They worked hard, they took pay cuts, and still the jobs were lost—far from being created.

"Finally," writes Tom Clarke, "my views on the Furniture Trade Union are well known." Perhaps he refers to a previous letter to the same paper, May 1984, shortly after the union, FTAT, had been set up at Silentnight and had led the company's first strike to a successful outcome.

On that occasion Clarke felt the need to uphold the Tory party's determination to smash the unions and deny the "right to strike", and he ended his letter with the words: "the unions' power has to be restrained." That is what he set out to do last year. Unfortunately for him, things went badly wrong, and he now has a dispute on his hands that refuses to go away and is a constant drain on his profits.

Here, then, is one example of a 1980s employer—a self-made millionaire still greedy for profits and determined to keep building his family fortune, demanding that his workers should work even harder to create his wealth, trying to deny trade union rights, and punishing his workers by casting them out of their jobs when they dare to stay out on strike despite all his threats.

But his arrogance and ruthlessness have at last caused him to make mistakes he is now regretting.

Industrial Reports

Europe's largest white collar union conference

THE CONFERENCE of the National and Local Government Officers' Association voted to defend victimised councils and elected members.

This was despite the opposition of the NEC.

There was firm opposition to privatisation and support for public services which clearly raised the need for a Labour government committed to adequately financing staffing in those services. This was reflected by conference voting once more against the NEC in favour of industrial action against the implementation of the Social Security Review.

Calling for a genuine review, conference decided to liaise with civil service unions on a strategy to defeat Fowler and to launch a publicity campaign in defence of public services.

On the run

The Tories are on the run from all unions with regard to the political fund ballots yet the Nalگو NEC argued against the proposal to establish a political fund which failed to secure a majority.

The local government group meeting failed to commit the leadership to insist on the flat rate element of

By Dave Griffiths

the pay claim and this is a blow to all low paid members. There is to be a ballot on a programme of industrial action if the employers do not improve their offer and a vote to lobby negotiations in London on July 10 was passed against the advice of the platform. Nalگو activists will doubtless attend in force.

Another task for activists is to win support for Direct Links with South African trade unionists, as called for by COSATU, but opposed in an unprincipled fashion even by some lefts in the debate. There was overwhelming support for the struggle against apartheid which can easily lead to an understanding for direct links.

More than 300 people attended the Broad Left meeting which was addressed by Paul Astbury, a Liverpool City Councillor. The planned debate did not take place since the LCC could not find a replacement for Margaret Hodge. In reply to

criticism Paul pointed out that Liverpool council had fought, not postured, while other authorities had simply made cuts yet were not subject to criticism.

The meeting highlighted the divisions of the Left which have allowed the right wing to pull away from fighting government cuts. This has left a sense of unreality within the union where councils can face crisis without Nalگو members feeling the consequences.

Divisions

Government measures will affect Nalگو members and while former lefts move rightward only *Militant* supporters remain to hold the line.

1986 conference saw more *Militant* supporters than ever before as delegates. £1,400 was raised for the Fighting Fund.

● *Direct links:* Speaking to the miners whose conference was held at Tenby, the South African NUM President James Motlatsi said: "We think it vital to have connections with the British NUM and other British trade unions. We are fighting the same enemy. Workers are tired of being dominated by a minority, by the capitalists. We are against capitalism—we are fighting for socialism!"



Photo: John Smith (FL)

NALGO members at Manchester demonstrate against privatisation.

WITH THE abolition of West Yorkshire Metropolitan County Council on 31 May, the 'civilians' working for the West Yorks police were left without union representation when the NALGO County Council branch was disbanded. 480 members were affected.

The membership decided to form their own branch. Right wing members had for years complained of low (54%) membership because of the leadership's support for 'political' issues such as GCHQ, the Pit Strike and Wapping etc. The forming of a branch to represent police employees would, they felt, ensure the domination of the right wing.

At the inaugural AGM left wing members of the NALGO Broad Left were nominated for the positions of Branch Secretary and Assistant Branch Secretary. The subsequent elections returned both to office. The victory was sweeter because many members are ex-police officers or related to serving officers.

The first two months of office has seen the new leadership visit every police station in the region campaigning for new members. They have made it clear that they intend to promote their members' interests and made it doubly clear where they stand on 'political' issues.

Police 'civilians' may be

next in line, after GCHQ, for the banning of trade union rights especially since the West Yorks Fingerprint Bureau (where I work) held a successful strike last year which crushed management. However, such plans will be opposed by the 150 new recruits since the arrival of the new leadership.

This is the best possible answer to the pessimists who claim the unions are moving to the Right. Leadership is 90% example!

By Kevin Osbourne
(Assistant branch secretary, West Yorks Police Civilian Branch, personal capacity)



A MARCH of around 200 workers from NEI Nuclear Systems in Gateshead to the Town Hall on Wednesday June 18, was the reply of workers to the recently announced 190 job losses at the plant.

These job losses were announced alongside 600 at NEI Parsons, across the Tyne in Heaton, Newcastle, even though the NEI group made £40.5 million pre-tax profit in 1985.

Save jobs

The struggles of both factories must be linked. A campaign should be launched, involving workers throughout the NEI group, by explaining the issues through speaking tours, leaflets, shop floor and mass meetings. It must ensure every worker understands the situation, that no job is safe, only in this way can these workers hope to begin a fight that will successfully save their jobs.

Pressure must be brought to bear on full time union officials to explain these issues to all the membership in the area to gain their support, and if necessary to step up the action at a later stage.

By John Killen

LRT attacked

LONDON REGIONAL Transport workers have found themselves on the route to Privatisation. Bus workers have been victims of Tory attacks for the last 5 years.

Management, keen to implement Tory strategy by extending the time between job notification and completion (aided by the shortage of parts since the closure of the Aldenham Bus Works), are anxious to help the cowboys snap up the most profitable routes and snare the best subsidies.

The cowboy firms will have problems meeting the regularity of service, high

maintenance and cleaning standards enjoyed in the past.

Private contractors cannot compete with our wages and conditions which were won over years of struggle. Management, however, are clearing the road for their pals by reneging on agreements enshrined in the Red Book.

On two occasions ballots have endorsed industrial action. Management are now forcing us to accept a computerized Job Recording System (JRS) where we have to carry out our own work study as they don't know how to cost the jobs!

There is turmoil in the industry: wages, conditions and jobs are all being cut. Workers at garages in Loughton and Potters Bar were told 'take a £50 pay cut or lose your job'.

It is instructive therefore to see in the London papers that our Chairman, Dr Keith Bright, has been awarded a pay rise of £7,500. Many brothers and sisters remarked bitterly that this added insult to injury when jobs and conditions were being butchered.

By Pat Atkinson
(TGWU Shop Steward, Stamford Hill.)

TU News... TU News..

THE TUC now represents 45.4 per cent of the workforce. This shows a drop of 2.8 per cent to 9,580,000 since last year. The number of unions affiliated to the TUC also dropped to 89, mainly because of mergers. All is not doom and gloom however. The Society of Shuttlemakers reported an increase in membership from 49 to 50.

THE NUMBER of council houses started in the first quarter of this year fell to 6,700—one-seventh of the 1975 rate.

A STUDY carried out by Stirling University shows workplace ballots produce on average a 30 per cent higher turnout than postal ballots.

THE ANNUAL fee of 70p per member paid by individual

unions to the TUC is set to rise. The increases over the next three years are intended to cover the loan needed to pay for the refurbishment of Congress House in London. It will cost almost £5 million.

THE 'inner cabinet' of the TUC, the Finance and General Purposes Committee, recently turned down a request from the NUM for a £500,000 grant to help absorb the cost of the Great Strike, estimated by the NUM to have cost £35 million. The TUC pointed out it has paid £1 million from its miners' hardship fund, but to assist the NUM from any other fund would be 'unlawful'.

THE COST of policing Wapping has hit the £1 million mark. 570,000 police hours had been spent on the dispute with almost 2,000 officers present

on one single occasion. 1,000 pickets have so far been arrested.

THE NUMBER of individual shareholders in British Telecom has dropped a further 95,000 in the year up to 31 May, according to reports before the publication of official figures.

People's capitalism gets an even bigger blow from the greater concentration of corporate-held shares. Fewer pension funds and insurance companies hold shares but the numbers they hold are up by six per cent. Individuals now own only one-third as many shares as companies. Working class shareholding is likely to drop still further when the special deal for shareholders on phone bills ends later this year.

Bakers—stop the witch-hunt!

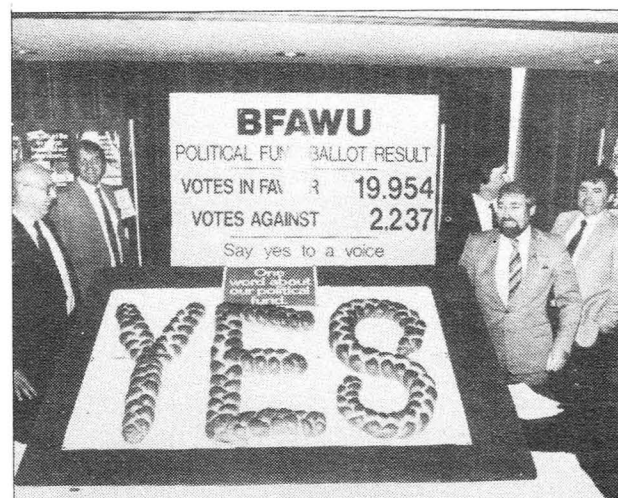


Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (Report)

Joe Marino announces the political fund ballot success.

"STOP THE witch-hunt!" That was the message from Joe Marino, General Secretary of the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union at their Annual Conference held in Blackpool last week (8-11 June) as the delegates reaffirmed the union's opposition to witch-hunts in the Labour Party.

Confidence summed up the mood of conference. A confidence that the union had rebuilt its strength. A confidence that this year would see a major improvement in wages and conditions and a confidence that the employers will ignore at their peril.

In conference elections, *Militant* supporter, Sharon Devaney was elected onto the Executive Council and the success of *Militant* meeting was shown with £107 being raised for the Fighting Fund.

The breadth of the trade union movement, as Terry O'Neill, National President, put it, was shown by the resolution on Child Sex Abuse, which won a standing ovation for its mover.

Notts NUM

And collections for the Notts NUM and Silentnight Strikers showed the way the BFAWU delegates support other workers in struggle.

At the close of conference delegates were asked to go back to their workplaces and campaign amongst their members to get maximum support for this year's wage claim and for the demonstration at Elkes Biscuit Factory, Northwich, Cheshire, on 28 June, where workers have voted unanimously to fight the closure.

By a Militant reporter

Industrial Reports

NGA-A joint campaign?

"THERE IS not a delegate who can honestly say that the Tories' laws have not seriously undermined the ability of the NGA to do that for which it exists, and that is to protect and advance the interests of the NGA members".

So declared Tony Dubbins in his introduction to the Industrial Relations Legislation debate.

Two of the most well-known print bosses, Maxwell and Murdoch have both launched attacks on the NGA. These attacks were

the subject of two emergency resolutions of the NGA conference this week.

Both are attempting with the aid of the Tory laws to defeat the print unions.

176 NGA members of Purnells, Maxwell-owned, have been involved in a 13-week strike. The writs have flown to try and stop any solidarity action. Every individual NGA striker has been served a writ threatening their personal assets.

Maxwell, for years, has been playing off one section against another. This has

resulted in some chapels refusing to black Purnells' work.

Purnells

Maxwell has played with the livelihoods of our members for far too long. It is time his whole empire, including the *Daily Mirror* and his other Fleet Street papers was mobilised, with strike action if necessary, to stop him. Yet it has angered many delegates that he is still in the Labour Party and is using the Tory laws to attack

the trade union movement.

The action in relation to News International is more wellknown. Commitment has nevertheless been given that we will fight to win trade union rights, jobs and adequate compensation. The resolution, passed unanimously, also said "efforts must now be made to extend this dispute to those plants producing educational and Sunday supplements and advertising material for News International".

If this idea is to succeed then we need a joint co-

ordinated campaign to ensure that the action is taken simultaneously—if we are to defeat these attacks against us—then the whole NGA membership needs to be mobilised. Once we are involved in the action, we can then call upon the wider trade union movement for solidarity action.

By Peter Jarvis
(London Regional Delegate,
personal capacity)

Cambridge sell-out?

20 MONTHS ago the NUPE and COHSE leaderships called on domestics to strike at Addenbrookes Hospital, Cambridge, against privatisation.

At first the strike was hailed as both glorious and exemplary, but in February of this year the union bosses declared it unofficial. Last week at the Cohse conference, General Secretary David Williams denounced the Addenbrookes strikers as 'divisive'. He denied his statement of a year ago that the dispute was over privatisation.

It seems the leadership(s) only supported the strike as long as it could be won easily. Moreover, this 'responsibility' or 'new realism' seems designed primarily to protect union funds. Andrew Emerson (Friern branch 596) told conference: "What do funds exist for but to protect members?" as he moved composite No 2 condemning the withdrawal of official support. Another delegate from Airedale branch quoted from a letter:

"I will not be coming back to the picket line... Mum has arthritis, the doctor's been in twice now... I have no money coming in and Mum has only her pension... My heart will always be with you... I kept my scrapbooks and I will never part with them, they are very precious to me".

The fight of the Addenbrookes women mirrored that of the Barking strikers and that it is imperative that trade unionists absorb the lessons of both disputes and subsequent sell-outs.

By Nick Stargardt
(Cambridge Labour Party)

(There will be a more detailed report in a later issue)

Knapp attacks

UNIONS COULD not expect to return to the position they held in law prior to the Thatcher government Jimmy Knapp, General Secretary of the NUR, told his conference earlier this week.

The secret ballot requirements (see editorial, page 4) were a small price to pay for a Labour government which is our greatest priority, he went on. He urged conference to vote against a policy statement demanding Labour 'totally repeal' Tory employment legislation—yet advised against complying with those laws as they exist!

Delegates followed his advice on both counts. Large majorities threw out a proposal to accept Tory cash for ballot-funding but supported a call to reinstate the closed shop agreement with British Rail.

Vitriol

Unfortunately, a resolution calling for opposition to *Militant* and its supporters at every level was passed. It needed a 40 minute plea by the General Secretary and a disputed procedure decision to get the nod.

After the motion was moved 14 delegates spoke against with only 1 for.

Delegates who did not entirely agree with *Militant's* policies argued against the persecution of the paper's supporters and others spoke in favour of Liverpool City Council. Others pointed out the dangers of a generalised witch-hunt arising out of the purge.

Those attending were astonished by the vitriolic language of Bro. Knapp as he singled out Liverpool for special treatment: "In a family you don't rape your own Mother—there are rules". All the old lies and distortions were 'weighed' out: Sam Bond, the redundancy notices, intimidation, etc.

But no matter—the rank and file will strive to reverse this decision at next year's AGM and continue to argue for socialist policies in the movement.

By Bill Esmond
(AGM Delegate
Nottingham No 2)



Wapping: arrests have hit the 1,000 mark. See page 14.

Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

Northern Foods march and rally

A MARCH and rally for jobs in North East Cheshire on Saturday was joined by Bakers' Union members from all over the country in a massive show of strength against asset-stripping biscuit and cake manufacturers Northern Foods, writes our North-western reporter.

The recent decision by Northern Foods to close their profit-making Northwich based Elkes Biscuit factory with the loss of 450 jobs (95 per cent women) has provoked outrage and anxiety.

Northern Foods only took over the 60 year old factory from Adams' Food last December with pledges that the future was safe in their hands, and as the factory has the second-biggest workforce in the town closure will have a devastating effect with the loss of £40,000 a week in wages and £120,000 a year in rates. Excuses by Northern Foods' directors for the closure have ranged from the company not being able to afford a modernisation programme to a pathetic statement that it was the state of the biscuit market which

forced closure.

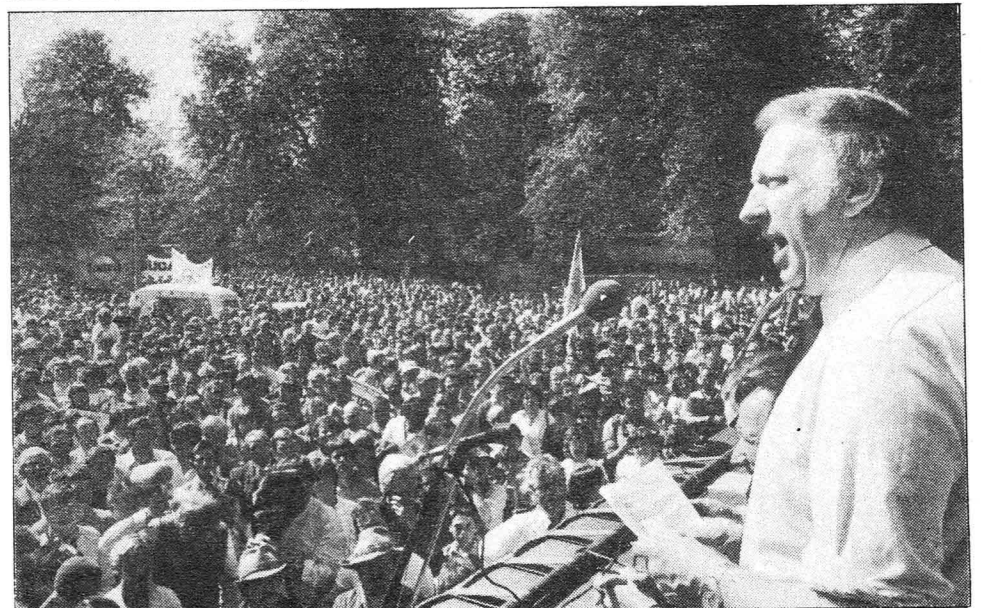
The fact is that Elkes Biscuits made £370,000 profit last year and, as the general secretary of the Bakers' Food and Allied Workers' Union, Joe Marino told the rally "if they didn't know the state of the biscuit industry when they bought the factory then it is them who want the sack".

Joe raised a few eyebrows when he declared that Nicholas Hawsley who is to be the biggest shareholder in the new Sunday 'left wing' paper to be launched later this year is, in fact, a director of Northern Foods.

The local District Council have offered £300,000 towards modernisation of the factory and the European Commission of Food Workers in Brussels have also promised a grant if a viable rescue plan can be drawn up.

The fact that Northern Foods have already refused to sell the factory as a going concern shows that their takeover and quick closure plan was a ruthless move to rid a competitor from the scene.

Scargill stands firm



Arthur Scargill addresses miners at Cardiff.

"WITH THIS government no amount of 'new realism' will shift them from a strategy of destruction... we must act sooner or later". These were the words of NUM President Arthur Scargill to the conference in Tenby this week.

His words were allegedly coolly received by Welsh and Scottish delegates. He went on to lambast the scab UDM asking when the Labour Party was going to act against two Notts MPs and local councillors who openly associated with a Tory-supported 'company outfit'.

"They (the MPs and councillors) are far more guilty of violating the Labour Party constitution than those recently expelled" he said. On South Africa, Arthur called for the

British trade union movement to enforce sanctions if the Tories failed to do so. "We should do the same for them as we did for the fledgling Soviet Union in 1917 and the Spanish Republicans in 1936" he said to loud applause.

The composite on privatisation was successfully moved by *Militant* supporter Alan Mardghum of the Durham Area which included demands for the re-nationalisation of companies with compensation based upon proven need, and the public ownership of the supply and distribution industries to mining: "Not just the hole in the ground".

By Kevin Miles

Militant

Liverpool on trial

AT A recent public meeting in Liverpool, a woman got up and simply said: "Thank you to the Liverpool City councillors" and sat back down.

In Mexico, the Liverpool fans who gained so much publicity had a flag with Liverpool City Council emblazoned on it.

Even a local radio interviewer, on leaving the local Radio City station declared that the city council had done a brilliant job.

The Tories and their judges should reflect carefully on these examples when

they come to judge us in the courts. They are not isolated examples; rather they convey the true feelings of mass support for the councillors.

It was this support which won us massive election victories in 1983 and 1984, and against all expectations, a victory in May of this year.

Kept promises

And we have won this support because we have kept our promises. We have built houses, frozen council house rents, created thousands of jobs, kept rates down and refused to implement Tory cuts. Above all

we have hammered away at the advantages of a fighting socialist council.

These are the reasons why we have such massive support and why we are in court, because in the eyes of the Tories, it is a crime to build houses and create jobs.

We have stood up and taken on the Tories and their rotten system. We have not bent the knee, so the Tories and their lackeys are determined to smash us. But this they will never do. Bankrupt us—maybe. Remove us from office—maybe. But crush our ideas, our fight, our spirit—never.

Where we come from

there are hundreds and thousands prepared to follow, to take our place and to continue what we have begun, and they will.

By Derek Hatton
(Deputy Leader, Liverpool City Council)

Lobby the court on Wednesday—see front page

Poplar 1921... Liverpool 1985—see page 3.

Inside...
Poland 1956
Centre pages

Councillors are denied justice

LEADING LIVERPOOL councillors have slammed a court decision which effectively denies them the right to a proper and adequate defence in their crucial Appeal Court hearing next Wednesday 9 July.

The councillors had asked the court to delay the hearing for a week until 14 July as their barrister was not available until then. Many other barristers had been approached but none were available. The court, however, refused to delay the case for a week and only granted a delay of two days. "This means" say the

councillors, "that in one of the most complex and serious cases this century, the councillors will have the prospect of being defended by a junior barrister or they will have to defend themselves.

Unfair

"The total failure of the court to fix a date enabling the councillors to be properly represented is unfair and means councillors will not be given a proper hearing by the court. In a case where councillors and their families risk bankruptcy and face disqualification, the decision is wholly unreasonable."

Liverpool public rally
Councillors against
the courts!
7.00pm
Philharmonic Hall,
Hope Street

Speakers invited:
John Hamilton
Dennis Skinner
Arthur Scargill
Eric Heffer
Tony Mulhearn
Derek Hatton

John Macreadie

from page 1

In the election for general treasurer it was the BL'84 candidate who narrowly beat both the Broad Left candidate Eddie Spence and the sitting right wing candidate John Raywood. It was generally felt in the union that the reason for her relatively high vote compared to Lewtas was due to the fact that she was the only woman candidate in a predominantly female union. Again the lesson is clear—if there had been one candidate for general treasurer, another massive majority would have been

achieved.

John has already called for left unity. An election for deputy general secretary is now imminent. The new left leadership must be strengthened. The left must unite around the candidate. Finally, as John Macreadie said at the press conference, this election gives the lie to the idea that socialist policies and a fighting programme are an electoral liability. John's candidature inspired the activists who in turn went out enthusiastically to secure this victory.

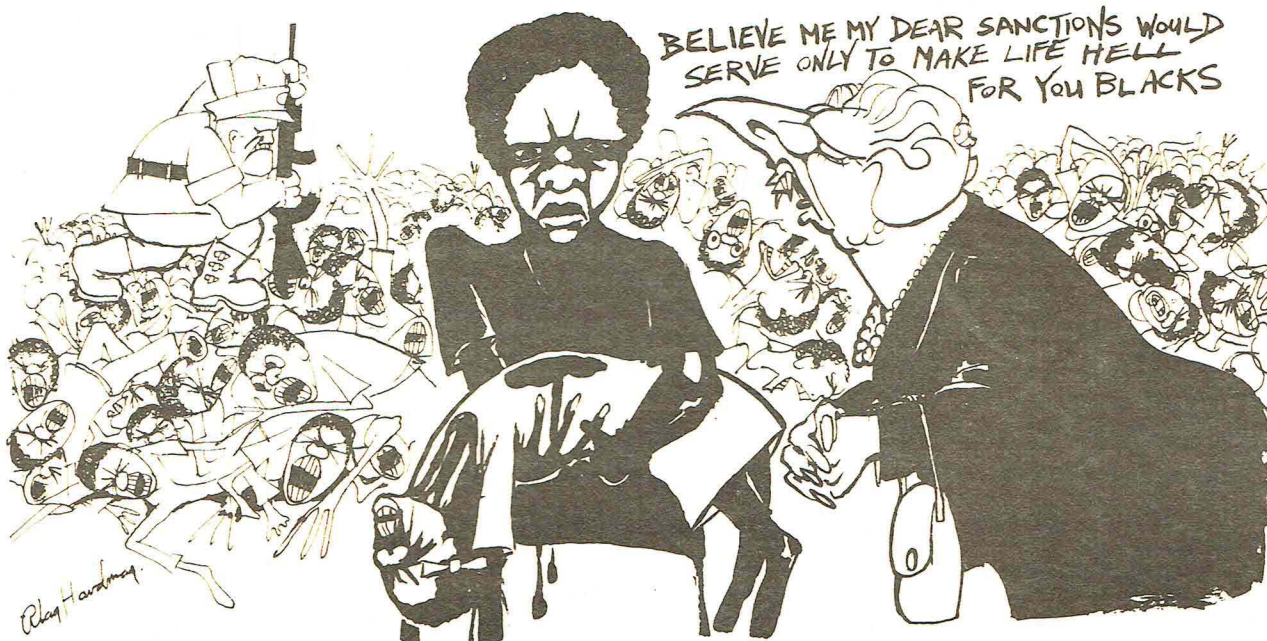
By Bill Boyle

CPSA General Secretary election result:

Macreadie	(Broad Left)	20,424
Ellis	(Right wing)	20,303
Lewtas	(Broad Left '84)	14,740
Thomas	(Non-aligned)	2,797
Majority		121

CPSA General Treasurer election result:

Kirk	(Broad Left '84)	19,904
Raymond	(Right wing)	19,188
Spence	(Broad Left)	19,180
Majority		716



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