

Militant

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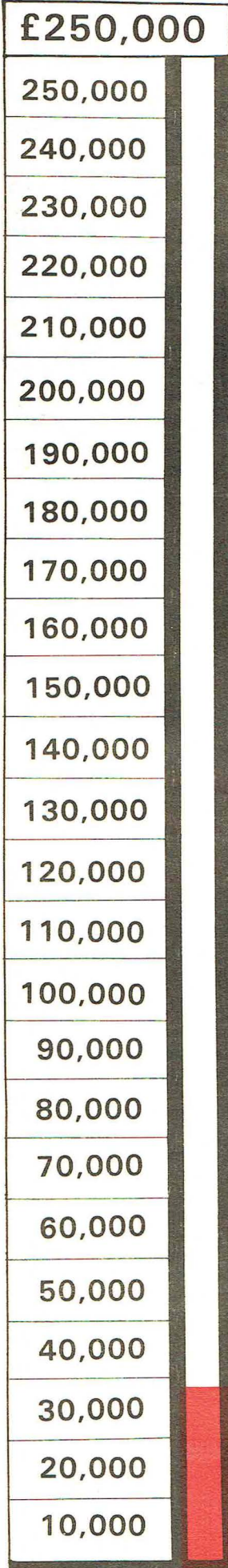
The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth 30p

ISSUE 819 17 October 1986

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Militant Fighting Fund



TORIES OUT

A HUNDRED thousand school leavers have now joined the dole queue.

Unemployment has been pushed up to a new high of 3.5 million and over a million are under 25.

Last week Lord Young was boasting that the government was more deeply involved in measures to reduce unemployment than any other in Europe. So it should be—Britain has the fourth highest unemployment rate in Europe.

What the Tories *have* been deeply involved in is cooking the books to make the figures appear better for the next election.

They've changed the way the unemployed are counted 17 times since they came to power. 314,384 are on YTS schemes. 240,000 are on community programmes and the government took 161,800 elderly off the register by stopping men over 60 signing on.

Then there's probably hundreds of thousands more who want to work but don't sign on. So the real figure for unemployment is nearer 5 million.

Now the Tories have launched the Restart scheme for those out of work for more than six months. They hope that another ten per cent of these—137,000—will come off the official dole figures.

But for the Tory extremists this is not enough. Tebbit wants to make the unemployed work for their benefits—as they have to do in three states in the US.

His government's policies put millions out of work, then he wants people to break rocks—or starve—for not having a job.

If you are angry—if you "can't wait till '88", then join the Labour Party Young Socialists demonstration on Saturday. Join the fight to bring back a Labour government. But one that will carry out far-reaching socialist measures to give real jobs for youth.



LOCAL HEALTH unions and the LPYS organised an angry reception for Thatcher at Guys Hospital, London on 15 October. She was opening a new scanner donated by a millionaire. The hypocritical Tories are giving nothing to finance running the scanner, they have cut local health spending. 160 beds have been lost in the North Southwark area and 100 jobs have gone at Guys. Community services have been butchered. Hundreds showed what they thought of Tory 'care'. Guys is opposite a private hospital and private ambulances whizzed past the demo. Thatcher, due to arrive at 11am, was rushed in by the police before 10am to eat a meal at the medical school. NHS staff would not have cooked for her. Nurses, doctors, ancillaries, students and community health workers were joined by LPYS members, trade unionists and local people on the protest. A 'Maggie must go' banner was hung from a hospital building by LPYS members.

(See page 7)

Young Socialists mass demo
Saturday 18 October
Assemble 11.30 Southwark Park for march to Trafalgar Square

We can't wait till '88

Militant

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Summit for nothing

THE HOPES of millions looking for steps to eliminate the threat of nuclear catastrophe, will have received a fresh blow from Reykjavik. The Gorbachev-Reagan summit foundered on the insistence of Reagan to cling to his pet Strategic Defence Initiative (Star Wars).

Yet Gorbachev made the most significant offer yet in reductions in the nuclear arsenals, in return for restricting Star Wars research to the laboratory and excluding its testing. Both sides would have cut the number of strategic (intercontinental) weapons by half, to 6,000 each. Intermediate nuclear weapons would be reduced from up to 1,300, to 100 on either side. But most significantly none of these would be stationed in Europe. The American Cruise and Pershing and their Russian SS-20 equivalent would be withdrawn.

Reagan was prepared to offer non-deployment of Star Wars for ten years, but considering the early stage of its development, as a system it could not be operational in less than a decade (if ever) anyway.

The two super powers were brought to the conference table because of the enormous drain of military spending on their economies. Arms accounts for 8.5 per cent of US gross national product. But Reagan is also in the grip of the military-industrial complex, whose profits depend on continued military orders. The Star Wars programme if nothing else, is a long term guarantee of big income for this sector of US capitalism.

Reagan and his advisers portray Star Wars as a defensive shield, with the hoped-for ability to knock out Russian nuclear missiles with lasers directed from satellites. They even suggest it is a move towards a safer, nuclear free world! However the unleashing of Star Wars, would create enough fallout to plunge the planet into a nuclear winter.

Reagan is searching for the illusory first strike capacity. If the Star Wars concept really worked and the US maintained its nuclear arms intact, theoretically a first strike potential could be created.

No wonder Gorbachev demanded an agreement on the SDI, although with the intensity of the arms race it is very unlikely that either side could maintain a monopoly of any particular technology.

But it is clear that in the negotiations Reagan was completely outmanoeuvred. The Russians deliberately broke the agreed news blackout, announcing the 'historic' concessions on the table. Then by linking these to SDI, it was Reagan who was made to appear intransigent, as the 'warmonger' and defender of nuclear weaponry.

When 78 per cent of Americans favour a reduction in arms spending, this propaganda defeat will damage the Republican Party in the coming Congressional elections. Democrat presidential hopeful Gary Hart was quick to make capital, denouncing "an unreasonable attachment to a speculative space-based defensive system (that) would come to block real progress towards arms control."

But the summit breakdown can have significant effects in Europe too. The vision of Greenham and Molesworth closing has been crushed, which will fuel the peace movement and unilateralism in the Labour Party. Thatcher had hoped to use an "historic" summit agreement to undercut Kinnock, and to prove that multilateralism works. She intended to make defence a central plank in the general election platform. That now looks decidedly shaky.

The Reykjavik failure confirms the impossibility of any lasting, meaningful agreement between the super powers. It is not because of the personalities, but the fundamental contradictions between imperialism, and the Stalinist states, where despite the bureaucratic elite, private ownership has been abolished. After all, the "historic" offer would still have left the super powers well able to destroy humanity several times over. Each individual warhead is several times more lethal than the Hiroshima bomb.

Of course it is possible at summits for temporary, minor agreements to be reached. Any dismantling of part of the nuclear armoury is to be welcomed. But even if they agreed to scrap all nuclear weapons, which is clearly impossible, as long as the knowledge and technique survive, once the insurmountable tension between the different social systems reached breaking point, new weapons could be constructed. It is not the mere existence of weapons that causes war, but in the modern era the class antagonism between the super powers.

Nuclear war is not of course likely immediately. Even the gangsters in the White House and Kremlin recoil at the prospect of a nuclear holocaust, which is the inevitable outcome of world war. But as long as capitalism continues, the threat of war remains. The defeat of the American workers, a Pinochet regime in the USA not subject to any of the constraints of the labour movement and its democratic rights, would be unbalanced enough to attempt a first strike, wiping out mankind in the process.

The summit has reaffirmed the stark choice facing the workers of the world—socialism or nuclear annihilation. Genuine socialism internationally, not big power wheel-dealing, will guarantee world peace.

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Throughout the world this year, \$1,000 billion will be spent on arms, half of it by the two super-powers. Every minute \$2 million are spent on arms and every minute 30 children under six die from lack of food, clean water or medical care in the third world. For the cost of one nuclear submarine the education budgets of 23 third world countries, involving 160 million children could be funded.

Greek socialists lose in poll

THE GREEK Socialist Party PASOK has suffered a severe defeat in the recent municipal elections.

At least one Marxist candidate, expelled from the Party, has been elected in Athens. (Full results yet to be heard).

In the capital PASOK won only 29.2 per cent of the votes, a drop of nearly 10 per cent compared to the general election in June 1985. The right wing New Democracy got 44.62 per cent, an increase of about six per cent. This pattern, with variations, was repeated up and down the country.

The reason for the dramatic collapse of the socialist vote is quite clear. The party leadership has abandoned all pretence of pursuing a socialist policy. Under the pressure of the bankers and capitalists, it has been carrying out an austerity policy involving spending cuts, a two-year wage freeze and attacks on the trade unions.

The Greek Marxists had warned for ten years of the consequences of this course of action.

Disgusted with the right wing policies of the government, many workers refused to vote PASOK last Sunday as a "punishment" to the leadership.

However, the "Communist" Party,

which has engaged in virulent attacks against PASOK, has no alternative to offer. It has failed to make much headway.

The CP were expecting big gains. It is true that they increased their vote compared to the general election last year. However, they got less votes this time compared to the last municipal elections in 1982. This situation has shaken the CP and caused disappointment and infighting in the ranks.

Marxists backed

A significant aspect of these elections was the participation of the Marxist tendency of PASOK, represented by the paper *Xekinima*. As a result of a vicious witch-hunt waged by the PASOK leadership over a ten year period, most *Xekinima* supporters are expelled from the party.

Yet in these elections, as in the general election, the local parties welcomed the comrades back, and in several areas included them on the lists of local councillors. Given the overwhelming support of the rank-and-file, the national leadership was compelled not only to accept *Xekinima*, but also funded its election campaign, paying for the leaflets and posters, with no at-

tempt at censorship, financing one issue of the supposedly "proscribed" paper and even giving a donation!

By their actions the party leaders have tacitly accepted that the Marxists are the best and most hard working PASOK activists, the only people capable of convincing workers with ideas and arguments.

Last Sunday's result is not the end of the story. Undoubtedly the workers wanted to give the PASOK leadership a stern warning. But it is likely that in the second round on Sunday 19 October many workers will again rally round the party—although it is not sure that this will be enough to keep the right wing out. With an energetic campaign based on the type of real socialist policies defended by *Xekinima*, the party would again sweep the board. But the policies of the right wing, whether in Greece or Britain, guarantee defeat.

One thing stands out clearly from the events in Greece: Marxism will never be separated from the labour movement. Neil Kinnock, please note.

By Alan Woods

RUC 'wild west' killings exposed

DETAILS OF unarmed men, killed in high speed car chases by Royal Ulster Constabulary units in late 1982, appeared in last week's *Observer*.

The detailed reconstructions were those that John Stalker, deputy chief constable of Manchester police, was prevented from uncovering.

The report is based on evidence from police, legal sources and forensic evidence. It tells of six man teams armed with pistols, Sterling sub-machine guns and high powered Ruger rifles who dealt with their victims—a total of six people—"like the wild-west" in high speed car chases.

They were members of the mobile squad unit, many of whom were ex-soldiers and answerable only to special branch chiefs and the RUC chief constable Herman.

Machine gun fire

After each incident all evidence of RUC ambushes was covered up. Cars, weapons and uniforms were transferred. After the first killings of Toman, McKerr and Burns, the RUC issued a statement saying that they had broken through a routine checkpoint.

What happened was totally different. The car, driven by Gervais McKerr, slowed down to enter a Catholic estate in Lurgan.

Two policemen stepped forward and opened fire. The car then sped off and was chased by a police Cortina.

The policeman on the passenger seat fired bursts from his Sterling sub-machinegun. The policeman in the back fired with his high-powered rifle and the police driver with one hand on

the wheel fired with his pistol.

In this short time 109 shots were fired, and the three men were dead; all were unarmed.

The other killings followed similar patterns. Peter Archer, Labour's shadow Northern Ireland secretary, is asking for an "immediate public statement" about the issue from Tom King and asking for "an assurance that there will be no cover-up".

Labour must demand that the investigations of John Stalker be made public. The Labour Party must conduct its own inquiry into the shoot-to-kill policy of the army and the RUC, both of live and plastic bullets. The labour movement must campaign for the ending of these killings and for the disbandment of those forces involved.

By a Belfast Militant reporter

A SMALL strike wave in Northern Ireland shows the potential for working class unity against sectarianism, repression and poverty.
The strike by workers in Wellworth supermarkets ended last week after ten days.

Last Friday 3,000 social service workers went on strike against the government's latest cutbacks and workers in Aghadowey in County Derry have occupied a billiards factory.

Royal Albert Hall
Militant RALLY '86
Tickets £4

Sunday 16 November

Speakers: Ted Grant, Peter Taaffe, Tony Mulhearn, Derek Hatton, Nimrod Sejake

★ Videos ★ Exhibitions

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

Liverpool councillors united

ATTEMPTS by Labour's right wing to divide the Liverpool Labour Group and oust Derek Hatton and Tony Mulhearn collapsed at a meeting of the group last Wednesday.

Party officials Larry Whitty and Joyce Gould who called the meeting walked out in despair after 15 minutes, having failed in their attempts to elect a new deputy leader and reconstitute the group.

No votes were taken and the group remained united. The meeting, attended by 45 councillors, decided to send a delegation to meet the NEC and try and resolve the differences.

Larry Whitty has since sent all members of the group personal letters demanding a loyalty oath and that they should no longer recognise Tony Mulhearn and Derek Hatton.

Over 100 party members and Young Socialists lobbied outside the meeting with banners and placards. They remonstrated with some of the 14 councillors who previously had gone along with the NEC's attempt to reconstitute the group.

Having left the meeting Larry Whitty denied that it had taken place. "Certain ex-members of the party were present and it was necessary to abandon the meeting. They forced their way in" he said.

But it is the party officials who are increasingly interfering with the democratic working of the group—even to the extent of putting 'bouncers' on the door of the meeting room.

At a press conference Larry Whitty said that he hoped both the group and the District Labour Party would be reformed and running normally as soon as possible. "Unfortunately", he said, "a small number of comrades were acting out of egocentricity more than anything else" and preventing this happening.

Responsibility

Clearly the responsibility the expelled councillors have to thousands of constituents as elected members, and the wide support they still enjoy in the party in Liverpool is lost on Larry Whitty and the Labour hierarchy. It is the party officials who are putting obstacles in the way of bringing the Liverpool Party back to normality.

There were ominous warnings from Whitty that disciplinary action would be taken against those still defying the decisions of the NEC. He indicated that innocent victims may suffer. The issue will be discussed at the next NEC meeting on 22 October.

Tony Mulhearn said that "in spite of these threats the majority of the group are determined to carry on the fight. These latest attacks reveal the attempts by the right to stifle all opposition in their abandonment of socialist principles. It will make the party membership more determined to defend party democracy."

By Ben Eastop

A LETTER in the CPSA's journal *Red Tape* explains that the "entire population of Liverpool" haven't been "sold out by the council" as a previous writer had argued.

"I am not a member of *Militant*, or indeed of the Labour Party" Les Mitchell wrote. "Yes people of Liverpool do feel let down. They feel let down by this government and the Labour Party hierarchy."

"When a Labour council, who were elected into office on a mandate of more jobs, more houses and no cuts, endeavours to keep that promise and then is kicked in the teeth by its own national body there comes a time to say enough is enough."

"There are very few people who feel that the Labour Party's policies in this city were unrealistic. The only naivety we can be accused of is expecting the likes of Kinnock and company to offer their support when we needed it."

Right wing thuggery at Labour Group meeting

HERE'S A real case of intimidation which won't hit the headlines. It's just the sort of thing that the right wing and the Kinnockites have accused *Militant* supporters of—without any evidence.

But there were plenty of witnesses when Councillor Harry Smith, a *Militant* supporter, went into the Liverpool Labour Group meeting last Wednesday and was accosted by a 'bouncer' on the door.

"When I got there I noticed a number of people from the Vauxhall area, who have been vocal in attacking the council" said Harry Smith. "I went upstairs with about a dozen other councillors. An ex-Communist Party member, Mickey Keating, was stan-

ding on the door."

"As I went up to the door he put his arm across my chest. I asked him to take it away and to mind his own business. Then as I walked into the room he hit me in the chest. I kept my arms by my side—then he grabbed my jumper."

"I was fuming. I went straight up to Larry Whitty and said who are you, putting these thugs on the door?"

"Whitty said nothing and just looked up at me."

"Several people told Keating that there were plenty of grounds for assault charges to be made against him. After that he disappeared."

A story never heard

SUCCESS AGAINST the Odds is a new booklet produced by Liverpool City Council to publicise its achievements.

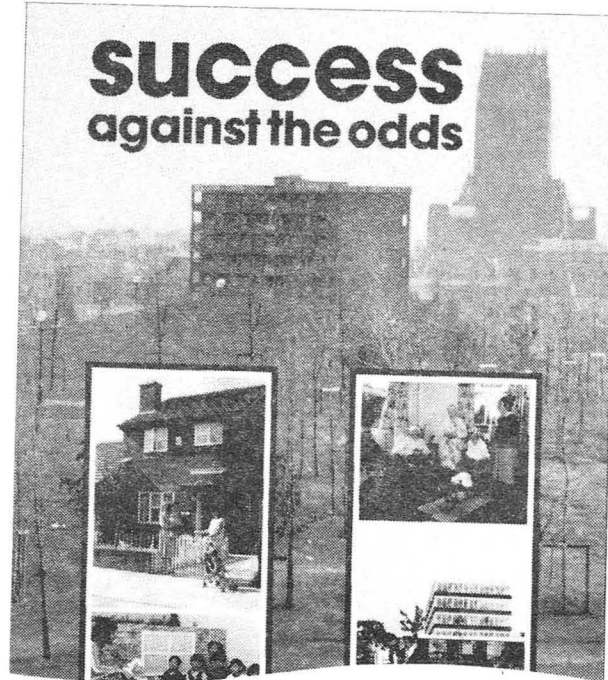
It describes the strategy behind the council's building programme—that people prefer to live in traditional houses, in traditional streets, in traditional neighbourhoods, and how in building 3,800 new council houses Liverpool has stuck to these ideas.

Last year over 1,300 private houses were improved with help from the council. And a nomadic maintenance service for council homes makes sure that repairs are kept up to date.

In education, the council has taken on an extra 519 staff in the last four years. They have built six new nurseries, and are making sure that all rising-5s are catered for with nursery or reception class places.

Secondary education has been reorganised to get rid of surplus places.

Success against the odds



But new Community Comprehensive Schools have been set up, with enough teachers to provide a full curriculum.

Liverpool often gets a bad press—the council's achievements are covered up.

But this book shows what can be done by using the available resources, and by standing up to Thatcher. How many other councils have done the same?

All the people who attack Liverpool City Council

should read this booklet—the press, the Tories and the right of the Labour Party. And they should eat their words.

By Jane Lincoln

Success against the odds can be obtained free from Liverpool City Council, Public Relations and Information Unit, PO Box 88, Municipal Buildings, Dale Street, Liverpool L69 2DH or phone 051 227-3911 extension 620.

Dinner ladies make it hot for Currie

THIRTY EIGHT dinner ladies from the North East descended on South Derbyshire last week to deliver a school dinner to Edwina Currie.

This was a spontaneous statement of anger by these women who were armed with their own home-made banners.

The women were a representative group from NUPE branches in Gateshead, Newcastle, South Tyneside and Sunderland. They travelled down to answer Edwina Currie's comments that ill health in the North was due to ignorance and bad eating and not to conditions such as poverty and bad housing.

They were asking the simple question "If the Tory government is so concerned about diet and good eating, why is it about to deny the right to a free school meal to hundreds of thousands of children from poor families?"

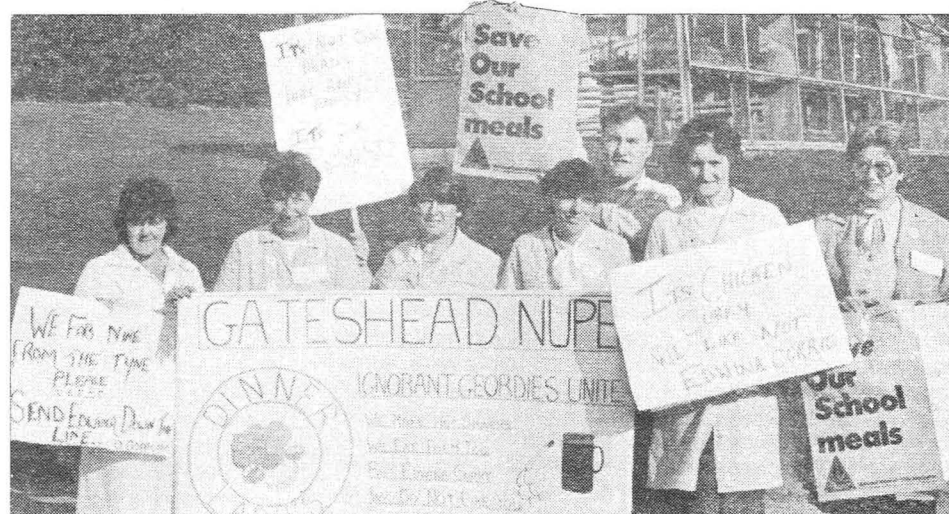
The school meal is the one

decent meal a day received by these children. It has been estimated by education authorities that if the proposed amendment to social security legislation takes effect, then probably only 25 per cent of those currently receiving free school meals will continue to do so.

One of the dinner ladies, D Schuster from Lindisfarne school commented: "I think it's disgusting what this bill is doing depriving 90,000 school children in the Northern region of their free meal, their only cooked meal of the day. I think she ought to be made to apologise for the remarks attacking the North East."

The women cooked a school meal—a curry—for Edwina to show what the children would be missing. The meal was taken from last Thursday's menu.

They invited her to meet them in order to receive the meal—not surprisingly she failed to turn up. A delegation then drove to her house



Dinner ladies from the North East protest to Edwina Currie.

Photo: Chris Bastow

to hand over the meal.

They were staggered at Currie's opulent lifestyle. She lives at the end of a long driveway in a refurbished, old mill. A man answered the door claiming he was the gardener. But in the end he had to admit he was her husband.

The women didn't

manage to see Currie but they thought however, that they had achieved a great deal. A public meeting was held in Etwell, a village in her constituency.

Derby itself was leafleted for an hour, as was the small town of Swadlincote. All in all, 5,000 leaflets were handed out. In all three areas peo-

ple were coming up to apologise at Edwina Currie's remarks.

"She was not speaking for us." One way or another that message kept being repeated.

Brian Ingham spoke to Peter Doyle NUPE Area Officer

'Gang' pays Knowsley a visit

THE 'GANG of three', Charlie Turnock, Ken Cure and Diana Jeuda—the Labour Party's national executive inquiry team for Knowsley North—visited the Merseyside East Euro Constituency last Monday.

They presided over hearings at Wigan, St Helens and Kirkby. In both Wigan and St Helens they refused to give Euro constituency delegates a hearing.

Party members wanted to express their satisfaction with Les Huckfield's candidacy for the parliamentary nomination in Knowsley North.

Officers of Garston Labour Party were not notified of the hearing but came nevertheless and were eventually allowed to address the inquiry team.

Protested

Knowsley North Constituency officers protested at the suspension of the selection process, the lack of any proper notice concerning the inquiry team and their method of procedure.

The constituency officers underlined the dangers posed by the NEC's action. They insisted that the only way to ensure a massive Labour win was to allow the local party the democratic right to select its candidate.

The inquiry team was also told of the anger at the way Party officials were operating behind the backs of the constituency officers and ward party officers by contacting individual members to discuss by-election plans.

Prescot West officers have protested officially about this and asked to ensure there would be no repetition.

Resolutions are still urgently needed demanding a democratic selection conference in Knowsley North, they must reach the NEC before 22 October.

By a Militant reporter

Liberals' election punch-up

BROADGREEN Liberals haven't been very chummy recently over who is going to be the candidate to fight this Liverpool seat at the next election.

Richard Pine, the Liberals prospective candidate for Broadgreen was punched in the face and kicked in the backside by the leisure services spokesman, John Jones.

This ungentlemanly behaviour took place at the constituency party's annual general meeting two weeks ago in Tuebrook. Jones' supporters claimed that fellow councillor Pine and his supporters had packed the meeting.

Visa rule is racist

TO A chorus of racist lies from the Tory press, the government has moved unexpectedly to implement new rules requiring visitors from the Indian sub-continent to obtain entry visas.

They have acted even before the Commons has had the chance of discussing it. So much for Tory debate and democracy! The press has seized the chance to indulge in racist scare-mongering: "Immigrants paralyse Heathrow" lies the *Mail*. "4,000 Asians pour in" yells the *Star*, while the *Express* even refers to a "mass invasion of illegal immigrants."

The Tories and their racist rags have made the term "immigrant" synonymous with black. The truth is that, for example in 1982, of the 202,000 immigrants, 10 per cent came from Australia, Canada or New Zealand, 24 per cent from other Commonwealth countries and 27 per cent from European countries.

The government has ignored the Home Affairs Committee report on "Immigration from the Indian sub-continent" (printed in April 1986) which stated: "There is no reasonable case

By Nina Rahel

at present for imposing a visa system on Bangladeshi nationals, though this remains a reserve option in case of a drastic change in the situation." No such drastic change has occurred, yet the entrance visa requirement has been imposed not only on Bangladeshis, but on Pakistanis, Indians, Ghanaians and Nigerians too! The report also showed that immigration from the Indian sub-continent is "strongly in decline."

More emigrants

To justify their racist immigration controls, the Tories argue that Britain is a small, over-populated island that cannot cope with more immigrants. Yet between 1973 and 1982, 2.27 million left Britain, and 1.8 came from abroad to settle here. The population was reduced by approximately 430,000.

Despite this fall in population, unemployment in the same period rose from 531,000 in 1973 to 3,167,000 in 1983!

The new rule has done nothing to alleviate the staffing problems that the Immigration Service faces. It has served only to fuel racist attitudes. The new scheme will cost £14m a year, which could have provided for thousands of jobs at Heathrow, or other ports of entry in Britain. Instead fifty extra staff are being hired. This insignificant number will do nothing to shorten the queues or the already extensive waiting period, at present as long as 13 months, before an interview with an Entry Clearance Officer.

The harassment of blacks does not end once they have entered Britain. *The Guardian* (8.10.86) reported that the Home Office has threatened to deport a three year old boy, originally from Bangladesh. The Home Office claims that he was brought to Britain in an "adoption of convenience"! The child has deformed feet and has been offered treatment to correct the problem, which would not be available in Bangladesh. This is just

one example of how the government's immigration controls treat blacks with such contempt.

Refugees

Another example is the refusal to grant political asylum to Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka. Some refugees have been forced to travel repeatedly between Britain, France, Jamaica, the Bahamas and India. A main cause of the problem has been the demand for compulsory entry clearance certification from Sri Lankans entering Britain. Tamils wanting to flee the conflict in Sri Lanka, which has already claimed 4,500 lives, are in effect being denied entry into Britain.

The next Labour government must repeal all the racist legislation, abolish the Nationality and Immigration Acts, as well as conducting a campaign of explanation on the question of immigration, exploding all the Tory lies that surround the issue. It must implement a socialist programme to create jobs and homes, and break decisively with capitalism, the disease for which racism is a symptom.



Demonstration against racist deportations in Manchester last year.

Photo: Mick Carroll.

Sam Bond answers press attack

LAST WEEK was the second anniversary of Sam Bond's appointment as Principal Race Relations Advisor to Liverpool City Council. To mark the occasion the *Liverpool Echo* published two articles attacking the City Council and Sam Bond personally. He wrote this reply to the *Echo* but they have not published it.

'Dear Editor,

Yasmin Khan's two articles which appeared in last Friday's *Echo* (10 October 1986) give an entirely misleading account of my position and record at the City Council.

The first article, headlined "Bond stays put as talks fail" quotes NALGO Chairman, Graham Burgess, as saying that I am "unqualified for race relations work."

Who does he think he is fooling? The restrictive practices which his union has operated for many years are the principle reason why so few blacks are employed in white collar jobs at the corporation. His union continues to staunchly defend these practices, and no doubt this explains why Mr Burgess and his colleagues recently rejected a set of proposals that would have given me a free hand to concentrate my efforts on securing better job opportunities for the black community.

The second article claims, among other things, that "community groups" have "steadfastly" opposed my appointment. This is simply untrue. The majority of the city's functioning voluntary black organisations have publicly given me their backing. Indeed, I have previously provided your paper with a list of these groups, which you have never seen fit to publish.

The same article also states, wrongly, that I started my job with no experience of the workings of local authorities, the laws and complexities of race relations", etc.

In fact, prior to taking up my appointment, I issued a 2,000 word statement (part of which was published in your paper) fully documenting my eight years of experience of active anti-racist campaigning, including my first hand knowledge of the workings of the local authority which has pioneered a very successful anti-racist programme.

In the same statement I openly challenged the notion that the oppression of black people is "too complicated" for ordinary blacks to comprehend, and should therefore be left to the "race experts" to deal with. I make no apologies for my continued opposition to the "experts" who seek to deny black people a central role in the struggle against racism.

Ms Khan also quotes me out of context with my record over the last two years, which she describes as "bleak".

I am the first to admit that NALGO's harmful boycott has prevented me from doing all the things which I believe are necessary to improve the prospects and opportunities of the City's black community. But despite their efforts to block everything I have tried to do, I have still managed to win some important gains for the black community.

Over 50 black youngsters have now been taken on as apprentices and trainees. Moreover, there are now more blacks employed in both the council's manual and clerical divisions than ever before—in spite of NALGO.

Ms Khan also makes the



Sam Bond on demonstration in support of Newham Seven anti-racists.

mischievous claim that I have been unable to find "expert help" to draw up a new employment code of practice. Nonsense! A draft code already exists; the trouble is that NALGO refuses

to discuss it.

In addition to the fact that Liverpool City Council now has one of the highest per-capita spending programmes on projects that specifically cater for the special needs of

minority communities, I have proposed a range of further initiatives which could significantly improve the delivery of council services to the black population.

True, some of these measures have only been partially implemented, others not at all. Why? Mr Burgess and his colleagues have the answer.

Yours, Sam Bond'

Two biggest ever Militant meetings

AT OPPOSITE ends of the country, in Ipswich and Paisley, record numbers have come to Militant meetings to hear what we stand for.

In Ipswich 70 people turned up to hear Peter Taaffe, in spite of competition from an Ipswich Town home match and Five Star appearing live. Passing the hundreds of youth queuing for the latter, Peter Taaffe remarked that one day our meetings in Ipswich would have the same following!

Peter Taaffe pointed out that in spite of the anti-Militant feeling at Labour Party conference, 500 predominantly working-class people attended the most successful Militant meeting ever held in Blackpool. He quoted Lenin—the Labour Party might not recognise workers in struggle but workers in struggle would



Teresa and Roger MacKay, expelled from Ipswich Labour Party.

recognise the Labour Party. The party was created on the backs of the trade unions and both would be transformed from top to bottom over the next period. The attacks on Teresa and Roger MacKay were attacks on the policies they represented.

The excellent meeting was given an even greater boost by the £338.30 that was



raised—£200 pledged by Dave Smith; £18 dole cheque pledged by Liz Lloyd and a week's pocket money pledged by Daniel MacKay.

Over 200 in Paisley heard Tony Mulhearn refer to "one of the darkest days in Labour's history" when he and seven other Militant supporters were expelled from the party.

"The leadership" he said,

see nothing wrong with expelling socialists who campaign for jobs and a better life for working people and yet remain silent about those union leaders who have organised the scabs working at Wapping.

"The working class's hatred of the Thatcher government has put Labour on course for victory at the next general election. I will fight as hard as anyone for that victory and the implementation of genuine socialist policies."

The meeting showed its appreciation for Tony Mulhearn's long and courageous struggle for the working class with a standing ovation and a collection of £385.

By Teresa MacKay, expelled member of Ipswich Labour Party and Jim Halpenny, West Renfrew and Inverclyde Labour Party.

Thousands die needlessly

THOUSANDS OF babies die needlessly every year in maternity hospitals that lack the most basic resuscitation equipment. Paediatrician Dr Neil McIntosh knows of 20 babies unable to be admitted to intensive care last year in London. Most of them died. In Britain in 1984, 7,500 babies were stillborn or died within the first weeks of life.

For the South East Thames Region 35 intensive baby cots are needed to meet the recommended quota of one cot per thousand births. It has in fact only six. University College Hospital in London has 34 cots, but 12 of them cannot be used because there are too few nurses. The department there turns away more babies than it takes.

Throughout the country the shortage of doctors and nurses in this field is acute. Highly trained nurses, experienced in intensive care baby treatment are paid only £6,500 a year, for one of the most stressful jobs, where minute by

minute attention to detail is crucial. Most units are understaffed by 50 per cent, putting nurses under extra pressure, and many do not stay in the job for long.

Health administrators and some doctors in other fields do not think tiny or premature babies really matter. They say the parents do not suffer as much as when an adult or a child dies. The mother can always have another, better baby.

But poverty is the root cause of babies being born with low birth weights. Babies born of unskilled workers are twice as likely to die as babies born into the professional classes and the gap is wider than 15 years ago. 3,000 lives would be saved each year, if the risk of death for all babies was the same as for social class one.

Under capitalism human life means so little, that while the technology exists for performing intricate operations, once undreamt of, the basic equipment for keeping alive a small baby is not available.

By Sharon Maclean



One of the 'lucky' ones—baby in intensive care.

Cervical cancer

The British Medical Association has just published a report which criticises government policy over cervical cancer screening.

Cervical cancer kills hundreds of women needlessly every year in Britain, yet if discovered and treated early enough in its development, it can be completely curable. Because the disease has been linked to a sexually transmitted virus, women who developed the disease used to be blamed for bringing it upon themselves through promiscuity. However, this 'escape clause' for the government has been blown in recent years since it was known that the disease can affect any sexually active woman, and the government's own statistics show that working class women, particularly the partners of men who work with

By Anne Lewin
(Newham NE LPYS)

chemicals and in specific engineering industries are most at risk.

According to the government's own Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, the number of new cases of the cancer is expected to rise from 2,100 this year to 3,400 by 1996.

Technology

Based on present trends, the number of women dying from the disease will increase from 580 this year to 1,000 a year by 1996 and to 1,200 at the turn of the century.

"We ought to be able to



Health minister Edwina Currie

halt the increase" said Dr Dawson, launching the report: "we have the technology to deal with it now."

Although it is government policy to screen women every five years from the age of 20, general practitioners are only paid to take smears from women over 35. The lack of a proper administration and

recall service means that 60 per cent of those who die of the disease have never been screened.

"This disease has a major impact on families and children. We are talking about premature death," pointed out Dr Dawson. Yet the report states that if the government gave it priority, and sufficient funding, a thorough screening of 80 per cent of women at risk every three years from the age of 20 could be operating within 15 months.

It is vital that screening be extended, not only because of the numbers who have never been tested for the disease, but also because recent reports suggest that a new strain of the disease is particularly virulent among younger women and can develop and kill within only a few years—possibly before

some young women have even been recommended for their first test.

However, as any woman who has ever tried to get regular testing will know, some GPs are reluctant to do the test more frequently than the recommended five year intervals. This is partly as a result of the pressure of work on current testing laboratories. Many labs have a continual back-log of testing—the system could not cope if all women were tested regularly. The report shows that to implement the BMA's proposals, lab facilities would have to double.

Currie

All women have a vested interest in seeing the expansion of the cancer screening services, yet Edwina Currie

who preaches about self-help for health, said last February that universal cancer screening was "neither desirable nor necessary". So women will know what to expect from her since her appointment as junior health minister.

The decline of the NHS has undoubtedly made cancer screening more and more difficult for women. A future Labour government must ensure that the Health Service is rebuilt with a thorough screening service for women, including a proper recall service every two or three years. Although cervical cancer screening is not the only area of the NHS which has been starved of resources, it is appalling that a disease which is detectable and fully treatable claims such a massive death toll every year.

Brum tenants win repairs victory

EIGHTEEN TENANTS from Beale House, Ladywood, Birmingham have won a court case that could have national repercussions.

The tenants of the twenty-one year old tower block took action under the Public Health Act because of damp, poor heating and black mould caused by condensation.

The council were ordered to carry out £600,000 of work on Beale House and two similar blocks. The renovation will mean the installation of off-peak storage heaters, extractor fans, secondary glazing and the treatment and re-decoration of mould affected rooms.

If the judgement is not overturned by a higher court, it will mean that groups of tenants can take action on behalf of a whole block, instead of taking the council to court over individual dwellings. This could force councils to spend millions of pounds throughout the country.



Beale House

Birmingham has the highest proportion of unfit housing in the country. There are 148,000 sub standard homes and nearly one in ten of inner city households lack exclusive use of basic amenities. There are even 7,000 council houses without an indoor toilet.

Since 1979 however, the money spent on housing has been cut 60 per cent and

there have been no new family council houses built for five years. There are now 21,000 on the housing list.

Despite all this, the labour council has not been prepared to take on the government over the cuts, preferring to go for glamour projects. What use is the 'super-prix' olympics or a new convention centre, if people do not have decent housing.

This year, Birmingham will pay 53 per cent of its housing revenue in debt charges, whilst only spending 32 per cent on repairs. The bankers and finance houses are making money out of Birmingham's despair.

By Lila Evans
Nechells Labour Party

Exclusive

Labour MP asked to go

REDCAR Constituency Labour Party general committee has voted, with only five against, to ask their MP, James Tinn, to resign. If he does not do so within ten days, they will ask the national executive committee to approve a timetable for the MP's reselection.

For many years, Redcar Labour Party was right wing dominated. At the AGM in March this year there was a swing to the left. This meeting also disallowed a delegate who supported Tinn whose affiliation form was sent in late. Although a regional official of the party was present and declared that

the meeting was properly conducted, the MP led a walkout and has not attended any constituency party meetings since. He was not present when front-bench spokesman John Prescott spoke at a march for jobs in the constituency.

Tinn has demanded a Liverpool-style inquiry into the party which he claims has been taken over by the *Militant* tendency. This is no more than a desperate 'red scare' ploy to save his political skin.

By a Militant reporter

Conservative Conference 1986

Beware of the 'caring' Tories

A PRE-ELECTION jamboree—that was the Tory Party conference. The theme word was *care*. After seven years of relentless attacks on health, welfare and employment the Tories have discovered the word "care" and every Cabinet speaker was obliged to use it.

But they sounded about as genuine as seedy market stall holders. Every hour another Tory minister stood up to announce their bargain basement offers to tempt the voters. New, improved education; bigger, better health service; more jobs: more homes—all wrapped with care (*Conservatives After Re-Election*).

But of course the Tories could not maintain the caring facade all week. Thatcherite minister, Rhodes Boyson, condemned those 'choosing' to be single parents as "probably the most evil product of our time." While a speaker from Sheffield denounced "silly young girls" who "become single parent families so they can go to the top of the housing list and see their supplementary benefit

Privatise everything

THE TORIES really do care about privatisation. Conference was told that a further £4.75 billion worth of state assets is to be 'piratised' to their friends in the private sector. British Gas, Rolls Royce, British Airways, British Airports Authority are all set to go.

Extreme Thatcherite Nicholas Ridley, the Environment Secretary, warned that local councils are to be compelled "very soon" to put out to tender services like refuse collection and street cleaning.



The blue rinsed ovation.

But the prize for young upstart of the week goes to a Guildford student who told the conference: "Everything must go... Let us sell shares in the Bolshevik Broad-

casting Corporation... and we will see a bit of balance on television. Let us sell shares in British Rail; sell it off station by station, line by line."

Even more Currie sauce

EVEN TORY conference it seems does not care for Edwina Currie. A northern delegate was loudly applauded for attacking her patronising remarks on the eating habits of the poor.

Now Richard Holt, Tory MP for Langbaugh in the North East, has founded a very select 'Currie Dining Club', for Tory MPs who feel like him about the junior health minister: "It's hard enough being a Tory MP up here... without having a stupid woman like her making these crass remarks."

BUT EDWINA has been caught out—tucking into double hamburger, fried egg and greasy chips.

What catastrophe could have forced this self-appointed guardian angel of working class diet, to increase the danger of making herself a burden on the National Health Service (some chance)?

"It was a cold, damp, wet



Tory delegates enraptured by Douglas Hurd.

day" she told *The Mirror* "and we had not eaten anything for hours. Yes I know I could have ordered a salad but we were cold and hungry. We needed a warm, filling meal and that is what we had."

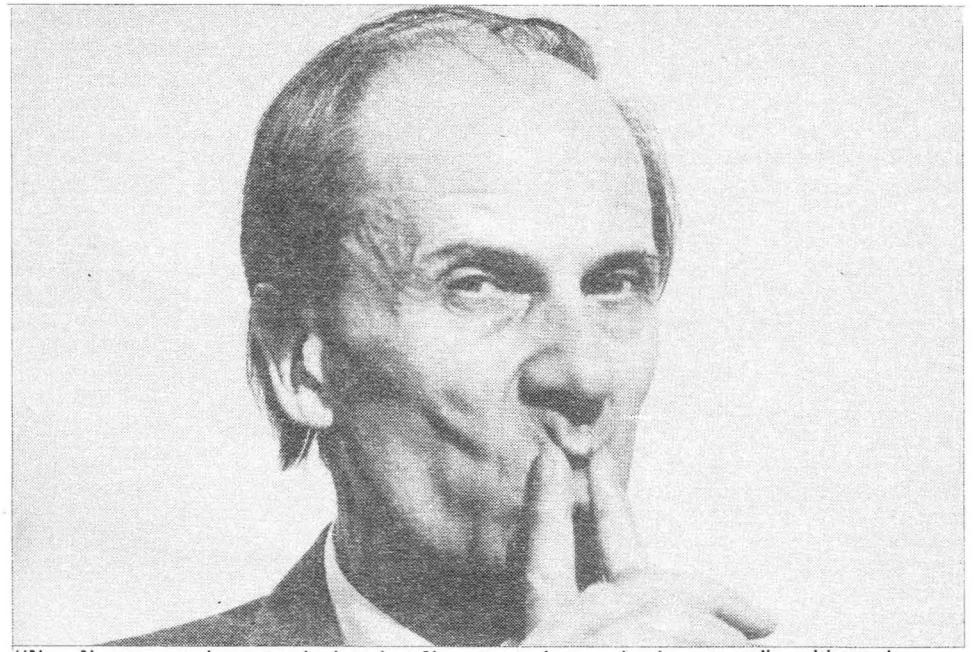
So if poor Edwina gets caught out in the rain (waiting for a bus maybe), has to wait hours for a meal

(like a shiftworker) or suffers from the damp (like a miner), we will all understand if she fancies a fry-up. But as for you ignorant, unhealthy Northerners—as Edwina said: "Don't blame me if you die of a heart attack or cancer".

By Kevin Ramage

speeded through the system." The Tories would doubtless prefer to see single parents shunned by society, as they were under Victorian values.

Lord Young, Unemployment Minister really cares about the jobless and the low paid. "There are millions of jobs at under £80 a week", he declared enthusiastically, trying to deride Labour's plans for a modest minimum wage.



"Now Norman, you've got to look caring. Now, try and remember how to smile, without showing your fangs."

Your NHS in their hands

THE NATION'S health is safe in Tory hands, it is official from their conference. Social Services Secretary Norman Fowler, is going to cut waiting lists, increase the number of hip, heart bypass and cataract operations, and bone marrow transplants. On the seventh day he may rest!

Unfortunately, he omitted to mention how all this would be achieved, when no extra cash is to be made available. The British Medical Association replied: "the programme which the Secretary of State outlined for improved care and treatment for patients, and particularly to reduce waiting lists and waiting time, must be accompanied by additional funding if his targets are to be achieved."

The National Association of Health Authorities, the people at the sharp end of health care, estimate they need an extra £650 million next year just to maintain existing levels of service.



Norman Fowler holds out a list of hospitals improvements! Probably written in invisible ink.

Currently there are over 600,000 on hospital waiting lists. But the vice-chairman of the Conservative Medical Society gave the conference the answer: if every general practitioner referred one less patient a month to a

specialist, and if every specialist referred back to a GP one patient a month, 500,000 could be cut off the waiting list in a year.

The Tory prescription for care for the sick, is to stop treating them.

Educashun at risk

THE RETURN of selective schools to selected inner cities, was the main conference proposal for education. 'City Technology Colleges' (scientific grammar schools) will be established for just 15,000 children, with all the best resources pumped in.

While the overwhelming majority of children will be sharing text books in the comprehensives, under siege from Tory cuts, the fortunate few will be using the most modern educational equipment.

For these schools will not be reliant on local education authority funding. In fact they will be outside of local authority control. Outside therefore the interference of the Labour Party, which controls these inner city authorities. These schools will be run by special educational trusts, with big

business sponsorship to pay for the equipment etc.

To get a place children, and their parents, will have to pass not an aptitude test, but an "attitude" test. The families will be selected, according to Education Secretary Kenneth Baker, on their "attitudes", and their commitment to making these schools work.

Tory attitudes will no doubt go a long way towards securing a place. Needless to say the only teachers' union backing the plan is the Tories' pet—the non-strike Professional Association of Teachers.

For millions of children, parents and teachers, Baker's gimmick will be an expensive irrelevance. But the Tory Cabinet Ministers really do care about state education, after all they all went to public schools.

Tories boost sales

ANGER AGAINST the Tories is fuelling *Militant* sales. Fifteen papers were sold in under an hour at Stratford precinct in London in a lunchtime, with last week's headline 'Tories don't care'.

One buyer turned out to be a steward leading a strike in a local factory. Another was a visitor from Zimbabwe. A third had heard Peter Taaffe speak recently at a meeting in Ipswich and was interested in finding out more about our paper.

And one old lady said simply; "Did you see Maggie trip over the manhole the other day? I wish she'd fell down it!"

While sellers in Conisbrough using last week's feature on their area, have sold 300 copies to date, 68 on one estate.

Left and Right

Norman's nasty shock

THE CHINGFORD boot boy, Norman Tebbit, may be party chairman, but that made no difference to the Chingford Conservative Association. Their resolution, which was not called, wanted conference organisers "not to manipulate proceedings or to stage-manage debates at this, or future conferences."

Very healthy

SOME PEOPLE have got very healthy under the Tories. Just seven companies have been awarded 70 per cent of all contracts for domestic and cleaning staff for the NHS under Tory privatisation plans. Recent takeovers and mergers give a near monopoly position in many areas.

Unemployment for NHS workers and low wages for contract staff may mean worse health for them, but at least profits are healthy.

Jumping the gun

WHATEVER IT will cost the Tory Party, their Bournemouth conference cost their dearly-loved taxpayers at least a million pounds in policing.

To justify this the media are happy to exaggerate the slightest "security" risk. Thus on the opening day the morning TV and radio news opened with the story of two men arrested on "a firearms charge", all of them carefully omitting the fact that the main item was a *harmless starting pistol* belonging to one of the hotel chefs.

Riot alert

LOCAL YOUTH, black and white, attempt to stop a police consultative committee meeting which is debating the purchase of specialist weapons by the Chief Constable. 'Tension indicators' that the police believe show when riots are likely, have increased and officers are on standby. Stones and petrol bombs are thrown and barricades built. The police use plastic bullets (which strangely enough they already have) to disperse the crowd, although (naturally) "the area is generally in support of the Chief Constable's action."

This is the scenario that West Midlands police are acting out to train in the use of plastic bullets.

As Clare Short MP has commented, no riots in England have been associated with political meetings. But the West Midlands police are preparing for pitched battles with working class youth over political questions!

In fact, such are the social tensions in the region that police in Handsworth, Coventry, Walsall and Wolverhampton have all been put on riot alert at least once this summer. The boys in blue can't be very confident of their popularity. Their 'tension indicators' include the number of attacks on police cars!

Shop lifter

In Wolverhampton, Sandwell and Handsworth, a drive to recruit from ethnic communities has met a distinctly cold shoulder, and there are only 105 black police officers out of 6,800 in the West Midlands.

An amazing incident was reported in the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* recently. 30 to 50 people surrounded shop assistants who had chased a young shop-lifter onto the street

By Tony Cross

where they had caught him. The crowd demanded the lad's release and he escaped after a middle-aged man shouted "Leg it son." Respect for the traditional forces of law certainly seems to have broken down in some quarters!

The police have introduced another sinister measure in the region. They have started to use unmarked cars and vans, equipped with night sights, binoculars, telescopes and micro-computers to spy on high-crime areas. Trade union activists are bound to ask what is to stop these vehicles being used to spy on leaders of industrial disputes and other labour movement activities.

These developments show how independent the police are from democratic control. Plastic bullets and CS gas were introduced against the wishes of the Labour majority on the West Midlands County Council, and Warwickshire Chief Constable Peter Joslin has publicly attacked his County Council over the resources they allocate to the police:



Police public order training centre, Hounslow, London.

Photo: Andrew Moore (Reflex)

Nightmare of Northern Ireland

Tony Cross and Nigel Bayton asked local workers and youth for their comments on these developments:

Warwickshire miner Allan Stewart: "If they want civil war, that's the way to go about it. Just think if they had had plastic bullets during the strike! They definitely will be used in industrial disputes. The police will try to provoke a situation where they can use them and people will get killed."

"I've got no confidence in the police whatsoever. I was charged with riot at the NUM's Mansfield demonstration. I was locked up for 36 hours; there were 20 of us in a cell and they opened the door every half-hour. In the end they dropped the charges because the Orgrave trial showed the police conniving to put people away."

"It's getting like South Africa in this country. They can arrest twelve people for meeting in the street. The police and this government are totally against the young."

Coventry LPYS member, Dave Mutton: "I saw police using so-called 'special weapons' on Central News. They were firing plastic bullets at a stack of lorry tyres from a distance of 40 yards. I was under the impression that plastic bullets were supposed to be fired at the ground and then ricochet into the crowd. The police are obviously unaware of this as the policeman on the TV fired from a kneeling position into the lorry tyres, making them shake considerably."

"The velocity of the round as it



leaves the barrel is around 180 mph. In Northern Ireland people have been seriously hurt and even killed by them. This is not surprising if the police are trained to fire directly at them."

Peter Dillon and Ian Barton are Young Socialists from Tipton. Peter, a young Asian, lives on the same street as the disused British Steel site on which the police are training: "It's very worrying to think that something like this is going on just around the corner from where I live. What surprises me is that our Labour Council is actually letting it go on. The police will use this to get more power, not only with riots but any disturbances by the people. The government seem more prepared to spend

money on giving police equipment to kill people than they are on creating jobs."

Ian: "The nightmare of Northern Ireland is being brought to the streets of the mainland. People there have been killed just for the crime of being in the wrong place at the wrong time."

"It's obvious you don't train with something you have no intention of using. If there was another riot like Handsworth, the police would not think twice about using plastic bullets and they would have used them in the miners' strike. In the future they could be used in any mass strike or struggle by workers."

"It is time the Labour Council did something about this and stopped the police using Tipton as a training ground. If the people of Tipton were made to realise the consequences for them, I'm sure they would organise to stop it."

Les Kuriata served his apprenticeship at the steelworks:

"Before Thatcher got in, apprentices like me were being trained in engineering at London Works Steel. Despite having one of the most technologically advanced steel rolling mills in Europe, it was closed. Now the police are using it to train in engineering social conflict."

"No doubt they intend to use plastic bullets in areas of high unemployment caused by the closure of this mill and other factories like it. It seems they'd rather spend money on plastic bullets than creating jobs and wiping out the conditions that cause riots."

Democratic control

The West Midlands police have used guns five times in the last ten years. Two people have been killed and a shot fired into a bed in which two children were sleeping. In May a policewoman was hit in the leg with a training pellet during an incident at Birmingham Airport. Despite this appalling record, the government is encouraging them to extend their armory.

Crime figures have doubled in the West Midlands in the last ten years. The police's increasing powers don't seem to have affected the sort of offences that many workers are anxious to stop, like theft, burglary, crimes of violence. But the labour movement ignores the extension of police powers, and the lack of democratic control over

them, at its peril.

The TUC and the Labour Party must campaign for the banning of plastic bullets and CS gas, and should campaign to win rank and file police officers to the trade union movement. Labour local authorities should do everything within their powers to prevent training in the use of special weapons in the areas they represent, and alert local workers to the danger such exercises represent.

The labour movement must fight against the extension of the police's powers to snoop, and for the weeding out of the fascists and racists from the force. Above all the police must be democratically controlled by the elected representatives of working people.

Raise the money

PUTTING THE new look Fighting Fund Chart on the front page of the paper has caught the imagination of our readers. "Brilliant", said Cathy Dineen of Mossley Hill, Liverpool: "It's made everybody really determined to raise the money." "It's made the fighting Fund a talking point," said Diane Simcox, of Birmingham: "New readers are asking what the money is for and how can we raise it."

Our appeal to send us at least one week's income to reach our massive target is meeting with an enthusiastic response. Mick Siddall, a Nottingham miner, sent us £100, a pensioner in Hackney £31.50, Alex Tarry, a student spending a year in industry, £200 and another student Aled Francis, from the West Midlands, £100. Ian Snode, who works on a Community Programme in Grimsby gave us his pay cheque for £51.39 and a reader in Broadgreen handed over an unopened pay packet containing £65. Phil Ashome, from Bux-

ton, sent £100, nearly a fortnight's wages.

After the accidental omission of the Solidarity Price we had sellers phoning up to complain. We can see why. Edinburgh sellers raised £28 one week and £14 the next. £10 was raised in Portsmouth. Don't forget to ask for it.

Keep up all the usual sources of raising cash. Jumble sales in Fife and Brighton raised £35 and £72 respectively. A sponsored 'no-smoke' in Edinburgh raised £32. A collection from miners in Maesteg raised £14 and one outside Snowdown Pit, Kent, raised £5. Make sure your area has things organised.

DONATIONS THIS week include: Tara Mistry Bristol East Labour Party £5; Ipswich Readers' Meeting £308; Gosport LPYS £10; Bryn Wise Surrey £5; K Nelson Huyton £10; SJ Stubbs Sheffield £10; Terry Ellis Shoreditch £11; Chris McNulty Hounslow £5; Mr and Mrs Arnold Nottingham OAPs £10.

£250 000 Fighting Fund

		£9,700	10,450	40,450	12,850	25,000	15,300	10,400	11,000	10,300	6,700	6,750	15,850	15,350	23,900	36,000
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	Eastern	East Midlands	London	Manchester and Lancs	Merseyside	Northern	Scotland East	Scotland West	Southern	South East	South West	Wales	West Midlands	Yorkshire	National	

Labour must change society

"LONDON HASN'T got it easy any more" John Bryan prospective Labour candidate for Bermondsey told a Labour Party Young Socialist (LPYS) meeting there last week.

Bermondsey in South East London is nothing like the media image of the "soft south". It used to be docklands, but Surrey Docks closed in 1969 and that tore the heart out of the area. The Tories and the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) have been trying to transplant a new 'yuppy' heart.

"The land along the river that should have been used for local businesses and homes for local people—we have the likes of Bob Geldof and Paul Eddington moving in. The

cheapest home there is £60,000" John told the audience.

"Young people in Bermondsey don't have the choice of jobs I had when I left school round here. Many don't have any job at all. All the government offers them is cheaper and easier access to drugs. Solvent abuse has become an epidemic. It is up to the LPYS to make sure the next Labour government changes things."

The LPYS demo starts in Bermondsey this Saturday. Sian Rhys spoke to local young people. They agree with John Bryan. Things have got to change.

Photos: Mark Sah!l

"Stop these cuts"

"IF LIFE is like this for us, what is it going to be like for our children, and the next generation?" asked 19 year-old Michelle Monaghan, mother of 18 month-old Lee.

"You have young people living in these high rise flats with the winds so high that they break the windows. They're fire traps—if there was a fire in the flat, there's only one way out. You jump to your death or burn to death!

"I want Maggie out because of the cuts she's done in education and health. When Lee got burned, I had to take him to three different hospitals and the first two turned me away—they didn't have any room.

"They kept him in for three weeks, and he had to sleep on a special foam mattress. When he wet himself or made a mess they just turned it over—they only changed it when he made a mess



Michelle and Lee

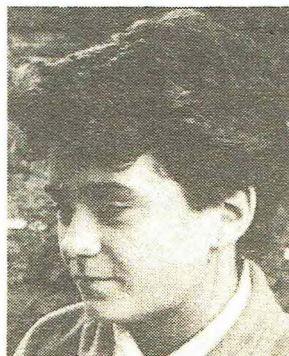
on that side, too!

"As for education—a couple of months ago my sister was only doing about a day a week in school because there wasn't enough teachers. If there's no teachers, what are they going to learn? Nothing.

"The government should spend money on the comprehensive schools. If the Tories get in again a lot of children won't bother going to school—they'll have to pay for their own education."

Michelle's cousin, Kerry is 14. "I want to be a hairdresser, or a clothes designer or something like that. But if Maggie Thatcher gets in again, I'll have no chance at all. She doesn't give nothing to nobody.

"When we do social



Kerry

studies at school, people in my class just say they'll do nothing when they leave school, and they'll be on the dole. But I don't want to be on the dole, with no money for clothes or to do something decent.

"I want Maggie out because she's a bitch. She makes me sick."

"A job for every school leaver"

MARK ENRIGHT, a 15 year old school student, got an 'excellent' mark for socialism!

"A teacher at my school told us to write an essay about how we would vote if we could.

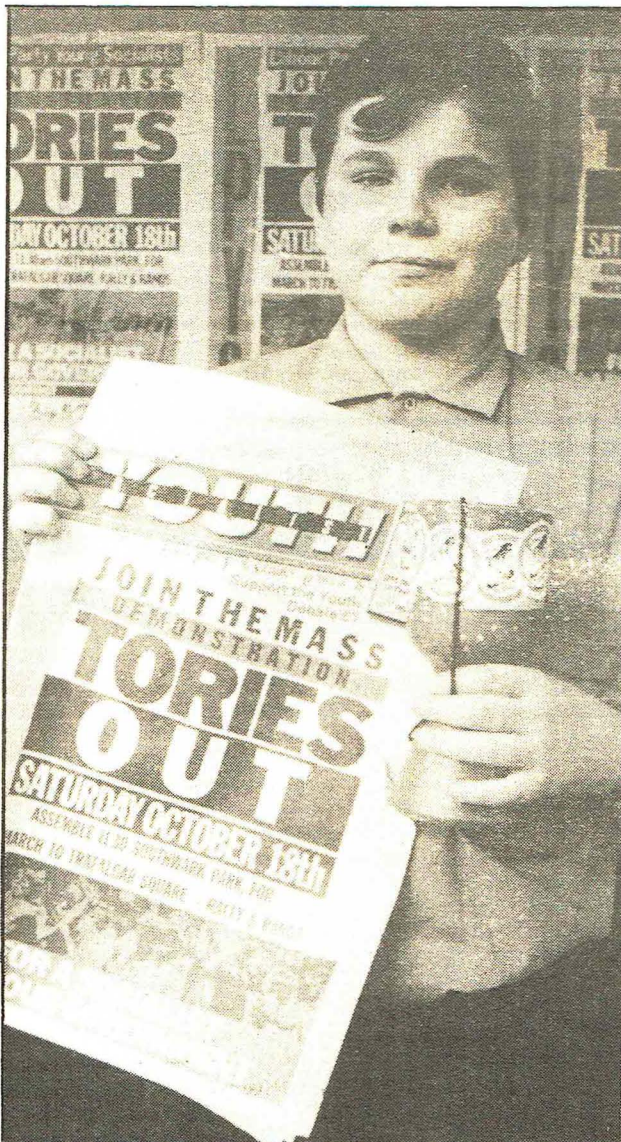
"I said I was working class, so I'd vote Labour because it's a working class party. And I went on to say what Johnny Bryan's going to do when he becomes the MP— he's going to live on a worker's wage and still live in his flat in Bermondsey.

"I don't know much about Tory party policy, except under the Tories education and health have got worse. But I can understand policies like decent wages for all young people and a job for every school leaver," he said.

Out of 33 in the class, 25 said they would vote Labour, 3 Liberal, 2 Tory, and the rest didn't know.

"Our school is going to be closed down. In our maths class there's ten books between 22 kids. They're really tatty and falling to bits. And when you need a new exercise book you have to pay for it.

"I'd like to be Prime Minister. The first thing I'd do would be kick the Tories out and make Edwina Currie stick to salads! Then I would give every school leaver a job. I'd save jobs and sack the Tories!" he said.



Mark Enright



The LPYS got a great welcome all round London.

TORIES OUT

NO

Working and studying round

SOUTHWARK COLLEGE is the local tech, with more than 2,000 students spread over five different sites.

19 year-old Devon Brodnock is studying for A-levels. He doesn't get a grant, but works part-time in a local clothes shop to pay his way.

"When I leave here I'm going to emigrate to Canada—my mum's there. The policies the Tories are bringing out just makes Canada more attractive. They've cut back on education—I had to take one subject out of my course. And even people who do get a grant, they have to work part time."

Devon's friend Mark Fairfield is 17, and on a BTEC course at Southwark. He gets a grant of £7 a week. How does he live on that?

"I don't! It wouldn't even pay my fares". So he lives with his parents and relies on them for money.

He's not hopeful on the jobs front. "It's going to be a good few years before I leave full-time education. In seven years from now, they say, there are going to be more jobs. There



Devon and Mark at Southwark College

are jobs about now—it's just there are too many people going for them.

"In Wandsworth, where I live, it's a Tory council and they are selling off council property. There's one big block they are selling off and converting it in-

to three-bedroom furnished flats that cost £126,000 to buy. I don't agree with that."

The student union is run by president Chris Blackman, with help from Edith, Nancy, Christianna and Wayne. They have part-time jobs, as well as

Round London for jobs: a marcher's diary

Tuesday 7 October.
OUR FIRST stop off was Ilford dole office where unemployed people gave us money and encouragement for our march around London.

Then to Ilford Town Centre where the local Tory council made sure the police stopped us even touching the Town Hall steps. Local journalists interviewed us and took pictures. Then to Stratford for an evening rally. Marcher Andy Lemon, a member of Lambeth NALGO explained why marchers were taking the issue of youth unemployment round London—to win young people to the LPYS and the unions.

Tony Banks the local MP explained how the Tories had changed the way they calculated unemployment 17 times since 1979! There were about 5 million out of work. He urged people to join the Labour Party and LPYS and campaign for a Labour election victory.

Wednesday 8.

To Waltham Forest where students met us outside in a show of solidarity. Then a civic reception and lunch in Walthamstow Town Hall with the mayor and Labour councillors. I pointed out that while the march was a success their real hope was



The jobs marchers arrive at Broadwater Farm estate.

Photo: Tim Bolwell

for an election victory for a Labour Party committed to implementing socialist policies.

Afternoon: Visited local estate then on to an evening meal and reception laid on by Haringey council. Evening rally with local CPSA branches. Naresh Chauhan stressed the need to build links with CPSA branches and help in the new John Macreadie election campaign.

Thursday 9.

Breakfast with mayor of Haringey then off to Broadwater Farm Estate where the

youth association gave us warm friendly welcome. This visit probably the highlight of the march so far. We stayed there for some time discussing with organisers and local youth and having loads of pictures taken.

Bill Graham a NUPE convenor and marcher said the reception was an inspiration. Youth Association gave the marchers a letter wishing them well and a £40 donation towards the march.

Then through Tottenham into Camden staying at the Winchester Road community project courtesy of a local Labour councillor.

Friday 10.

Civic reception Brent Town Hall with Labour councillors. On to Harrow where Keith Toms Labour group deputy leader, led the march through the town centre and even gave marchers tea at his house. Evening YS Print strike benefit organised by Harrow LPYS.

Saturday 11.

Detour to Uxbridge where fascist British National Party were meant to be holding a day of action. We had a duty to join the counter-demonstration because mass

unemployment helped to breed fascist filth.

Then off to a good lunch in Ealing North Labour Club then marched to Southall via Golfinks estate where Southall LPYS joined us. Response on estate marvellous—dozens joined in, young and old, taking LPYS national demo leaflets and stickers.

Then into Southall. Another brilliant response, hundreds stopped and gave donations and signed petitions, two young lads joined the march and gave out leaflets. Raised £150 in half an hour. Then onto Havelock Temple, the largest Sikh temple in the area where we were fed and put up for the night. We were treated like special guests.

Sunday 12.

Morning photo call with local organisers in Sikh temple who promised a full article in their journal which has a big circulation in the local Asian community. On to Heathrow Airport where two shop stewards from the cargo sections drove us in by coach for a full roast dinner. Stewards donated £25 to our funds. Another great day.

By Sue Khan
(Harrow LPYS)

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the clock

"Giz a job" centre occupied by YS members

LAST FRIDAY morning the Jobcentre in Liverpool's shopping precinct was plastered with Labour Party Young Socialist posters.

"Giz a job, YTS is slave labour, real jobs for youth", covered over the normally glossy advertising. As the Jobcentre opened its doors around 20 members from Merseyside LPYS branches, mostly unemployed, moved in and occupied the ground floor.

Soon the police arrived and a crowd of about 50 gathered outside to see what was going on. Sympathy for the protest was overwhelming; one smartly dressed woman said "It's fantastic". The police soon disappeared.

A man standing nearby with his wife and child said he thought YTS schemes were "disgusting". "They take men out of work and put kids in for next to nothing".

Once they saw that the protest was peaceful, jobcentre staff said that they agreed with its aims. They wanted to see Thatcher out as soon as possible and Labour back in.

No one was prevented from entering the Jobcentre, but were directed around a side entrance to the upper floor. Many said there probably were no jobs anyway. Tricia Grue from Garston LPYS explained: "It's no good just me getting a job, we are fighting for all young people to get a job".

She and her friend were then offered interviews for jobs working in a hotel—in London. There were hardly



any jobs on display in industry, most were part-time jobs, poorly paid in catering or cleaning, often in places like Ambleside in the Lake District 100 miles away.

Nearly all the community programme jobs were part time. One was for £42 per week "hours to be arranged." preparing tea and refreshments and some cleaning duties.

An elderly woman looking for a job said that her son took home £62 for a 45 hour week, after paying for fares he was left with £50. When the bus deregulation goes through and fares go

up, it won't be worth him going to work. "Thatcher's promising everything now, but she's had eight years to do it in, we need Labour back."

Young Socialist members were stopping young people and asking them to join the 18 October demonstration in London. Within an hour and a half 21 said that they were interested. Many hardly needed any persuading "Do you want to join the Labour Party Young Socialists?" "Yes", said two young girls.

- * Tories out— For a socialist Labour government fighting for the working class and youth.
- * End unemployment— a guaranteed job for all school leavers.
- * End low pay— a minimum wage of £120 per week at 18 with 75 per cent of adult rate at 16. For a 35 hour week.
- * Educational opportunities for all— a £35 a week grant 52 weeks a year for all in education after 16, and a full grant from 18.
- * No discrimination on grounds of race or sex.
- * For YTS immediately— trade union rights and union rates of pay, full health and safety provision and a guaranteed job.
- * Nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, banks and insurance companies under workers' control and management.

Labour Party Young Socialists

Mass demo against the Tories

Saturday 18 October

Assemble 11.30am Southwark Park for march to Trafalgar Square. Rally and bands.

Edinburgh success

OVER 200 young people turned out for the LPYS rally against the Tories in Edinburgh last Thursday. The main theme was 'organise for the 18 October demonstration'.

John Ellen, LPYS chair, and Sandy Donaghie of the CPSA explained how to fight. Kevin Mullins, the General Secretary candidate for the health union COHSE ridiculed Edwina Currie, showing the double standards of the Tories who rant and lecture workers about health while their party funds accept huge donations from tobacco companies and breweries.

The success of the meeting can be judged by the new names for the LPYS and the demo and the quality of contributions from the floor from among others shop stewards, a plumber, a nurse and a teacher.

By Andy Clachers

Meanwhile

THE TORIES are worried that they may be a wee bit out of touch with young voters, so they have launched a new youth group.

The Federation of Conservative Students has gone down from 20,000 to 2,000 members in the last decade. The Young Conservatives, the former yuppie marriage bureau, has declined from 250,000 when Peter Walker was chairman to 30,000. Where is the next generation of Tory leaders to come from? Young Curries and Tebbits from Transylvania or the undead maybe.

Losing support

John Moore, young (48 years old) MP is in charge of the new Tory push.

There was talk of a march for real peerages for youth going from Royal Ascot to Windsor Castle.

Of course it could be the Tories are losing support because of their policies...

being students and helping in the union office.

"Part time work is alright if you have a Saturday job. But if you work at nights—like at Kentucky, you don't finish till three in the morning and you have to be up again at eight."

China Behind the new image

THE QUEEN'S visit to China symbolises a profound change in the capitalists' attitude. Before, the media painted a picture of a regimented population, political thought-control, and unrelenting 'Communist' austerity. Now they present a new China, enlivened by a blossoming market, with political 'liberalisation' and a rapid adoption of a western life-style by growing sections of the population.

Behind this rosy new picture, which is just as superficial as the former gloomy portrait, lies a ravenous appetite for Chinese profits reawakened by the far-reaching economic reforms introduced under Deng Xiaoping.

Beginning in 1978/79, the leadership has introduced a series of reforms. In the countryside households have been allowed to manage their own farming, sell their surpluses on the market and run their own manufacturing and commercial enterprises. In industry, management has been given much more scope for initiative, and many controls on private enterprises have been lifted.

Above all, China has adopted an "open-door" policy to the capitalist world, allowing in foreign capital, borrowing much more from Western banks, and importing modern equipment and technology. This has been accompanied, of necessity, by a "liberalisation", allowing more initiative to the managers, technocrats and business people required to operate such reforms.

The attraction of the vast potential profits was recently summed up in the right wing journal *Economic Affairs* (June/July 1986): "If each of the billion Chinese can be anticipated to consume only one dollar more, to produce goods worth one dollar extra, or to save one dollar additional, the results will be staggering."

They warn that there may be many barriers and risks. But, "trade or investment based on a huge market offers huge possibilities."

Some of the spokesmen of capitalism, carried away by their first impressions of Deng's reforms, have even raised the question of a possible restoration of capitalism. At the same time, a few writers who still espouse Maoist thinking, both in China and the West, have raised the spectre of China turning back down the "capitalist road".

In reality, Deng's attempt to stimulate the economy through "market methods" resembles similar reforms in Russia and Eastern Europe, though the Chinese leadership has perhaps moved more suddenly and sharply in this direction.

Periodic lurches in policy are the inevitable product of the attempt by a bureaucratic leadership, based on a privileged elite, to direct a nationalised, centrally planned economy (still with a predominant agrarian sector) involving a workforce of over 400 million and required to meet the needs of over



Lynn Walsh

1,000 million people.

In spite of all the upheavals, the planned economy, with all the limitations imposed by China's economic backwardness, has proved its superiority over capitalist relations. India was on a comparable level in 1949. But China has outstripped India in many vital fields of production, and because of the much less uneven distribution of wealth, living standards in terms of food, housing, and income, are incomparably higher for the vast majority of Chinese workers and peasants.

For this reason alone, the Chinese revolution, which actively involved millions of toilers and decisively smashed landlordism and capitalism, must count as a monumental event, second only to the Russian October revolution in its historical significance.

Yet isolation in an impoverished country, which had suffered from centuries of barbarous exploitation by both Chinese rulers and predatory imperialists, meant that the social transformation took a distorted form. From the outset, the new regime under Mao Zedong was constructed on the model of Stalin's Russia. With the working class excluded from the leadership and the Red Army chiefs basing themselves on the peasant masses, power was concentrated into the hands of a privileged bureaucratic layer.

Contradictions

Even under the conscious socialist direction of the working class, the problems of development would not have been negligible. What should be the balance, given the paucity of resources, between agriculture and industry, between investment and consumption, between building factories and producing consumer goods, between creating greater equality and providing incentives for skilled workers and specialists?

In addition, there is the crucial problem of relations with the capitalist world market, indispensable for modernisation, but involving all the dangers of capitalist penetration.

But in the hands of an undemocratic apparatus, these problems have produced an unending stream of policy contradictions. The attempt, until the current reforms, to solve the problems within national limits, even those of China, have sharpened all the conflicts. This is why the Chinese leadership, under Mao and after,



This is the first part of a two-part article by LYNN WALSH

have twisted and turned from one expedient to another in their efforts to consolidate the economic and social basis of their power.

To a far greater extent than in Stalinist Russia, moreover, the conflicts over policies have been bound up with struggle between contending factions or coalitions of factions within the bureaucracy. For this reason, the leadership has been torn by a series of convulsive upheavals.

The most explosive and notorious of these was the so-called "Cultural Revolution", launched in 1966. This violent political spasm neither changed anything fundamental nor raised the level of culture. But the factional turbulence and its bloody aftermath profoundly disrupted Chinese society.

The current supremacy of the Deng leadership is, in fact, the culmination of a long-drawn-out, very uneven reaction to the Cultural Revolution, and Deng's policies must be seen in that context.

The Cultural Revolution began essentially as a purge launched by Mao against top leaders like Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and the group which dominated the apparatus at that time. They had excluded Mao from direct power after the failure of his "Great Leap Forward" (1958-60). The personal bonapartist power of Mao was no longer compatible with the interests of a consolidated mature bureaucracy.

But when Mao mobilised students, peasant youth, and the unemployed into the Red Guards under radical "anti-bureaucratic" slogans, he undammed a seething reservoir of discontent.

All the factions in the leadership tried to manipulate the rebellious youth for their own ends. But once in action, the radicalised youth went far beyond Mao's aim of dislodging his rivals. The spontaneous but politically crude movement exposed the privileges and corruption of the bureaucracy.

Red guards who hauled bureaucrats out of their houses found valuable antiques, luxurious gardens, servants' quarters, expensive imported clothes, perfumes and liqueurs, and other luxuries. Later, when the radical leaders associated with the "Gang of Four" were toppled, they were found to enjoy a similar lifestyle, far removed from the conditions of the vast majority.

However, the Red Guards' demand for a democratic control from below threatened the very existence of the bureaucracy.

Mao himself was forced to dam the tide. Compromising with his rivals, Mao gave his authority to the use of the army and the militia to subdue the Red Guard. In many regions, factional clashes led to



1971: Youth march in support of Mao's slogan "Walk and train yourself to be ready for war". (Above) Youth in western gear today.

violent, armed conflicts, and tens of thousands, possibly millions, perished in the bloody suppression of the movement.

In the period after the Cultural Revolution, up until Deng's new supremacy, the party leadership rested with an unstable coalition of factions, with Zhou Enlai as a key balancing figure. Economic policy oscillated between reform, emphasising modernisation, imported technology, incentives to managers and entrepreneurs, and return to tighter controls over the economy and the state machine exercised from above by the top leadership in Beijing.

However, the leadership was still dominated by a struggle for control of the apparatus between the "radical leftist" newcomers, who had gained positions during the Cultural Revolution, and the "old guard" bureaucrats. Step by step, the old guard around Zhou Enlai and Deng reconquered control.

Life sentences

Lin Biao was ousted in 1971. After Mao's death in 1976, the "leftist" Gang of Four around Mao's widow, Jiang Qing, were put on trial and given life sentences. There was not a murmur of mass protest, which belied their claims to mass support after the Cultural Revolution.

After a transitional period under the "compromise" leader, Hua Guofeng, Deng restored the grip of the old guard bureaucrats.

In his struggle for control, Deng with great caution, used a similar tactic to Mao. Beginning with the Tiananmen incident in 1977, when tens of thousands commemorated the first anniversary of Zhou Enlai's death, Deng encouraged mass pressure on his rivals. This led to the so-called "democratic movement", partly orchestrated by the Deng faction, but also spontaneously expressing the real grievances of young workers, uprooted youth from the countryside, and unemployed school leavers.

The movement involved very mixed social forces, with largely inchoate demands. There was support for the stability and prosperity apparently promised by Deng's reform policy. But to Deng's "four (economic) modernisations" the movement added a "fifth modernisation", democracy. Some of those involved undoubtedly raised liberal capitalist ideas, but others were groping towards the idea of socialist democracy.

Though falling far short of a clear programme for the overthrow of the bureaucracy and the establishment of workers' democracy, some of the currents posed an unmistakable threat to the bureaucracy. Predictably, having used the protest movement for his own purposes, Deng moved to suppress it, jailing some of its leading figures and banning its publications.

Such expressions of mass protest, for all their limitations, are a significant pointer for the future, when a new generation based on a strengthened working class and a much higher level of culture, will challenge China's ruling bureaucracy. Closer ties with the world market, moreover, will mean that movements of the working class internationally will have far more effect on China in the future.

For the time being the Deng leadership is in the ascendant. But those enthusiastic commentators in the queen's entourage who are hailing Deng as a man with original solutions forget that the 82-year-old veteran is starting once again from where his old boss, Liu Shaoqi, left off before the Cultural Revolution, applying similar reforms to present-day conditions.

Deng does not represent a fundamentally new stage of the Chinese revolution—merely a new episode in the career of the bureaucracy, although one which will have many repercussions for China's proletariat.

Next week: the meaning of the economic reforms.

FOR CHINESE names the article follows the People's Republic's official pinyin system of romanisation, now in current use, rather than the old system traditionally used in Britain: Beijing (Peking), Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung), Zhou Enlai (Chou En-lai), Lin Biao (Lin Piao), Liu Shaoqi (Liu Shao-ch'i), Jiang Qing (Chiang Ch'ing—'Madame Mao'), Deng Xiaoping (Teng Hsiao-p'ing), Hua Guofeng (Hua Kuo-feng), Tiananmen Square (T'ien An Men), etc.

USA, South Africa, Japan, Israel, Sweden, Sri Lanka

Battle of electronics giants

THE AMERICAN chip industry—makers of the brains and memories of computers—is in a bad way. Japanese industry has led the way in technical innovation and price cutting, and the US has been unable to keep up.

Japanese chip makers have been accused by US competitors of "dumping" on the American market in order to drive US producers out of business. While there may be some truth in this, the underlying causes of the problem are that the Japanese industry has had a more sustained programme of investment, and that Japanese manufacturers have acted in a more planned way than their US rivals.

For example, in 1976 the Japanese Trade Ministry coordinated a £400 million joint research programme, involving all the Japanese companies. This led to a major increase in the amount of electronics that could be squeezed onto a single chip. Even limited and partial planning, in other words,

By Phil Rowe

has an enormous advantage over traditional capitalist "free enterprise"!

As a result, the US industry has declined from a situation where they controlled over 80 per cent of world chip output in the early 1970s. They are now a poor second to Japan. In 1985 alone, 54,000 jobs were lost in US chip factories—equivalent to 19 per cent of the whole workforce.

Legal threat

The US producers' response has been the threat of legal action against alleged "dumping" to force the Japanese to sign a trade pact. Under the terms of this



Air-freighting Japanese electronics products to the West.

pact, the American Commerce Department can dictate "fair prices" for chips imported into America.

This pact, far from rescuing the US electronics industry, has in fact made matters far worse! The price of chips in the US has increased by as much as 600 per cent and the computer manufacturers who buy the

chips are aghast. The cost of producing computers in the US has in many cases increased by 30 per cent, at a time when prices are falling world-wide.

The pact was signed only two months ago, but the computer producers are already organising to oppose these import controls. If they fail, US computer manufac-

turers will either go out of business, or be forced to move production overseas where chips are a fraction of the cost. Either way, employment in US computer factories would be decimated.

This is just one more example of a fundamentally sick capitalist economy desperately trying to defend

itself by artificial means. Import controls are again seen to be either ineffective or positively damaging. Only socialist measures will be able to tackle the underlying problems of inadequate and wasteful investment, and protect the jobs of workers in the American electronics industry.

S African union's "clear socialist programme"

AT LABOUR'S conference, the right wing revived the tired old argument that "we must not tell the South African workers what to do" by supporting the struggle on a socialist programme.

This argument—the stock-in-trade of opponents of socialism—has long been refuted by the activists in South Africa itself. It has again been answered in the clearest possible terms by the Congress of the Metal and Allied Workers' Union, which resolved *unanimously*:

"We are committed to building socialism.

"We are committed to the leadership of the working class in the struggle...
"The working class and its allies can only build true socialism and democracy if it has clear aims and a clear programme of how to build them.

"It should be a priority of MAWU and other organisations of the working class to build a clear socialist programme... which can bring together as many groups in society as possible."

MAWU is one of the foremost non-racial unions in South Africa, with more members detained in the Emergency than any other union. The explosive growth in its membership shows the support for its unambiguous socialist approach.

Socialists in Britain who support this approach, and support the call for the arming of the workers and youth, will find themselves on the same side of the barricades as the overwhelming majority of activists. Right-wingers who oppose these positions will find it increasingly difficult in the struggles ahead to gain a hearing for their discredited ideas.

By George Collins

Japanese trade unionists oppose rail pirates

TWELVE JAPANESE railway workers are on hunger strike in protest at their union's capitulation over privatisation plans.

Kokuro, the country's largest rail union, had refused to cooperate with the government's plans to split up and sell off the national rail network (JNR) after it made a record loss of £8.4 billion last year. This would mean up to 61,000 redundancies out of a workforce of 276,000.

But three right-wing unions agreed to a deal, and management refused to redeploy Kokuro members until it 'cooperated'. As a result, Kokuro lost 33,000 of its 170,000 members—including 38 suicides.

Finally, the leaders signed a no-strike deal last week in return for assurances of the right to organise in the new private companies, and an end to victimisation.

The dispute has been very bitter, with violent

demonstrations, a sit-in by activists at Kokuro offices, and sabotage of signal and communication cables by a terrorist group.

JNR has a total debt of around £100 billion. Loss-making rural services have been kept, and new lines and bridges of dubious necessity have been built for the government's political advantage.

Lightning strike by Israeli nurses

ISRAELI NURSES staged a lightning strike last Monday night. All hospitals were deserted except for a few nurses left to cover emergencies and critical patients.

This is the nurses' fourth action in two

weeks, in protest against the intransigence of government and Histadruth (TUC) leaders who refuse to agree to the nurses' demands on staffing levels and pay. Average pay for an Israeli nurse is £52 per week.

Sri Lankan workers fight sacking



WORKERS' MEETING at Lever Brothers (a subsidiary of Unilever) in Sri Lanka, preparing for strike action against management's provocative sacking of a union activist. Among Lever's top managers are leaders of Sinhala communist organisations, determined to smash the unity of Tamil and Sinhala workers on the shopfloor and in the union, where the influence of Marxism is strong.

Messages of support to: Commercial and Industrial Workers Union, 143 (3rd floor) Kew Road, Colombo 2, Sri Lanka. Cheques payable to Commercial and Industrial Workers Union.

Swedish civil servants strike against cuts

SWEDEN HAS entered one of the most important disputes in the country's history. Over 20,000 public-sector workers are on strike at the time of writing, and over a million are banning overtime.

Another 1,000 are locked out, and thousands more joined the strike this week. Further lock-outs are threatened.

Behind the strike is the enormous cut in public spending by the Social-Democratic government. They have also tried to keep wage rises down, in the hope of getting the capitalist economy out of its difficulties. The method has been "voluntary" wage ceilings, agreed under government pressure.

This restraint from workers has meant soaring profits for employers, and a widening gap between private and public sector workers.

The present dispute is mainly about the principle that public-sector workers should get a pay increase, over and above what has been agreed, if private-sector pay rises above a certain percentage. Public-sector workers have had this right for many years, and over the last decade it has accounted for one-third of their increments.

Last year, civil servants were on strike to protect this right. With an election coming up, the government caved in. Last spring, doctors and other sections came out on strike for the same reason. The government responded with a lock-out of teachers.

Teachers responded angrily

with wild-cat actions, and school students came out in their support. The government then asked the unions to postpone negotiations and actions over the summer.

Negotiations have now restarted, and the result is the third and biggest action over the same principle in a year and a half. It is also the first time in history that blue-collar unions have come out on strike against a Social-Democratic government.

No hostility

The strikers' bitterness has been increased by a statement by the Minister of Finance that the offer already made to them (and rejected) is too much. The government is determined to break the link between public and private-sector wages, and says there is no money for increases.

So far only small numbers of workers are on strike, so as not to hit the public too much. Some 2,500 nurses at selected hospitals are on strike. The nurses have a 30 per cent pay claim. Significantly, the media have been unable to find a single person hostile to the nurses, even among the affected patients.

A conservative newspaper complains that Sweden has caught "the English disease". The lesson for Britain is that, if an incoming Labour government tries in the same way to make workers pay for the crisis, the 'Swedish disease' will undoubtedly spread to British workers.

By Sigbritt Herbert

Controversy hidden at conference

Dear Comrades,

In March 1977 a young Labour MP made a scathing attack on Denis Healey and his team of Treasury Ministers after they had capitulated to the IMF and agreed to implement public expenditure cuts and increase taxes:

"They treat the City of London as if it were some kind of winnable Tory marginal constituency... They think generation in and generation out, as their predecessors have done, that somehow there is some deal, some

kind of understanding, that can be reached with people who are sworn ideological enemies". That was none other than Neil Kinnock.

Less than ten years later this champion of 'new realism' talks about consensus with capitalism. These new realists will be forced as their predecessors have been, to carry out counter-reforms and attacks on working class people in order to save capitalism.

Yours fraternally Roger Hearn, Swindon

Dear Comrades,

At Labour Party conference this week there were calls for a policy of positive discrimination with places on parliamentary shortlists reserved for women. This will open the door to "reserved" spots for women on other lists or committees throughout the movement.

This will be a step back for women not a step forward. It will divide the labour move-

ment along the lines of sex.

I do not feel that middle-class women can represent me better than a working class man simply because she is a woman. It did not do us much good with Thatcher!

I have been elected to positions in the Labour and trade union movement standing on equal terms with men, on the basis of my policies not my sex.

Yours fraternally Mara Dale, Isle of Wight



Photo: Dave Sinclair

Dear Comrades,

During Labour Party Conference Roy Hattersley was busy contemplating the philosophical essence of the sight of a young boy he watched vomiting on Blackpool promenade at 12am on the Tuesday of the party conference.

These rich thoughts and memories of his own youthful spasms filled his thousand

word 'Endpiece' column in the following Saturday's *Guardian*.

Our Labour leaders seem so fearful of telling the truth about the great convulsions facing the world that they are reduced to flaunting their own.

Yours fraternally
Phil Frampton
Manchester

Letters

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

Send us your views, comments or criticism.



Photo: Jacob Sutton (Reflex)

Baby death due to cuts in the NHS

Dear Comrades,

Sheree Adatia died in an Ealing hospital, probably needlessly, three days after she was born. Among the factors leading to her death were the following:

"An electronic heart monitor was faulty... a special stethoscope, basic equipment could not be found; a resuscitator, which should have pumped oxygen into the baby's lungs had temporarily broken down..." (*Guardian* 4 October).

The report continues: "Three hospitals which could have given expert help were full and could not accept her the day after she was born blue and lifeless."

What will future generations see as the main achievement of the Tories' health policy—"higher cost-effectiveness", or a higher kill rate?

Yours fraternally
George Collins
Hackney

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.

○ *L'Avance Socialiste*, the french marxist paper for youth, socialist and communist workers: The situation in France. A socialist policy for the left, Young socialist activities, letters of support from communist youth, South Africa etc. Order now from *L'Avance Socialiste*, BP No. 705, 75531 Paris CEDEX 11, France. £10 for 12 issues.

Militant Meetings

□ **Caerphilly** Marxist discussion group. Working Mens Hall, Caerphilly, every Monday 7.30pm.

□ **Huddersfield** "Fight the Tories not the socialists". Wednesday 29 October, 7.30pm. Speaker: Tony Mulhearn. Huddersfield Polytechnic.

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

□ **Swindon** 'What we stand for' meeting. 23 October 7.30pm. Prince of Wales, Union St. Speaker: Robin clapp.

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

□ **All Yorkshire Militant Womens Day School**. Workshops on famine, sexual harassment, women and childbirth, women in trade unions, equal pay and more. Sheffield, Saturday 29 November. 12 until 6pm. Mid-day and evening meals provided, crèche organised. Social in the evening. Further details contact: Marion Adkins, Sheffield (0742) 330855.

○ **Militant Rally in the Albert Hall**: Can all parents who will require crèche facilities during the rally on 16 November please contact the Rally crèche, 3/13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB for a crèche booking form.

○ **Surplus Value** require singers and musicians to build for the revolution. Phone Mark/Tim 01-254 9551.

○ **Gail, Phil and Eleanor Frampton** wish to thank everyone for their kind gifts and wishes on the occasion of the birth of their daughter Sidonie, born on 30/9/86.

○ **Out now!** Lenin and Trotsky on Rosa Luxemburg. 4 articles 25p (40p including post) 5 copies-£1.50. Read it before you see the film! Order from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB.

○ **Halloween Disco** and bar 9pm-2am. Friday 31 October, at White Hart. 231 Lower Clapton Rd, 50 yards from Lea Bridge Island. Entrance by ticket only, £2 in advance. From Brian Debus 533 3311 and Dave Webb 254 2495. Proceeds to FF.

Enemies of the people?

Dear Comrades,

Recently I heard a radio play *An Enemy of the People* by Henrik Ibsen.

It tells of one man's struggle against bourgeois corruption and hypocrisy.

The city fathers refuse his demand to shut down the town's profitable baths which have become polluted, on the grounds that costs would be much too high and visitors would be driven away. Instead he is ostracised and branded an 'enemy of the people'.

It ends with him refusing

to renounce his unpopular stance and declaring that "the strongest man is he who stands alone".

Coming in the wake of Labour Party conference, it holds a moral for today's bureaucrats and their obsession with 'popular' policies. The Liverpool councillors may be reviled by the media at the moment, but time will show that they are not 'enemies of the people' for standing alone.

Yours fraternally
Stuart Miller
Leicestershire

Surrounded by 'Rich Tendency'

Dear Comrades,

In TV interviews about taxation policy, Roy Hattersley tells us that it's only the rich with incomes over £500 per week (£25,000 per year) who now pay less tax because of Thatcher's taxation policies.

For examples of this "Rich Tendency," Roy points towards Thatcher's "entire cabinet".

The 'Rich Tendency' also has plenty of members in both Kinnock's and Willis' own cabinets.

I am sick of representatives of Labour's Rich Tendency lecturing us on 'unity' and on 'not rocking the boat' in the name of the unemployed, low paid and pensioners. If they really spoke for the unemployed they would be calling for action to force Thatcher out of government now—not in one or two years time!

Yours fraternally
Nigel Wheatley
Unemployed, Walsall

Top hack gets it wrong

Dear Comrades,

Peter Phelps, who was rewarded for his attacks on Liverpool City Council by being named 'Journalist of the Year', has shown the high standard of his investigative work.

In an article in the *Daily Mail*, he claims that left-wing councils can't fill top posts because of the "conspiratorial tactics and petty political posturing of the Militant-sympathising city bosses". He makes the ritual attacks on Liverpool, but also includes Coventry on his list, which apparently can't find an education director because it is so far left.

In fact Coventry City Council leaders are so right-wing that they have thrown left-wing councillors, including two *Militant* supporters off the Labour group for voting against school closures.

Maybe Mr Phelps' friends can find him a prize for fiction next year.

Yours fraternally, Tony Cross
Coventry North West Labour Party

Polling for the right opinion

PROFILE POLL

Research shows that only about one in seven Southeners have had or taken the opportunity to speak to their local Council or Members of Parliament in the last two or three years. Your people have little opportunity to express their views to people in power. This is your chance. Each month, *Profile Magazine* will conduct its own Profile Poll. We recognise that this is not a statistically reliable sample in the strictest sense of the word. Nevertheless, it is your opportunity to express your views on issues of importance.

We will analyse them and report the findings to the attention of over one million households to which *Profile Magazine* is distributed and to the national media. All you need to do is tick the boxes that express your opinion.

How likely do you think it is that the Conservative Party will win the next General Election with Mrs Thatcher as leader?

Very likely 1
Fairly likely 2
Not very likely 3
Not at all likely 4

2. Do you think that the Conservative Party would be more likely to win the next General Election under a different leader or not?

Yes 1
No 2
Makes no difference 3

3. Which of these politicians do you think is most likely to be Prime Minister in 10 years' time?

TICK ONE BOX

a Tony Blair 19
b Roy Hattersley 11
c Michael Heseltine 2
d Neil Kinnock 4
e David Owen 5
f David Steel 2
g Norman Tebbit 2
h Margaret Thatcher 2
i Shirley Williams 2
j Other WRITE IN 19

4. Who do you think will be remembered as Britain's best post-war Prime Minister?

TICK ONE BOX

a Clement Attlee 26
b Winston Churchill 27
c Anthony Eden 11
d Harold Macmillan 4
e Alec Douglas-Home 4
f Harold Wilson 16
g Edward Heath 16
h James Callaghan 28
i Margaret Thatcher 28

5. Which of the party leaders would you personally like to see as Britain's Prime Minister after the next General Election?

TICK ONE BOX

a Margaret Thatcher 21
b Neil Kinnock 11
c David Steel 2
d David Owen 2
e None of them 2

6. To whom...
a Margaret Thatcher 21
b Neil Kinnock 11
c David Steel 2
d David Owen 2
e None of them 2

7. In the United States, any one individual can only be president for two terms of office. Would you like to see a similar law introduced in Britain for Prime Ministers?

TICK ONE BOX

a Yes would 11
b No would not 11

8. Do you think it is more important for a Prime Minister to stick to his/her own principles, or to be guided by British public opinion?

TICK ONE BOX

a Stick to own principles 25
b Be guided by public opinion 25

9. Do you believe that decisions should be left to the Prime Minister of the day or to the collective responsibility of the cabinet?

TICK ONE BOX

a Prime Minister 26
b They don't 26

10. Do you believe that decisions should be left to the Prime Minister of the day or to the collective responsibility of the cabinet?

TICK ONE BOX

a Prime Minister 26
b They don't 26

11. Thank you for answering these questions. Now could you please tick the relevant boxes in order that we can analyse the results of this survey in more detail.

Your Name: _____
Sex: Male 27, Female 27
Age: Under 14 27, 14-24 27, 25-34 27, 35-44 27, 45-54 27, 55-64 27, 65-74 27, 75-84 27, 85-94 27, 95-104 27

principles, or to be guided by British public opinion?" Presumably "public opinion" as interpreted by so-called "opinion polls" like this one.

Yours fraternally
Derek McMillan

Hospital closure

Dear Comrades,
I worked at Grassington Hospital, North Yorkshire. Staff, patients, unions and members of the local community fought a campaign to stave off the closure of our hospital.

Despite a long, arduous campaign we failed and the hospital closed on 13 December 1985, a lovely Christmas present for everyone!

I have recently learned that patients from Grassington and High Roysds hospital are now at the nursing home of a local Tory councillor, paid for by the DHSS. The councillor concerned sits on the local Health Authority making decisions about hospitals. He has a vested interest in closing them with a view to fill his nursing home.

Yours fraternally
Gwyneth Cullen
Wakefield

Walton campaign defeats privatisation

WALTON HOSPITAL workers are hailing the latest management offer as a victory.

The original tender involved cuts of between £48.40 and £71.02 in wages and worsening in working conditions. While the proposed new contract maintains the existing workforce and conditions, it does entail minor cuts in rates of pay. But still it is a serious blow to management's plans. It is a

vindication of the campaign organised by the Walton Hospital Action Committee.

As well as lobbies of health authorities, petitioning and public meetings, hospital workers went on the offensive against the contractors.

Private firms which use the contract cleaners were picketed and their unions encouraged to campaign for the contract cleaners to

be incorporated into the direct labour force. Undoubtedly this campaign has discouraged some contract cleaners from tendering at Walton.

At present the workforce have correctly decided that the campaign must continue. Any slackening up could be treated as a sign of weakness. It has already been decided that the next step will be to picket the unemployment agen-

cies used to recruit cheap labour for these private cleaning firms.

The workforce is under no illusions as to the nature of this victory. They recognise that unless guarantees are secured from management the offer will be used as a ploy to undermine them. This tactic was used by the same health authority to decimate the workforce at the neighbouring Fazackerley hospital.

The lesson is clear, however. It is possible to defeat privatisation—and not at the expense of massive cuts which many in-house tenders entail. If a massive national campaign along the lines of Walton's was waged by the NHS unions privatisation could be defeated.

By John Blackhall, Walton Hospital Action Committee

The truth about Addenbrookes and what it means for the left



Stefano Cagnoni (Report 15)

Angry strikers reply to their accusers

Dear Editor

We are very angry with the letter from W Patterson and D Fowler about the Addenbrookes strike and would like to set the record straight on some of the out and out lies contained in it.

Firstly, they say of the Addenbrookes strikers that: "they were not part of the NHS" and were "part of the private sector" i.e. Crothalls.

The fact is that approximately 300 domestics worked for Crothalls and about 50 worked in other areas for the NHS as direct labour.

The dispute arose when OCS took over the whole contract on 1 October 1984, winning it on the basis of drastic cuts in jobs, hours and the destruction of nationally agreed Whitley council conditions, particularly on sick pay and annual leave.

We were fighting the "competitive tendering" programme of this Tory government. In any case, even if most of us were working for a private company we were still members of Cohse and Nupe and working in the NHS.

Secondly, we are appalled by the disgraceful lies told about Graham Heneghan who was actually sacked as a porter because he insisted on staying on strike in support of the domestics.

He was indeed a member of Nupe and Cohse. But he had been so for eight months prior to coming out on strike and his strike pay was deducted from hardship benefit raised by the strikers—leaving more for other strikers to claim.

The statement that Graham held down employment outside the NHS while on strike is an *absolute lie* and we demand a public withdrawal of this allegation.

Thirdly, we feel we must once again explain our reasons

for rejecting the so-called 'final offer' of OCS and Cambridge Health Authority which was supported by our full-time officers.

The offer consisted of jobs in other hospitals in other skills (eg. catering, laundry, sterile supplies, etc.) with the wrong hours and on the wrong terms.

Most importantly the offer was only made on condition that we called off the dispute and withdrew the pickets. And in any case we were only offered "interviews", not jobs.

If we had accepted the offer we would have abandoned the fight for a proper domestic service at Addenbrookes—what would have been the point of that after a full year on strike?

Having set the record straight we would like to say one further thing. What interests are served by telling lies like these about strikers? How does this square with the aim of "securing the maximum possible for the left in Cohse"?

The only effect of this letter can be to cover up for union leaders who consciously and cynically abandoned members fighting to defend the health service. We aim to continue that fight, not only for a proper domestic service at Addenbrookes, but to defend the NHS everywhere.

Yours fraternally
Tessa Howe, assistant branch secretary Cohse (ex-striker)

Sylvia Burton, chair Cohse (ex-striker)

Martin Booth, Cambridge hospital branch secretary Nupe

Graham Heneghan, sacked porter Cohse/Nupe

Anne Sweeney, Cohse ex-striker

On behalf of the Addenbrookes strikers

Critics question status of Cambridge dispute

Dear Editor

We read with interest your recent article in *Militant* (5/9/86), page 13, on the candidacy of Kevin Mullins for general secretary of Cohse.

We would suggest that there was indeed a lack of nationally co-ordinated action between the four main unions involved. It is perhaps worth noting that in Scotland, where the campaigning and action was co-ordinated by one body—the STUC—not one service has been privatised.

It is regretful however that an article intended to support Kevin's candidature for the post of Cohse general

secretary contains many inaccuracies and also makes statements out of context.

Indeed, to describe the Addenbrookes situation as "fighting against privatisation" is in itself grossly inaccurate. The staff at that hospital were not part of the NHS. They were in fact part of that private sector themselves, one-time employees of Crothalls.

We wonder why Mr Heneghan is so ready to condemn the supposed failures of trade unions, *there were more than one involved*, when, to our mind, you could hardly describe the actions of some of the strikers as honourable. People who

take out dual union membership in order to claim dual strike benefit, at the same time as holding down other employment outside the NHS can hardly be described as showing "commitment, courage and determination" towards the 'struggle' in the same way as certain other workers in struggle recently.

It could be said, with a fair degree of certainty, that these actions were some of the main contributing factors to the *joint* withdrawal of official support. We would also suggest that the so-called fighters against privatisation lost a great deal of sympathy and support, as

well as credibility, when they turned down transfers into the NHS from the private sector, opting instead for employment only in the private sector.

We would none-the-less welcome the opportunity to hear Kevin's own positive views on the future of both Cohse and the NHS, hopefully this would provide us with a more unbiased and inaccurately ghosted biography. In particular, we would be pleased to hear what steps are being proposed to involve all socialists in Cohse in mounting a campaign to secure the maximum possible for the left.

W Patterson and D Fowler

Kevin Mullins defends Cohse Broad Left

Dear Comrades

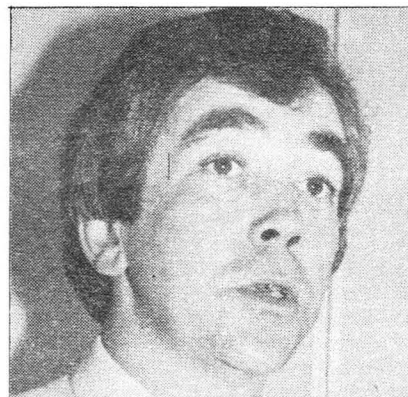
In commenting on this letter I first wish to clarify the credentials of one of the signatories. Having checked with Cohse head office I find that W Patterson of 929 Larbert branch is none other than Mr WPB Patterson, national executive committee member for Scotland.

Why have you sought to hide your true identity Bill, are you not proud to be known as a member of the Cohse national executive?

As for the specific, spurious allegations made about my friends at Addenbrookes; I think they are more than capable of answering such slurs for themselves.

What has to be said, however, is that if Bill and other executive members had taken the trouble to visit the picket lines, as George Nazer, Chris Brace and I did, they would have witnessed first hand "commitment, courage and determination" to drive the privateers from the NHS. This is more than can be said of the present leaders.

I trust the comrades also read the article in *Militant* issue 817 by Mick Barwood under the headline 'A fighting programme for health workers' which covers the points about my own positive



Kevin Mullins

views—which are also those of the Broad Left and widely known in the union.

The writers ask: "What steps are being taken to involve all socialists in Cohse in mounting a campaign to secure the maximum possible for the left in Cohse?"

I am not too sure what they mean by "maximum possible". But if they mean a more democratic, open and accountable leadership; a leadership and executive that truly acts in the best interests of its members then I can only direct them to the Broad Left in Cohse,

called Group '81.

This body was formed in 1981. Those of us who have stayed true to it and helped build it have been present at every conference since; dishing out daily bulletins, holding *open*, democratic meetings, urging all Cohse left wingers to get involved in the fight to return the union to the members.

Even George Blades, a fellow NEC member of Bill Patterson, who lives in Larbert, has heard of the Broad Left—and on occasions has written to the Cohse magazine inviting people to take disciplinary action against us.

Come off it Bill! On most occasions on the executive you have voted in the best interests of the members. Don't spoil your good record by siding with the tellers of half truths.

Why not admit you were misled over Addenbrookes? Join forces with the rest of us in the Broad Left and let's "secure the maximum possible for all Cohse members"—a truly socialist society based on people's needs not on the profit motive. Save your lectures on honesty and integrity for the right wing. They are in greater need of them.

Your in comradeship
Kevin Mullins
ex-COHSSE NEC member

Industrial Reports

Turn Wapping vote to new offensive

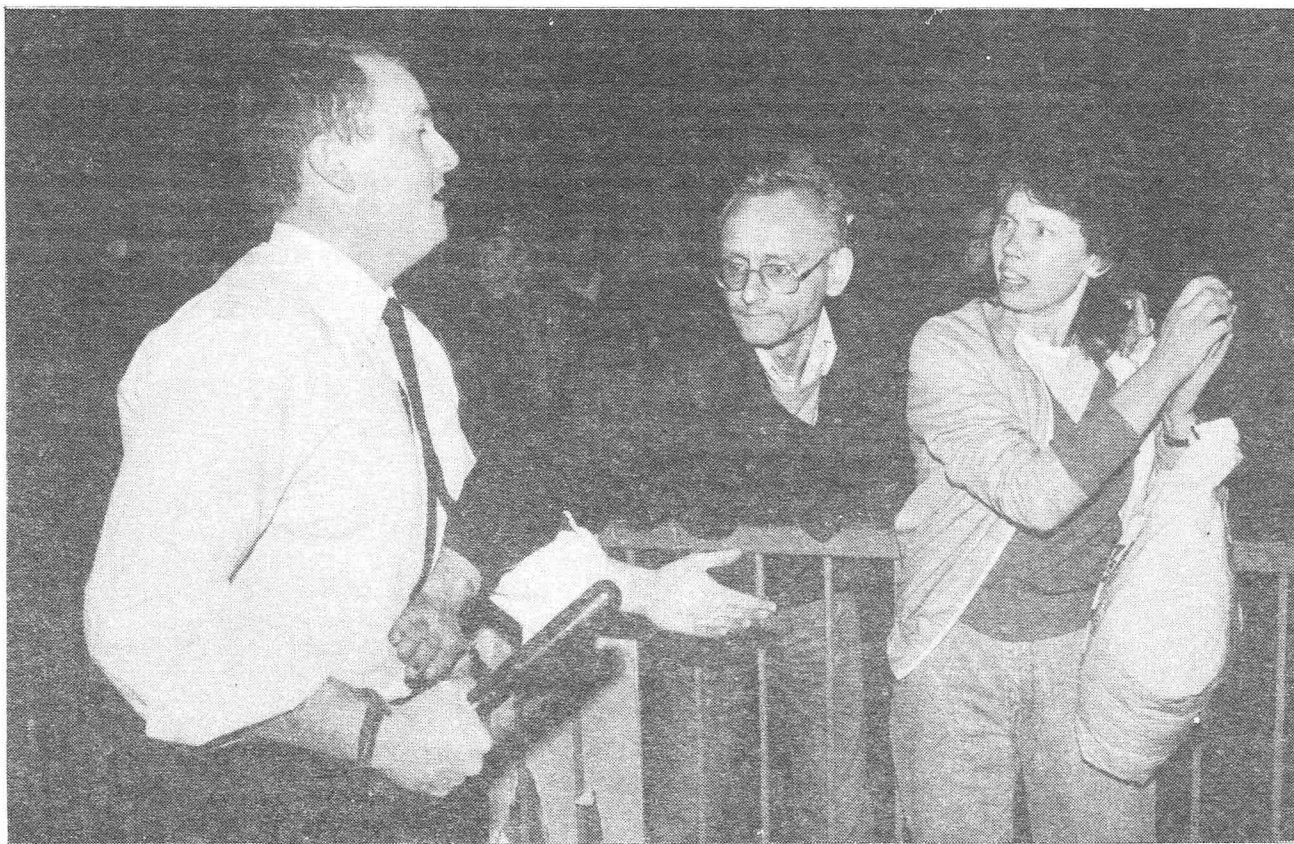


Photo: Andrew Moore (Reflex).

Wapping picket last Wednesday—policeman draws truncheon after tussle with woman picket.

THIS WEEK'S march to fortress Wapping was larger than recent weeks and there was again a buoyant mood—confidence has returned.

Murdoch had been defeated.

The Sogat ballot result was a resounding no to the insult of an offer that should never have been voted upon. The 2,372 to 960 was an overwhelming rejection of any offer that does not include jobs and union recognition.

The burning question on the lips of the strikers is "What next!" This time the opportunity must be fully grasped. The leaders of the unions have let the possibility of extending the action slip through their fingers. Their attitude has been akin to that of Mr Micawber—"Hoping something will turn up."

This was the attitude even before the strike. Confronted by mounting evidence that News International, aided and abetted by the EETPU, were preparing a union smashing operation the union leaders waited, allowing Murdoch to pick the time.

The bosses of Fortress Wapping have been willing to use any available weapons—a massive scabbing operation, the police, the courts etc. The unions tops have shown themselves unprepared for the onslaught and unable to provide a fighting leadership in response.

It has always been plain the strike had much wider implications, especially for the print unions. All the union leaders stressed and re-stressed this point. But they backed away from any meaningful escalation of the dispute.

The area most under threat was the other Fleet Street papers. If Murdoch

By Peter Jarvis
(London Region NGA)

won, the other press barons would force similar battles.

Rather than accept the necessity of involving the rest of Fleet Street they conceded and conciliated on jobs and conditions elsewhere. Without any strategy, the union leaders let slip the gains of the past. The *Telegraph* have moved less than half a mile away from Murdoch's plant with the workforce cut to 600.

But even the concessions already made will not be enough for Maxwell and the others. He has plans to launch a new London 24 hour paper. The man chosen for the task of setting up this new operation was the one Murdoch charged with preparing for the so-called *London Post*, the cover for the transfer of his four titles printed by scabs.

Is it too late?

The writing is still on the wall if anyone cares to lift their head. Even after the deals with other newspapers, the bosses' aims are still the same—smash the unions.

Central to victory must be stepping up the action. If there had been an immediate response the tempo would have been raised immediately. But is it now too late?

The problem, that has existed since day one, is that the union leaders have called upon workers to assist the strike individually rather than collectively. There was no preparation.

The wholesale workers were instructed, those working on *Times* Educational Supplements and the Sunday

magazines balloted. Apart from a few exceptions the answer has been no.

Any call for solidarity action will fall on deaf ears unless serious preparations are made. Even if Tony Dubbins called a 24 hour strike on Fleet Street there is unlikely to be a response unless it is preceded by effective agitation.

A conference should be arranged to bring together all those who could help in speedily ending this dispute. Fleet Street must be the anchor for such action.

Many officials at both national and regional level point to the difficulty in achieving this. For most it is no more than an excuse to defend their wrong tactics since the beginning of the strike.

One of the demands now being made is to get the EETPU to instruct its members to honour the picket lines.

If they refuse, then they should be expelled—they should have been expelled months ago for their complicity in manning Wapping with scabs.

Although a correct demand little faith can be placed on the present members of the General Council, if their past record is anything, to go on, to vigorously pursue the question. An appeal over their heads to the trade union rank and file is the only way of surmounting the obstacles.

The other, often repeated call is for the boycott campaign to be stepped up. It seems to have died outside London, with only a few areas still effectively campaigning.

Dublin it appears are leading the way. Pat Smyth, deputy FOC *Irish Times* and a prominent *Irish Militant* supporter brought a cheque for £2,000, the proceeds of a successful film festival.

Print workers in Dublin have also refused to print one of his titles and on the *Irish Times* have blacked *Times* service copy in defiance of a management threat to close the paper.

Efforts are still being made to stop the airport deliveries of Murdoch's paper. If this can be done in Ireland there is no reason why it cannot be repeated in every city and town in Britain.

New focal point

A new focal point to raise the level of boycott is necessary. This could be further action by other workers in support, but what is also necessary is to stop the scab papers reaching the streets.

A special appeal should be made for a drive to shut down Wapping. Thousands could answer such a call.

For far too long the leaders have turned away from taking decisive action. The time to strike is now. The longer things are left the more difficult it will be to get the desired response.

If the leaders of the various print unions continue to refuse to adopt a fighting programme. The rank and file must take the strike into their own hands.

Too much is at risk to allow things to just continue and drift on. Tactics can and must be changed. Extending the action is the only way of bringing a swift victory.

Sogat 82 London Central Branch Wapping strike committee

Defend Steven Savage March from Clerkenwell Green to Pentonville prison. 28 October 2pm.

GMB Broad Left

THE TORIES' plans for legislation to enforce privatisation of council services represents potentially the most serious attack yet on the conditions and jobs of local authority workers.

The fight against environment minister Nicholas Ridley will dominate the agenda of the national conference of the Broad Left in GMBATU which meets in Manchester on Saturday 1 November.

The new legislation targets refuse collection, street cleaning, cleaning of buildings, catering, vehicle maintenance, park services, computing, architect services, transport and refuse disposal. Councils will be compelled to put these services out to tender.

The elevation of former Wandsworth council leader Christopher Chope to the Ministry of Environment shows that the Tories mean business. Chope led the way with the privatisation of Wandsworth refuse collection back in 1980.

The Broad Left in GMBATU will be pressing for a national campaign of opposition to meet this new danger. Local authority workers cannot be left to fight these measures city by city, authority by authority.

The combined national strength of GMB and other local government unions must be mobilised to defeat the Ridley plans before they reach the statute books.

Unfortunately, as we have seen in the gas industry, the GMB leadership completely failed to organise such a campaign. As a resolution to annual conference complained: "pumping out literature is not enough."

This failure was admitted by the union's National Energy Officer Frank Cottan...In the GMB journal's report of annual congress Cottan told a delegate who inquired "Where do we stand now on privatisation?" that he was "intruding into private grief."

"The union has produced thousands of leaflets and briefing packs. The campaign was launched with a national rally followed by regional rallies attended by top union officers and

Labour MPs. The results demonstrated weakness rather than strength" he said.

"With one exception, the numbers at rallies could be counted in tens, and one was under 20. The tally of signatures on the petition was 25,000, thousands fewer than the total number of workers in the industry. A ballot on industrial action would have been counter-productive."

These pitiful excuses conceal the reluctance of the leadership to prepare seriously for industrial action as the only effective means to defeat the Tories' privatisation measures.

Campaign

This is in sharp contrast to left sections of the union who have led successful battles against privatisation like the Liverpool branch 5 and the Walton hospital workers (see page 13). By advancing a serious programme to combat privatisation these campaigns generated enthusiasm from the members.

In reality the union leadership never had any confidence in their ability to square up to the government. Cottan let the cat out of the bag when he informed Congress that the new gas industry agreement "is to provide protection, *especially after privatisation*."

The Broad Left has a decisive role to play in fighting within GMB for the adoption of a serious strategy to defeat privatisation. The threat of privatisation and the campaign for renationalisation by a Labour government affects GMB members in shipbuilding, the NHS, local authorities, gas and water.

For more information write to: BL for General Workers and Boilermakers, 94 Richard Kelly Drive, Liverpool 4.

National Conference GMBATU Broad Left 10am Saturday 1 November

Concourse Room, All Saints Building, Manchester Poly, Oxford Rd, Manchester

Liverpool teachers negotiations progress

LIVERPOOL LOCAL authority and the National Union of Teachers are still discussing a resolution of the dispute on cover for absent teachers which resulted in the NUT staging a three day strike of teachers last week. These discussions are between the representatives of the local authority and the NUT nationally and took place in London yesterday. Further discussions take place on Thursday 16 October.

This dispute is yet another indication of the breakdown

of the interim Coventry Agreement on cover. Similar developments are taking place in Sefton on Merseyside, Birmingham and Blackpool where the Coventry Interim Agreement is resulting in industrial action or threats of industrial action. At present the national leaders of the NUT are jumping from one dispute to the next "fire-fighting" the growing number of disputes which indicate the breakdown of Coventry.

By Bill Boyle

Industrial Reports

Background to Sealink dispute

WHILST NIGEL Lawson was telling a delighted Tory conference last week of his intention to privatise everything, one of their denationalised 'products', Sealink, was sailing into stormy waters.

In fact, since the previously wholly-owned British Rail shipping subsidiary was sold off at a knock-down £66m to the private Sea Containers shipping and container leasing firm, it has become a flag ship for all that's worst in privatisation.

Sealink, which ran at a profit for most years since 1969 (it wouldn't have been de-nationalised otherwise) has apparently now contributed some £14m towards Sea Containers' £21m losses this year!

Since Sea Containers took over the Sealink workforce have faced continual attacks on pay, conditions and jobs. The high-handed attitude of the private employers has now provoked an all-out national strike by NUS members, throughout the company.

All Sealink sailings to Europe and Ireland have been stopped as well as those to the Channel Islands.

Sealink management's announcement, without prior negotiations, of their decision to abandon their routes

from both Portsmouth and Weymouth to the Channel Islands and Weymouth to Cherbourg, sparked off the action.

Despite Sealink's stated intention to hand the routes to the firm British Island Ferries and possibly lease their existing vessels to them, 316 jobs would have been lost and the very existence of Weymouth Harbour jeopardised.

Hard on the heels of this announcement, management then declared that 134 jobs were to be axed at Folkestone. At Holyhead there was to be a reduction of 20 jobs, through cutting crew levels on sailings to Ireland, together with a reduction in leave time and a worsening of conditions.

Harwich

At Harwich two smaller cargo boats on the Zeebrugge route were to be withdrawn, with the loss of some 60-70 jobs, and even cut backs on the *St Nicholas* also at Harwich.

Everywhere there would be pay cuts and worsening of conditions. At Harwich two boats have been withdrawn in the last year and replacements promised at the end of 1985 never materialised.

The crew's response on

the Channel Islands' runs was swift and decisive. Although the company has locked them out, they are occupying four ships and are ready to repel any attempts by management to board the vessels.

At other ports seamen have now been on all-out and indefinite strike for several days, including those such as Fishguard and Stranraer, which are not threatened on this occasion.

Sailors at Liverpool, employed by the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company—in which Sealink have a 40 per cent stake and where jobs are also threatened have been taking 48-hour strike action also.

Without doubt the action is biting. In talks between management and the National Union of Seamen, Sealink have given ground. At Folkestone they have agreed that instead of attempting to unilaterally slash jobs and conditions and perhaps talk afterwards, their proposals will now be the subject of a working party and then negotiations. Similar formulae have been worked out for Harwich and Holyhead.

However, no agreement has been reached on the all-important Channel Island routes as yet. Negotiations are due to continue, but if

management have not conceded by the end of the week, pressure will be increased.

A meeting of the Seamen's Port Chairman's Committee on 13 October advised Sealink representatives to maintain the all-out action. They also agreed that failing agreement on the Channel Island issue, as from Friday a 24-hour strike of all NUS members employed on all ferry services, on all firms, not just Sealink, would be called.

Concessions?

This would then lay the basis for further prolonged action which could paralyse all ferry sailings from Britain to Europe, Scandinavia, Ireland and all offshore islands etc.

The strike has reached an important stage. There is some suspicion that concessions made at the other ports, under pressure, are partly aimed at isolating Portsmouth and Weymouth, and that they'll renege at the other ports in the future, once the heat is off.

The present action must now be used to ensure an end to the attacks on jobs, pay and conditions at Sealink and guarantee all their long term futures.

The strike action at

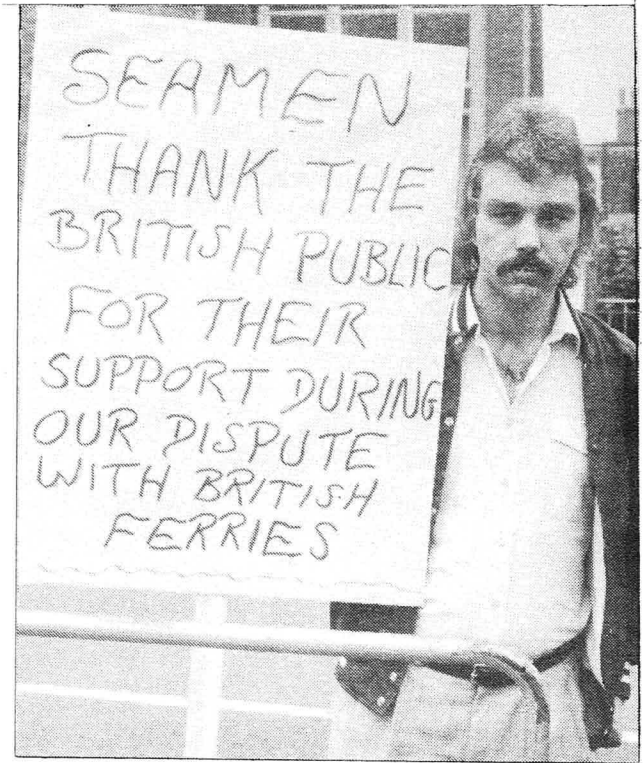


Photo: Dave Sinclair

Sealink is spreading to involve more workers all the time. This week the National Union of Railwaymen are balloting their 2,000 members who are employed by Sealink on shore work and shipping within the three mile limit.

A yes vote will give the NUR national executive authority to call industrial action. Already NUR

members at Weymouth and the Channel Islands have been sacked.

We have had reports that now seventy two workers on the Isle of Wight ferries have been told their jobs are to go. Local Portsmouth NUR representative John Duff is reported to have told seamen that the men are solid in opposition and could well be out by Monday.

S Wales pits

ON MONDAY this week, following a sham review meeting of the NUM and so-called British Coal, Cwm and Nant Garw collieries in South Wales were announced as closed.

Men from Coedely colliery who had become leading members of Cwm NUM lodge recalled that it was only seven months ago that Coedely was closed on the basis that Cwm was a long life pit.

They had been told that it would have four million pounds investment to upgrade the washery and install new shield powered supports.

The Board's investment plans are no longer believed. The 'North Diamond' area of Cwm colliery has extensive reserves of prime quality coking coal. Some 15 to 19 coalfaces were mentioned in the meeting.

Yet due to bad stewardship in the past by local management a two-year development to work those North Diamond reserves was ruled out as unviable some years ago.

By NCB figures Cwm and Nant Garw lost £10m this year. In Nant Garw as well the workforce had been victims of management lowering morale, tightening up on discipline, creating a climate of uncertainty and mistrust.

It is ironic, and passing strange, that these pits which the Board has earmarked for closure have suffered from sabotage.

Recently Nant Garw was stopped as underground belting was slashed in forty places, making production impossible for a day. At

Cwm one obstacle after another had been placed in the way of the workforce increasing production and getting development going.

The NUM has decided not to go through the review procedure in view of the Bates colliery experience last year at the hands of the 'independent review body'.

1,500 jobs are to be lost immediately with a threat to the coking plants at both pits. Both plants require a steady supply of coking coal to survive.

The threat to mine workers' jobs is not yet over. British Coal continues to shift the coal posts. The NCB's plan for a South Wales coalfield was that, in the words of the area accountant speaking on HTV in January 1984: "Only six pits will close over the next two years".

Already 13 collieries have closed and two mergers taken place in the eighteen months since the strike ended. Over 7,000 jobs have been lost.

Defence of our union and remaining jobs in the industry places a special responsibility on the shoulders of labour movement activists.

A public campaign condemning the stewardship of British Coal and the Tory government must be developed to raise the confidence of our membership to fight back now—alongside the campaign for a Labour government committed to expanding the mining industry, protecting jobs and communities.

By Ian Isaac
(Ogwr Lodge NUM, personal capacity)

Weymouth dependant on ferries

WEYMOUTH WORKERS have already sampled tactics of private management. On the day redundancies were declared, the *Earl Granville* sailed to Cherbourg and then all the shore staff were taken to a hotel on the other side of the town and told they had lost their jobs.

By the time they returned to the ferry port a private security firm had arrived with dogs to make sure that nobody got any ideas about defending their jobs.

The crew were rounded up and told they had lost their jobs. To add insult to injury they were asked to take the ship to London after they had docked at Cherbourg.

These cowboy tactics are the reason the crew decided to occupy the ship in Cherbourg. All the passengers got was a free meal for their inconvenience.

Weymouth would become a ghost town if the ferries were withdrawn. It is a small seaside town with no industry apart from tourism and the ferries. If the ferry port were dead how long would the railway last?

Messages of support and donations to: National Union of Seamen, Southampton Office, Havelock Chambers, Southampton.

By Alison Hill
(Portsmouth CLP)

Dearne Valley NUM overtime ban

DEARNE VALLEY NUM in Yorkshire have voted overwhelmingly to carry on the overtime ban imposed in response to management attacks on concessions made before the miners' strike.

Water notes and half hour stoppages conceded to men

in the tailgate who work in dusty conditions are under threat.

Management seem to be disregarding the Yorkshire water agreement between NUM, Nacods and British Coal, by instructing deputies to allow no water notes.

The attacks are continuing but many Yorkshire NUM members are increasingly discontented and angry leading to increased strikes and a growing demand for a national overtime ban.

Kent hit by Tilmanstone closure

A MASS meeting of Sealink workers from Folkestone and Dover last Friday voted for continued strike action over the proposed shift changes and job losses.

Paradoxically, a few days later, not ten miles away in Elvington, a mass meeting of Tilmanstone miners voted overwhelmingly (four to one) to accept the closure of Tilmanstone pit. This decision will be seen by many of those who were active in the strike as a local step by the Coal Board in the wake of the strike defeat to smash one of the most militant and best organised coalfields in the country.

The reasons for closure, given by the Coal Board are as usual the 'uneconomic' argument. Yet losses are due

to bad planning, bad management and tens of thousands of pounds squandered on ineffective new equipment that is destined to the scrap metal dealers.

With all the arguments won and a year of sacrifice, miners left the meeting, many to collect their redundancy payments, but some to transfer to either Betteshanger or Snowdown. They will bear the responsibility to see the battles to come and draw on the lessons learnt. As one sacked miner said after the meeting: "No matter what the result was, the struggle has to go on".

Many miners have relations working on the boats. One of the immediate lessons to draw from this weekend is

that under the next Labour government, Sealink must be brought back under nationalisation with no compensation for Sherwood.

But as with the Coal Board, nationalisation must not be an excuse for some gangsters like Sherwood or MacGregor to take over and destroy the industry and destroy jobs. Nationalisation must be on the basis of democratic workers control and management.

If our movement does not seriously take heed of the lessons of the miners' strike the job losses will be seen not only in the North of England. Kent, the so-called 'Garden of England' could become a compost heap.

By Eric Segal

Earl Howard

SEAMEN and officers aboard the Sealink ferry *Earl Harold* have been occupying the vessel since receiving notices of redundancy when they returned to Portsmouth.

Sealink management are following the 'hire and fire' tactics of the American bosses. The mood amongst NUS members, officers in NUMAST and other Sealink workers is angry and bitter.

Only last year they accepted wage cuts of 20 per cent, an increase in hours from 15 to 18 per day as well as redundancies. The agreement with management then suggested that future jobs would be secured under an impressive modernisation programme.

However, two weeks ago every seagoing member was handed a redundancy notice on their return to port, with no prior warning or even any discussions with the unions.

Booking clerks were busy selling tickets for future sailings only minutes before the office was closed and they were told that they were no longer employed by the company and to cease work.

At a public meeting called by Portsmouth Trades Council members from NUS, NUMAST and smaller unions involved explained their case and asked for support from the wider labour movement.

Dave Nixon, NUS convenor on the *Earl Harold* told how after 25 years at sea one member had been offered £8,000 in redundancy pay. Maximum support was needed from every section of the labour movement.

By John Flatley
(Portsmouth TGWU)

Militant

March on Wapping
 Led by Labour Party Young Socialists. Saturday 18 October. Assemble 8pm. Tower Hill

Macreadie - we will win again

THE RIGHT wing clique currently in the majority on the CPSA national executive (NEC) contemptuously overturned the democratic election of John Macreadie as General Secretary, and arranged a re-run from 17 November to 12 December.

John Macreadie is absolutely confident that his election will be confirmed by the CPSA membership. He has been deluged by messages of goodwill from throughout the union. Many members who did not vote for John have told him they believe he was elected fairly. They are impressed with the way he has conducted himself since his election and are outraged at the blatant and desperate manoeuvrings of the right.

Sweeping all precedents aside, the right wing refused to allow John to take up office. They appointed the Electoral Reform Society to fulfill the General Secretary's constitutional duty to investigate any complaints into the election.

Separate powers

The union's Returning Officer alone has the power to decide on a re-run. In this way the union keeps separate the functions of investigator and judge to protect against bias.

Despite the union rules and its own remit, however, the ERS itself recommended a re-run. They provided no evidence to back this up, merely a flimsy collection of unsubstantiated general assertions.

They admitted there was no ballot-rigging. They produced no complaints against John Macreadie personally. **The major irregularity they highlighted was the desk-top balloting in the Ministry of Defence, which polled heavily for the right wing candidate, John Ellis. If these votes had been invalidated John Macreadie would have won by a landslide.**

By Brian Ingham

The ERS's main complaint was against the discretionary decisions of the Returning Officer. But the right wing NEC was elected following the same decisions, one member by only 14 votes.

The Returning Officer said there were "material weaknesses" in the ERS report yet he managed to repeat the recommendation for a re-run.

To try to justify this call, his one and a half page report refers to a second, and so far secret, ERS report. He cites the large number of complaints. But there were bound to be many with the right wing actively soliciting complaints. The question is, are the complaints valid? He also refers to 21 branches which did not take part in the voting. There is no explanation of why, no proof, and no indication as to whether these complaints arrived through the constitutional complaints' procedure.

Significantly the Returning Officer only gave a recommendation for a re-run. He simply could not produce hard evidence to back up a formal decision. He passed that task to the far from impartial NEC who, under rule, have no power to decide on this matter.

At the NEC, despite John Macreadie's insistence, the right wing refused to issue to members all the relevant documentation, including his detailed rebuttal of the ERS report. They also insisted on proceeding to order a re-run, even before the Returning Officer had responded to the points John had raised.

The right wing now want postal



John Macreadie

balloting which gives greater scope for interference to the Tory media, removes the control of ballots from democratically elected branch scrutineers and where there is no check on votes that go "missing" in the post.

But the left has shown, by the (unsuccessful) legal challenge it mounted to defend the election result that it will not allow the right a free hand to rewrite the rule book.

It is understood that the right have received legal advice, warning that they would lose against any legal challenge to prevent them introducing postal balloting in a re-run election. The sovereignty of the conference over any changes in the union's rules, is crystal clear.

John has challenged the right wing to place before the November special pay conference all proposed changes to the electoral rules and procedures. At the NEC union President, Marion Chambers, again refused to reveal how many branches have called for a special conference on this issue.

Dirty campaign

The right have been hell-bent on forcing a re-run. The wrong man won, the members were wrong, democracy could not prevail. That was their attitude. They will now conduct the most rabid campaign of personal abuse ever seen in a modern trade union election.

This will only further encourage the ranks of the CPSA once again to return John Macreadie as General Secretary.

John has said that as General

Printers scorn Murdoch



Striking print workers have again rejected Murdoch's phoney 'peace' offer in last week's ballot. After nine months their heroic battle for jobs and union rights is an inspiration to the labour movement. They have answered all those sceptics who tried to argue that workers are not prepared to struggle. Now the printers demand the same fighting determination from the TUC and Labour leaders. (Turn Wapping vote to new offensive—see page 14.)

Secretary his pay will be frozen. He will not take the £26,000 a year general secretary salary. He will continue to donate from his income to the labour and trade union movement and to workers in struggle, so that as General Secretary his wage is no more than that of an average industrial worker.

In the re-run John Ellis will be supported by the Tories and the Tory media. John Macreadie will be backed by the overwhelming bulk of rank and file activists, who want to see the implementation of conference policy and the election of a leader in tune with their aspirations.

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