

# Militant

The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth 30p

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# For richer,

## Palaces, titles and wealth

Photo: Militant



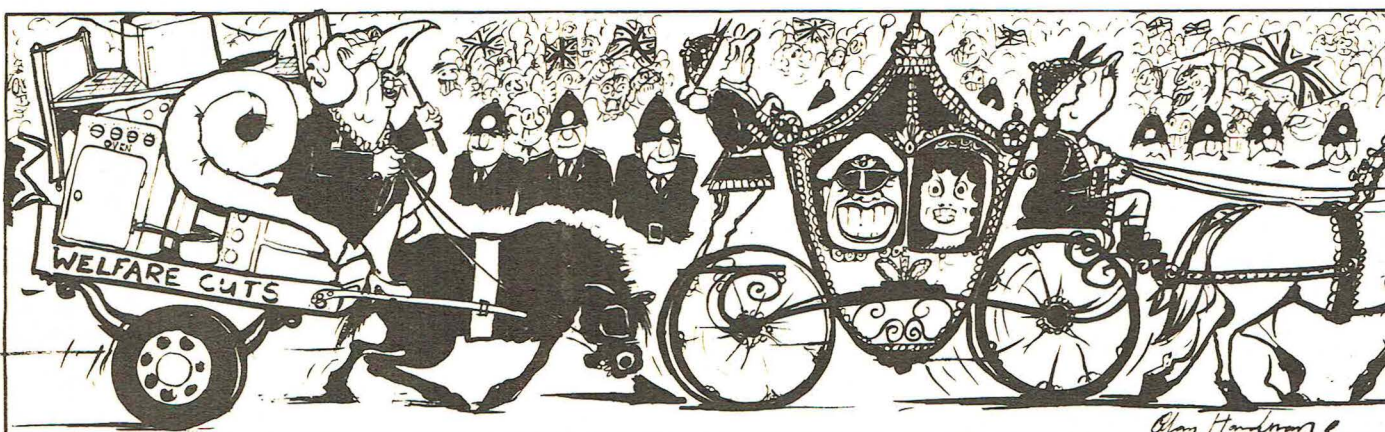
Liverpool councillors fought for a real escape from poverty conditions, knocking down slum tenements and building new houses.



The royal wedding—pure escapism.

## Unemployment and poverty

# for poorer



"IS SHE ON YOUR LIST DAHLING?" "NEY I THOUGHT SHE WAS ON YOURS"

TELEVISION CAMERAS from around the world were at Westminster Abbey on Wednesday to see a member of Britain's richest family get married.

By Roger Shriver

At the same time over the road in Parliament Tory MPs were cutting the social security rights of the country's poorest families.

Single payments for people on supplementary benefits are being cut. These are for cookers, bedding, chairs, tables, carpets, etc, all the things that newly married couples need but cannot afford on social security.

The media will dwell lovingly on every detail of the royal wedding. Randy Andy has knocked Dirty Den off the tabloids' front pages. West Enders has replaced East Enders as the biggest soap opera.

Weddings are more cheerful news than dole queues, benefit cuts, wars and nuclear disasters and provide a form of escapism. But most weddings, even if Thatcher hasn't kicked you below the poverty line, are run on a tight budget of a few hundred pounds, a bottle of champagne and maybe a cheap video of the proceedings.

Even if you're earning "reasonable" wages of say, £150 a week that's when the problems start. How can they afford a mortgage or get one of the few council houses being built? Will they have to live with parents? Will they keep their jobs?

No such worries for Andy and Fergie. The Queen is probably the richest woman in the world—her wealth is a "state secret". Prince Andrew, now the grand new Duke of York gets an extra £30,000 a year just for getting a duchess. The family have no accommodation problems. They own a number of palaces and a bit of land, Cornwall for instance.

The American TV company NBC are paying Princess Di's young brother Viscount Althorp £10,000 for commentating on the wedding. Other young people are told that wages of £50 a week are pricing them out of the market. Fergie's father charges £1,000 for interviews for charity—the Guards Polo Club!

The bosses know that the monarchy is far more popular than politicians like Thatcher so the royal family are consciously used to bolster the British ruling class. The Tories need them now with Westland once more adding to the government's problems. They will need them even more in the future.

The bosses plan to use the monarchy as the last line of defence against any future socialist legislation. Our rulers are very grateful for the Fergie dolls and royal wedding books.

Labour politicians can cut across this reactionary nonsense by campaigning for an end to the parasitic society the monarchy tries to hide, for a real and permanent "escape" from the miseries of Thatcher's capitalist Britain.

## Get Militant on target

THERE IS only one week left for *Militant* to meet its fighting fund target. We appeal to every reader for fivers, tenners and more! Take the message to workmates, friends and neighbours.

Have you organised your 'weekend of action' to give us a record for this quarter? Set up a stall on Saturday with papers, petitions, stickers, rattling tins. Use a loudhailer to let everyone know you're there and looking for (financial) support! Use the 'solidarity price' to ask every buyer for at least £1.

Celebrate your success on Saturday night with a fundraising party. Then get cracking on Sunday with door to door sales and keep up the push for the target.

Good luck and let's see the cash rolling in!.

# Militant

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## The monarchy's role

THE REPORTED disagreements between the Queen and Margaret Thatcher are an indication of the growing splits within the ruling class.

The Queen has been reported as being "dismayed" at the social and economic effects of Thatcher's policies, believing her approach to be "uncaring, confrontational and socially divisive".

The Palace is also reported to have been concerned about the damage done to the country's "social fabric" in the year-long miners' strike, to have "misgivings" over the use of British bases to bomb Libya and to regret the undermining of "consensus" politics.

The most recent indication of Thatcher's short-sightedness has been her determination to oppose sanctions against South Africa, despite all the protests and threats of other Commonwealth leaders.

Sections of the ruling class are clearly concerned about Thatcher's policy and its social consequences. They can see the huge class gulf opened up by the miners' strike, the boiling anger of millions of workers and youth with no job prospects and the likely collapse of the Tory vote in the next general election.

The royal opposition to Thatcher was almost certainly publicised by Tory "grandees" in an attempt to discredit her and replace her before the next election. This wing of the Tory party disagree with the methods used by Thatcher. They can sense the public revulsion at her strident, unbending and uncaring approach to the interests of workers, yet in essence they have no other policy themselves.

Where Thatcher carries out cuts with apparent relish, these others would blanch at the threat of social conflict, but would carry out the same policy only with greater subtlety.

But what is so significant in this latest split is the degree to which it has been brought out into the open. Trotsky explained that the British capitalist class, the oldest and most experienced, always argued out its disagreements behind closed doors in case a third party—the working class—might be listening. If they are now airing their dirty linen in public, it is a reflection of the complete political, economic and social dead-end they are in.

However, the issue also contains a warning for the labour movement. The monarchy may not be the most important political question now, but it is an important reserve weapon of the capitalist class and will be significant in the future.

It is not an accident that all the pomp and ceremony of the royal wedding is rammed down the throats of a bored and uninterested public. Nor is it coincidence that every BBC news broadcast without exception devotes a slot to some "royal" issue or another. These issues are useful diversions, to avoid the need to deal with important questions like poverty and unemployment; but they are also a conscious means of giving the monarchy a high political profile for future use.

The monarchy is more than an historic vestige to draw tourists to royal palaces. It is the legal and constitutional focus of the House of Lords, the armed forces, the police, the civil service and the judiciary. The considerable political power of the state will not stand idly by as an elected majority Labour government carries through socialist policies.

In Australia in 1975 the then Labour government was dismissed by the Governor-General, the Queen's representative, resulting in the coming to power of a Tory government. If the monarchy can be used against a right wing Labour government in Australia, or even a Tory government in Britain, there is no doubt that at a later stage—despite the present pious protestations about the Palace "interfering in politics"—the monarchy will be used against a future Labour government. In the event of a Labour government attempting measures against the vested interests of capitalism, the splits in the ruling class would disappear and there would be a united opposition, including the monarchy and the House of Lords, to such a government. Under those circumstances the labour movement would have no choice but to defend the elected government from the unelected and unrepresentative forces ranged against it. In a democratic socialist society, there will be no place for undemocratic feudal relics like the House of Lords and the monarchy.

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Photo: Jez Coulson (IFL).

## Protest at Broadwater policing

FIVE HUNDRED supporters of the Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign marched through Tottenham on 20 July to protest against the continual harassment of youth on the estate since the riot last October.

360 arrests have been made, from which 160 people have been charged. The campaign has condemned the tactics used by the police, including the isolation and stripping of suspects, and the denial of food and sleep. It also condemns the police for threats to implicate people in the murder of PC Blakelock, threats of long prison sentences or the arrest of members of families of those already detained and the frequent interrogation for up to seven days by a "Mr Nice" and a "Mr Nasty".

The police have maintained a constant presence on the Farm since the riot, but fears are mounting about the police stepping up operations on the estate. Tottenham police station is now used to store weapons for the whole of North London, but its proximity to the Farm obviously worries residents.

The Gifford Inquiry, organised by Harringey Council, put the large part of the blame for the riot on the police. The continued police harassment is fermenting the conditions for more disturbances.

By Kevin Parslow

## Tributes to a murdered socialist

**COLUM McCALLAN, a supporter of Militant Irish Monthly from Belfast who was shot three times in the head by Loyalist assassins died early on the afternoon of 16 July. Two days later, over 1,000 mourners turned up at this funeral at Ligoniel, North Belfast.**

His socialist ideas and his belief in workers' unity made this funeral exceptional, given the present sectarian climate in Northern Ireland. Many of his comrades from both Protestant and Catholic

backgrounds were present.

Messages of sympathy from all parts of Ireland and from supporters in Britain, America, Denmark and South Africa were received at the house. There was even a message of sympathy from the Dee Street Community Centre, in the heart of the predominantly Protestant Newtownards Road area of East Belfast.

Also present were a number of leading figures from the trade union movement including Jim McCusker, general secretary of the Northern Ireland

Public Service Alliance, and Paddy Devlin, recently retired from his full-time post with the Irish Transport and General Workers Union.

### Class action

The words of the song *Rosa Luxemburg*: "Stand up, stand up, and fight, we have a score to settle," sum up the mood of *Militant* supporters, not for revenge in the form of sectarian reprisals, but for a class revenge against the system which spawns the mindless

bigots who murdered a comrade.

His death can be made meaningful only if it inspires socialists everywhere to fight that much harder for the overthrow of capitalism internationally.

**IN THE tribute to Colum McCallan published in last week's paper there was an error made in transcribing the report. This should have read: "Words alone are also an insufficient tribute. Colum would have preferred the tribute of deeds."**

## Another victim of sectarianism

**ONLY A day after the funeral of Colum McCallan, another innocent Catholic was shot dead in North Belfast. 28 year old fireman and part-time taxi driver Martin Duffy was killed as he answered a taxi call.**

A father of three, he was driving his taxi to earn money to take his kids on holiday to Donegal.

Martin Duffy was a member of the FBU, and was opposed to sectarianism. Only days before he was killed he was one of the firemen who rescued a Protestant family whose home near the Catholic Ardoyne had been petrol-bombed.

Close to his home in Manor Street—which has become a sectarian battle ground in recent days—a 12 foot high corrugated iron fence has been erected to divide Protestant and Catholic homes—a symbol of the failure of the British ruling class to end the hellish nightmare for both Protestants and Catholics.

Repression and the enforced physical division of

workers will solve nothing. Nor will the Anglo-Irish Agreement which is now in tatters, although still enough to ensure more sectarian violence—likely in August.

A response from the labour movement is urgently required. But Jim McCusker, president of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, has said that trade unionists could take no position on the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Although he attended the funeral of Colum McCallan, he is offering no solution to stop the killings.

The Derry branch of Martin Duffy's union, the FBU, recently passed a motion demanding that the trade union leaders confront the problems of sectarianism and campaign for a socialist alternative to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. This should be taken up by the entire trade union movement.

A special rank and file conference of the trade union movement could start a campaign against sectarianism and defend working class homes and areas from sectarian attacks.

This could be linked to a

struggle for jobs, decent wages and against the Tory cuts in services. It could prepare the way for a mass Labour Party based on socialist policies.

Likewise in Britain, the coalition between Thatcher and Kinnock on Northern Ireland must be broken now. Labour's continued support only prolongs the life of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Labour should reject this bosses' agreement and put forward a socialist solution

based on working class unity in the North.

There is no other way—either class unity in the industrial and political field will be built in Northern Ireland, or else there will be even worse sectarianism and more young workers, Protestant and Catholic, will suffer the fate of Colum McCallan and Martin Duffy.

By Militant reporters

## Militant RALLY '86

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Royal Albert Hall Tickets £4

Speakers from the national and international labour movement

★ Videos ★ Exhibitions  
★ Stalls ★ Entertainment

Order your ticket now! From *Militant Rally*,  
3/13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB.

## The very moderate dynasty

LABOUR'S NEW star moderate MP Llin Golding was elected in the Newcastle Under Lyme by-election by a narrow 799 vote majority.

Llin Golding and husband John, specialist in witch-hunts, have spared no energy in attacking the left in the party. The election campaign was heralded as a model of moderation without the slightest scent of *Militant* anywhere.

In fact there wasn't much hint of a campaign either. There was a lot of hand-wringing and condemnation of the Tories but no real alternative was put. Labour leaders were said to have been concerned at the low level of canvassing by members of the local party and from the surrounding areas. What has John Golding been doing these past 17 years?

Well, Llin did get praise from one quarter. Norman Tebbit, lately known as the Goebbels of the Tory Party, said on Radio 4: "Llin Golding will be a steady influence in the Parliamentary Labour Party", and will put "backbone" into the witch-hunt, "even in the PLP where there are two Militants".

Norman should be concerned about his own party. The Tory vote was halved. There were no Tory posters on the working class estates and their candidate was splattered with eggs when he attempted to address a crowd of about two hundred in the centre of Newcastle.

The Alliance played some dirty tricks but the increase in its vote should be a serious warning to Labour. So moderate was Llin Golding that the Alliance claimed to be fighting two Tory candidates. On at least one issue—disarmament—the Liberal candidate was more radical than Labour's.

The Labour duo had been dubbed the 'Golding Dynasty'—and perhaps it was the assumption that it could run and run which irked Labour supporters. But more likely it was the contempt shown by calling the election in the traditional holiday period which really put the punters off.

By a Militant Reporter



450 PEOPLE attended a *Militant* Readers' Meeting in Bradford on Thursday 17 July to hear Peter Taaffe from the editorial board of *Militant*, Tony Mulhearn, expelled Liverpool Labour Party member and president of the District Labour Party, Razina Boston from the Labour Party Young Socialists, Raja Gazanfer Chaliq from *The Struggle* and Mohammed, a South African speaker. The success of the meeting was a result of the well organ-

ed campaign of posters and 20,000 leaflets distributed to all sections of the labour movement, trade unions, local communities and young people, including leaflets in Hindi and Urdu.

For many of the 450 who turned up it was their first political meeting and many were interested in finding out more about the *Militant*. A collection for the *Militant* Fighting Fund raised £933.

## Hatton charges don't stick

THE CASE against Derek Hatton over his expenses claims was dropped last week by the Director of Public Prosecutions.

There were no banner headlines in the press announcing 'Hatton is innocent'—only brief factual articles hidden away in the inner pages.

Yet for 18 months the media, goaded by the Tories and Liberals, has mounted a campaign of character assassination against Derek Hatton. It almost seemed as if the police and DPP were

part of this political campaign—regularly arranging 'interviews' with Derek Hatton to keep the issue constantly in the headlines, and always at the most crucial times in an attempt to sabotage Labour's battle for jobs and services in Liverpool.

Derek Hatton said when he heard the news: "I have protested my innocence every step of the way. It is the end of a period of incredible pressure for me and my family".

It was the allegations of "political and literal corrup-

tion", now shown to be baseless, which were made by Roy Hattersley and other Labour leaders as a pretext for the inquiry into Liverpool Labour Party and the subsequent expulsions. Hattersley's allegations were widely repeated by the Liberals in their recent election campaign.

Any sense of decency in Roy Hattersley would lead him to make an immediate and unconditional apology.

The closing of the case also undermines the grounds for Derek Hatton's expulsion from the Labour Party,

and he is now demanding that the "NEC now reconsider the case".

He also condemns the "Liberal Party's dirty tricks department for their campaign of smears and mischief-making". He is writing to the Director of Public Prosecutions demanding that the cost of the police investigation, estimated at £100,000, be charged to the Liberals and others who made the mischievous allegations.

By a Militant reporter



John Golding, arch witch-hunter, now general secretary of the communications' union, NCU.

## Howe letter said cut Liverpool's cash

EVIDENCE THAT the Tories have deliberately starved Liverpool of cash since the riots of 1981 has come to light in an article in the *Liverpool Echo*, normally noted for its denigration of the Labour council.

The paper quoted a confidential letter sent by Sir Geoffrey Howe to Mrs Thatcher just after the riots saying: "We must not expend all our resources in trying to make water flow uphill. We do not want to find ourselves concentrating all the limited cash that may have to be made available into Liverpool, and find nothing left for possibly

more promising areas such as the West Midlands or even the North East".

This vindicates what *Militant* has been saying throughout. Liverpool is regarded as some forgotten 'colonial outpost', and the workers as 'the enemy within'.

The Tories will never give anything to Liverpool, especially as they no longer see any electoral gains to be made. Only a united fight by the working people in the city will secure more cash.

By Dave Cotterill

## Councillors banned from Militant meetings

THE RIGHT wing on Stockport council's Labour Group and District Labour Party (DLP) have banned councillors from speaking on *Militant* platforms or enhancing *Militant* in any way. This followed a special meeting of the DLP executive to interview councillor Bob Boyd after an article in the local press had alleged that he had been critical of the DLP when addressing a *Militant* readers' meeting.

It was accepted that no credence could be given to the press article as it was riddled with factual errors,

(it got the name of one of the speakers wrong), but this obviously didn't satisfy the group leader who asked a "hypothetical" question: "If we passed a resolution instructing councillors not to appear on *Militant* platforms, would you abide by this decision?" By a strange coincidence just such a resolution appeared less than three weeks later and was carried.

The second phase of the attack is reminiscent of the pass laws of South Africa. The right wing tried to stop Bob Boyd visiting Liverpool, if the visit had "any *Militant*

connection whatsoever".

But the most damaging phase of this three-pronged attack is the attempt to suspend Bob Boyd from the Labour Group. Delegates are being asked to believe that this is for his 'attitude' to the whip, and that this has nothing to do with the other attacks!

### Stunt

During a council debate on school closures, Bob Boyd and two other councillors refused to follow a political stunt, dreamed up by the group leader and chief whip. They voted in accor-

dance with the decision taken by the full Labour Group. No action was taken over the other two councillors yet Bob Boyd is to be suspended.

He already has the backing of large sections of the membership and angry members have organised a lobby of the DLP on 31 July when the decision is to be endorsed. The situation was summed up aptly by an elderly worker at Bob Boyd's surgery who said: "They shouldn't listen to the Tories and SDP. Anyway the *Militants* probably do all the work."

It is just this type of witch-hunting which many activists blame for Labour's poor performance in Stockport in the local elections. At a time when most other areas of the north west made excellent gains. Labour in Stockport took a giant step backwards in being relegated to third place on the council. If all the time and energy now diverted into witch-hunting and in-fighting was put into fighting the Tories, the lost seats and more could be won back for Labour.

By Gordon Ross

## Militant meetings

CHERYL VARLEY, facing expulsion from the Labour Party, was warmly received by 80 people at the first ever *Militant* meeting on the Moulscob estate in Brighton. She expressed surprise at the poverty and hardship faced by many workers in the Brighton area and called on the newly elected Labour council to build a Liverpool-style campaign to win more money from the government to build houses and provide jobs.

Local Marxist Labour councillor, Gordon Wingate, pointed to the dreadful problems on the local estate. His main job was building links with council unions and the local housing and tenants' groups to build up such a campaign.

£280 was raised for the fighting fund.

## Sunderland

DESPITE THE initial difficulties caused by Vaux Brewery, who banned the meeting from a local pub, 50 people attended a rally in Sunderland to show support for the expelled Liverpoolians.

Terry Harrison, expelled party member, compared the destruction of jobs on Wear-side to the rundown he had seen at Cammell Laird's since he worked there as a boy labourer in 1954: "The shipyard worker is now an endangered species." He concluded with a call to redouble efforts to return the Labour Party to its pioneering days with genuine socialist policies. The collection raised £100.

By Peter Marsden

## Neath

A MAINLY young audience of over 100 in Neath listened to Tony Mulhearn's powerful defence of Liverpool City Council's record. "Liverpool's 47 councillors", he said, "were being treated worse than criminals for defying the dictates of 'Rambo's granny'. To add insult to injury, the 'thanks' from Labour leaders had been expulsion."

The meeting raised £160 for the Fighting Fund, including £14 from striking workers at Tudor Garden Products. (See *Militant* No 807).

By Andy Sweet

## Bridgend

NEARLY 100 attended a *Militant* meeting in Bridgend to hear Richard Venton, despite a press statement by officers of the local Labour Party and the Parliamentary candidate calling on members and supporters to boycott it.

A speaker from the floor summed up the mood of the many people attending their first *Militant* meeting when he said: "I came to this meeting expecting you to have horns and tails, but you have proved to be decent people and I am very glad I came." This mood was reflected in the £157 collected for the Fighting Fund.

## Canning Town

TERRY FIELDS MP for Liverpool Broadgreen told a meeting in Canning Town, East London, that the Labour Party was not brought into being to manage capitalism but to transform society. He condemned attacks on the Labour Party Young Socialists.

Sacked *Times* SOGAT '82 member and local Labour councillor John Lang graphically described the fight against Murdoch's "union busting operation" and the attacks of the police at Wapping: "People are being arrested out of the crowd just for being there. Ordinary people are finding out a lot about what is going on in this country." The meeting raised over £50.

By Pat Craven

**THE WITCH-hunt against Marxism in the Labour Party is continuing at local level. Some right wingers have developed a new approach—trying to prevent membership applications from anyone who is young and enthusiastic.**

# Party purge goes on

**CHRIS McCANN, a 17 year old YTS trainee shortly to be made unemployed, has been fighting throughout this year to be allowed into the Labour Party. Rubery Ward (part of Bromsgrove constituency) rejected his application in March in his absence, when many of those voting against Chris had never met him.**

He received a letter explaining that his application "was refused on the grounds that your ideals were not compatible with those of the Labour Party."

Since then the campaign for his right to join the Party has swung into action. As a result of this pressure a further hearing of Chris' application was held, again in his absence, and it was turned down, but only after a delayed start, while right wingers phoned round to get their supporters out. But at least it was decided to call Chris before the next ward meeting.

In the meantime, however, a special 'star chamber' was set up with no constitutional basis. The ward secretary and chairman, the constituency secretary/agent, the former constituency chair and a regional LP official all grill-

ed Chris and other young comrades who wanted to join the Party, for two hours, asking them about the activities of well known local *Militant* supporters, even to the point of taking descriptions.

At the subsequent ward meeting, with Chris present his application was defeated by 12 votes to 11. However, he was allowed to appeal to the GMC, on 9 July, where many of his supporters gathered to lobby delegates. But the meeting started by endorsing an Executive resolution that demonstrations outside meetings damage the Party, and could be grounds for disciplinary action.

Left wingers in the meeting could not believe their ears when the chairman therefore ruled that the demonstration outside would prejudice the appeal and so it would not be held until the next meeting in September. This after the totally prejudiced and high handed behaviour of the right throughout this battle.

The right seem intent on placing a total exclusion zone around their own meetings, so that their dirty deeds can be done out of sight of ordinary workers.



Party activists lobby NEC against expulsions.

## Left in the dock

**IN GRIMSBY, constituency of anti-*Militant* MP Austir Mitchell, a whole household has been subjected to the witch-hunting attentions of the right wing over the last five months.**

Richard Wilkinson, a YS member for three and a half years, unfortunately allowed his Party membership to lapse last year, and so had to re-apply to join. He was hauled before the constituency General Management Committee where he was asked such questions as "why do you want to join the Labour Party?" and "why didn't you join the Labour Party as soon as you left school?" But the question to beat all was "do you think it's a good idea to sell a paper outside a factory on council election day with 'Vote Labour' as the headline?" He had been spotted selling *Socialist Youth* on the day. Finally it was agreed he should be allowed in.

### Red-handed

But at his very next ward meeting the leader of the Labour Group of councillors moved that Richard's flat mate, Bill Brewster, should be interviewed by the constituency Executive. Apparently the Group leader had caught Bill 'red-handed', selling *Militant* in the local precinct. The GMC has since ratified the decision for him to be interrogated.

But then the third lad sharing the house felt the wrath of the Grimsby right wing. Kevin Craggs has never sold *Militant* in his life, his only 'crime' is his address and wanting to join the Labour Party. The ward had decided that all new members should be vetted, to see if they supported *Militant*. Kevin duly turned up only to be refused entry to the meeting because he had not been notified in writing.

Instead of building on their recent success in gaining 6 new Labour councillors and taking control of the council, the right treat with contempt low paid young workers like Kevin Craggs who want to join in the fight against the Tories.

# Socialist policies under threat



Labour Party conference must challenge the new watered-down policies.

Left: Eric Heffer walks out in protest at 1985 conference.

**AT LABOUR'S Communications' Committee, Gordon Collinge of the NGA moved that *Labour Weekly* be given six months to break even. Yet if it was then closed down it would be his union members and other print workers who could suffer. Staff rep and NUJ Mother of Chapel, Joy Copley, complained that this was no way for Labour to treat its own staff, putting an axe over their heads. The resolution was lost.**

**BEHIND THE attack on *Militant* supporters is the Labour leadership's attempt to shift to the right party policy, and therefore the manifesto of an incoming government.**

But at the 14 July Home Policy Committee and special NEC they were more brazen than ever in their disregard for Labour's traditional stance. To Tony Benn what was agreed was "worse than Gaitskell", as the retention of legal interference in unions, and the watering down of the commitment to full renationalisation of privatised assets, were endorsed.

The left were defeated in several fundamental amendments to the Social Ownership document, with Neil Kinnock voting against each one. The call for renationalisation of British Aerospace was voted down, in favour of a Labour government "taking a strategic stake". Resolutions for the nationalisation of banks and insurance companies and of Rolls Royce, if it is sold off, were also lost.

Even Alternative Economic Strategy policies which were included in the last election manifesto, to encourage workers' co-operatives and to establish a public building corporation were defeated, with several erstwhile AES supporters voting with the majority.

A further motion recommending Labour to its historic aspirations for a socialist society based on production for need and not profit, were defeated by 12 votes to 11. Rumours that at its next meeting the NEC intends to expel itself for being in contravention of Clause 4 may

be unfounded! Tensions that will inevitably break out if Labour is returned to office surfaced in the discussion on industrial relations. General Secretary Larry Whitty and Tom Sawyer of NUPE were unhappy about "statutory" principles to be included in union rule books, compelling the holding of pre-strike ballots for example. Sawyer successfully moved deletion of "statutory", against the wishes of Neil Kinnock. A few minutes later Kinnock angrily moved it be restored, seven words further back in the document. With Blunkett and Meacher changing their votes, this was accepted.

### No gratitude

Sawyer may have realised that there is no gratitude from the right for him backing the witch-hunt up to the hilt. He was moved to warn Kinnock that over these proposals "if you want trouble this side of an election you will get trouble, there are 3 million votes already stacked against you at the TUC".

Other amendments from Eric Heffer restating basic union rights were also lost. (See below).

Party members should be aware of what is being agreed in their party's name, and should protest about these attacks on Labour's socialist values.

# NEC accepts legal restraint on unions

**ERIC HEFFER'S amendments that Labour's NEC including most of the union representatives opposed:**

Some of the essential collective rights for trade unionists are as follows:

- a) The right to organise.
- b) The right to bargain collectively.
- c) The right to strike and

take employment action short of a strike.

d) The right to picket in a dispute. This right should embrace both the right peacefully to persuade and the right peacefully to demonstrate.

e) The right to seek and to give solidarity in disputes, including strike action and the "blacking" of work.

f) The right of unions to determine their own decision-making processes and to have their affairs conducted in accordance with their own rule books, providing always that both unions and members have access to the courts for the protection of property, funds and entitlements.

Not one of these rights is

today adequately protected by British law.

**Unions are entitled to shape their own decision-making processes. Article 3 of the ILO Convention, No 87, Freedom of Association, reads:**

**"Workers' and employers' organisations shall have the right to draw**

**up their constitutions and rules, to elect their representatives in full freedom, to organise their administrations and activities and to formulate their programmes.**

**"The public authorities shall refrain from any interference which would restrict this right or impede the lawful exercise thereof."**

# Right wing aim to cripple LPYS

**AFTER SEVEN years of attacks on young people by the Thatcher government the five million first time voters could be decisive in the next general election.**

Yet the right wing dominated youth sub-committee, chaired by Tom Sawyer, has put forward proposals aimed at crippling the Party's youth section, the Labour Party Young Socialists. The most serious plan is to lower the age limit to 21 which would debar many of the most active members.

Instead of supporting the campaigns inspired by the Young Socialists on youth issues the right wing want to undermine the effectiveness and influence of the youth section.

The LPYS welcomes any debate which is constructive. It also supports some of the proposals, such as the election of youth officers in every constituency, holding 'Labour listens to youth' events in the regions, and the convening of a 'Youth Trade Unionists for Labour' conference.

But the main aim of the right is to drown the Young Socialists' Marxist policies with bureaucratic controls. They are attempting to create a tame youth section on the model of the Swedish Social Democrats' where, ironically, the age limit is 35. John Evans MP justifies the lowering of the limit by saying that the older members dominate the younger ones. But it is clear that he and the rest of the right want to see a younger youth section dominated by the much older party members on the youth sub-committee.

Evans uses some astounding arguments. "I have two sons of 19 and 23", he says, "the 19 year-old

**By John Ellen**  
(LPYS National Chairman)

is a boy and the 23 year-old is a man, therefore they shouldn't both be in the youth section."

The cutting of the age limit will halve the membership at a time when all sections of the Party need to recruit youth. Many trade unionists, who often become active in their twenties, would be disenfranchised.



Frances Curran, outgoing NEC rep.

The latest proposals to lower the limit have historical parallels. In 1936 it was a prelude to disbanding the Labour League of Youth.

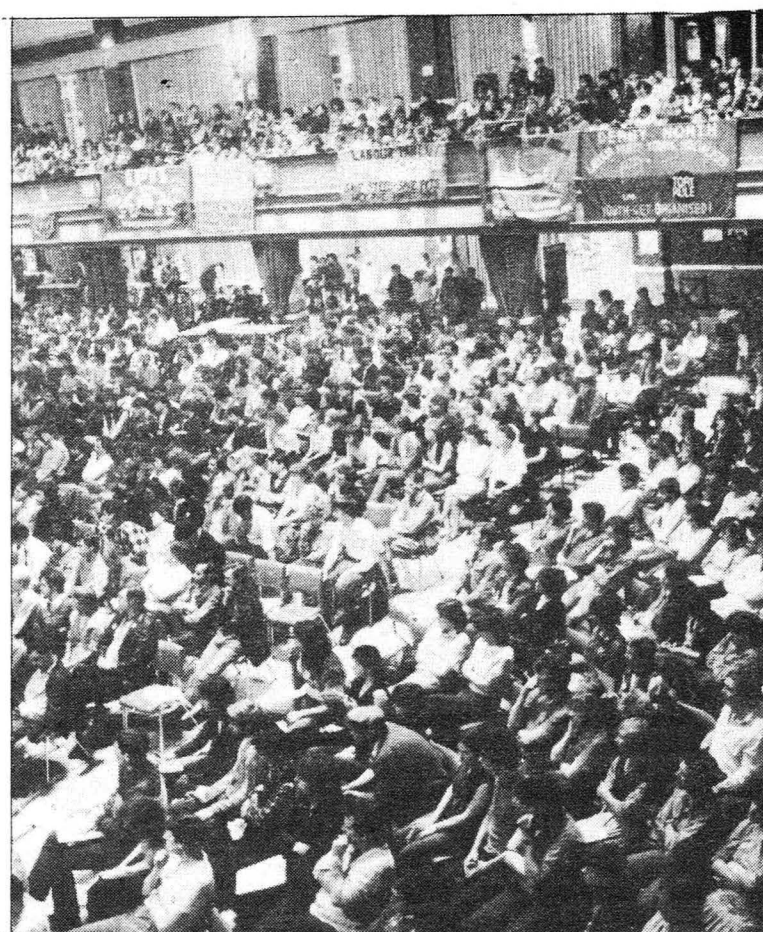
A proposal to elect the LPYS representative on the NEC by a 'wider franchise' would remove the right of the national conference to elect its own representative. Under the guise of 'broader consultation'

it would further dilute the autonomy of the LPYS. The student organisation, NOLS, would have equal voting rights for the NEC position, yet only 1,000 of its 6,000 members are also members of the Labour Party. What accountability exists if these non-party members have a say in choosing a leading representative of the youth section. It is a ploy by the right to remove the voice of Marxism from the Party's leading body.

Tied to this is the proposal to establish 'an annual youth conference made up of delegates from the LPYS the Constituency Labour Parties, the women's organisation the student movement and the trade unions' which would become a 'rally with workshops'. If this is based on an under-21 age limit it will be a very small unrepresentative conference.

Why doesn't the Party come up with a positive attempt to broaden the representation of the LPYS conference? Why doesn't it give the constituency parties the resources to set up new youth branches? Or urge the trade union youth organisations to send democratically elected delegates?

The other major proposal is to "establish youth campaign committees at regional and national level which are representative of the whole of Labour youth." Again the LPYS welcomes any moves towards co-operation with the rest of the movement to win youth to Labour. But regional structures already exist—they are the long-established regional youth committees which are democratically elected bodies and have a clear method of representing the



LPYS conference. Proposals put by the right wing would mean a much smaller, unrepresentative conference.

LPYS membership.

As has already taken place in Scotland, the right, and their shadows on the soft left, would use these committees to try and stifle the elected regional committees.

## No consultation

These proposals, which will be discussed by the NEC on 30 July, have been made without any consultation with the LPYS. In fact they had already been circulated, prior to the youth subcommittee and in exactly the same wording and typeface, as a model resolution from the Kinnockite Labour Coordinating Committee for Labour Party conference.

It is no coincidence that these attacks are being made at a time when the Party leadership is shifting away from socialist policies and a previous commitment to de-

cent education, real training and above all a guaranteed job for youth. The Young Socialists will fight tooth and nail to ensure that these demands are carried out by the next Labour government.

The anger at these proposals will not be limited to the youth in the Party but to young people in general looking for a radical alternative to the Tories.

Furious opposition will be stirred up across a broad section of the Party who recognise the LPYS as one of the most hard working and energetic sections.

**Resolutions of protest should be rushed to: Tom Sawyer, (Chair, Youth Sub-committee), Civic House, 20 Grand Depot Road, Woolwich, London SE18 6SF.**

**Copies to: Larry Whitty, The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT.**

# Campaign for workers' sanctions hots up

**LABOUR PARTY Young Socialist branches up and down the country are campaigning against British business involvement in South Africa, and calling on the trade unions to enforce workers' sanctions.**

The TUC's special delegate conference on 15 July to discuss action against South Africa was lobbied by a delegation from the LPYS. They called on the trade union leadership to mobilise the movement in Britain to stop the trade in South African goods.

LPYS members in MANCHESTER picketed a department store owned by the Lonrho Corporation, which has interests in South Africa. This company paid some black South African workers a minimum of £5 a week, less than half the poverty wage of £16 a week recommended by the EEC.

The picket brought frenzied appeals from the management, who looked on in dismay as shoppers were turned away. They pleaded that the company had no links with Lonrho and insisted that the LPYS members phone the *Financial Times* to check, and provided the phone, so desperate were they to stop the picket.

Manchester Young Socialists also plan to campaign against Thorn-EMI, with interests in 29 companies in South Africa, some paying a minimum of £8 per week to black workers.

Thorn EMI make millions from the exploitation of young people in Britain. Its tentacles reach to EMI records, HMV record shops, Golden Egg restaurants, DER rentals, Radio Rentals, and Rumbelows, amongst others. Young Socialist branches should demand action from all those pop stars who use the EMI label. Shop stewards in these shops and companies should be approached to support the campaign. Rock apartheid by not rocking with EMI.

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**POOLE** Labour Party members and LPYS members are planning a public meeting calling for workers' sanctions for South Africa, as part of a campaign launched by Poole Labour parties' trade union liaison committee. Picketing and leafletting of the Poole based headquarters of Barclay International is also planned.

Names of trade unionists arrested have been distributed to over 80 trade union branches, together with a letter asking them to adopt a South African trade

unionist and their family, or a trade union branch, suggesting that they write to the trade union organisation, COSATU, for names and addresses of those still in prison.

Poole and Swanage branch of the building workers' union, UCATT, have already adopted the Paper and Wood Workers' Union, and Hamworthy branch of Poole Labour Party has adopted a trade unionist and family, donated £17, and is organising a Rock against Apartheid concert to raise money.

Poole Labour Party has also backed the programme for direct links with South African workers. The soft left attempted to delete reference to sending 'material aid', saying it would be used to arm the workers. But the LPYS delegate, Dale Bardsley, said that refusing arms to black workers was like sending them into the ring with their hands tied behind their backs. "It was like asking them to commit suicide", he said. After a heated debate delegates were won over to support the full resolution. *Reports by Louise James (Hackney South LPYS), Andy Divall (LPYS National Committee, Manchester), Julie Harris (Poole Labour Party and Regional Executive member, personal capacity)*



John Ellen, LPYS chair meets James Motlatsi SA NUM president on LPYS delegation to the TUC.

## Target seats pinpointed

**THE LABOUR Party Young Socialists have launched a campaign within the party on the question of the 'target seats' which Labour has to win to form a majority government.**

Every LPYS branch in 'target' constituencies has been asked to contact the parliamentary candidates and make preparations with them and the election agents

to start the campaign in the run-up to the general election.

John Ellen, national chair of the LPYS said: "The mood amongst working class youth is overwhelmingly anti-Tory. We must prepare now for what could be an early general election next year to drive the Tories out of office."

**For a socialist S Africa**

New poster 10p each from LPYS, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17

# The abolition of slavery

## British workers "suffered, starved and even died"

**THE ARGUMENT** over sanctions against South Africa raises important questions for the labour movement. Thatcher weeps crocodile tears about the number of children in South Africa who might die if sanctions were imposed and about job losses in this country.

Yet, the British labour movement has a proud record in the fight against oppression overseas. **TONY AITMAN**, one of the expelled Labour Party members in Liverpool, looks at the parallels from the campaign against slavery in the southern United States.

THE BRITISH ruling class were as bound up then with the future of the southern states as they are now with the regime in South Africa. The cotton companies of Lancashire employed thousands of slaves in their southern states subsidiaries which had a monopoly in cotton production. The raw cotton was sent to the Lancashire mills for weaving and spinning.

Finished products were then sent back to America in ships which also took back other industrial goods duty free. England's competition became more and more oppressive to northern manufacturing industry which employed 'free' labour and favoured protective tariff barriers.

The vested interests of British capitalism, its need for free trade in cotton with the south and a free market for manufactured goods in the states, led the British ruling class to back the south in the inevitable clash that was to come.

In England, anti-slavery societies were formed at about the same time as those in America, and they often worked closely together. In precisely the same way as 'liberal' representatives cry crocodile tears about the conditions of blacks in South Africa, so just when the British ruling class was preparing to subject British workers to the appalling conditions of industrial slavery in the 1830s, a part of that ruling class began to preach in favour of the abolition of slavery.

The British working class

were opposed to slavery, but, like the growing labour movement in America, they linked the abolition of chattel slavery with the abolition of wage slavery, and exposed the hypocrisy of the ruling class that could overlook white slavery at home, while opposing Negro slavery abroad.

### Clarion call

In an article in the *Poor Man's Guardian*, Bronterre O'Brien wrote:

"He who sallies forth on a philanthropic mission in Jamaica when he needs only to go to Spitalfields to find more misery than he will be able to abolish is either a thick headed fool or a heartless fraud. How is it that we never hear the Buxtons or the Wilberforces complain about slavery here at home? Listen, Buxton, and we will tell you; it is because you know, you smooth tongued rogue, that English slavery is indispensable to our 'highly civilised state'. The slavery of millions is the foundation of your cannibalistic civilisation".

The Working Men's Association, the forerunner of the Chartists, had been established in 1836. William Lovett, who later drew up the 'People's Charter', was given the job by the association of producing a manifesto to answer the ruling class' vicious attacks against American republicanism. It was a clear clarion call, showing that even then the British labour movement understood the

international unity of working people:

"Why, when America has afforded a home and an asylum for the destitute and oppressed among all nations, should oppression in her own land be legalised and bondage be tolerated?... Surely, it cannot be for the interests of the working classes that these prejudices should be fostered, this degrading traffic be maintained..."



Chartist William Lovett—"this degrading traffic"

"We entertain the opinion, friends, that those who seek to consign you to unremitting toil, to fraudulently monopolise your lands, to cheat you in the legislature, to swell your territory by injustice, and to keep you ignorant and divided, are the same persons who are the perpetrators and advocates of slavery".

The outbreak of civil war affected Britain greatly. Textiles had reached their highest development by the 1860s, and the British industry needed the raw cotton that the south had a monopoly in. Thus, the English capitalist class favoured an independent confederacy of the southern states.

Under pressure of these economic necessities, the abolitionist feelings of sections of the British ruling class disappeared, and they turned to favour intervention on behalf of the south. It was only due to the actions

of the British labour movement that this did not take place and the future of the civil war—and thus of the slaves—become very different.

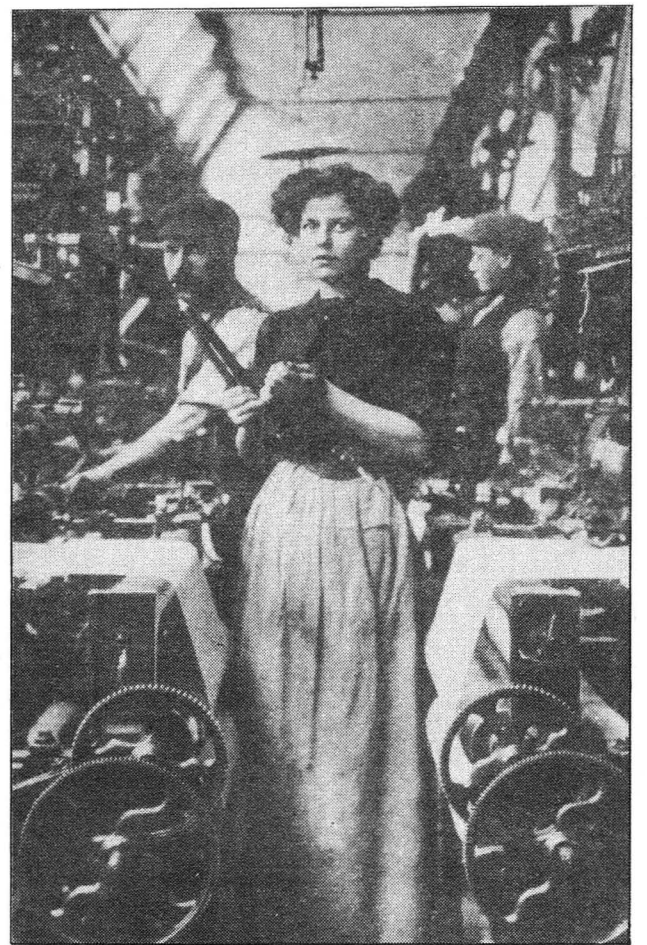
To try to get workers' support, British capitalism attempted to organise labour demonstrations in favour of intervention on the part of the south. They also used intimidation, trying to use starvation to force British workers to declare for slavery, so that Britain could intervene in the civil war.

The war itself, in particular the blockade of southern ports by the north, had created a scarcity of cotton in England—which the manufacturers welcomed, as there had been overproduction in British cotton in 1860.

Thus over half the textile factories of Lancashire were closed—the manufacturers hoping that the lack of work, starvation and the rising price of their commodities would drive the workers into their arms. Wages were artificially reduced to starvation levels.

### Union opposition

As Marx showed in *Capital*, in 1863, the weekly wages of the spinners was 3s 4d. Fever broke out; prostitution grew out of the horrors of starvation, yet the British working class refused to declare in favour of the south—just the opposite. As Ernest Jones, Chartist leader, put it in Blackburn when he asked the rhetorical question "why did the south secede?" and was told "for



A mill girl in the North of England—heroic internationalism.

free trade":

"Free trade in what? Free trade in the lash—free trade in the branding iron—free trade in chains".

Throughout 1862 and 1863, workers' meetings against slavery grew. The London trade unions held a major meeting in St James Hall on 26 March 1863, with John Bright in the chair. Leading participants included Cremer, a cabinet maker, later a member of the general council of the International Workingmen's Association.

Palmerston, then prime minister, was on the verge of declaring war on the northern states. According to Marx, it was this massive meeting of trade unionists and the feeling of working people throughout Britain

that stayed his hand and altered the outcome of the war.

To those who say that sanctions against South Africa would harm British workers rather than South African capitalism, or that the history of the British labour movement is one of treachery and racism, it is enough to quote the words of a contemporary writer on the civil war in America:

"The heroic attitude of the textile workers of England during the civil war in America constitutes one of the most glorious pages in the history of the working class and must therefore be emphasised here. They suffered, starved and even died—for the cause of Negro emancipation in America."



Slavery in America's Southern states was a source of profit to British capitalism in its early days.

## Left and Right

**RUPERT MURDOCH** recently took time off from attacking workers' rights, to buy a Spanish-style mansion in Hollywood's Beverley Hills. It has 14 rooms, a swimming pool and a wishing well. He may be wishing that the sacked workers who made his fortune for him would give up their struggle for their jobs at Wapping, but this news will only make them more determined.

**THE SECRETARY** of the Wales Anti-Apartheid Movement wrote to the Hungarian embassy to tell them that certain members of a Welsh choir which was about to tour Hungary had recently visited South Africa. Hanif Bhamjee, who is also a member of the African National Congress (ANC) was acting in accordance with the AAM's long-standing policy against cultural

connections with apartheid South Africa.

He was surprised therefore to be accused by the chief representative of the ANC in Britain, Solly Smith, of 'meddling' and 'jeopardising relations with Hungary'. "We have a lot of connections with the Hungarian people" said Smith, "and we do not want to ruin them. Hanif is causing us a lot of trouble".

It would seem that for the exiled 'leaders' of the ANC, collaborators with apartheid are to be deplored in Wales, but welcomed by the bureaucrats of 'Communist' Hungary.

**THE TRADES** Union Congress is buying £100,000 worth of ICL computers for use at Congress House. ICL is the largest supplier of computer systems to South Africa.

## Sell Militant—'persistence pays'

**MILITANT** SUPPORTERS in the Aire Valley district of Yorkshire are consistently good sellers of the paper. They say there is no secret to their success, but "persistence pays."

In Bingley a regular Saturday sale has been livening up the shopping precinct for the last 18 months. Last week saw a record 12 sold.

Thirty copies were sold in one hour to Silentnight strikers when we carried the feature on Mr Wonderful

the other week. 25 of these were sold by a new supporter who is himself one of the strikers.

Plans are now afoot to emulate the good estate sale built up in Skipton in other parts of the Aire Valley.

Down in the West Country, Plymouth supporters have doubled their order with city centre sales of 31 over two weeks and eight sold at a tug boat crews' meeting in Devonport.

Street and workplace sales

are important to keep *Militant* in the public eye, but estate sales are paying off particularly well at the moment. In Exeter 30 were sold in two weeks on the Wonsford estate.

Take time to chat to people on the doorstep about our ideas and always call back to try and consolidate a regular sale. That is the way to build rounds and get new people involved. Remember "persistence pays".

# A taste of freedom

**AFTER FOUR** and a half years on 'wages' of £1.30 a week I was suddenly reintroduced into society after a long spell in prison.

I was finally released on 'Maundy Thursday'. Easter, traditionally a time of forgiveness and charity. I was jubilant. Although I only possessed the clothes I was wearing. I also had £60—my discharge grant. It seemed like a fortune.

I'd settle in London, centre of the affluent South East. Nothing could go wrong. Initially I was going to a charity hostel for ex-offenders. I could stay there for ten weeks; plenty of time to find a job and accommodation, and generally sort my life out, I thought.

## A new cell

The alternative would have been six weeks in Bed and Breakfast before DHSS board and lodging regulations forced me to move to another area. At least the hostel would provide a breathing space and security for a while. Life felt good. No more prison for me.

The first shock came at the hostel. I had to hand over £41.50 for a week's rent. Then I saw my room, which strongly reminded me of my former cell—tiny, with a sloping ceiling so I couldn't even stand up in places. Still, I was free, and I still had £18.50 to live on until next Tuesday when the DHSS reopened after Easter.

But there were no cooking

facilities at the hostel, so my money was quickly eaten up in greasy cafes. I had no spare clothes so I had to wash what I was wearing every night and put it on damp in the morning. By Sunday I was broke, and disillusioned with my 'freedom'.

I remembered Norman Tebbit saying that people should 'get on their bikes'. I wondered where they were supposed to get bikes from, and anyway, where could they go?

By Tuesday the prospect of being able to eat cheered me up a bit. I went to sign on and then took my B1 to the local DHSS office. Upon arrival I walked past five people fighting on the steps to the doors at the top.

I knocked on the huge, locked wooden doors, more suited to a prison than a public building. The door was opened about six inches and a capped hand peered out: 'What do you want?' 'I've come to hand in my B1'. 'Sorry, come back tomorrow' he said, as he slammed the door.

This was 9.50am, twenty minutes after they had opened. I knocked again and this time two people answered, dressed in pseudo-American style police uniforms. They abruptly demanded an explanation for what they obviously considered my unreasonable request for entry after 9.30.

I thought I'd become accustomed to this kind of treatment in prison, but I was disgusted to have to ex-

plain my personal circumstances. They looked at me as though I had just crawled from under a stone.

Then they told me they couldn't let me in today, I'd have to come back tomorrow and slammed the door in my face. As I walked down the stairs, the fight was still in progress.

The next day I arrived at 9.35am. I was again turned away. 'Phone and make an appointment' they said. I got through by phone, only to be informed that I could not make an appointment by phone but would have to queue like everyone else!

## Treated like animals

I explained how difficult it was to gain entry. "You'll have to get here earlier than!" I was exasperated. What was the difference between prison and freedom? At least I could be sure of eating in prison.

That night a man told me to queue from 8.30am as they only let the first fifty people in.

Thursday, a week after my release and still no money, I arrived at 8.15am. I was third in the queue, it was freezing cold and raining, and I had no coat. By 9.30 the queue stretched down the steps and up the road, and people jostled for a better position. When the doors opened people pushed and shoved and scrambled.

A little girl was pinned to the wall, crying, as people heedlessly stepped on her



Second hand furniture and DHSS queues—the meaning of 'freedom'?

and pushed her. She was ignored in the general frantic panic to 'get in'. I picked her up and carried her in. Her mother was really surprised that anyone showed basic human concern. This system forces such degradation on to people for a paltry amount of money which will not even provide a family's food for a week.

I had to wait until 2.30pm, when I got a counter pay-

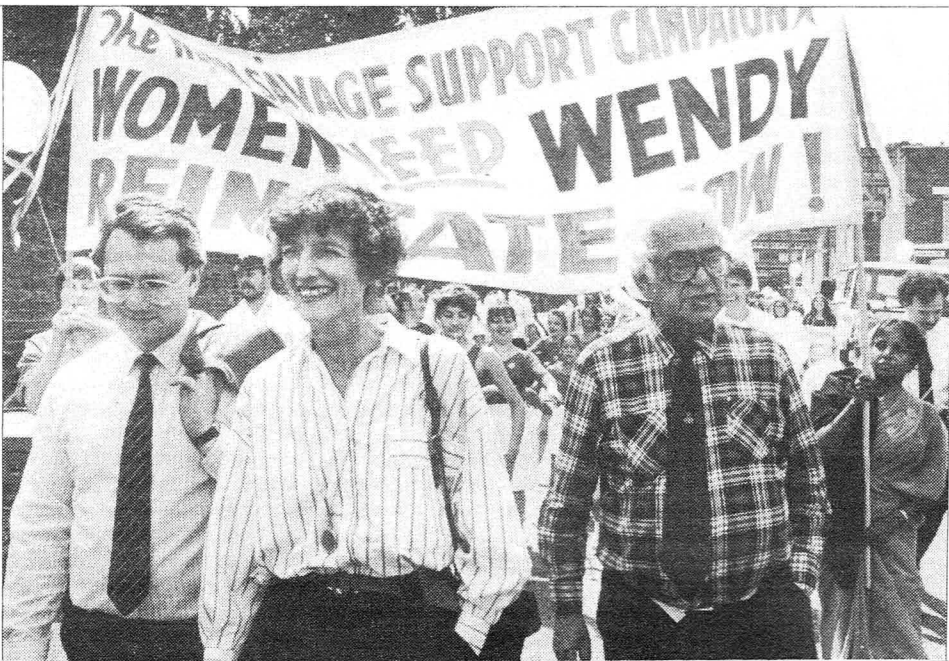
ment from the overworked staff. Five hours without the possibility of going to the toilet, as it has not been considered necessary to provide toilets, and if I left I would be unable to get back in. The system seems designed to make claimants feel like beggars, inadequate and unworthy. The 'thoughtfully' provided TV encased in bullet proof glass high on the wall did little to placate the

screaming children or anguished mothers.

So this is the 'caring capitalism' the Tories are screaming about. It seems to me that if people are treated like scavenging animals eventually they will be forced to behave like animals in order to survive.

By A. Fisher

## Reinstate Wendy Savage



Wendy Savage on the victory march on 10 July.

Photo: John Harris (IFL)

**AFTER WENDY** Savage, the obstetrician suspended after allegations of incompetence, had been cleared after a 15 month battle, around 1,500 local women, toddlers, midwives, doctors and medical students joined a victory march.

They handed a letter to the Chair of Tower Hamlets district Health Authority meeting later that afternoon, demanding Wendy Savage's immediate reinstatement.

However, the authority will probably not decide on Wendy Savage's reinstatement until the end of July when the final part of the inquiry report is published.

The tribunal rejected 54 of 58 charges and the remaining four had been accepted as

self-criticism by her as far back as June 1985 and do not imply incompetence.

In February 1985 an inquiry into Wendy Savage's alleged mismanagement looked at five of her obstetric cases, in which one baby was born dead and one died eight days after birth.

## Public inquiry

The main charges centred around her delay to perform a caesarian section when colleagues claimed they would have done so as a matter of routine. The cases were handpicked out of 800 cases treated under her supervision.

The inquiry made medical history because on Wendy

Savage's insistence, and against much opposition, it was held almost exclusively in public. £150,000 of the Health Authority's money was spent on staging the inquiry and employing two Queen's Counsel barristers to prove her guilty of incompetence and malpractice. The Labour Party, which has supported Wendy Savage, must now ensure she is reinstated by taking up the issue in parliament, trade unions and through local health bodies, and fight for the next Labour government to investigate NHS obstetric and gynaecology provision and practice in Britain.

By Julie Morgan

## Fighting Fund

This week:  
£2,239

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 Humberside	1491	68%	2300
2 London East	2039	89%	3550
3 South East	959	43%	2400
4 London South West	567	26%	1500
5 London West	1010	46%	2900
6 London South East	666	30%	2250
7 Scotland West	1060	47%	3850
8 Wales West	930	42%	3350
9 Manchester/Lancs	1089	47%	4150
10 Southern	812	36%	3100
11 West Midlands	1189	53%	4500
12 East Midlands	764	34%	3050
13 Merseyside	1631	71%	7000
14 Yorkshire	1307	59%	5600
15 Eastern	757	33%	3450
16 Scotland East	519	23%	3200
17 Northern	696	31%	4550
18 South West	231	10%	2150
19 Wales East	182	8%	2150
Others	8265	37%	5000
Total	26163	61%	70000

AMONG THE many donations this week was a cheque for £200 from a reader's first monthly pay packet. This type of sacrifice is typical of the determination of our readers to see our paper grow in strength and influence.

From the largest donation to the smallest they show the deepening support for Marxism in Britain. Our paper is the only genuine workers' paper, funded solely by donations from ordinary working class people.

Only one week remains to raise this quarter's target, so every reader needs to make an extra effort to raise the cash we need. This weekend we have a marvellous opportunity to take our ideas out into the workplaces, on to the streets and housing estates winning thousands of new supporters to our ideas.

Using the petitions against the expulsions and the collecting tins, we can raise thousands of pounds from workers who want to fight back against Thatcher and the system she represents.

In Edinburgh, one seller raised over £30 in a tin on a street sale. Sellers in South

Humberside collected £35.68 using the petitions showing how much support exists and just how easy it is to raise money for our fighting fund. £50 was collected from a coach full of delegates to the BLOC conference from Liverpool.

Readers in Drumchapel, Glasgow, organised a disco and raised £57; other socials in Glasgow raised a further £56. Every area should have events like these before the end of the quarter.

Make sure that everybody you know is asked for a donation this week. At your workplace, in the colleges and schools, everywhere you go take the petition and tins. If you explain what we are collecting for we will have a tremendous response.

**DONATIONS THIS week include:** P Raby, Ashington £2.30; C Allom, Pensioner, Ryde IOW £3.50; D Jowes, Peterborough £10; A Butterworth, Lymington £5; B Howgate, Birkenshaw £2; F Campbell, Oxford £15; R Page, Borehamwood £15; J Ferguson, Stirlingshire £20; D Richards, Oxford £5; AEU members Aire Valley £5; First-ever readers' meeting in Hastings £45.

# Workers storm the barracks

**FIFTY YEARS** ago this month the Spanish Civil War began, when workers rose up to seize power in one of the greatest episodes in the history of working-class struggle. To commemorate the anniversary, we are publishing a series of articles by ALAN WOODS which consider the many lessons of these events.

Last week he described Spain's backward economy and the revolution of 1931 which established a Republic. It soon became clear that the capitalist government which took office was incapable of resolving Spain's deep-rooted problems, especially on the land. Its proposals for 'agrarian reform' were described by Socialist leader Largo Caballero as "an aspirin to cure an appendicitis".

This article deals with the historic events of 1936.

The Republic had aroused the hopes of the masses. But so long as the leaders of the Socialist Party remained in the alliance with the bourgeois Republicans, so long as they remained within the framework of capitalism, they could not begin to resolve the most pressing problems of society.

The strike wave of July and August culminated in a general strike in Seville. Here the Republican government showed its true colours. The army was sent against the workers. Artillery was used on the workers' districts, leaving behind 30 dead and 200 wounded.

The Republican government had left the old state apparatus intact. From the very beginning the tops of the army and police, while publicly swearing loyalty to democracy and the Republic, were conspiring with the bankers, landlords and capitalists to crush the workers, destroy the Republic and install a dictatorship.

Emboldened by the weakness of the government, in August 1932, general Sanjurjo, the 'Lion of the Rif' attempted a military rising. The workers of Seville, the same who had been bombarded by orders of the government a few months before, declared a general strike and attacked and burned the houses and clubs of the conspirators. Under the pressure of the masses, Sanjurjo was condemned to death, then reprieved. He was later to participate in the fascist rising of 1936 which led to the deaths of up to one million Spanish

workers and peasants.

CEDA—(Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Right)  
PSOE—(Spanish Socialist Workers' Party)  
CNT-FAI—(National Confederation of Workers—Iberian Anarchist Federation)  
UGT—(General Workers' Union)

workers and peasants.

After the defeat of Sanjurjo, there was the beginnings of a polarisation of the left and the right. The anarchists staged a series of adventurist uprisings in the villages. In the village of Casas Viejas in Cadiz, the Republican assault guards brutally repressed the movement, murdering 14 defenceless prisoners.

The collapse of support for the 'centre' parties was revealed in the April 1933 municipal elections and the general election in November. The Socialist Party dropped from 116 seats to 58, while the right wing parties got 207. The largest party in the new Cortes, with 117 seats was the CEDA of Gil Robles, a quasi-fascist right wing Catholic party, which tried to ape the methods of Hitler, Mussolini and Dollfuss.

The victory of Hitler in Germany, made possible by the criminal policies of the Social Democratic and Stalinist leaders,

had a traumatic effect on the workers internationally.

After the November elections, the right wing Republican prime minister, Lerroux, attempted to inch towards reaction on the parliamentary plane, while the employers everywhere lowered wages, raised rents and evicted tenants. Even the pathetic excuse for an agrarian reform was now abandoned as the government carried out a policy of ruthless counter-reform.

*The main thrust of this policy was clear: by degrees to push the government to the right and prepare the conditions for the inclusion of Gil Robles in the government.*

*Had this policy succeeded, it would have meant a parliamentary coup and the victory of fascism not in 1939, but in 1933. Had it depended on the right wing socialist leaders and their 'democratic' Republican friends, there is no doubt that this is what would have occurred. Fortunately, it did not depend on them.*

## Largo Caballero

The election defeat had provoked a crisis inside the Socialist Party, Largo Caballero, a building worker who had become general secretary of the UGT, under the pressure of the militant rank-and-file of the union and the Young Socialists, broke with the right wing and moved far to the left. The 'Caballerista' left won the majority on the PSOE NEC.

To their credit, Caballero and the Socialist left began to prepare for a general strike and a rising. Besteiro and the other right wingers who wanted to crawl on their bellies in the face of the fascist danger, were ignominiously thrust aside.

The crushing of the Austrian proletariat by Dollfuss was a further warning to the Spanish workers. Finally, in October 1934, the workers of Asturias rose, arms in hand, in that glorious episode, the Asturian Commune.

Within three days, the workers had taken power in Asturias. There was little bloodshed and order and discipline was maintained by the workers' revolutionary committees. Had this magnificent movement then been seconded in the rest of Spain, the working class would have taken power.

Unfortunately, though the Socialist leaders tried to give a lead, their whole past was against them. They had no idea how such a movement could be organised.

On the other hand, the anarchist leaders of the CNT-FAI played a contemptible role. In Catalonia, they held aloof from the struggle, describing it as a squabble "between politicians".

Only in Asturias itself did CNT workers fight alongside their socialist brothers and sisters. In the

subsequent repression, Franco's troops were driven to the Asturias in trains driven by railwaymen with CNT cards in their pockets.

The rising was put down with terrible slaughter. Some 1,500–2,000 workers were killed and 3,000 wounded. 30,000 workers were taken prisoners, tortured and in many cases 'shot while trying to escape'.

By their selfless heroism, the Asturian workers had prevented the victory of fascism. But the movement had paid a heavy price. The 'two black years' (el bienio negro) were years of reaction. Yet none of the basic contradictions had been resolved. The government of the 'bienio' was a government of crisis, of constant cabinet upheavals. Finally, the reaction exhausted itself. The Zamora government collapsed amidst a major financial scandal. New elections were called for 16 February 1936.

The election result showed that the workers had recovered from the defeat of 1934. They had learned from the harsh school of reaction, when wages were slashed, hours increased, and union activists sacked and blacklisted.

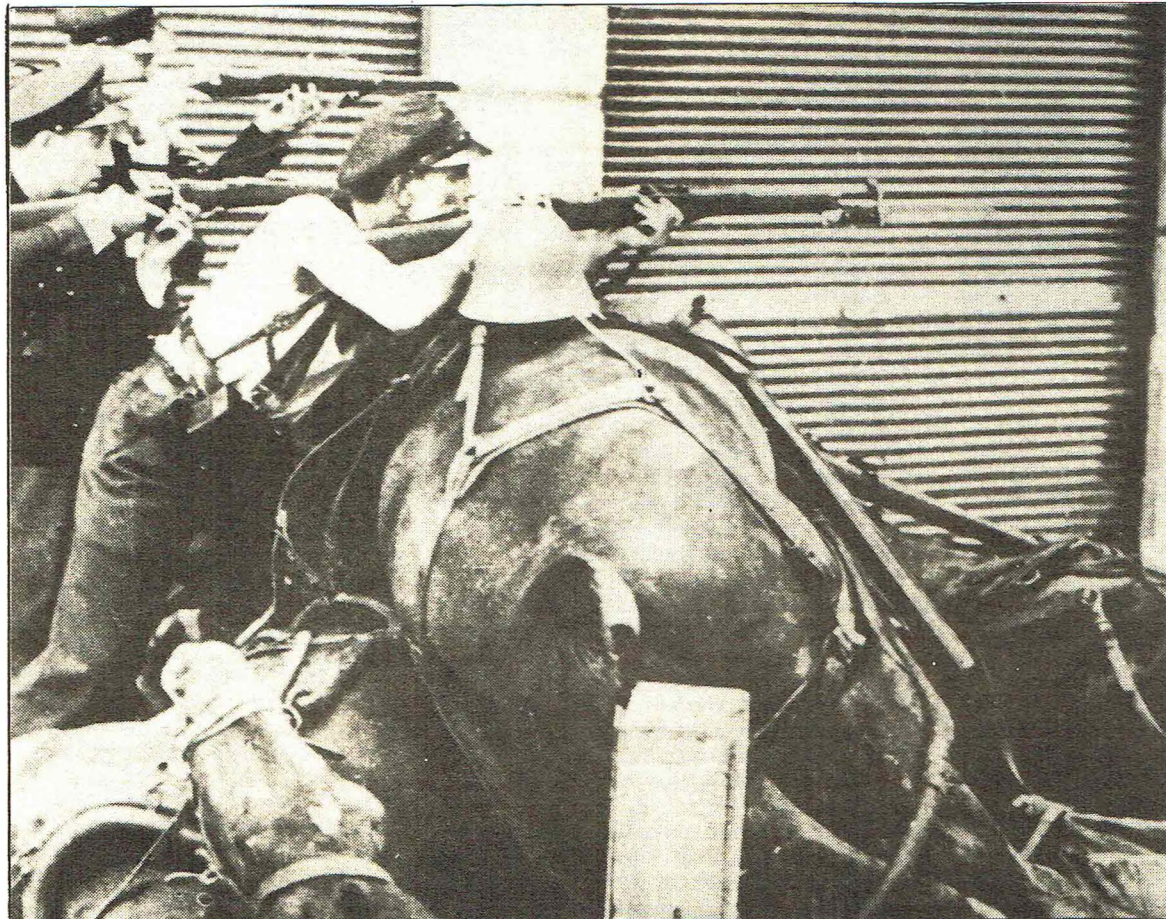
The defeat intensified the internal ferment in the PSOE. The Young Socialists, which represented an organised force of 100,000 young workers, moved sharply to the left, and announced that they rejected the policies of the Second and Third Internationals (ie. Social Democracy and Stalinism) and came out in favour of a 'New International'.

The leaders of the Young Socialists invited Andrés Nin and his followers to join them, as they lacked theoretical understanding and 'Bolshevize them'. Unfortunately, Nin showed himself to be utterly confused and incorrigibly sectarian. Refusing to join a 'reformist' organisation, he threw away a unique opportunity to create a genuinely mass revolutionary Marxist organisation, which would have transformed the entire situation.

As a result of this criminal behaviour, the Stalinists were able to hijack the YS, acquiring for the first time a mass base from which to carry out their counter-revolutionary activities in Spain.

After the victory of Hitler, in which the Stalinist policy of 'social fascism' played a fatal role, Moscow did an about-turn of 180°. From the position of denouncing everyone else as 'fascists', they now advanced the equally criminal policy of the 'popular front', in which the Communist Party advocated the subordination of the workers' parties to the so-called "progressive" bourgeois parties, allegedly to 'stop fascism'.

That policy, called by its right name is *class collaboration*. Far from creating the conditions for a serious fight against fascism it merely serves to deceive and dupe the workers.



Workers firing at nationalist insurgents in Barcelona in 1936 behind a barricade of a dead horse.



# SPANISH REVOLUTION

## 50th ANNIVERSARY



Buenaventura Durruti.

From bitter experience, workers and peasants had learned to distrust the liberal politicians. But the Socialists and, especially, the "Communist" leaders strove to convince them that the alliance with the "good", "democratic" capitalists against the bad fascists was a merely a clever tactical "manoeuvre" to gain power.

In fact, the Spanish labour leaders fell over themselves to hand power to the capitalist Republican politicians, limiting their "struggle against fascism" to tearful appeals to the Republicans to "act", instead of basing themselves on the independent movement of the masses.

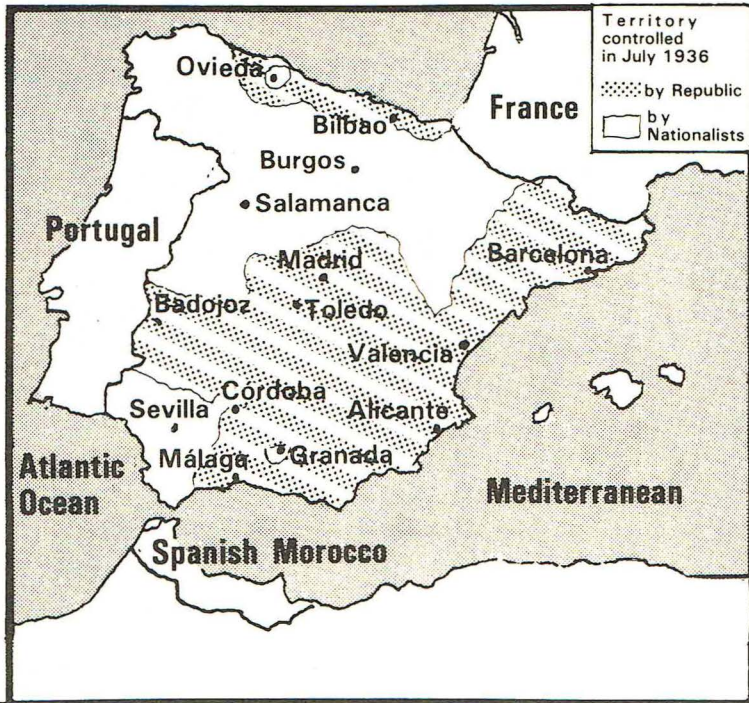
Meanwhile, the fascists, in cahoots with the capitalists, made deadly serious preparations behind the scenes, sheltered and protected by the 'People's Front'.

Only the united struggle of the working class, drawing behind it all the oppressed and exploited layers of society, can smash fascism, and also destroy the social base upon which it rests—the capitalist system.

### Popular front

The Spanish workers—like workers everywhere—had a deep-seated desire for unity. But the Leninist policy of the united front of workers' organisations—Communists, Socialists, Anarchists—was distorted by the Stalinists into collaboration of the workers with their bourgeois Republican enemies.

The elections of 1936 showed that the Spanish workers were on the move again. The Popular Front won a crushing majority with 278 seats, against 134 for the National Front and 55 for the centre. The Socialist Party once again emerged as the biggest party. Yet the prime minister was a Republican—Azana—who proceeded to nominate a Cabinet ex-



clusively of members of the bourgeois parties!

The policy of uniting with the 'progressive' bourgeois was doubly false in relation to Spain, because the decisive section of the bourgeoisie had already opted in favour of fascism. What the workers' parties had united with, as Trotsky explained, was not the bourgeoisie—'progressive' or otherwise—but the shadow of the bourgeoisie.

Azana did not represent the bourgeoisie, which went over to Franco at the outset of the Civil War, but the 'democratic second eleven' of which the bourgeoisie no longer had any need. Yet Azana and co. did their best to serve the interest of the bourgeoisie by attempting to block the movement of the masses.

The mass of workers and peasants saw the victory of the Popular Front as a signal to unleash a revolutionary struggle. The workers staged strikes. The peasants took over the land. The employers were compelled to restore wage cuts, limit the working day and re-admit sacked workers. The masses marched on the gaols and forcibly released the class prisoners of 1934. In this way the programme of the Popular Front was carried out within days, from below, by the direct action of the masses without waiting for the government.

From the moment the Popular Front came to power, the bourgeoisie had staked everything

on the card of reaction. That the generals were preparing an uprising was known to everyone. Yet Azana took no action, other than to re-shuffle the conspirators, moving them to different provinces. This helped, rather than hindered, their activities. Franco was sent to the Canary Islands, from where he was in easy communication with the Foreign Legion in Morocco. General Mola was dispatched to Pamplona, which put him in direct contact with the reactionary Carlists in Navarra.

All along, the Republican ministers covered up for the conspirators. Shortly before the rising, Casares Quiroga assured a parliamentary commission that Mola 'is a general loyal to the republic and to spread rumours of that sort is to demoralise the regime.'

### Workers' militia

When finally the military acted on 18 July, the government hid the news from the populace. The newspapers of the workers' organisations appeared with blank spaces. Crowds of workers demonstrated in Madrid demanding arms. But this—the only way to defeat the fascists—was rejected by a government much more afraid of the working class than of the fascist officers.

Thanks to the treachery of the Popular Front government, the fascists were allowed to occupy one-third of Spain in a week.



Workers go into battle.

Algeciras and Jerez fell without a fight. Despite some brave resistance, most of Andalusia fell into the hands of the executioner.

If it had not been for the workers of Catalonia, it is likely that the pattern of Andalusia would have been repeated all over Spain.

But the workers of Barcelona, armed mostly with kitchen knives, table legs, the odd old hunting rifle, marched on the barracks, stormed it and smashed the rebels.

Power was in the hands of the working class in Catalonia. The factories were in the hands of the workers who elected committees. The only armed force in Catalonia was the workers' militia. Transport and supplies were in the hands of the workers' organisations. The only form of identity which was of any use was a trade union card.

All that would have been necessary was to have arrested the bourgeois Catalan government and proclaimed workers' power for the revolution to have been a fact. Linking up the factory committees and inviting delegates from the militias, the small shopkeepers, housewives, peasants and other exploited sections of society into a workers' council of Catalonia, a genuine workers' government could have been formed, which could then have made a revolutionary appeal to the workers and peasants of the rest of Spain to follow suit, take the power into their own hands and wage a revolutionary war against the fascists.

That such a war could have been successful is shown by the example of Durruti's campaign in Aragon. Buenaventura Durruti was an anarchist leader who, in the process of the revolution, was moving away from anarchist prejudice towards a position akin to Bolshevism.

Durruti stood at the head of the workers' militias which carried the offensive into Aragon. Durruti waged a revolutionary war, in which the military tasks were linked to a programme of social emancipation. In every village, the land was distributed to the peasants. In this way, each village became a bastion of the revolution.

If Durruti had not been starved of arms and ammunition by Madrid, he could have taken Saragossa, which would have changed the whole course of the war. Instead, he was called to Madrid where he died under mysterious circumstances.

The revolution in Catalonia constitutes one of the most outstanding pages of revolutionary history. Yet all the efforts of the workers were undermined by their leaders—in this case the anarchists. These creatures refused to take power, alleging that anarchists cannot form a government. Yet a few months later these ladies and gentlemen entered the Popular Front government, thus assuming full responsibility for the betrayal of the revolution.

### Stalin terrified

The state, Lenin explained, is, 'ultimately armed bodies of men'. After the smashing of the reaction in Catalonia, the only 'state' consisted of the armed workers' militias. A similar situation existed elsewhere in Spain, where the workers, following the example of Barcelona, seized arms and went over to the offensive.

The only way to beat Franco would have been for the workers to take power and wage a revolutionary war. But this necessarily meant giving the masses something to fight for: not merely to 'defend the Republic'—ie to go back to the state of things that existed before.

The example of Aragon showed how the question of the land could have been used to win over the peasant troops in Franco's army. Similarly, the offer of self-determination to Spanish Morocco would have led to mutinies in the Moorish Legion. The Nationalist leader Abdel Krim made an approach to the Popular Front government asking for autonomy, but this was refused. Consequently Franco's Moorish troops, seeing no difference between the two sides, tragically, continued to fight under the flag of reaction.

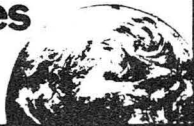
(Continued next week)



Young Communists march through the streets of Madrid, 'armed' with dummy rifles.

## France, South Africa, Brazil

## International Notes



## "Tainted money"

**DISTINGUISHED GUESTS** at a literary dinner in Grahamstown, South Africa, settled down for another speech as Menan du Plessis went to receive the Sanlam Young Artists' Award for her novel *State of Fear*.

But complacency turned to consternation when the 33-year old white author said: "At this point I should say I had originally considered turning the award down."

## Battle of ideas

In shocked silence she delivered her points: "...Sanlam, a giant of monopoly capital in our country... big business and the government, two sides of the same bloody coin... big business helping to manufacture the rifles which get handed out to vigilantes... This money is tainted, undeniably soaked in blood..."

Menan du Plessis then said she would donate her share of the R5,000 prize money to the United Democratic Front, the mass anti-apartheid movement.

With sjamboks and shotguns the regime may impose some sort of order on the streets—for a time. But clearly it has lost the battle of ideas, with the pressure of the working class being felt even in the innermost circles of white society.

## Land is won, not given

**IN OCTOBER** last year over 8,000 people occupied 20,000 acres of unworked land in Brazil. The operation was organised by the *Sem Terra* ("The Landless"), a new organisation which has spread like wildfire in the countryside.

Now there are over forty *Sem Terra* camps.

Twelve million families are homeless in a country with at least 600 million acres of unworked arable land. Yet the land barons recruit private armies to defend "their" land.

## Watered down

At least 260 people died in land conflicts last year. So far this year over 100 have died, mainly rural workers and their union and community leaders.

The landowners' association, the UDR, is so influential on the "democratic" government that its land reform programme has been watered down and now has no effect.

As *Sem Terra* put it: the land is won, not given.

By Steve Poole

# Chirac government will 're-ignite class struggle'



**AFTER JUST** a few months in power, Chirac's right-wing government has marked itself as the most reactionary administration in France since the fall of the collaborationist Vichy regime in 1944.

From our Paris correspondent

A whole battery of pro-big business laws has been rushed through the National Assembly.

The wealth tax imposed by the left government in 1981 has been abolished. The government has cut employers' National Insurance contributions as well as the tax on profits.

State regulation of redundancies is being dismantled, which will mean up to 200,000 additional job losses over the next few months.

Sixty-five nationalised companies and banks are being handed back to the profiteers. TF1, the main state-owned TV channel, is also being privatised.

Rent and price controls are being abolished. Tenants can expect rent increases of up to 35 per cent in the short term.

Devaluation of the franc has been accompanied by an austerity package, including a 12-month wage freeze in the public sector, and cuts that will mean 20,000 jobs immediately lost.

But most dangerous are the new, increased powers being given to the police. The hated, arbitrary identity checks, abolished by the Left government, are being brought back. This will give police a free hand to harass the population, especially immigrant workers and youth.

The police presence has generally been stepped up. It is now common to see the brutal CRS riot police patrolling railway stations and immigrant areas with rifles and machine guns.

A series of incidents has shown the meaning of the new police powers. In Paris, five teenage schoolchildren were kept in overnight custody, and prevented from contacting their parents, for the 'crime' of being out late at night.

More recently a young man was brutally gunned down for failing to stop his car when ordered to do so by the CRS.

Chirac plans to increase the number of police in the capital by 10 per cent, supposedly in the fight against terrorism. In reality it is an attempt to cow the working class.

A special clampdown is being prepared for the four million strong immigrant population. The authorities can now refuse to renew work and residence permits if a person is deemed a "threat to public order".

The aim is to blackmail immigrants to accept without protest their super-



Workers at Talbot Poissy, many of them immigrant workers occupy their plant.



"The bosses are tough and so are we. Everyone on strike". Young workers will challenge Chirac.

exploited position, and intimidate foreign-born trade union activists.

The appointment of Charles Pasqua as Minister of the Interior typifies the outlook of this government. Pasqua was a co-founder of the shadowy SAC organisation, a paramilitary machine of right-wing thugs set up in 1958.

## Economic crisis

But the government's outlook is not determined by personalities. The whole thrust of its policy, to bring about an enormous transfer of wealth from working people to the rich, flows from the deep-seated crisis of French capitalism.

Last year the French capitalists lost a further one per cent of their domestic market share, and two per cent abroad. The basic problem is an abysmally low level of investment in production, which remains at pre-1980 levels.

At present the money-makers can expect an average rate of profit in industry of only four per cent. The government is striving to

change this situation through its conscious assault on wages, jobs and workers' rights.

But Chirac will not succeed. Despite the new-found confidence of big business in their "own" government, and the fall in oil prices and the dollar, estimated growth for 1986 is only 2.5 per cent—which will not prevent a new rise in unemployment.

And to complete a vicious circle, the low level of demand in the French economy is being eroded still further by falling living standards, with further negative effects on production and employment.

Visibly, the speed of the government's attack has stunned the labour movement, burdened already by mass unemployment and disoriented by four years of counter-reform under the Left government.

In general there is a mood of "wait and see". But, on a number of fronts, a fight-back has begun.

In Paris, the best-supported strike in ten years on the bus and metro network paralysed public transport for 24 hours. Suc-

cessful strikes have taken place on the railways against 20,000 planned redundancies.

A one-day dock strike was 100 per cent solid. Shipyard workers have been involved in lengthy strike action to prevent closures, and different sections of civil servants have been out against the pay freeze and planned job losses.

A strike of metro cleaners—an almost entirely immigrant workforce—against the management's racist behaviour was victorious, showing the combativity of these downtrodden workers.

## Opposition

Despite the generally calm situation, these movements are an indicator of the period ahead.

Former Socialist Prime Minister Fabius correctly remarked that the Right's policy will "re-ignite the class struggle". The right-wing leader of the Christian Workers' Union has warned: "Very often, periods when strikes are absent because of economic dif-

iculties or austerity policies are followed by periods of important social explosions. We say to you therefore—go carefully!"

There is absolutely no way that the Right can carry through their policies without sooner or later arousing the massive and determined opposition of the French workers. In the short term, the return to work in September, after the holidays, could provide a rallying point.

## "Moderation"

The leaders of the Socialist Party, their outlook affected by five years in the corridors of power, are preaching moderation to the rank and file. They are openly preparing to "revise" the party's Declaration of Principles, which states the objective of breaking with capitalism.

Unfortunately, there is no left leadership to rally the counter-offensive of the rank and file. The former left wing of the Socialist Party, *CERES* (now renamed *Socialisme et République*) has shifted to the party's "centre", according to its main spokesman, Jean-Pierre Chevenement, and is moving steadily rightward.

In the Communist Party, the "monolithism" of the past has broken down into internal "dissent" and debate following the party's disastrous performance in the last elections, when it was down to 10 per cent of the vote—its worst result in sixty years.

But any real programme for mounting opposition to the government is glaringly absent.

The return to power of the Right has shocked many workers, especially the youth. The Socialist Party has been flooded with new members since the elections, with most of the youth looking for ideas of class struggle, not class compromise.

The programme of Marxism will gain increasing support among them over the next period.

# Greek workers can smash austerity programme

**ELEVEN PILOTS jailed for refusing to go back to work; 15 pilots fined £292,000 and their personal property confiscated; 60 pilots sacked—these are some of the methods used by the PASOK (Socialist) government in Greece to break a 13-day strike by 365 pilots and 132 flight attendants at Olympic Airlines.**

Scabbing was organised, a 1974 law of the military regime was used to "mobilise" the pilots, in effect ordering them back to work.

It was the refusal to obey this decree which resulted in the jailings and sequestrations.

The pilots' union was demanding a modest six per cent pay increase. But victory for the pilots would have destroyed the government's austerity programme.

In spite of its socialist pro-

By Mike Waddington

mises, Papandreou's government has based all its policies on an attempt to revive the capitalist economy. The desperate crisis of the Greek economy explains the vicious reaction against the pilots' strike.

The OECD (organisation of developed capitalist states) in a recent report on Greece pointed out that in the industrial sector the

losses by 775 firms outweighed the profits of 1,337 others—and that the short-fall has trebled since 1983.

Investment in private production fell by 25 per cent between 1980 and 1984. This has forced the government to step in. Forty companies have been taken over by the "Organisation for the Rehabilitation of Firms".

The *Wall Street Journal* calculates that 60-70 per cent of the Greek economy is now in the public sector!

However, these efforts at bailing out the capitalist system have resulted in a doubling of Greece's foreign debt. Debt servicing now absorbs nearly one-quarter of foreign earnings.

Clearly, this could not be continued indefinitely.

In October 1985 the government announced a "stabilisation package" including a 15 per cent devaluation of the currency (pushing up the cost of imports), cuts in public spending, price increases and wage restraint for two years.

## Workers' struggle

THE OECD approved commenting that this "should contribute to... reducing incomes... and correcting income distribution in favour of profits" (January 1986).

Unfortunately for the government and the capitalist class, the workers



Greek workers have rejected capitalist policies from the PASOK government.

massively rejected this programme.

In October, and again in February there were general strikes in Athens and many other towns. In March 40,000 truck owners struck. In April there was another 24-hour general strike affecting 30 towns.

As the OECD pointed out: "Labour unions in public corporations and enterprises are very well organised and have often, in the past, obtained concessions that would be unthought of in the private sector".

The airlines dispute has therefore been an important battle in the government's war to discipline the public sector workers and make them pay for the crisis.

The General Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE) had supported the government up until the October bombshell. A majority of the leaders were members of PASOK.

But the austerity pro-

gramme forced the GSEE into opposition. Papandreou reacted by expelling 300 trade unionists and PASOK regional officials from the party—such was his fear of workers' opposition developing in the movement.

## Democratic control

The April Congress of the GSEE saw what threatened to become a damaging split. The pro-Papandreou president, Raftopoulos, was removed and then reinstated by the courts. This led to a boycott by more than half the Congress delegates.

It would be disastrous for the left to leave the GSEE in the hands of pro-government bureaucrats. Marxists in Greece call on activists to remain and battle to bring the GSEE and PASOK under democratic control.

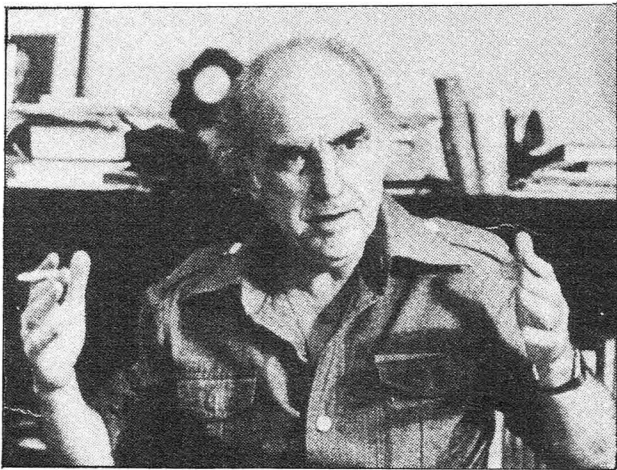
This can only be done on the basis of a socialist programme, showing the way to transform society and meet

the workers' needs.

Now Papandreou is faced with municipal elections in October and the threat of losing votes among the disillusioned workers. The *Wall Street Journal* advises the US ruling class to have patience with Papandreou: "As Mr Papandreou can hardly abandon his austerity programme, the only way to appease leftist parties and voters is by maintaining some form of radical rhetoric in foreign affairs".

But for the workers there are dangers. The parties of the right will demand an early general election if PASOK loses in October. And the demoralisation fostered by the austerity programme could see the opposition parties make gains.

PASOK can still be forced to change course. The workers' energies, if led correctly, can smash the austerity programme and bring about the fundamental change in society long promised by PASOK.



PASOK prime minister Papandreou.

## 'Greece: the hidden war'

## TV Review

EARLIER THIS year ITV screened their outstanding documentary on the Greek civil war of 1945-49, showing the bloody involvement of British imperialism in the crushing of the workers' and peasants' movement and the installation of a right-wing dictatorship.

Even after 40 years the British ruling class reacted with fury at the exposure of this episode from their past. Pressure was put on the Independent Broadcasting Authority to ban the films from being shown again in Britain, or abroad.

For readers who missed the series, TIM WHITE reviews the films which this blatant act of political censorship will prevent them from seeing in the future.

CHANNEL FOUR's excellent series "Greece: The Hidden War" traces the causes and events of the Greek civil war of 1945-49, when the mass resistance movement clashed with British imperialism and the Greek right.

It demonstrates the hypocrisy of the British ruling class in their so-called "war against fascism", and the failure of the Greek Communist Party leaders to measure up to the revolutionary tasks posed in Greece at that time.

The first programme showed the rise to mass proportions of the EAM (National Liberation Front) and ELAS (Greek National Liberation Army) following the Italian fascist invasion in 1940.

The ranks of EAM and ELAS were Communist and

revolutionary. However, in line with the CP's official "People's Front" politics of seeking alliances with "progressive" capitalists, various liberals adorned the top of EAM. They were to play a fatal role in the war.

### Stalin's deal

The EAM/ELAS forces bore the brunt of the battles against the occupation armies. But the outcome of the struggle was decided elsewhere: in Stalin's bargaining with the imperialist powers at the end of World War II, he signed away "90 per cent influence" in Greece to the British, in return for predominant Russian influence in Eastern Europe.

Thus the stage was set for savage conflict in Greece in the

revolutionary period after liberation.

EAM controlled most of the country at this time, and could have carried through a social revolution. Instead, at Varkiza in February 1945, they signed an agreement to disarm their forces without amnesty and hand power to the British.

Stalin commented: "I have every confidence in the British policy on Greece".

But Churchill's aim was to re-establish the reactionary pre-war monarchy in Greece. This was opposed by the mass of people. Within weeks of the British entering Athens, the civil war began.

The programme shows the full horror of police firing on an EAM demonstration, tanks on the streets, and the attack on the EAM headquarters.

Churchill's orders to his Commander-in-Chief, Scobie, were clear: "Rule as if in a conquered city facing a local uprising". And: "Now the Russians have given us control, let us exercise that control and eliminate the EAM".

The second programme goes into the civil war itself. Thanks to the CP leaders, ELAS men were fighting ex-ELAS men conscripted into the government army. Families were divided; sons were fighting fathers.

This tragedy resulted from the CP's compromising vacillating policy of combining a 'legal' road in Athens with guerilla struggle in the mountains—but making no attempt to mobilise the working class.

*Time and again the programme demonstrates how a clear class appeal to Greek and even British soldiers could have dissolved the reactionaries' army. But the CP was wedded to the treacherous methods of Stalinism, which carried the seeds of eventual defeat.*

The third programme deals with the aftermath of the war—the shadowy dictatorship of the generals, the murder, torture and imprisonment of thousands of left-wingers, and the 30-year-long exile of many others.

The programme gives a brilliant insight into the revolutionary traditions in which the present-day struggles of Greek workers are rooted.

It also demonstrates the British ruling class's real attitude towards fascism and dictatorship—a warning socialists ignore at their peril.



Guerrillas fought bravely against Nazi occupation and British imperialism.

## Confessions of a powerless government minister

Dear Comrades,

During a recent parliamentary lobby, a group of workers from GEC Telecommunications were able to talk to Tory MP John Butcher about the future of the industry.

One of us asked Butcher if he could persuade Arnold Weinstock to invest some of the £1.6 billion GEC has in the bank into the industry to create jobs.

Butcher replied that if he put such pressure on Weinstock he would probably immediately close down three factories!

This is a confession that the government has no control over the multinationals and shows the importance of nationalisation and workers' control of these industries.

Yours fraternally

Ian Webber  
ASTMS, GEC Coventry

## Solidarity and Polish CP



Lech Walesa addresses strikers in Gdansk. The Solidarity movement in Poland has had long-term consequences for the regime.

Dear Comrades,

Sometimes the truth slips out. In the paper of the New Communist Party (an early splinter from the CP), the Polish CP's General Secretary, General Jaruselski, is reported saying that during the Solidarity period of '80-'81, in the Polish CP: "The branches whose Party work had been dominated by ceremony and empty verbiage fell apart."

The paper adds: "In the aftermath of the 1980-81 crisis, the Polish CP lost some 800,000 members." That's no small amount of ceremony and empty verbiage!

Yours fraternally  
Pete Mason  
Leicester

## Fake concern for drug addicts

Dear Comrades,

A close friend of mine has just completed a free two year course to cure his drug problem: a prison sentence ending sadly in a suicide attempt.

The cost of sending thousands of users to prison is unbelievable.

The huge amounts of money could be put towards free clinics for addicts. Not only would this ease the overcrowding in Britain's prisons but it also helps those who can't afford the £900 a week cure.

It's obvious the government aren't putting any money into solving the problems that they condemn.

Yours fraternally  
J Harborow  
Wolverhampton

## Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism.

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

## Services wrecked

Dear Comrades,

The worst thing that ever happened to Sealink was that it was privatised.

The catamaran service between the Isle of Wight and the mainland is typical of the cheap-jack operations favoured by these millionaires. There is no longer any thought for the service provided, all that matters is the profit.

I have had the misfortune of attempting to travel on the catamaran 'service'. On one occasion wooden ramps were set up to get passengers aboard. I had my baby with me in a buggy and it was bad enough trying to get her on the ship so goodness knows how a disabled person manages in a wheelchair.

Each time I have used the 'cat' there has been a timetable change resulting in waits of up to an hour.

If this is how private firms abuse formerly public industry then god help us when vital services like water, gas and electricity are sold off.

Yours fraternally  
Mara Dale  
Isle of Wight

## In defence of free-masonry

Dear Comrades,

At the Labour Party Wales Executive Committee on 14 July consideration was given to a resolution passed at Labour Party Wales Annual Conference declaring membership of the Freemasons to be incompatible with Labour Party membership.

One left wing executive member moved that the REC members should declare that they were not Freemasons. This provoked angry reactions from the right-wing.

Arch witch-hunter George Wright strongly argued against, saying that this action was not called for in the resolution.

A UCATT full-time official went further. He shouted "If you witch-hunt us we will continue to witch-hunt you". Comrades can draw their own conclusions from this outburst.

Yours fraternally  
Chris Peace  
Cardiff Central  
Labour Party

## Death on production-line

Dear Comrades,

I was talking recently to a worker who is employed at Peugeot Talbot in Coventry. He said that workers have three ten-minute tea breaks apart from lunch. In the ten minutes they are supposed to drink tea and get to the toilet, which is packed to capacity because they are not allowed to visit the loo while working.

When one worker died at work of a heart attack, he was just pulled away from his position. The track was only stopped for two minutes.

Perhaps it would be possible to have a column in the Militant each week to expose the conditions in the workplaces as this kind of thing won't be reported anywhere else.

Yours fraternally  
Pete McNally  
Coventry South East  
Labour Party

## Classified ads

15p per word, minimum 10 words. Semi-Display £2 per column centimetre. Three weeks for the price of two. Militant meeting ads free. All advertisement copy should reach this office by first post on Friday, the week before publication.

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

○ MERSEYSIDE Militant Picnic in Sefton Park. Sunday 3 August. Children welcome. Meet 12 noon by Conservatory. Games, entertainment, food etc. Bring a toy or cash donation for creche box.

○ Northern Militant Camp 22-25 August in Edale (Peak District, Derbyshire). Leading Marxist speakers, crèche, trips, folk nights. £10 waged, £5 unwaged, £3 children. Cheques to: MSDC, c/o J Hartley, 21 Carrforge Cl, Sheffield, South Yorkshire.

○ Militant Marxist Weekend School 13/14 September, London. Courses on Theory of Marxism, South Africa and Colonial Revolution etc. MIR rally, debates, films, videos, disco, crèche. £8 waged, £6 unwaged. Cheques to: MWES, return to: MWES, 3/13 Hepscott Rd, London E9 5HB. Book now and get detailed course study guide.

○ Address books 60p, bookmarks 40p, plastic sleeves 20p, sew on badge 40p, pens 30p plus post to: Militant, 8 Woodside Court, Woodside Rd, Portsmouth, Southampton.

○ 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).

○ South Wales Summer Camp. Bank Farm, Horton, Gower. August 23/24/25. £15 per adult, £2.50 per child (under 15) £5 per day. Overnight stay £10. Make cheques payable to Militant Summer Camp and send to MSC c/o 33 Bryn Road, Brynhill, Swansea.

○ Maggot Thatcher T-shirts. Original design, quality white T-shirts, s, m & l. £6.50. Also your own idea for £10. Details from Terry, 10 St Johns Terrace Road, Earlswood, Redhill, Surrey.

○ 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.

□ Sittingbourne Marxist discussion group. Every second Tuesday at 29 Waterloo Rd, Sittingbourne, Kent. For further details ring Sittingbourne 72632.

□ Wroxall Marxist discussion group. 2 Mountfield Rd, Wroxall, Isle of Wight. Every Wednesday. Phone Vic Dale on IOW 854759 for details.

□ MILITANT Readers Meeting. "Get Thatcher out" 7 August 8pm. St Matthews Hall, St Mary's Road, Southampton (off 6 Dials Roundabout).

# Expulsion hypocrisy exposed

**NOWHERE HAS the NEC decision to expel Liverpool Militant supporters been seen to be so blatantly hypocritical as in Liverpool West Derby CLP.**

**Whereas Marxists have been expelled for their views, without a shred of evidence to back up any charges, the NEC opposed the expulsion of someone subsequently give a three months sentence by the court for assault on other party members.**

OVER THE past few months some members of the constituency have been accused of hypocrisy, because they opposed the expulsions of Militant supporters by the NEC, but supported the expulsions of two Labour Party members by the West Derby constituency four months ago.

But there is a fundamental difference between the two cases. In one, the expulsions by the NEC are because of political ideas. In the other, the expulsions by the West Derby constituency were because of physical attacks by Labour Party members, threats and disruption of Labour Party meetings.

Militant supporters oppose the expulsions of socialists on political grounds. Ironically, the expulsions by the NEC were first posed under the guise of "threats, intimidation, violence, abuse of Labour Party rules."

No evidence has ever been

By a West Derby LP member

produced to back these scurrilous charges and all allegations on this basis have been dropped, showing that all along they were a cover-up for the real reasons for expulsions—support of Marxist ideas.

However, Militant supporters have not opposed expulsions of Labour Party members who have been proved to have used repeated threats and physical violence against other Labour Party members.

In the case of West Derby CLP, one member, Harry Roberts, was accused of just such physical threats and violence against Labour Party members.

There were six months of attempts by the constituency to resolve the situation. Five main witnesses: two ward officers, one LPYS secretary, one T&G steward for the Labour Club bar

staff, one branch member plus others were all prepared to give written and oral evidence—unlike the mysterious "confidential" witnesses called by the NEC, to expel the Marxists.

## Bad hearing

Eventually a special constituency meeting was held, which resulted among other decisions in the expulsion of Harry Roberts by 34 votes to 4. Unlike the so-called "hearings" for the Liverpool Militant supporters, Harry

Roberts' appeal was arranged by the NEC in such a way that the "accused" and the witnesses were all in one room confronting each other!

West Derby constituency understandably objected to the way in which the appeal was conducted before the result.

Incredibly, the appeal, conducted by National Agent David Hughes, and two representatives of the NW Region, found that the expulsion was "too severe" for the offence committed.

Apparently the evidence required by the police to convict a Labour Party member of assaulting another is insufficient grounds for expulsion. After his reinstatement to the Labour Party Roberts pleaded guilty in court to charges of assault on two ward officers in West Derby. He was sentenced to three months jail, suspended for two years. Liverpool Labour Party members are now asking, where is the justice? Where is the "inquiry"? Who are the hypocrites?

## History repeated



Leading figures in Liverpool DLP. Left to right, Felicity Dowling, Terry Harrison, John Hamilton, Tony Mulhearn and Eddie Loyden. Only the Militant supporters are threatened with expulsion.

**FELICITY DOWLING, brought to the NEC meeting for expulsion on July 24, was secretary of Liverpool District Labour Party. She has been charged by the right wing with responsibilities in running the DLP.**

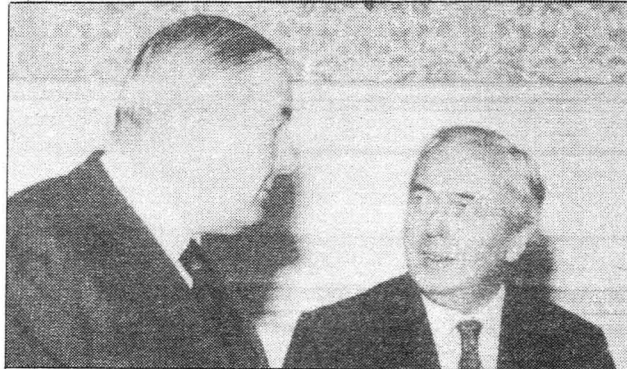
It is clearly a political attack. While she, DLP president Tony Mulhearn and vice-president Terry Harrison—all Militant supporters—are expelled, DLP treasurer, John Hamilton and other vice-president, Eddie Loyden MP, are not charged with breaking any rule.

This latest intervention of the NEC is as Martin Lee (Garston CLP) shows, only the latest in a series of right wing attempts to stifle democracy and accountability in the Liverpool Labour Party.

In 1953-54 the NEC intervened on behalf of an unrepresentative clique around the Braddocks. When the Exchange Party of Bessie Braddock MP voted not to reselect her, this was over ruled by the NEC. The Exchange Constituency defied the ruling only to be over-ruled again.

Eventually the Exchange Party was dissolved and reformed to exclude all the rebels, whom Bessie dismissed as "Communist Party" and "Trotskyist" elements.

A year or so later, in October 1954, the Labour Group decided that "future group policy should be to oppose the building of flats". Unfortunately when Labour came to power in 1955 the Labour Group voted unanimously to accept "the need for building



Under successive right wing leaders bureaucratic measures have been taken against socialists in Liverpool. From Gaitskell (below) to Wilson and Callaghan (left and right above). It was the Wilson Report (before he became Labour leader) which recommended splitting Liverpool Labour and Trades Council.



flats". When the Labour Party and Trades Council (a joint body) began to voice opposition to the "boss politics" of the Braddocks and Bill (now Lord) Sefton, the NEC bulldozed through proposals to split it into separate parts—the District Labour Party and the Trades Council.

Again in 1960 only 9 councillors voted to follow Labour Party Policy to refuse to increase the rents. Compliance with the Tories' Housing and Finance Act in 1972 was a natural conclusion to the policies of the right wing in this area.

When the NEC today inquire into Liverpool DLP they are blind to the fact that the present relationship between the councillors and the DLP, with the DLP electing the leader and deputy of the council, is a direct consequence of the experience and history of the labour movement in Liverpool.

The rise of the Liberals in the 70s was due to the disillusionment felt by working class voters towards a Labour Party which reneged on the socialist aspirations of the movement.

The defeat of the Liberals and the return of a Labour council committed to socialist policies has gone a long way to cleansing the image of Labour in Liverpool.

Militant supporters have played a significant role in the democratisation of Liverpool Labour Party and the campaign for socialist policies in education and housing. No amount of expulsions and organisational manoeuvres can sever the Marxists from the development of the Liverpool Labour movement.

Liverpool DLP will become the model for other District Labour Parties.

## Local support for Liverpool expelled

**MARXISTS HAVE always argued that the right wing may be able to expel individuals from the Labour Party, but it is impossible to expel ideas. For every expelled socialist, tens and even hundreds more will join the Labour Party to take their place in transforming their party into a fighting, socialist one.**

Since the beginning of May over 3,000 people have attended rallies and meetings to listen to comrades like Tony Mulhearn and Derek Hatton giving their verdict of the witch-hunt, joining in the battle to oppose these expulsions.

The most significant meetings have taken place in local wards where the expelled lived or represented as councillors.

The mood at all the meetings has been brilliant, both from the older people who are determined that the right wing will not hijack their Labour Party, and from youth attending their first ever meeting. One youth club in Netherley cancelled their meeting in the same community centre to hear Derek Hatton speak, and later eight of them joined the LPYS.

In St Mary's ward where Tony Mulhearn is councillor, over 150 people attended a meeting. 37 people joined the Labour Party in that one ward alone, including many members of the GMBATU branch of expelled convenor Ian Lowes.

As one angry worker explained at the same meeting, "on 8 May we told Kinnock where to go. We all knew what we voted for. What right has he now to take away my vote?"

Derek Hatton addressed another public meeting of 80 in one small part of Broadgreen where he is a member of the Labour Party. One woman thanked Tony Mulhearn and Derek Hatton "for all that they had done for the working class in Liverpool", a statement which received enthusiastic applause.

In Picton Ward, where Ian Lowes lives, after a meeting of over 50, ten people joined the Labour Party. One old age pensioner donated £10 to the Militant fighting fund.

In West Derby, so far unaffected by expulsions, there was a very successful meeting in the Club Moor ward, the area represented by Roy Gladden who recently led a small opposition in the Liverpool Labour Group against Derek Hatton, calling for the recognition of their expulsions. 80 people attended this meeting to hear Derek Hatton, and donated an excellent £70 to the Militant fighting fund. Two people who had not been to a meeting before both donated £100 each.

With the backing of all those who view the expulsions with anger and disgust, Militant supporters in Liverpool are confident of the continued growth of Marxist ideas in the City labour movement.

By Josie Aitman

## Blunkett's plan



Blunkett going into the NEC to vote for expulsions.

DAVID BLUNKETT on behalf of Labour's Local Government Committee recently unveiled new party proposals, urging Labour councils to "plan programmes that can benefit from investment in housing repair, education and environment" and that "it is vital that we use the next 18 months to show it will work".

Derek Hatton, deputy leader of Liverpool City Council, whose expulsion from the Labour Party was supported by Blunkett and other supposed left wingers, replied in an open letter welcoming the statement but stressing the role of the national leadership in sabotaging Labour councils implementing such programmes.

"Our experience is that Labour Councils can build houses, improve schools and the environment now rather than leave people in appalling conditions pending the arrival of a Labour Government.

"The problem is that not only do you face surcharge, disqualification and abuse from the Tory Government and their agencies, but you become the target of vicious attacks from your own side.

"Labour Councillors in Liverpool have been vilified by Labour's national leadership; Neil Kinnock told us that we need some "psychiatric help" and Roy Hattersley said we are corrupt. Some of us have been or are about to be expelled, a process which you can claim a lot of credit for.

"The Party's message to Labour Councils should be if you build 4,000 new houses, 11 new nursery classes, 5 new sport centres and make derelict sites into parks then you will get support from the Labour and Trade Union leaders.

Unfortunately in Liverpool where our programmes have created 16,000 jobs, the only thing we get is abuse and expulsions."

# Industrial Reports

## One miners' union—but not at any price

NEIL KINNOCK, at the Durham miners' gala, spoke in favour of the reunification of the National Union of Mineworkers and the breakaway Union of Democratic Mineworkers. In contrast to NUM president Arthur Scargill's uncompromising rejection of talks with the UDM, Kinnock said that "the costs of disunity are so much greater than any price of unity. There should be one national, democratically run coalmining union." A miner from Hatfield Main colliery, Yorkshire, looks at the issue.

According to *The Guardian* on Monday 30 June 1986, union vice-president Mick McGahey is the driving force behind a move "to seek reconciliation with the breakaway Union of Democratic Mineworkers" and it claims he has gained widespread support from both left and right within the union for an attempt "to unify both organisations as soon as possible".

### Out of touch

This shows just how out of touch the Scottish president is with rank and file miners' views on this matter.

We would prefer to see one union within our industry. But for McGahey to suggest that national unity be achieved by lumping the two unions together into some form of federation is both undemocratic and unsavoury. It's undemocratic because only the rank and

file of those unions should determine their futures. And unsavoury because the majority of NUM members remained faithful to the bitter end. They could well find themselves in the unhappy position of mandating their delegates to share a future conference hall with renegades such as Lynk, Prendergast and Toon. They are still the self-determined leaders of their flock, and should never again be allowed NUM membership.

McGahey and his cohorts should realise that reconciliation with the UDM at any price would be an insult to the majority of NUM members who endured the suffering and hardship of the 84/85 dispute in defence of their jobs and communities. Many thousands of these lads were injured—a few fatally, thousands arrested and to this day hundreds remain victimised by the NCB,



some to the extent that they are still behind prison bars. Millions throughout the world supported us, not least the women who tried to alleviate the suffering stood shoulder to shoulder with us on picket lines.

### Tragedy

I shall never forget standing in a London street when the return to work statement was read out. I witnessed grown men unashamedly crying—men from North, South, East, West—some with no jobs to return to. McGahey's own Scottish miners were amongst the unionists—whom any union would be proud to have as members.

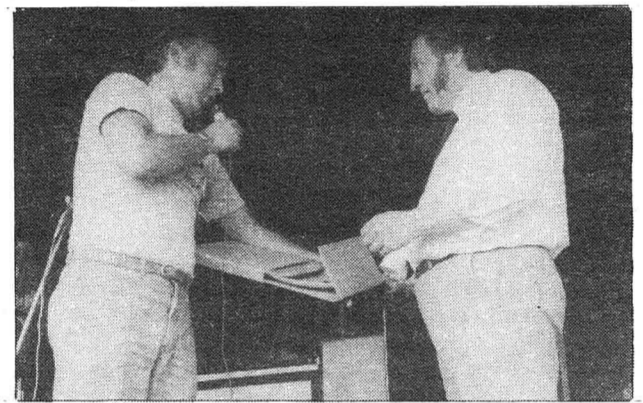
One does not need a long



Mick McGahey left. Above, *Militant* stall at Kent miners' festival with Terry Harrison, expelled vice-president of Liverpool District Labour Party centre. Below, he is presented with a miners' plate by George Beaver of Snowdon NUM.

memory to remember the media constantly referring to McGahey as "Communist miners' leader". Today it is becoming more common for them to describe him as "veteran miners' leader".

He should be warned—the cloak of respectability has always been a political shroud to workers leaders).



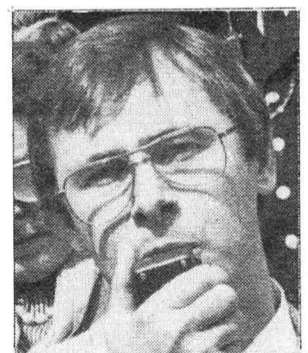
## Liverpool expellee backed by Broad Left for Nalگو executive

ON 20 July the Nalگو North West and North Wales District Broad Left agreed to back Roger Bannister, a *Militant* supporter and secretary of the Knowsley Nalگو branch, recently expelled from the Labour Party, to stand against the right-wing in an NEC by-election, caused by the unfortunate resignation from the NEC of Grame Burgess for health reasons.

The other candidates considered by the Broad Left were: Les Page, North West Water Authority; Lynne Humphries, Central Electricity Generating Board; Lynne Evans, Manchester; Tony Watts Bolton; Clive Bass, Oldham Health.

Much emphasis in the discussion was based on the fact that Lynne Evans was a woman, but it was pointed out that politics should be more important than the sex of the candidate, and one speaker referred to the record of Roger Bannister in leading struggles for women workers including Nursery nurses, typists and telephonists in Knowsley. In fact the majority of the people in the Broad Left meeting who voted for Roger were women.

Roger has been active in Nalگو since 1976, playing a



Roger Bannister.

leading role in the social workers strike during the winter of discontent, and has twice faced dismissal for his trade union activities.

He believes that the main issues for Nalگو are the campaign against low pay and opposition to cuts and privatisation. He is firmly committed to the affiliation of Nalگو to the Labour Party. As secretary of Broadgreen Constituency Labour Party, Roger was expelled for his role in supporting Liverpool's fight against Tory cuts by the right wing on Labour's NEC.

The Conservative trade unionists will undoubtedly back one candidate in this election and it is now vital that the left mount a united campaign throughout the district to ensure a Broad Left victory.

## CPSA executive resignation call

A RESOLUTION carried by the leadership of the CPSA DHSS Leicestershire branch calls for the immediate resignation of the union's national executive, who decided to bar John Macreadie, from his job as general secretary.

The Leics branch has pledged full support to Mr Macreadie in any action he finds necessary "to secure his rightful position as general secretary of CPSA".

By Tony Church

## Meeting some parliamentary peculiarities

I HAVE just attended a very interesting conference. The recent USDAW Eastern Divisional Conference taught me quite a lot. I learned that after our triumphant victory over the government on Sunday trading, Ray Powell (USDAW sponsored MP) has been trying to reopen the debate. He announced on a radio programme that he intended to move a 10 minute bill for a standing conference to review anomalies in the 1950 Shops Act. He has had to think twice however as the union told him they would publicly disown him if he went ahead.

I also learnt that all the arguments we had at national conference over whether to accept government funds for our secret ballots were wasted. The government now says that because we conducted workplace balloting (probably the best way to ensure a high turnout) we can't have the money anyway.

Oonah McDonald, the guest speaker, taught me a thing or two as well. For instance, I never knew that the reason there weren't many women in positions of influence in the trade union movement was because they are too short!

According to Oonah, when a union meeting adjourns to the pub, the conversation goes over women's heads because they are not tall enough to hear—yes, she actually said this.

But that's not the only reason, of course. She also thought that the wages of MPs were far too low to attract women into the job.

There may be some truth in this. Considering the plight of poor Gwyneth Dunwoody, I think we should take a closer look.

By Dave Fryatt  
(USDAW, Booksellers and Stationers)

## Ward's Sheffield struggle

FOR OVER two months now, almost the entire workforce at P Ward Engineering of Sheffield has been on strike for union recognition.

Atrocious pay for a standard 65 hour week, no tea breaks and dangerous conditions prompted the men to join the GMBATU.

After initially threatening to sack them all, Peter Ward offered a pay rise if they would leave the union and accept the sacking of two blokes! They refused and management went ahead with eight dismissals. "These were just excuses to put us on the spot", said Ray Eagle. "But we weren't go-

ing to back-down". As a result, all the union members were sacked without notice.

Since then the men have been picketing every day. With help from Sheffield's Centre Against Unemployment, they've been around other workplaces and support is coming in fast. The local MP, Bill Mickie, and ISTC members have been amongst those pledging financial and practical help.

A mass picket is organised every Monday at 6.30am and the widest support is called for this.

Scandalously the dispute has not yet been made official. The local GMBATU official claimed it could not

## Liverpool hospital workers privatisation strike vote

IN A ballot at Walton hospital in Liverpool, a 700 bed General Hospital in the Sefton Health Authority, workers were asked "are you willing to take indefinite strike action against privatisation?". Sixty-two per cent of NUPE workers voted 'yes'.

Peter Ballard, NUPE branch secretary, explained to Kevin McNeill how the campaign has been organised and what plans Walton workers have to fight the privateers:

"Our campaign has been going on for some time. We felt it very important to keep our members informed of any developments. We have used evidence of what privatisation has meant in other hospitals. In Fazakerley Hospital just up the road, domestics have seen a 35 per cent drop in

pay due to the private cleaners, RCO, coming in. Our members are not prepared to accept that.

"Management have backed off inviting tenders for the moment due to the strike threat. We have spent the last four weeks discussing the specifications for the tenders. We see this as very important.

### No cuts

"We are arguing that the specifications should maintain jobs and services on the present basis, a lowering of the specifications would be an admission that cuts were to be made.

"Seeing as our workers are on a measured bonus scheme, management could hardly argue the same jobs could be done to the same standard by working faster or harder.

"As well as the battle with

be, because a ballot on joining the unions had not been conducted in line with the Tories' anti-trade union laws!

The strike must be made official right away. As Ray Eagle commented: "If we lose this one then it'll be the green light for every employer. Peter Ward thinks we'll just fade away and that he can replace his workforce every week. Well he's got another think coming."

Messages of support to P Ward Strike Committee, c/o SCCAU, West Street, Sheffield S1 4EO.

By Bill Shepherd

management, we are going on the offensive against the contractors themselves.

"Contract cleaners like RCO not only clean hospitals, but also private firms in the area. We will be approaching the unions at firms where RCO are cleaning, like Plesseys to get them to campaign for the inclusion of the contract cleaners into the firm's workforce.

"We will also be picketing RCO's headquarters in Manchester. This struggle is not just about a few workers in Walton hospital, it is about the service to the community. We have set up a stall with a petition to let local people know the threat to their hospital. 4,000 signatures were got in just eight hours".

By Kevin McNeill  
(MATSA Health Service)

# Industrial Reports

## Elkes bakery bosses take the biscuit

THE DECISION on the fate of 430 workers at the Northern Foods-owned Elkes Biscuits factory in Northwich, Cheshire, has been postponed for two weeks.

Following three hours of heated discussion between Bakers' Union (BFAWU) and AEU officers and Northern Foods management on 17 July.

Northern Foods, who have just announced record profits, bought the 60-year old Broadhurst biscuit factory last December but recently announced its closure. It is blatant asset-stripping.

### Rescue

A rescue package put forward by BFAWU general secretary Joe Marino was brushed aside. Northern Foods now insist that their reason for closing is

underutilisation of the plant. They say the rescue package "did not meet their requirements" on this score.

Chris Ball, managing director of Northern Foods UK, claimed that only 52 per cent of biscuit and 27 per cent of cake machinery is being used. The union forced a concession of two weeks' reprieve to get an independent consultant to check their figures.

The firm showed their real reason for the closure by refusing to sell it as a going concern. The takeover was a ruthless move to get rid of a competitor with no thought of the consequences of closing the town's second

biggest employer.

Northern Foods have offered excuse after excuse. As soon as one is knocked down up springs another. First of all they said they couldn't afford a modernisation programme, so the local Vale Royal District Council came up with a £300,000 rescue offer backed by a promise of a European community grant.

### Hypocrisy

Last Thursday management denied the council had even made the offer. Their next line was that there is no longer a realistic market for biscuits and cakes.

But BFAWU regional general secretary Bill Bellamy asked: "If only a small percentage of machinery is used why do they want workers to work



Demonstration in support of the Elkes' workers in Northwich on 28 June.

overtime on Saturdays and Sundays?"

Northern Food's greed is only matched by their cynicism in offering to transfer 217 workers to Uttoxeter when they know that 95 per cent of the workforce are women—most of whom would have to persuade husbands to leave jobs to

move further south.

Elkes' shop steward Mrs Chris Mills said: "If we fail it won't be for lack of trying". Chris has been a tower of strength in organising the massive march and rally a month ago.

Joe Marino speaking at the rally also pointed out that Elkes director Nicholas

Horsley was chairman of the planned new "left" paper *News on Sunday*.

The BFAWU now have until 25 July to get an independent inquiry before meeting management on 31 July.

By George Parsons

## West Midlands buses

FROM 27 October 1986 five hundred of the 1,800 buses in West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive's (WMPTE) fleet will be off the road. It's D (for Deregulation) Day.

In many areas public transport will be non-existent as a result of the Transport Act. 250 of the 500 school buses will go, night services too.

Only 110 of the 312 remaining 'profitable' routes will be run on Sundays or after 7pm on week days. And several garages will close altogether.

The cuts don't stop there. WMPTE (which replaces the West Midlands County Council) still needs £61.9 million to run these bus services next year.

But the government has rate-capped its spending limit at £55m. That's £6m short. If it doesn't get the extra money there could still be more cuts in bus services or cuts in pensioners' free travel passes—or both.

The Transport Act means 2,000 jobs lost by April '87. The budget deficit could mean another 600 to go.

PETE HAYWARD, a TGWU garage delegate in Walsall talked to Nigel Wheatley about how to resist

the savage attacks on jobs, wages and conditions which will follow deregulation:

Firstly, we should fight now, not in one or two years' time when voluntary redundancies are replaced by compulsory redundancies. A campaign is needed now whilst bus workers are still together and strong.

Otherwise we will be divided into three camps: those who go for voluntary redundancy now, those who get compulsory redundancy later, and those who will still have a job but on worse conditions.

### Kinnock

Secondly, we shouldn't listen to those who think a Labour government will automatically put us back where we were.

Neil Kinnock visited Tyburn Road garage in Birmingham in May '86. TGWU members asked him what he could do for them in future and his reply was: "I've got other priorities."

Despite countless meetings to explain the horrors of deregulation no plan of campaign has been put to T&G members to stop the cuts. Bus workers have been left in mid-air. All the leadership has said is: "Write to your MP."

Not surprisingly there has been little response from the membership. Official leadership has deliberately tried to create an atmosphere of 'realism' which they use to justify no action—and then blame the members.

I think the Broad Lefts should issue a call for action to get some ideas and real realism into the situation. We need a public transport Broad Left to bring together and organise workers throughout the industry. That's not just on the buses but London Transport and British Rail too.

We need to stop voluntary redundancies so that pressure is put back on to management and the Tories. We shouldn't do their cost cutting for them.

Pressure must be put on for a campaign of mass meetings to explain the effect of Fowler's Social Security Review. This will penalise workers' redundancy nest-



Bus workers throughout the country are being hit, here Battersea bus workers in London last year tried to stop the closure of their garage.

eggs by disqualifying them from rent and rate rebates and many other benefits.

There should be a policy of non-cooperation with plans for deregulation: no tendering for services and no poaching other companies' (other workers') work. It should be 'one out all out' if jobs are cut.

### Unionise

The non-union private bus and coach firms must be unionised. Otherwise they will be used as scabs just as

they were in the miners' strike.

Special attention must be paid to Asian bus workers and their communities. Leaflets and notices must be translated so that everyone is well aware of the position.

It is essential to link up with shop stewards at Leylands, Metro Cammell and other workers in bus manufacture. We have to form a united front with low-paid workers at the factories which depend on works services, with the teachers and school students

who rely on school buses, so that private cowboy firms can't just walk in and take away our work.

Above all, we must get organised and give bus workers the leadership they need. Only by our own actions can we stop job losses.

With the public now being hit by the first of the bus cuts and fare rises and management exposed for what they are, there is no better time to begin industrial action against privatisation. It must be done whilst we still have a service worth defending.

## Dorma don't ballot

540 production workers at SKF Dorma in Sheffield are on all-out strike over management's reluctance to offer a decent annual pay increase.

Because many of the production workers have to claim social security when the annual pay negotiations were due, the shop stewards' committee decided to put in a claim for a £25 per week increase (which would bring many members out of the poverty trap).

Management countered the claim with an offer of 4 per cent across the board, which would mean a labourer would only get approximately four per cent of £83 as the annual increase. Strike action followed

over the pay claim—for the first time in over 20 years.

Management have made two further offers which have basically been the same offer in a different package.

At a meeting on Thursday 18 July, members refuted management's claim that there should be a secret ballot. They voted unanimously to carry on the strike and give full support to the strike committee.

Money and messages of support should be sent to: SKF Dormal Strike Fund, AUEW House, Farnival Gate, Sheffield.

By Chris Weldon  
(AEU Maltby Branch, personal capacity)

## TU News

SINCE 1979 a total of 1,744,000 jobs have been lost in manufacturing industries. 294,000 have gone in the North West and surprisingly, given the 'soft south' image, the biggest loss was 337,000 in the South East (to March '86).

BRITAIN HAS lost the most jobs (1979 to 1984) of any country in the EEC. Thatcher has succeeded in destroying 1.3 million jobs. The second largest loss is West Germany with 701,000 jobs lost but a still much stronger economy thanks to massive modernisation and investment compared to the performance of the British bosses.

THE APPEAL against Kinsley Drift closure to the 'Independent Review Procedure' has been lost. Just how 'independent' the procedure was can be gauged from the fact that it took place in Hobart House, London, the NCB's headquarters. Paul Wilkinson of Kinsley Drift NUM, thanks all Militant supporters for their support during the struggle to remain open.

THE AEU has requested the TUC to call a meeting of all trade union trustees of pension funds in South Africa. It wants to draw attention to the dangers of continued investment in that country.

THE *Morning Star* last Friday happily quoted one of its leading trade unionists in Liverpool on a local one-day strike of teachers saying that the council is "trying to make cuts through the back door" and that 90 schools could be affected by the cash crisis.

Pardon? Has the massive campaign of the past three years in Liverpool entirely escaped Britain's so-called 'Communists'?

We thought it was precisely the threat of such cuts on the basis of existing resources which prompted Liverpool council to wage their very public campaign.

Yet even now the council is breaking new ground in improved services and workers' conditions. NUT deputy general secretary Doug McAvoy recently welcomed a new agreement with Liverpool Council, saying: "It shows

what can be achieved if all the parties want to do the best for the education service.

THERE IS one union official to every 3,137 members on average, according to press reports of a confidential TUC survey. TUC-affiliated unions employ 8,914 people, 2,917 of them classified as 'officials'. The average income per member is 55p. But income from investments is rising faster than from subscriptions. Perhaps that trend would be reversed if some of those officials were a bit more enthusiastic about a serious fight on jobs and wages—and thus in general recruitment.

SOGAT London Central Branch Casuals' Strike Committee.  
March to Wapping  
30 July, 1pm  
Assemble Clerkenweel Green

# Militant

**Labour youth under attack**  
See page 5

## TUC - isolate S. Africa

**UNDER THE** South African state of emergency, 3,500 have now been detained. 2,646 of them are trade unionists. In the last week alone, 17 South African Allied Workers' Union members have been rounded up. So too have 8 Chemical Workers Industrial Union shop stewards and 6 Transport and General Workers Union officials.

The international union leaders' delegation just returned from South Africa told of the "systematic brutality and torture" experienced by detainees. "The delegation have seen the physical evidence in the scarred bodies of the released detainees to substantiate the harrowing accounts they have received."

These top union officials, including Ron Todd and Norman Willis, were clearly affected by their brief taste of the everyday existence of South African workers. They visited Alexandra, the virtual shanty township near Johannesburg, designed for 40,000 and housing 200,000. Seeing the hostels for male workers forced to live apart from their families, Willis was moved to comment:

"those conditions are for animals. They are kennels not homes."

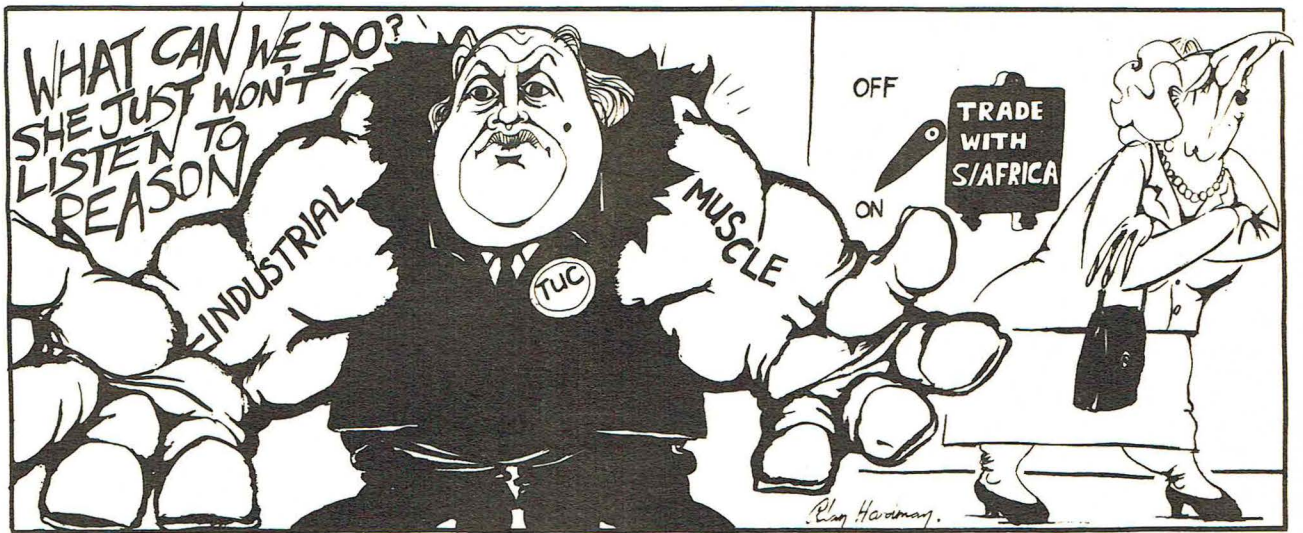
The delegation was itself briefly 'detained'. While in Alexandra, they were surrounded by 100 soldiers and 'hippo' troop carriers all too familiar to black workers. Their first hand experience of the regime's clampdown was obviously an embarrassment to Botha.

### Sanctions

But now they have seen the barbarity of apartheid for themselves, the union leaders have a duty to call their members to action, not just to make meek demands on Thatcher for sanctions. The Tories can be no more relied upon to solve the problems of workers internationally, than they can for workers at home.

James Mndaweni, president of the Council of South African Unions, now in detention, works for Unilever. British trade unionists must exert maximum pressure on such companies to force Botha to free jailed workers.

Willis reported that one black worker he met, when



asked to respond to the Prime Minister's view that sanctions would produce suffering, said: "Those suffering have the right to decide what suffering they are prepared to undertake, no one else!" Everyone they spoke to in the townships supported sanctions.

Ron Todd in July's TGWU Record writes: "all our actions will continue to be guided by our trade union friends in South Africa." But what the COSATU

leaders are demanding, what the South African NUM leaders asked of the TUC on their recent trip to Britain was workers' sanctions.

### Dockers

Willis talks of only promising South African workers what is "deliverable" by the TUC. But what can be delivered depends on the vigour and commitment of the campaign of explanation

mounted by the leaders.

TGWU dockers at Southampton (through which 90 per cent of British trade with South Africa passes) are concerned that sanctions could jeopardise their jobs, while other port workers, perhaps in Europe, pick up the trade. The TGWU, and the foreign unions with which it is linked, could organise an international docks' stewards conference, to ensure the complete effectiveness of workers' sanctions and allay

these workers' fears.

Now Geoffrey Howe is visiting South Africa (although he will not meet any workers) to drag out further the Tories' inaction. The TUC is still planning some limited action in early August. The unions must prove through full, independent action that they alone are prepared to take determined measures against apartheid capitalism.

By Jeremy Birch

## Witch-hunt farce goes on



Cheryl Varley



Felicity Dowling

**THE LABOUR** Party leaders are spending yet another whole day expelling leading Liverpool members, this time two women with impressive records of service to the party.

Felicity Dowling has been a member for 20 years. After years of work in the Labour Party Young Socialists and the Walton constituency party, she became secretary of the now suspended District Labour Party, a councillor for Speke ward and vice-chair of the Education Committee. In May she was re-elected in Speke with 70 per cent of the total vote.

"It is ludicrous that when there is so much to be done that the NEC should be wasting time like this" she said.

Cheryl Varley is convenor of the Merseyside Area Students' Organisation, representing 72,000 students. She

is national chair of the Further Education Labour Students and for three years has been elected as sabattical officer for the students in the Further Education sector in Liverpool. She also sits on the executive of the DLP for which she received the highest vote.

### Justice denied

Members such as these deserve the congratulations of the party, not the inquisition to which they are to be subjected. But given the role of the NEC in the cases where guilt has already been determined, there can be little hope that there will be any justice before they are drummed out of the party.

One section of the party which is particularly incensed at the NEC's ac-

tivities is in Bermondsey. On the very day that the NEC is meeting, they are out fighting a council by-election in the Dockyard ward, caused the sudden resignation of the sitting Liberal councillor. Party chairman and agent in the by-election, Bernie O'Connor, is being forced to take time off from the campaign to deliver a letter to the party's Walworth Road headquarters protesting that the NEC is discussing these expulsions instead of being out fighting the Liberals and Tories.

Members will recall that it was also in Bermondsey, in the 1983 parliamentary by-election, that Labour lost just after the NEC expelled the five members of the *Militant* editorial board. Now as then, the leadership regard internal purges as more of a priority than taking on the party's enemies. Once again the Bermondsey

activists face the prospects of splits in the Labour Party being highlighted in the TV news just as they set out for the doorsteps to persuade the voters to vote Labour.

### No expulsions!

In Bermondsey and throughout the country, party members will be more determined than ever to get the Tories and Liberals out, but will insist that the NEC stop putting obstacles in their way by diverting the party down the dead end of internal strife and expulsions.

By Pat Craven

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