

Militant

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Militant Fighting Fund

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THE WAVE of revolutionary opposition to apartheid and capitalism by South African workers has forced Barclay's Bank, and Thatcher's favourite contract cleaners, Pritchard's, to pull out of the country.

Direct investment has become too much of a risk for the former owner of Barclays National (Barnat), the largest clearing bank in S Africa, and the biggest UK company there.

And anti-apartheid campaigns in Britain have persuaded many young, potentially high earning customers to boycott Barclay's, while some Labour councils have changed banks. Barclay's were even forced to produce internal leaflets to convince its own staff that it was 'an anti-apartheid bank'.

They said that their presence was encouraging 'peaceful and evolutionary change.' Yet the present Barnat chairman, Basil Hersov, was a member of the board which advises Botha on arms purchases. Morality has nothing to do with their decision. They are selling their shares to other multinationals—Anglo-American, De Beers and the Southern Life Association, and they will maintain indirect links

with Barnat.

Apartheid was designed to provide a compliant workforce for capitalism. No foreign companies took more advantage of this than Britain's bosses. Thorn/EMI, BTR, Courtaulds, Unilever, GEC, Shell, BP, Standard Chartered—it reads like a *Who's Who* of British capitalism.

Half of the top 100 companies have a subsidiary in South Africa. UK direct investment in apartheid is around £5 billion with another £6 billion held in shares in South African companies.

Botha's government is worried that Barclay's decision will have a domino effect on other companies. Apartheid will not be brought down by the Barclay's of the world. But the labour and trade union movement should take advantage of Botha's problems by building up links with the non-racial unions fighting Botha's state machine and the multinationals.

British unions should draw up plans for workers' sanctions; actions in the docks, the airports and in all companies associated with South Africa to hit hard at all trade.

The power of the workers here can strengthen the fight for liberation and workers' power in South Africa.

Profiting from Botha's regime

MONDAY'S WORLD in Action TV documentary showed how one British firm in particular is still propping up apartheid. Consolidated Gold Fields run from London, making a profit of £575 million a year out of the low pay and atrocious conditions of their black workforce.

Black miners face appalling risk of injury due to minimal safety provision; if injured they get miserly compensation. They are housed in disgusting barracks and policed by thuggish security guards to produce high dividends for British bosses.

The Gold Fields chairman, former Tory government minister Lord Erroll of Hale had the brass neck to claim that miners' living conditions were "better than I had at my public school." The labour movement must

take the complacent smirk off the bosses' faces, Consolidated have a large number of subsidiary companies. One of them, ARC, gets many contracts for local authority and health service construction jobs.

We say:

- ★ End all Labour council and health authority contracts with ARC companies.
- ★ Send messages of protest at conditions to Consolidated Gold Fields Ltd, 49 Moorgate, London EC2 6BQ.

Messages of support for workers via SANUM, Box 2424, Johannesburg 2000. Copies of Goldfields video available from SALEP, PO Box 77, London E8 4TB.

● Anti-apartheid protestors arrested—page 5.



OUR FIGHTING Fund is now £99,061.

Clive Bomford has paid us £200 and has promised to send more at the end of November. Helen Taylor, Glasgow, has sent £100. We appeal to all readers to send us at least one week's income to push our cashometer to the top.

Have you sent your donation yet?

Militant

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US arms for "Murder Inc."

THE REVELATIONS that the US has been supplying military hardware to Iran to finance the 'Contra' war in Nicaragua shows that Ronald Reagan's campaign against "world terrorism" has been no more than a showy facade to hide the strategic interests of American imperialism.

The cabal around Reagan are like gangsters: corrupt and cynical, playing in the world of power politics, the game of cross and double-cross. Reagan himself has been shown more clearly than ever to be a direct puppet of the capitalist class, well able to read prepared scripts but completely incapable of personally grasping any detail, fumbling and stumbling his way through press conferences.

Although the situation is not serious enough for Reagan to be removed—as was the case with Richard Nixon—sections of the capitalist class must now be concerned about his lack of control. But most of all they are concerned about these secret operations, in no way exceptional, being thrust into the public domain, through the blunders of his staff.

For years these hypocrites have been condemning the alleged "morality" of Marxism as they see it and have been lecturing the European governments about the need to stop arms sales to Iran. Secretary of State George Shultz gave cast-iron assurances that the American embargo held firm. In July last year Reagan himself described the Ayatollah Khomeini as a "new international version of Murder Incorporated", and this year, to justify the murderous bombing of Libya, he flourished to the world's press, his official list of "terrorist" states including both Libya and Iran.

Yet during this entire period, it now transpires, his administration was shipping arms to Tehran, either directly, or through intermediaries like Israel, also a staunch opponent of "terrorism", and then laundering the profits to finance murder, rape and pillage in Nicaragua.

On the very day that a British Foreign Office official was in Washington to discuss the co-ordination of "anti-terrorist" policy, the former National Security Adviser, Robert McFarlane, was touching down in Iran with a plane-load of military equipment and parts.

As Marxists have always explained, for the US, or any capitalist government, its policy and its "moral" standpoint on "terrorism" or "counter-terrorism" are dictated by the class interests of capitalism. The trumpeted "sanctity" of "freedom" and "morality" mean nothing alongside the profits, power and prestige of the capitalist class. The US government has backed every reactionary gangster where it suited their class interests, including brutal dictators like Pinochet in Chile, Duvalier in Haiti and Marcos in the Philippines. Similarly, they have no qualms about backing Contra murder squads in Central America.

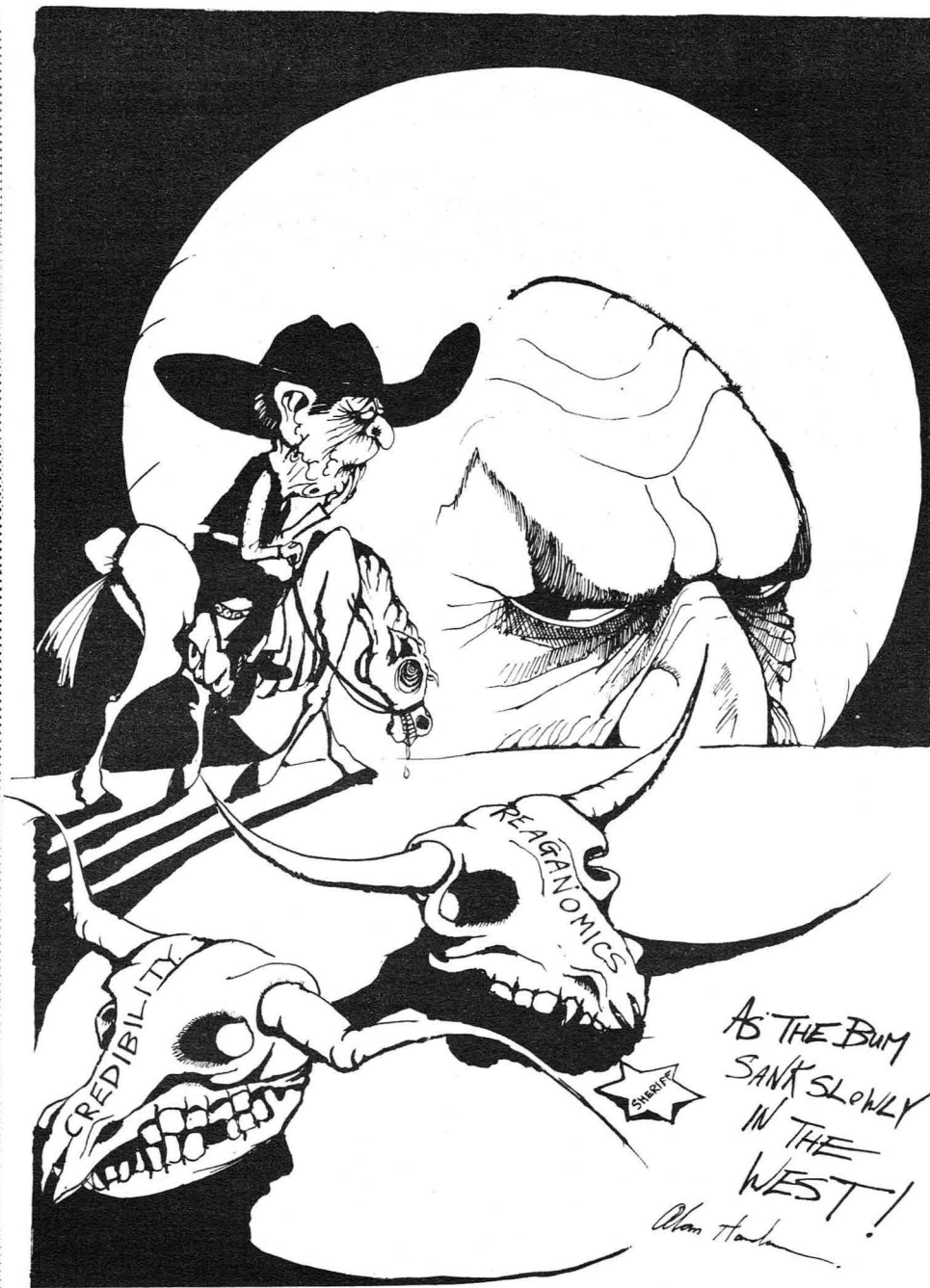
Thus, despite all its public pronouncements on Iran, despite the taking of US hostages in 1979 and despite the political links between the Iranian clergy and the militias conducting kidnapping in Beirut, the US has attempted to maintain a foothold of influence in Tehran. American imperialism can see the possibility of Iran being victorious in its present war and being by far the most dominant power in the Middle East. To underpin American strategic interests in the region, therefore, the US has attempted to open up contacts, especially with the Iranian military.

These arms shipments and the overtures to Iran were made without a thought given to "moral" scruples or to the fact that the US was "double-crossing" other capitalist governments. The only reason other capitalist governments do not howl with rage is because they share the same morality.

The morality of the labour movement, however, rests upon a fundamentally different basis to that of people like Reagan. What is "moral" to the working class is that which furthers the interests, organisation and strength of the working class in the fight for freedom, democracy and socialism; what is "immoral" is that which weakens the working class.

The "Irangate Affair"—the most serious crisis to affect his presidency—will contribute significantly to the collapse in support for Reagan, especially as the US economy goes into recession. One or two scapegoats will not remove the stain from the Reagan administration as a whole. But it is also a clear and unambiguous demonstration for all workers to see of the rottenness, degeneracy and bankruptcy predominant in the ruling class and especially in the leadership of the most powerful of capitalist countries.

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Tories sink into deeper trouble in MI5 spy case

FRESH FROM the humiliating revelations of their deceit and botched cover-up over Westland new revelations of the Tory Cabinet's 'economy with the truth' are emerging in an Australian court room.

Cabinet Secretary, Sir Robert Armstrong, (who protected Thatcher in front of the Select Committee inquiring into Westland) has been despatched down under. With a legal brief prepared by Attorney General, Sir Michael Havers, he was to argue in the New South Wales Supreme Court against publication of a book lifting the lid off the operations of MI5, written by one of its former officers, Peter Wright.

Among other things the book repeats the widely accepted allegation that Sir Roger Hollis, a past head of MI5, was another Russian agent.

Flimsy case

Armstrong and Thatcher's case is that Wright, like all state officials, gave an undertaking not to reveal secrets. To do so, they argue, is tantamount to treachery. But this had been made to look embarrassingly flimsy because:—

- ★ Lord Rothschild, head of the 1970-74 Tory government's think tank, paid Wright to return to Britain in 1980 to repeat his evidence against Hollis to Chapman Pincher who was writing his own book on MI5. Wright says he cannot believe Rothschild acted without government approval.
- ★ Pincher's book, which in-

cluded disclosures from other MI5 officers (none of whom have been prosecuted as a result) was given to MI5 and to the Cabinet Office prior to publication. Havers, according to Pincher, told him privately while out shooting together, that there was no danger about publication. Even the Australian judge concluded that: "The government authorised the book to be published."

- ★ A third book on MI5 has been written by Nigel West, a pseudonym for Tory parliamentary candidate Rupert Allason. This too contains material from MI5 sources. Armstrong wrongly told the court that all the confidential information was removed before the book went to print.

- ★ Pincher claims that Havers told him no action could be taken against West/Allason, because he was a Tory candidate. Havers has vigorously prosecuted ordinary civil servants like Sarah Tisdall and Clive Ponting for leaks.

Armstrong has been made to squirm, acting again as the government's straight man. But their real motive for trying to block this book goes deeper than mere party political credibility.

MI5 is the secret service wing of the capitalist state, responsible for intelligence gathering and surveillance exclusively within the UK. But it does not just operate against foreign agents. Its role is to forewarn and protect the ruling class with its

privileges against any threat to its domination of the economy and society from the majority of the population.

Another ex-MI5 officer, Cathy Massiter, revealed on TV its phone tapping activities against labour movement activists, even the CND and the National Council for Civil Liberties. Justifying this, Armstrong said in court: "It would be justifiable for telephones to be intercepted in order to discover the extent of external, possibly subversive, influence on the conduct of pay negotiations."

Exposed

Wright's book apparently exposes more fully than before the covert methods of MI5, and against whom they are aimed. He details the plot hatched by MI5 officers ('only a few' Armstrong admitted in court in mitigation) against the Harold Wilson Labour government. Imagine the lengths MI5 and the rest of the state apparatus would go to undermine a left Labour government, which is really threatening the rule of capital.

The Labour leaders should use this case to expose the Tories' hypocrisy, but also to warn of the threat to the labour movement's democratic rights. To avert it will require decisive measures by a new Labour government to expropriate capitalism and simultaneously to dismantle its state. That should include the disbandment of MI5.

By Jeremy Birch

Minister admits officer was in terror talks

THE GOVERNMENT admitted last week that a serving British Army officer did attend a conference on counter terror in London on 3-4 November. As reported exclusively in *Militant*, the conference was organised by the US based Defense and Foreign Affairs group which calls for increased military action in Nicaragua.

In answer to questions put by Dave Nellist MP, asking who attended the conference and what they spoke on, defence secretary Mr Freeman said "one UK military officer attended and spoke in general terms on certain aspects of special operations."

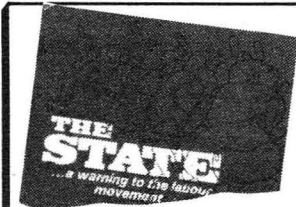
He said that information about official attendance at previous conferences held by the Defense and Foreign Affairs group is "not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost."

Dave Nellist also asked the leader of the House of Commons, John Biffen, whether he was aware that the commanding officer of 2 para, David Parker, was also invited to attend. He also asked if Biffen could explain how "the Prime Minister can denounce terrorism, when this conference was organised two weeks ago to discuss supporting terrorist operations against the governments of Nicaragua, Mozambique and Angola" and would the Secretary of State for Defence "make a statement to explain the government hypocrisy?"

Biffen answered that he was "unaware of all of those things, which I fear reflects the fact that I would make pedestrian company"—which roughly means 'no comment'.

There is little doubt that such conferences and meetings take place regularly and act as a forum for the military to work out strategy for defending the interests of capitalism. Since they are organised by private groups and in secret, governments can fairly easily deny any involvement or official backing. But the lessons and conclusions of such gatherings will be taken into the military and intelligence circles to be debated further.

By a Militant reporter



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Hatton resigns but policies undefeated

A YEAR on from the suspension of Liverpool District Labour Party, the National Executive Committee have finally succeeded in forcing the resignation of Derek Hatton, Tony Mulhearn and Felicity Dowling from their council positions.

The expelled councillors took this decision to defend the longer term interests of the Labour movement. The right wing dominated NEC were already preparing action to discipline and probably expel other members of the Labour Group, beginning with the chair of finance Tony Byrne, following the meeting to 'reconstitute' the Group on 20 November.

As Tony Mulhearn put it: "The 27 November 1985 will go down as a day of infamy in the Liverpool labour movement. The day when the NEC suspended the District Labour Party and began their process of expulsion".

The disgraceful attitude of Neil Kinnock and the Labour leadership has been to concentrate their fire on socialists within the Party and not against the Tories. On their shoulders lies the responsibility for splitting the unity of the Liverpool Labour Group. The forced resignation of these comrades, against the wishes of the majority of the Labour Group who were prepared to risk expulsion, is a temporary victory for the Tories, their kept press and the right wing of the Labour Party.

At last week's 'reconstituted' group meeting only a minority of the Group were initially invited. Those who refused to sign a 'loyalty oath' were refused admittance. The ma-

majority of councillors had signed a letter which pointed out that they had "always abided by the constitution of the party"—words which gained one councillor, Frank Mills, admittance. Inexplicably this did not suffice for the other 22.

Police lines

On the night, left wing councillors found themselves confronted with a metal-grilled entrance and lines of police outside the door of Sogat's Liverpool headquarters, where the meeting took place. On the inside was Neil Kinnock's political commissioner, Kilfoyle, refusing admittance to councillors who next month could be surcharged, disqualified and even bankrupted for defending official Labour Party policy.

Rank and file Sogat members, particularly those standing outside 'Fortress Wapping', must be wondering why their headquarters is being used in this way against Liverpool councillors.

The 200 demonstrators outside certainly made their feelings known. Singing "Let the socialists in, sport" to the tune of "Tie your kangaroo down" (a reference to Kilfoyle's years in Australia). They kept up their pressure and support for the excluded councillors.

Such was the stupidity of the Party in pursuing this policy, that even right wing councillors objected and demanded the excluded councillors be allowed admission.

Fearing that the left would win the position of chairman and determine the course of the meeting, general secretary, Larry Whitty, insisted that the position of leader and chairman was the

same.

This meant that Tony Byrne, the lefts choice to chair the meeting, was also elected leader of the council. No election took place for deputy leader.

The attitude of the Party leadership to John Hamilton is basically that he was a sacrificial lamb. Their tactics lost him the position of leader.

The responsibility for this situation lies with Neil Kinnock who has given into the demands of Tebbit and Thatcher that the Marxists be expelled from the Party.

But bureaucratic rule will

not work in Liverpool where the majority of the ranks support the ideas of socialism and Marxism, something which the Party leadership cannot admit or understand.

Lose control

Democratically elected councillors could soon be removed by unelected judges. If the party leaders impose new candidates, as in Knowsley, and ignore the overwhelming majority of the membership they will be creating the possibility of Labour losing control of the

city.

Derek Hatton said "we are not talking in terms of a defeat. Because our policies have not been defeated, nor our achievements destroyed. Individuals may have been forced to stand down, but others will step into their places and will continue with the same policies".

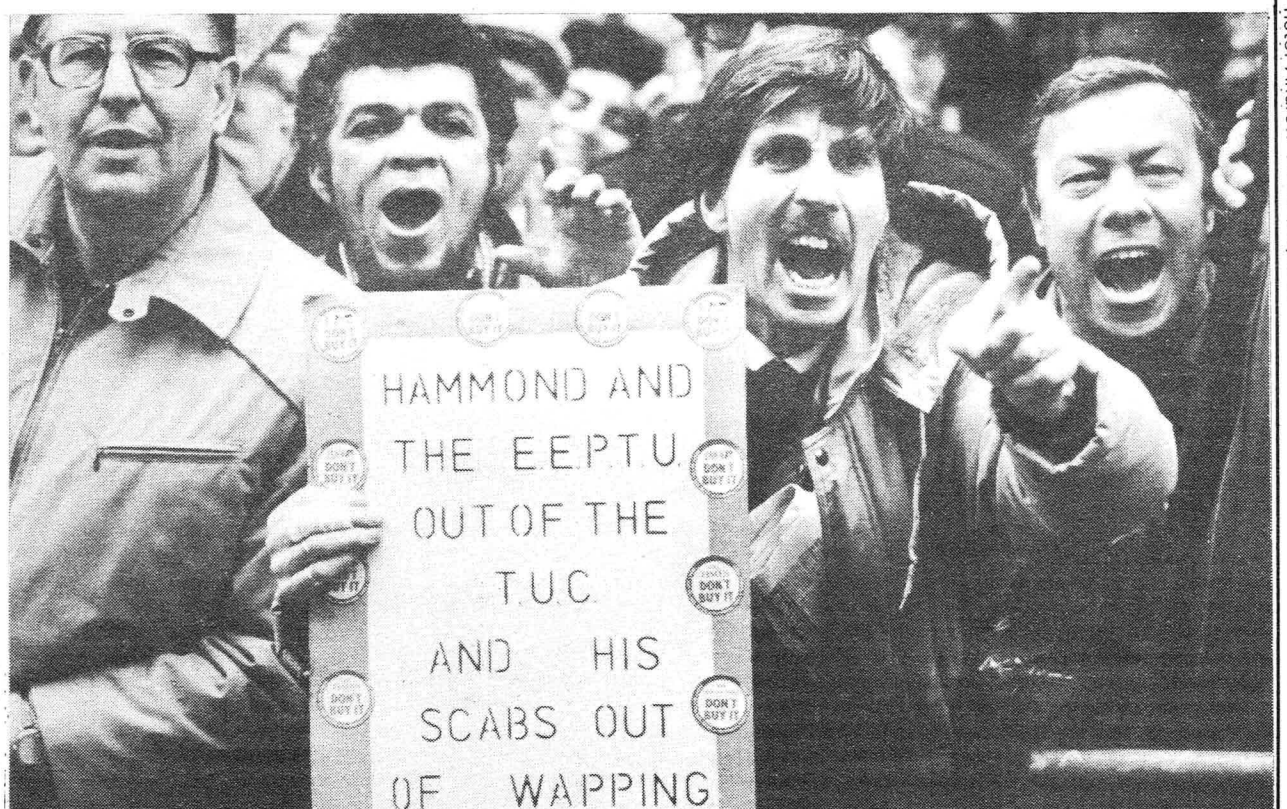
The Labour councillors may have suffered a temporary set-back but they can hold their heads high. Their achievements speak for themselves. The creation of the most vibrant and democratic District Labour Party in the country with

mass rank and file participation, and the most politically aware working-class.

And the implementation of a programme in housing and employment which will act as a living monument (see pages 8/9).

As Tony Mulhearn put it: "The enemies of the District Labour Party should enjoy their victory, because it will be a short-lived one. We will not go away, we are part and parcel of the working class movement"

By Dave Cotteril



Suspensions of 5,500 sacked print workers over the role of the EETPU in News International's move to Wapping now seems completely justified with new evidence which alleges that the electricians' leaders discussed plans with Murdoch. In her book *At the End of the Street*, Linda Malvern claims that minutes of

a secret meeting show that there was a draft agreement between the EETPU and the owners of the *London Post* which never came into existence. Above, angry print workers demonstrate outside the TUC which decided not to re-open the inquiry into the role of the EETPU.

Photo: Andrew Ward (Report)

Pat Wall slams Tory racists

FIVE HUNDRED people from Bradford's Asian community came to hear a debate between Pat Wall, prospective parliamentary candidate for Labour in Bradford North, and Geoff Lawler, the constituency's Tory MP, on the government's imposition of visas on five black countries.

The meeting was organised by Bradford North Labour Party Young Socialists.

There was a heated discussion with angry Asians arguing that the new visa system was racist and supporters of Mr Lawler making comments such as "This is a white man's country" and "Why don't you go back home?"

While such comments were being made, Mr Lawler was still arguing that he was not racist, nor was his government. When asked to denounce those people and ask them to leave the meeting he refused, saying that what his supporters meant was that the majority of people in this country were white and that 'go back home' meant get on the bus and go back home to your home in Bradford.

Pat Wall was undoubtedly the most popular man in Bradford Moor area that

night. The majority of people cheered every statement that he made, capturing their hearts and support. Pat Wall started by saying that this government was racist and seeks to divide the working people along racial lines hoping to win some backward layers of the white community.

He went on to say that the cost of sending immigration officers to the five countries was ten times higher than employing the necessary staff at the ports in Britain.

He summed up by saying that to fight unemployment, poverty, bad housing and other ills of our society, black and white working class must unite to fight the Tories and their rotting system.

Lawler dug his own grave. He said that the new system would mean that people in the five countries would apply for visas in the 'comfort' of their own home rather than wasting air fares by coming here and being turned back!

About a dozen Asian youth at the meeting joined the Young Socialists there and then.

By Hamid Khayan

Kinnock condones Tebbit's slur on left councils

THE LABOUR leadership have added fuel to the Tories' fire by underlining Tebbit's attack on 'loony left' councils.

Neil Kinnock said at a meeting of the parliamentary Labour Party that these councils attract "lurid headlines" and obscured the real achievements of 99 per cent of Labour councils.

The accusations of 'zeolotry' made by both Kinnock and Labour's environment spokesman, John Cunningham, only back up the Tories' propoganda of 'extremists' behind the rose, aimed at making a general attack on local democracy and local jobs and services.

Nor are the Labour leaders specific about which policies in particular they are against, or which councils they are referring to, so that all left councils are lumped together and condemned at once. Kinnock's talk of blotting out the real achievements of most Labour councils sticks in the throat when that is precisely what he has done in attacking Liverpool Council. Liverpool has built 4,500 new houses and bungalows and created 2,000 new jobs, facts which have been obscured by the expulsions



John Cunningham, repeated attacks on left councils.

of councillors and now the splitting of the Labour Group by the right wing.

Although *Militant* doesn't support some of the policies and methods of other left wing councils, like the divisive programme of positive discrimination to fight racism—the right of Labour councils to democratically decide and implement their policy must be upheld.

Real damage

The councils which need to be pulled into line, and which do Labour most damage are those who fail to defend jobs and services for working people. Labour

controlled Coventry is in the process of closing Binley Park comprehensive school, having already closed the junior school.

Another junior school is under threat of closure, yet councillor Phil Hollifield was expelled from the Labour group after he was elected in February for voting against school closures.

Hull Labour council is attempting to sack a leading council shop steward, Alan Shadforth. He is being victimised because he backed a strike by dustbin workers after one of their members was sacked. This followed a strike by bus workers over holiday pay and another strike over the implementation of the Tories' Transport Act leading to the loss of several hundred jobs.

Labour's leaders should use their authority to prevent these councils from attacking their own workers and members of their own party.

United opposition by Labour authorities and the Party leaders would have far more affect in defeating the Tories' propoganda than helping to raise the spectre of extremism.

By Ben Eastop

Whitty's double standards

IN THE few days between the Labour Group meeting and Derek Hatton's resignation, Larry Whitty actually wrote to the Chief Executive of Liverpool council, urging him not to recognise Derek as Deputy Leader. As if an unelected Labour Party official, and not the working-class voters of Liverpool could determine who their council representatives should be.

Whitty insisted that the Labour Group could not vote non-members into council positions. Collaborating with expelled socialists is apparently unacceptable, but formal agreements with the Liberal/SDP enemy are quite legitimate. Several Labour groups around the country have such agreements. On Exeter council Labour is the largest single party, but without an overall majority, it has divided up the committee chairs with the Alliance. Indeed, left-wing Exeter party members were expelled for opposing the council's methods and a similar deal with the Alliance on Devon County Council.

Lies, smears and abuse

Reply to the Black Caucus, Liverpool Echo and church leaders

THE LIVERPOOL *Echo* has carried a two page spread which quotes extensively from a new book, *Racial Politics of Militant in Liverpool*, by the Liverpool Black Caucus, published by the Runnymede Trust. Despite saying "It's not just *Militant* who come under fire," the *Echo* headline was "Blacks V *Militant*, the years of conflict" and the accompanying editorial was entitled "Corrupt *Militant*."

It alleges that when the Black Caucus tried to oppose Sam Bond's appointment by Liverpool City Council as its race relations adviser, "the *Militant* led

council really turned the heat on with threats and harassment." They say that the foreword by the Anglican bishop David Shepherd and Roman Catholic archbishop Derek Warlock "adds to the authority of the book" and the editorial finishes: "It merely confirms what we have known from the moment *Militant* wrapped its poisonous tentacles around Liverpool—that it is a corrupt and cynical organisation which shows an utter contempt for the democratic system and the Labour Party it has infected. It now stands condemned from almost every side."

In the article, they write: "But despite the descriptions of the terrible history over the last three years, the authors still find room for optimism in the future. They examine the prospects for race relations work with either a new Liberal administration of a new Labour administration if the present 47 rebels are barred from office by the House of Lords in January!"

The following reply by Richard Venton, Merseyside spokesman for *Militant*, was sent to the *Liverpool Echo* but only short extracts were published on Wednesday 26 November.

Your two page diatribe against *Militant* and Liverpool council regurgitates all the lies, smears and semi-literate abuse which the *Echo* and other enemies of Labour have poured out for two years. Like the Black Caucus book, your claims of corruption and racism are never substantiated with facts—just based on the gossip and hearsay of people with a vested interest in attacking *Militant*.

You show contempt for

the truth in your editorial claim that *Militant* deals in "threats and harassment". Prove it or publicly apologise! Your "witnesses" the Black Caucus, are the very people whose supporters assaulted councillor Felicity Dowling at a public meeting. . . I don't recall full page coverage of those methods. And when did the *Echo* ever expose police harassment of black youth?

Your fundamental assumption is false: there is no conflict between *Militant*

and the black community. You let slip that the Black Caucus are "12 people". Who elected them? Who do they represent? Certainly not the black community! They had their chance in the May elections and their candidate was obliterated in a democratic vote in Granby. And in the words of the *Echo* itself: "There is not a shadow of doubt that Liverpool's town hall election results were a success for *Militant*. No scouser could have been under any illusion

that a vote for Labour in this city yesterday was a vote for *Militant*."

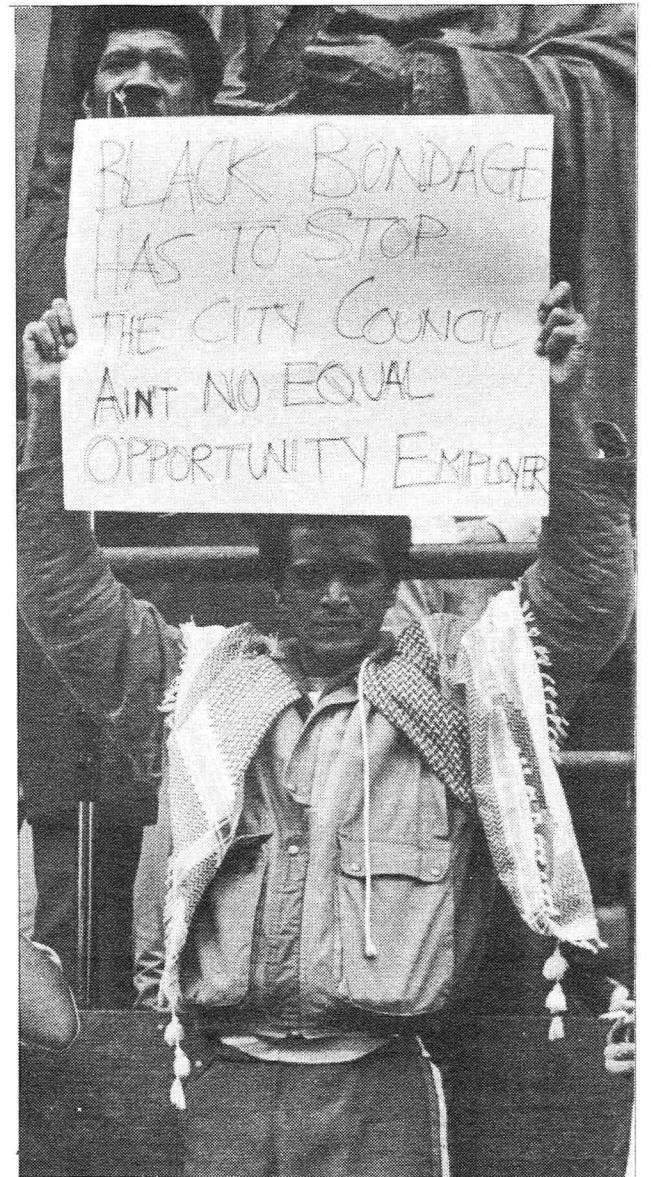
The Black Caucus are self-appointed and their vitriolic attacks on Sam Bond are because they wanted his job for one of their own small clique. That was why they are so keen to get a Liberal council which would oblige the Black Caucus but which would be an unmitigated disaster for black families who already suffer the worst levels of poverty and unemployment.

It is the *Echo* in its support for this unelected clique—and not *Militant*—which "shows an utter contempt for the democratic system."

Exploitation

Militant has already recognised that blacks suffer double exploitation under capitalism—as members of the working class and as blacks. Only a tiny elite of blacks (such as the authors of the Black Caucus book) escape mass unemployment, slums, racial discrimination and police harassment.

The *Militant* influenced council has at least done something to redress the imbalance. £53 million has been invested in Liverpool 8, in housing and capital programmes, already rehousing 850 families. Blacks now receive 13 per cent of council home-helps and meals on



Black Caucus supporter protesting against Liverpool City Council.

wheels provision, compared to 0.3 per cent under the Liberals, and whilst there is still a long way to go, there are now more black council employees than ever in the council's history.

It is an insulting lie to say that *Militant* does not fight racism. We organised the Liverpool contingent to last year's demonstration in defence of the Newham 7 who are black victims of racial terror and police attacks. We have recently led anti-fascist campaigns in Liverpool where the Black

Caucus and bishops have been noticeable for their absence.

Militant will not be deterred in our struggle for workers unity against racism and capitalism by the smears of a very unholy alliance. And the black community of Liverpool 8 will applaud us just as they will condemn the clamour of the *Echo* and black caucus for the return of a Liberal council. ■

A full analysis of the *Black Caucus* book will be published next week.



A home renovated by the council in Liverpool 8.

THE SUSPENSION and then reinstatement of Maureen McGoldrick, the head teacher in the London Borough of Brent, who is alleged to have made a 'racist' remark, is one of the issues used by Tebbit and Ridley in their diatribes against the 'loony left' in Labour-controlled councils.

From these two members of the 'raving right' whose government have starved councils of cash for vital services and imposed racist visa restrictions, such remarks reek of hypocrisy. Labour councillors need no lessons from Tories on how to fight racism.

Ms McGoldrick was suspended after she had been accused of telling a council official, Sheila Szulc, that she "did not want any more black teachers" at her school, Sudbury Infants. She denies this. The Court of Appeal affirmed the right of the council, and not the governors, to take disciplinary action, which all Labour councils will see as a victory. By then, however, Ms McGoldrick had been reinstated, after protests from parents and strike action by the National Union of Teachers.

They Tories have linked this story with an earlier decision to employ 180 race relations supervisors, whom the press describe as 'commissars', even though the decision to make these appointments was made, with Labour support, by the previous Tory administration, who had been offered £5 million by the Tory government

The McGoldrick affair

How to fight racism

to improve education for ethnic minorities.

The basic principle being followed by Brent council, of total opposition to racism, is one that deserves the support of the whole labour movement. The borough has the highest proportion of black people of any authority in the country, over 50 per cent, yet out of 3000 teachers only 200 are black. Black children on the other hand leave schools with the least qualifications and form the majority of those suspended from school for bad behaviour.

Discrimination

There are undoubtedly elements amongst teachers and school governors who are resisting the council's attempt to fight for racial equality. In such a situation, the council is right to insist on the appointment of more black teachers and to wage a campaign against any conduct which discriminates against the black community. They are right to take action

against employees who express racist opinions, but by trying to discipline those who make chance racist remarks they draw public attention away from the underlying problems which cause racism. It leads to unnecessary rows about particular individuals, as in the McGoldrick affair. Her immediate suspension was an ill-advised over-reaction. They should have taken no action before holding an inquiry to establish the facts, and only then considered any disciplinary action.

Such excessive actions against individuals are intended to promote anti-racist views, but the danger is that, as in this case, they can sometimes make the situation worse by trivialising this important issue, antagonising parents and teachers who are in no way racist, and presenting the Tory press with an easy target with which to discredit the council's campaign against racism.

The highly publicised campaigns by Brent and other London Labour councils against racism have also obscured their failure to stand up

to the Tory cuts in education, housing and other services which have done so much to create a climate in which racism can flourish. Brent for example is short of 200 teachers. Black or white, these extra 200 leaders would do more good for black children than the disciplining of Ms McGoldrick.

Resentment

Even the worthwhile under-publicised work to create more jobs and provide more houses for ethnic minorities, is undermined by the fact that the overall number of jobs and houses available is shrinking. It is precisely competition for scarce resources that can lead to racial tension. In that context, the appointment and promotion of blacks is right in principal though it can create resentment amongst other workers and actually foment racist attitudes if such appointments are based purely on racial background.

Underlying much of Brent's approach is a misconception that

racism is fundamentally a problem within the minds of white people, which is expressed in attitudes and statements, rather than a problem which arises out of the material conditions in which people grow up. Whenever poverty, unemployment, inadequate education and welfare services exist, the ruling class will try to stir up hostility between workers of different races. In Britain, as a result of the history of British imperialism which sought to promote the view of 'colonial' peoples as inferior, this has been traditionally based on colour.

The labour movement has a fine record in breaking down these prejudices and uniting workers of all races and nationalities in the common struggle to transform society.

Part of this struggle involves specific campaigns against racism, especially within the workplace and Labour councils should not be deterred by Tory slanders and weak leadership from within their own party from continuing to act against racism. But it is crucial that they do not separate that issue from the wider struggle to build a socialist society in which the root causes of racism will be eliminated.

By building new homes, expanding services and saving jobs, as well as acting to improve the position of ethnic minorities, Liverpool City Council have set an example to the movement of the socialist answer to racism.

By Pat Craven

Young Socialists arrested after apartheid protest

LAST SATURDAY, 22 November, 25 members of Glasgow LPYS branches were arrested, when over 40 Young Socialists were involved in picketing and occupying a Benetton store.

By Tommy Sheridan

We were protesting at the knitwear chain's links with apartheid through their stores in South Africa.

Thirteen Young Socialists entered the store: we told the staff of our purpose, although they recognised us from the previous pickets. We asked three customers if they would leave since we were about to sit in front of the doors back and front. Once told of our reasons, they left gladly, two wishing us luck.

We talked to the staff, four young women, who were quite at ease and laughed at some of our funnier songs. They were horrified to learn that blacks in South Africa were not even allowed to walk in the same streets and use the same facilities as whites.

We drew attention to the company's advertising slogan, "the united colours

of Benetton" with black and white women pictured in harmony. Blacks are probably not even allowed to enter their shops in South Africa as they are in white areas.

We told the staff of the economic exploitation of black workers, and the daily brutality and torture that they face. We raised the question of them joining USDAW and finding out more about apartheid.

Police attack

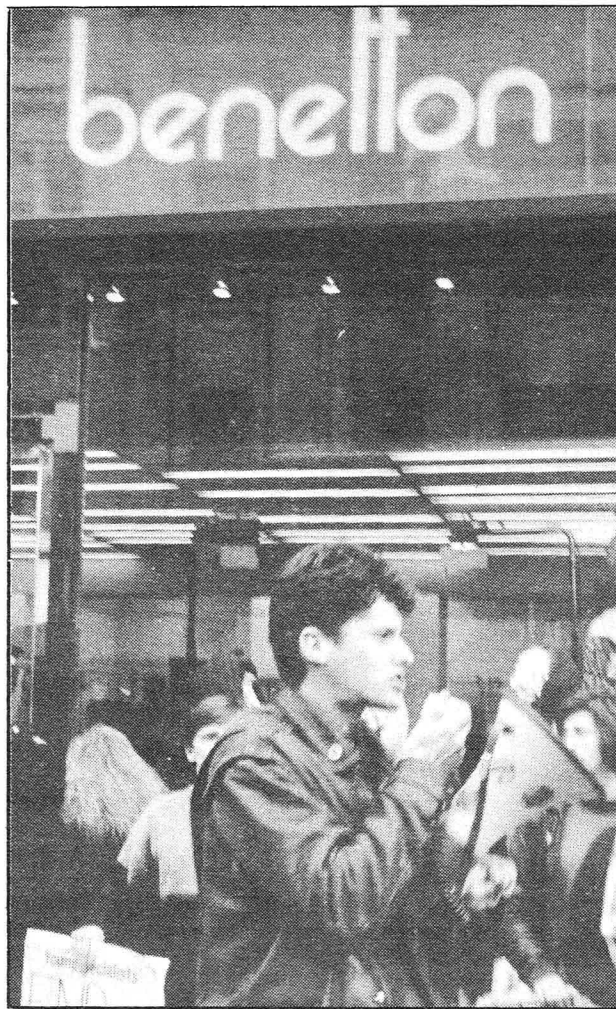
But outside, the police were less convinced than the staff. Three police vans had by now arrived and large numbers of police were mulling around the shop. We could hear YS members chanting "Benetton deals with Botha" outside.

Without any warning the police began arresting people indiscriminately. It seems handing out leaflets is now a crime in Tory Britain.

They arrested 12 comrades, then their attention turned to us inside. Without any warning they started trying to push open the front doors. Our concentrated weight made this impossible so they started kicking and battering the all-glass door.

We were reassured when the staff told us the glass was bullet proof and would not splinter but our relief was short lived when a truncheon on the glass door made it shatter. The staff, for the first time, were frightened. The police kept kicking the door, we moved away and they rushed in, four in plain clothes, one dressed like Belcher of Hill Street Blues.

All in one van, and forced to sit on top of one another, we were taken to the police station. All 25 of us were told we would be inside until Monday morning. Against all routine, we were then locked up for 8 to 10



Outside Benetttons on the first picket.

hours each, fingerprinted and photographed twice. We stayed resilient, brushing up on our singing, including a new version of "Stick it in your family album" when the police photographed us.

The pressure of the labour movement in Glasgow and as far away as London eventually got us out that night: "We have been bloody harassed by the Young Socialists" the police told us. We were told we had been

photographed because of the 'political' nature of the offense.

The arrests are a setback to our campaign. We now face a court case and possible fines. But a massive campaign will be launched for support and we will not give up our fight.

One of the biggest state machines in the world has not cowed South Africa's black workers. Ten hours inside will not cow us.

LPYS set up legal costs fund

THE NATIONAL officers of the LPYS have set up the 'LPYS Defence Fund' to raise money for legal costs for LPYS members arrested whilst campaigning to win the 6.2 million young voters to Labour.

This follows the arrests made on the 18 October demonstration where five LPYS members are to appear in court over the next fortnight on charges of obstruction. None of them have been granted legal aid and already the total legal costs are £600.

Also last Saturday 3 LPYS members in Portsmouth were arrested and held for 44 hours having urged a street meeting of over 300 people to get active in the campaign

to drive the Tories out of office. (See *Militant* 824). They also need to raise an estimated £500 to get legal defence.

It is clear that the police will not hesitate in using the 'medieval' 1361 Justice of the Peace Act in order to arrest and detain without charge for long periods.

The arrests in Portsmouth are a taste of the future in the run-up to the general election as LPYS members campaign for the return of a Labour government.

Donations, urgently needed from all bodies of the labour movement to cover the high legal costs, to be sent to: 'LPYS Legal Defence Fund', c/o LPYS, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT.



Glasgow Young Socialists on the LPYS demo on 18 October when five LPYS members were arrested.

Photo: Chaos

Campaign for youth vote

"IT'S THE Tories fault I've been low paid for the last six years, if young people get organised we'll have 'em out in six months."

Andy Walker a Teesside storekeeper and TGWU member was speaking at the first Northern Region Youth Forum organised by the National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS) and Trade Unionists for Labour (TUFL) in Newcastle on 8 November.

The forum aimed to bring together students, young trade unionists and unemployed youth to discuss campaigning for the youth vote for Labour and to encourage youth campaign committees in every constituency in the Northern Region.

About 70 people turned out. The ideas of the Labour Party Young Socialists played a large part. Three out of the four report backs on the youth campaign committees' sessions were given by LPYS members giving examples of YS branches' activities around the 18 October demonstration. The fourth report back, by a NOLS member, praised the LPYS for its campaigning work and for policies such as a guaranteed job for youth.

Later in the afternoon there was an open youth debate between speakers from NOLS, TUFL, a local prospective parliamentary candidate and the LPYS on a future Labour government's policies.

Theresa Carey got a rousing response to her call for Labour to take over big business and the city under the democratic control of workers who create the wealth of society.

There were useful discussions on political and organisational issues involved in winning the youth vote and setting up democratic trade union youth sections. The day was successful in bringing together young people to discuss ideas. Many YS members felt an opportunity had been missed to circulate the event more widely in the workplaces as there were only a few rank and file trade unionists present. The LPYS themselves got only three days notice.

Nonetheless LPYS branches should welcome the setting up of genuine youth campaign committees with representatives from all sections of the movement. They can play a big part in both winning young voters to Labour and building a mass LPYS before, during and after the next election.

By a Militant reporter

Boycotting Kilroy-Silk

THE OFFICERS of the Labour Party Young Socialists have refused an invitation to take part in the opening programme of the new BBC daytime television programme "Day to Day".

The programme started on 25 November and will be on five mornings a week. The first programme dealt with the attitude of young people towards privatisation.

John Ellen, National Chair of the LPYS explained: "We were asked to send a few members of the LPYS to make up the audience, which we would have liked to do, in order to smash some of the Tories' myths

about privatisation.

"But we feel that to appear on a programme chaired by Robert Kilroy Silk would be to give credibility to this ex-MP for Knowsley North who has scandalously recently serialised his memoirs in *The Times*.

"We are not prepared to recognise a renegade like Kilroy Silk who rode roughshod over the wishes of 6,000 printworkers who are calling for a boycott of Murdoch's titles. That is why we are boycotting this programme and calling on the rest of the labour movement to do the same."

The following tapes of lead offs on important issues for socialists are available from World Socialist Books. If you want something to bring you back to reality after the Christmas pudding, take up this special offer.

Tapes for Christmas

1. The origins of Bolshevism (1860-1900). Woods
2. The Rise of Bolshevism (to 1917). Birch
3. The Russian Revolution. Mullins
4. The Life of Trotsky. Grant and Hemson
5. The Theory of Permanent Revolution. Silverman
6. The Chinese Revolution of 1925-27. Taaffe
7. The Chinese Revolution of 1944-49. Taaffe
8. The Colonial Revolution (China and Cuba). Brooks
9. The colonial Revolution and South Africa. Hemson
10. The South African Revolution (rally 6/86) Sejake, Simpson, Nellist
11. The Colonial Revolution Today. Birch
12. The Latin American Revolution unfolds. Walsh
13. What is Imperialism? Cross
14. Chile on the Brink (March 85). Taaffe
15. The Nicaraguan Revolution. Saunio
16. Ireland and Permanent Revolution. Venton
17. Ireland to partition. Venton
18. Anglo-Irish Agreement—No Solution (6/86). Grant
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24. Has Thatcher weakened the unions? Jarvis
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32. Is Britain a police state? Edwards
33. The causes of the post war boom. McKee
34. World Famine. Waddington
35. A Charter for Women Workers. Redwood
36. "You can't expell ideas" (Rally July 86). Grant
37. The Socialist Way Forward—Debate. Taaffe and Johnstone

All tapes £1.25. 5 for £5, please add 10p per tape for postage.

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'Professionalism and passion'

"THE SPECTACULAR five thousand strong *Militant* tendency rally in London's Albert Hall was an impressive show of strength."

"About 5,000 *Militant* supporters gathered to participate in a rally which with its dramatic laser light show and video review of 1986 displayed a professionalism and passion that easily challenged Labour's party conference at Blackpool."

These quotes come not from *Militant* reporters but from Frank Chapple in the *Daily Mail* and Michael Cassell in the *Financial Times*.

All the reviews of the *Militant* rally in the national press were complimentary. Although nearly all managed to insert a sting in the tail somewhere along the line, they struggled in vain to find fault with the rally, either its technical execution or the tone and content of the speeches. The press came expecting to ring the bells of doom and gloom for *Militant*, but instead left wringing their hands.

These reports did not spring from any sympathy for *Militant*, but reveal recognition by our opponents of the serious political force that *Militant* now represents. In terms of professionalism, enthusiasm, élan and morale, *Militant* far outstrips any rivals in the labour movement.

It was not just the laser shows or the videos which impressed the scribes of the bourgeois but the speeches. Michael Cassell in the journal of big business, the *Financial Times*, spends little time on the lasers and lights but soberly gets to the heart of the matter, assessing the mood of all *Militant* supporters at the rally:

Very much alive

"The pin-striped stewards, having just presided over the Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance, appeared bemused: Mr Kinnock, the Labour leader would have been utterly depressed.

"For *Militant* organised a defiant, full-hearted gathering of the faithful to listen to its favourite sons and daughters and prove that, in spite of some setbacks at the hands of the courts and the Labour Party leadership, it remains very

By Ken Smith

much alive and totally unrepentant...

"...The cheers were reserved for people such as Mr Tony Mulhearn, for 23 years a Labour Party member until his expulsion by Labour's National Executive Committee. Mr Mulhearn defiantly holding on to his post as President of Liverpool District Labour Party, recited its achievements in Liverpool, including creating 10,000 jobs in the construction industry and building 4,500 new homes...

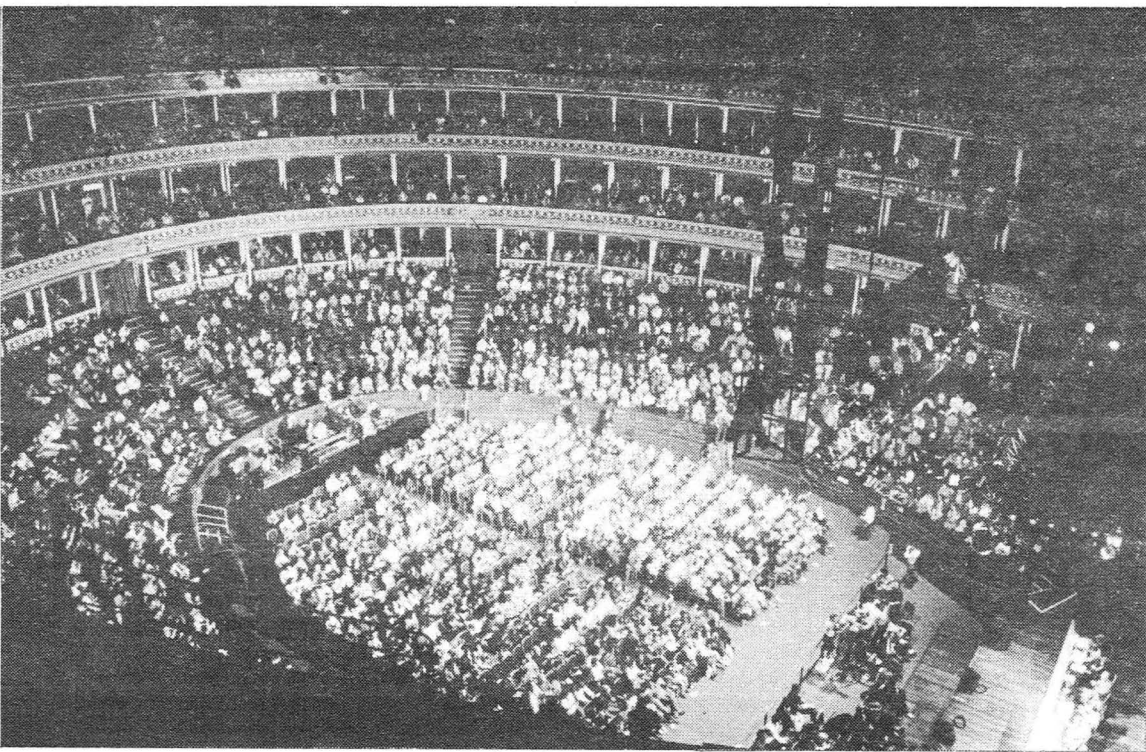
"...Mr Peter Taaffe, editor of *Militant* and another expelled party member, said Knowsley had proved a shameful result for Labour. It was a devastating indictment that, after "a seven year-long nightmare," the Tories stood any chance of re-election. If the Labour leadership opened the door to another five years of Thatcherism, it would never be forgiven by the working class.

"The undisputed hero of the day, however, was Derek Hatton, who said he still spoke, despite the Labour purge as deputy leader of Liverpool City Council.

"People were totally confused, he said, by the actions of the Labour leadership in expelling those whose worst crime was to carry out their pre-election promises. The Labour Party did not belong to Mr Kinnock but to millions of people who fought for a true socialist party...

"...*Militant* says it will not be back at the Albert Hall in 1987. The building it claims, will not be

How the press reported *Militant's* rally



big enough to house its swelling ranks. Mr Kinnock might wish that *Militant* holds its next rally overseas."

Other papers offered no less serious reports. Even the normally rabid *Daily Mail* who specialise in cover to cover red scare stories designed to frighten old ladies in the shires into voting Tory, was for once sombre and serious:

"Then, through a mist of white smoke released on stage, the brothers emerged like stars at a pop concert. And with their images thrown on to a 40ft screen, the banished rebels of the Labour Party stabbed their fingers at the air to scream a torrent of defiance.

"With thunder in his voice Peter Taaffe warned Mr Kinnock: "Don't think you are going to cover Marxism as shown by *Militant*. Others more powerful than you have tried that. You are going to have to recognise that *Militant* is a new phenomenon. The leadership of the party have given the heads of Tony Mulhearn and Derek Hatton on a platter to the ruling class."

Undaunted defiance

The *Daily Telegraph*, normally still living in the era when the Albert Hall was first built, dragged itself into the 20th century to report the rally:

"Undaunted by the Labour Party's expulsion of its leading lights and talk of further purges, the Trotskyite *Militant* Tendency demonstrated its defiance with a glossy "high tech" rally at the Albert Hall yesterday.

"The overwhelmingly young audience, estimated by the organisers at nearly 5,000 were given a display of razzmatazz closer to an American political rally than the hairshirts tradition of the extreme left."

And *The Guardian*, ostensibly a consciousness raising periodical for the tired and jaded middle class, found itself exuberantly refreshed after only one day at a *Militant* rally:

"Yet there was no doubting the political commitment of those attending the rally. The bars, during the speeches, were completely empty, an occurrence unknown at any other political gathering. An emotional appeal by Ms Frances Curran, the former Young Socialist delegate to Labour's national executive, raised £33,049, one person donating £5,000 and five others £1,000 each.

"After the Red Flag and the In-

Well done!

Dear Comrades,

Well done and thank you for our rally. I hope you were pleased to see the good press coverage afterwards. You must have worked so hard and earned it. It was quite different from previous *Militant* rallies, and from other meetings, but appropriate to the time.

Although it was very professional and slick it undoubtedly had *Militant's* stamp all over it. I was specially impressed by the deaf interpreter, the light show, the cabaret, particularly the brilliant conjurer, and very moved by the Liverpool councillors and their families, and representatives of strikers, coming on stage at the end. I had to stand up to salute their courage.

Also well done with the crèche. I have complained in previous years but this one was much better, especially the security on the door.

Of the speakers, I most enjoyed Peter Taaffe and Ted Grant who was truly inspiring. My eldest, who is eight, spent the afternoon in the hall and liked Nimrod Sejake the best, as he has a great interest in South Africa.

I also felt that Clare Doyle was a brilliant chairperson in the afternoon session, and the appeal was a model of how to raise money.

I came home awed and impressed.

Fraternally,
Julia Ingram,
Southampton.



Double your sales

NOW IS the time to turn your *Militant* Rally pledge to sell more copies into actual sales. Let's end 1986—the year of *Militant*—on a high note to set the tone for 1987 as the year of a more frequent *Militant*.

Next week's *Militant* will carry a four page feature on the way forward for mineworkers. Every shift at every pit should be targeted with this issue in a campaign to build more regular sales among miners. Order extra copies now.

And while you're planning ahead, the following week's issue (dated 12 December) will be the last before Christmas. (The next will be

dated 2 January.) We are appealing to every seller to make 12-14 December a weekend of action to boost our circulation by organising workplace and dole sales on the Friday, a street sale on Saturday and door to door sales on the housing estates on Sunday. With a bit of forethought you could double the sales in your area as your Christmas gift to *Militant*.

Well done Southampton supporters who last week sold 25 copies outside the dole office in two days.

By Andy Beadle

ternationale, the rally ended as it had begun: with the platform party supplemented by London youth marchers in neat red caps and anoraks, bathed in dry ice smoke and a virtuoso laser display which lit up the hall in swirling stroboscopic patterns before resolving into a giant *Militant* 86 slogan.

"Can you imagine the Labour Party doing this? a steward said as the hall began to clear. Last night, Kinnock and Hattersley couldn't even fill the Shaw Theatre in Camden. That's their idea of a mass rally."

It was left to newly born '*Independent*' to whine like a spoilt child who had their favourite toy stolen, yet the flippancy of their report could not hide the impressive achievements of the rally:

"Lasers weaved patterns on the balcony, the throbbing music reached a peak and the names of the stars were greeted with cheers as they were flashed on an electronic screen.

"As the excitement reached a peak, the stars of the show strode briskly on to the stage to wild applause.

"This was not the latest rock band on a global tour, but the 1986 *Militant* rally at the Royal Albert Hall—radical chic meets the Marxist brothers.

"The image was deliberately upbeat to woo a generation whose expectations of excitement are more attuned to *The Tube* than *Das Kapital*."

Last year we were told that *Militant* was about to be marginalised, so it would be appropriate to take a quote from *7 Days*, the weekly journal of the marginal Euro-Communists, which reflects as much their terminal decline as the increasing strength of support for *Militant*:

"It was a highly professional exercise with spotlights sweeping the audience as Curran appealed for cash.

Superbly organised

"Someone donated £5,000 from the sale of their house, and even I felt strangely compelled to turn out my pockets.

"*Militant* is a perplexing beast. Despite everything it seems to be thriving, and, in particular, attracting young people. It is superbly organised and efficient despite its dubious policies, or maybe because of them, and is possibly now the most powerful Marxist grouping on the left.

"The rest of the left and communists in particular, should take it seriously."

For the last year the capitalist press have tried to slander the *Militant* out of existence. Having failed at that, it may just be that they are trying to damn us with faint praise. But that will not stop the *Militant* going from strength to strength, as will be witnessed at the next *Militant* National Rally in June 1988 at the Alexandra Palace.

KILLER Diseases -do the Tories care?

THE STROUD area, and in particular the little town of Stonehouse has recently received the dubious distinction of being the home of a potentially fatal disease—meningitis.

It can affect people of all ages, but young people are especially prone.

Four of the victims have died and of the nine seriously affected two are totally deaf and four partially. One person lost fingertips due to septicemia, one has brain damage and the others suffer from behavioural problems.

The policy of the Health Authority has been to say as little as possible in the hope that it will all go away. But it hasn't and won't.

Earlier this year a leaflet was issued by Stroud District Council in an attempt to calm the increasing alarm in the community. But under the heading: "How will I know if I or my child has

meningitis", all it could say was: "The best advice which can be given is aptly summed up by quoting the mother of a patient, 'You will know that your child has something really wrong with him.'"

There is not one family in the area that has not been affected in one way or another. If a child has a headache, the first reaction of the parent(s) is that that child could have a "killer disease". And who can blame them? How else can anyone react when they are not given full, factual information?

Some of the publicity has been spurred on by the fact that Gloucestershire is home to several members of the

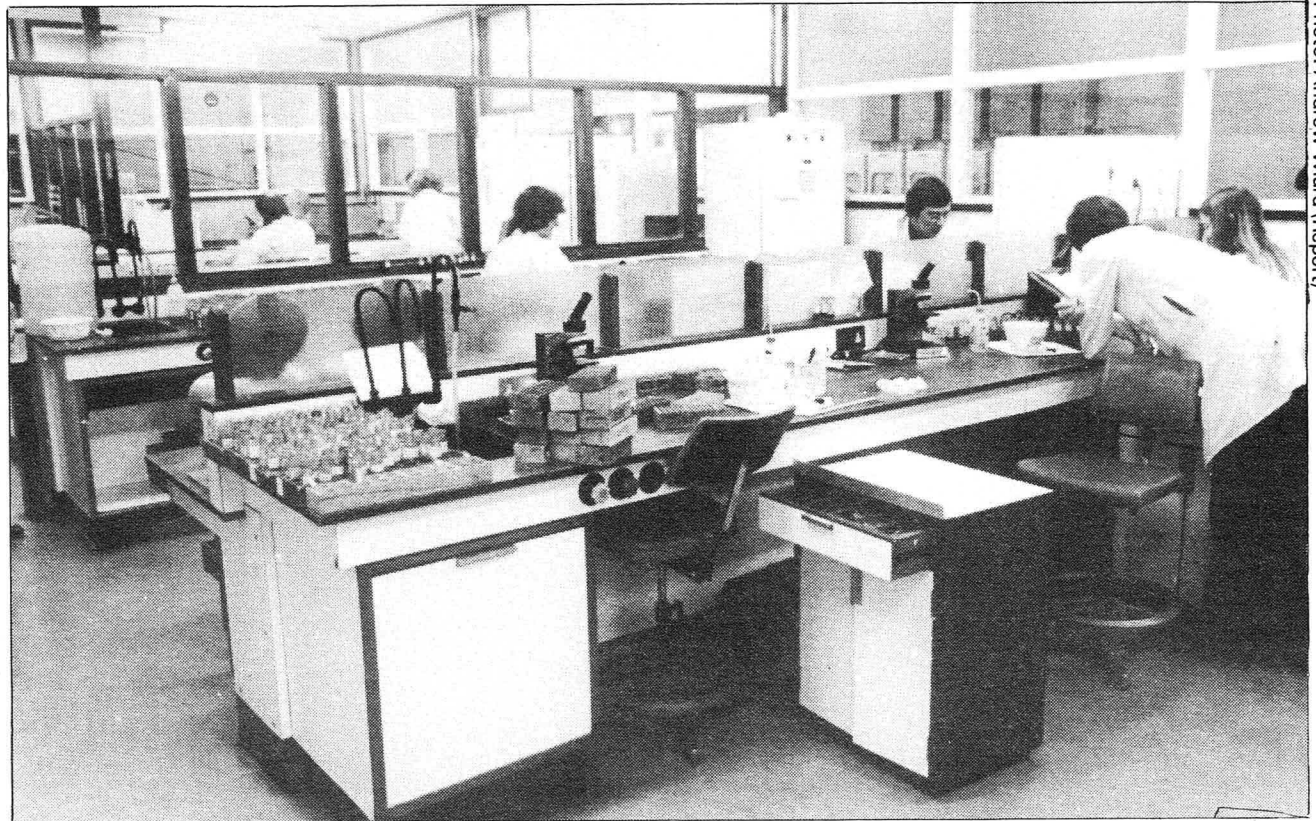


Photo: Andrew Ward (Report)

Medical laboratory — is 'everything being done' under the Tories to end killer diseases.

Royal Family. Captain Mark Phillips went on TV with the brave message that his family would not be frightened off. It's alright for them, they can come and go as they please. In an epidemic you would not see them for dust. But ask any council tenant where they would go, or what possibility they have of leaving.

Increase resources

Stroud's MP, the Tory Sir Anthony Kershaw, asked in the Commons whether further steps would be taken to increase medical resources to discover the cause and prevention of the disease. The very fact that he felt forced to raise it at all illustrates the extent to which

this issue has gripped the area. Needless to say Health Minister, Barney Hayhoe, soon put his mind at rest, "Everything possible is already being done."

Does Sir Anthony think that money is holding up research? Apparently not.

Stonehouse was honoured with a visit and public meeting from the Junior Health Minister, Baroness Trumpington. This meeting, scheduled for the evening was switched to the afternoon at the last moment, which meant a lot fewer people were able to attend. Again the message was clear, "Everything possible was being done."

Now, however, due to pressure from public opinion the biggest medical operation of its kind has just been

launched. Over the past three weeks thousands of Stonehouse residents have participated in the giving of a blood sample—to indicate what groups, if any, are immune to the disease; a saliva sample—to try and establish a link between the level of anti bodies and the risk of catching the disease; a throat swab—to identify carriers.

Study in jeopardy

The willingness of residents to participate (over 80 per cent of a population of 7,000, turned out in our own time under our own steam) shows just how much we want to understand, help and solve the meningitis problem.

Unfortunately, even after

this, a future, more comprehensive study is in jeopardy due to lack of availability of government funds.

Thousands of pounds have been raised by local people, but the wider study, which would have to involve up to 45,000 people around the country, as a necessary follow up to the work currently being done, will cost around £58,000 over three years. Only £13,000 has been agreed by the "caring" Tories.

The Tories are subjecting communities throughout the country to a serious and potentially fatal disease because of their tightfisted policies.

By Manny Thain
(Stroud LPYS)

Cervical cancer: hiding the causes

A RECENT Panorama programme linked the alarming rise of cervical cancer in younger women with promiscuity. So women have brought it on themselves! A neat way for the powers that be to duck responsibility.

But a leaked Northern Region Health report pinpoints a high incidence of cervical cancer in South Tees, North Tyneside, North West Durham and Hartlepool. In North Tyneside, covering North Shields and Wallsend (where my own mother—a cancer victim—lived) cervical cancer death rates are 44 per cent above the national average with 76 deaths between 1974 and 1983. Countless other women have had hysterectomies—a major operation to remove the cancer.

Are Geordie women simply more promiscuous? Cervical cancer is a clear class issue. For all these areas are highly

industrialised with heavy engineering industries and many with chemical industries. Working class women, particularly those with partners who work in industries like these, are most at risk.

The report says: "It is likely that women in this district do not get appropriate services... without appropriate and effective intervention it is likely that very high death rates from cervical cancer will continue to rise."

Halve deaths

A screening system costing £6 million could halve the number of deaths.

Militant (17/10/86) pointed out that 60 per cent of those who die of the disease have never been screened. My mother at the age of 69 had her first smear a few months before she died, and only because her doctor suspected

cancer due to severe haemorrhaging.

Many women who die of the disease leave behind young children and the distress caused in these families is acute.

Annual screening, linked to a computerized automatic recall system is vital if lives are to be saved. Cancer screening units could visit workplaces (as the Bloodtransfusion Service does) and also the housing estates. A huge publicity drive would make women more aware of the issues. But even all this is not enough. Research must be conducted into possible causes of cancer—environment and drugs should be highlighted. But all this needs money, not Tory health cuts.

By Heather Rawling
(Leicester West Labour Party)

Private labs cash in

THE ROYAL College of Pathologists has set up a register for the increasing number of private laboratories which are exploiting the National Health Service back-log of smear-tests.

At present anybody is entitled to set up a laboratory to process cervical smears, and there are no regulations governing the qualifications of the staff employed or the standard of quality control.

The standard of testing at these private labs is also dubious. A quality control test last year showed that a private lab failed to notice four out of five positive smears.

Pressure in NHS laboratories has increased

considerably over the last year or so due to the publicity surrounding women not being screened, leading to a processing backlog of six months in some areas.

The College wrote to 11 private firms. Dr Peter Trott of the college's special advisory committee on cytopathology said: "Eight of the firms wished to register. But we have no power to stop the others screening smears".

So now apparently, after battling with GP's to allow more regular testing of women, there is no guarantee that the test will be examined by qualified staff.

By Anne Lewin
(Newham NE LPYS)

No slow-up in cash

YOU MIGHT think that, after the marvellous collection at the Rally, cash for our £¼ million appeal would have slowed down, but you'd be wrong.

The nearer we get to our target, the more our supporters seem to be spurred on to donate or raise the cash for a more frequent Militant.

It's often those with the least who dig deepest. Who can match the sacrifice of Andrew Shepherd from Middlesbrough, who is unemployed and has donated £300 to our appeal? Or Muna and Chris from Stoke-on-Trent. Chris has just lost his job and Muna has recently had twins, yet they've managed to give £75.

Supporters in East Midlands are leading the way, sending us £1257 this week including £30 from a school student and £90 from Judy Rees. Special mention to Alex Tarry, a student from Stafford who's already given £200 and has donated a further £100. Thanks also to Dave Peden from Birm-

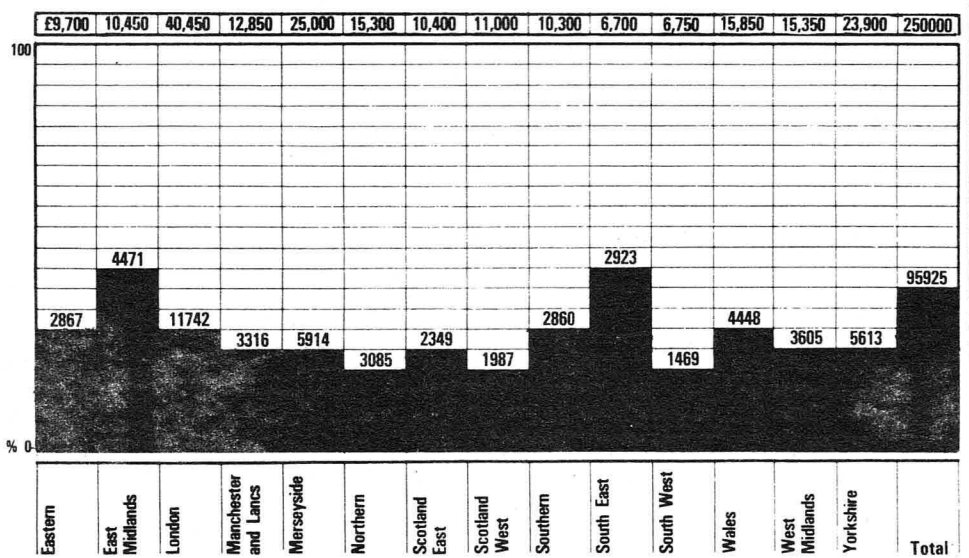
ingham who's donated £50 of his dole money (2 weeks income), M Benn from Mansfield for £125, Alison McSkimming from NE Scotland for £50, Daniel Olive-Lund from Hebden Bridge for £58 and Raymond Gunnian, a new reader from Lanark who sent us £185.25!

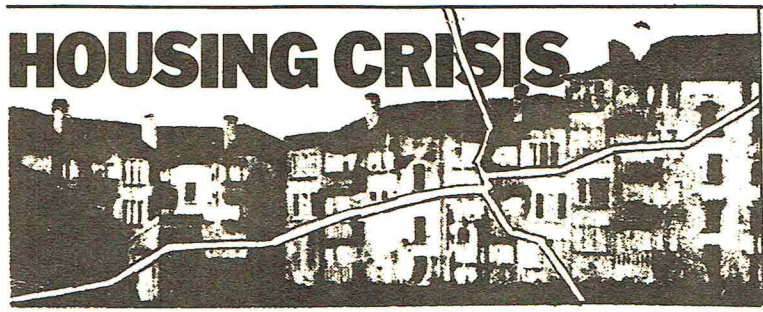
Don't forget the new Calendars and Xmas Draw tickets. Just mention the first prize of a fortnight in Spain and they'll be snapped up!

Finally get cracking and organise those end of quarter socials to celebrate reaching our most ambitious target ever. But get the cash in by the end of the quarter. Good Luck!

Other donations include: K Robinson Barnsley NUM £10, Littleton Pit collection £10.83; T Carroll unemployed, £7.50, A McLaughlin £5, T McLaughlin £4, (all Liverpool Broadgreen); A Farnese Westminster UCV £9; £130 from Aire Valley for sale of pictures at the Rally and £35.70 from Halifax for sale of scarves.

£250 000 Fighting Fund





Feature by Ben Eastop



Couple's delight at moving into new home

MR AND Mrs Holland (above) moved 15 months ago into their new house in Dingle. For 29 years they lived in Kings Gardens (top), a large old tenement block with open walkways.

"When we first moved we used to think that we were on holiday and would have to go home. We've got a big garden—I got sunburned for the first time ever sitting out in the summer," Mrs Holland said.

"If it wasn't for Derek Hatton then I'm sure that none of this would have happened," she said. They said that if the Liberals took over in the city then there would be a clamp down on the house building. They thought that the housing programme had made a vast improvement in the city, but there were "still old people living in conditions worse than those we were in. They should move the old people out first."

Rebuild Liverpool

WHEN PATRICK Jenkin visited Liverpool as Environment Minister he said he had never before witnessed such housing conditions. He told the City council: "I can give you an assurance that I will do my very best to ensure that allocations to Liverpool next year (1985) under the Housing Investment Programme and the Urban Programme, taken together, will enable the council to make positive progress in dealing with the city's severe needs."

But the following year the resources for housing in the city were slashed by 34 per cent. So much for Tory commitment.

But undaunted the council set about, what finance chair Tony Byrne calls, "the most imaginative and magnificent programme of urban regeneration anywhere in the country."

It is a programme which had been thrashed out and agreed democratically in the Liverpool District Labour Party well before Labour came to power in 1983. It was founded on the premise that "Everyone must have the

right to live in a decent home at a price they can afford."

It was the determination of the Liverpool labour movement with its strong Marxist component which ensured that these socialist policies were carried through by the Labour council.

Today 4,097 new homes and bungalows have been built. Another 4,000 homes have been improved and 350 houses created by 'top downing' walk-up flats. 5,000 slum dwellings in tenements and tower blocks have been pulled down or are awaiting demolition.

But the regeneration programme is not just concerned with housing. It's also about the environment and jobs. What was coined the 'total approach' aims to ensure that all needs of the community are catered for. Sports centres have been built, local shops renovated and a new park has been created in Everton.

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How city paid for urban re

Tony Byrne (right), chair of finance explains how the urban regeneration programme was worked out and financed.

So where was the urban regeneration strategy worked out?

As a concept it was worked out in the Liverpool District Labour Party. I was the convenor of the DLP housing sub-committee which also dealt with inner city policy.

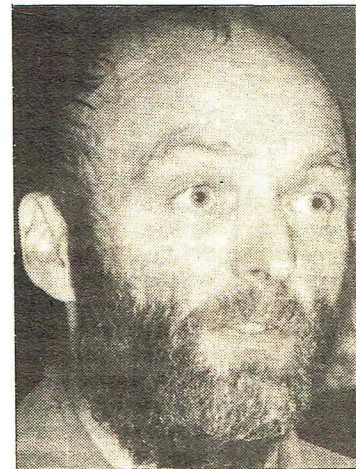
Once we were elected, as part of the urban regeneration strategy, every single person affected by the proposals of the authority was invited to meetings which were held in the town hall or in their localities. Any questions or comments were recorded, and the responses were given to every individual in writing. We have had, and still have, a very intensive consultative process.

The Labour leaders have attacked the relationship between the DLP and the Labour Group. Would the strategy for urban regeneration renewal have suffered had this relationship not existed?

I think it was a Tory MP who said that your adversaries are known to you and they are in the opposition. But your enemies are all behind you. This has been borne out of my experience recently.

I am absolutely certain that the relationship which existed prior to the disbandment between the DLP and the Labour Group, if known in truth to every other district in the country, would be the envy of every other district in the country.

One of the saddest things to me is the way it has been misrepresented and abused. I would be surprised if there is anywhere in the country where the chair of the finance and strategy of a council, who was responsible for the budget of the council, and the capital programme, would be ac-



countable on a week by week basis as I was.

So in simple terms how was the housing programme and urban regeneration strategy financed?

It's quite straight forward. We've simply drawn forward spending from future years' capital resources. So, instead of a capital programme of £50 million a year, which would be in line with government spending limits, we have financed a capital programme of £100 million a year. There's nothing magical about it. If we had operated within the normal constraints we wouldn't have carried out the programme. We've basically, by financial devices, found our way round the constraints placed upon us.

The important part about that is that those things are available to any Labour council.

The question needs to be posed: 'Why haven't other Labour authorities done it on a scale that we have?' It would have made a fundamental impact in terms of improvements on ordinary working people's daily lives, and also on the employment prospects in the construction industry.

What are the implications of the

budget settlement last year?

Once we lost the battle with the government—leaving aside why that happened—the role of the trade union leaders and the national leaders of the Labour Party—and we didn't secure more resources to fill the gap which was created by the reduction in the rate support grant, we used capital resources to bridge that gap.

So as well as bringing forward future years' capital resources for the capital programme, we also used part of these resources to finance the revenue account.

First we did the deal with a French bank, involving disposal of mortgages then we did two deferred purchase deals, one with a Swiss bank and then the latest with a Japanese bank. That totalled £100 million. Part was used for the capital programme and part was used for the revenue account.

That was the result of the defeat? Yes. That will mean that those capital resources will not be available for next year and we will not be able to do the things which would improve the daily lives of ordinary working people.

Will that affect the strategy as it stands?

Yes it will slow it down. Roy Hattersley has said that a future Labour government would not do anything about debts incurred by Labour authorities before Labour comes to power. How would that affect Liverpool?

In simple terms, in Liverpool, the average rents for council houses, not including rates are about £17 per week now—as an aside that is exactly the same level as when we came to power. Of this about £11.50 goes on interest payments.

So if a Labour government does nothing about the debt we will be at the mercy of the money markets and fluctuating interest rates. That

ng di



New houses with gardens built by Liverpool council according to Liverpool district Labour Party policy.



New neighbourhood housing office in front of the infamous Piggeries blocks being demolished.

programme started £110 million building contracts have been placed with building firms and 16,000 jobs created in the building industry.

There can be no illusions that what has happened in Liverpool through political action will lead to a permanent improvement in the lives of working people, the root causes of urban decline, emanate from the crisis of capitalism, with Liverpool and many other inner cities face a mounting debt crisis exacerbated by extortionate interest rates. And this can only be solved by the nationalisation of the banks and financial institutions in order to provide cheap credit. The District Labour Party policy makes public ownership of the major construction industries and building suppliers and nationalisation of all private rented properties the very least which is necessary to meet the demand for decent homes for all across the country.

Renewal

Labour government could not even be treating local authorities on an equal basis with home owners who get mortgage relief. It is saying that the poorest are going to have to pay for their own recovery, and that it is not going to give local authorities the resources to build with.

So what do you expect from a future Labour government?

For this council to make an impact on the problems of environment, housing etc, it needs capital resources of at least £130 million a year. It needs the assistance to ensure that it is able to sustain that through subsidy or whatever.

Presumably from Liverpool's point of view it would prefer direct grants to raising more money through borrowing?

It doesn't matter—looking at it from a council's point of view—as long as we get access to a high level of capital resources so that we can carry on with council programmes. The difficulty is financing the debt.

The historical debt of Liverpool which has accumulated is around £650 million which means as a city we have to find about £70 million a year in interest payments. That means we need assistance to finance the debt.

As a socialist, if you are in a poor area you need the national government to direct resources in your favour. You would hope that a socialist government would want to do something about the large levels of interest payments.

How the population of the country can be deceived by the nonsense talked at the last Labour Party conference I do not know. How anybody can believe that it is possible to carry out a sensible and progressive policy, which will start to redress the imbalance caused by the Tories since 1979 and make the resources available, just by taxing everybody over £27,000, I do not know.

Socialist housing policy

Peter Ferguson, deputy chair of housing explains how the housing policy was determined.

What would a more radical programme involve?

I think radicalism is attractive to the population. I think the reason that Thatcher won is because she is 'radical'. When people know that there is something wrong, as they do, then they will find a more radical stance alternative. If the Labour Party was saying there is something radically wrong and radical steps need to be taken I think people will respond to it.

How did you decide on the 17 priority areas?

They were decided on the normal criteria of social need—similar to the Housing Action Areas of the 1970's. These would include areas of hard to let flats, run-down estates and properties lacking basic amenities.

We also included some 1960s estates such as Speke, Croxteth and Cantrill Farm.

Once we had identified the areas we reorganised housing management on the basis of neighbourhood offices. There are now 19 new local offices. Previously allocation was on the basis of points. Now, with the reorganisation 'needs groups' are identified and resources allocated to each group.

How is the policy decided for what sort of housing to build?

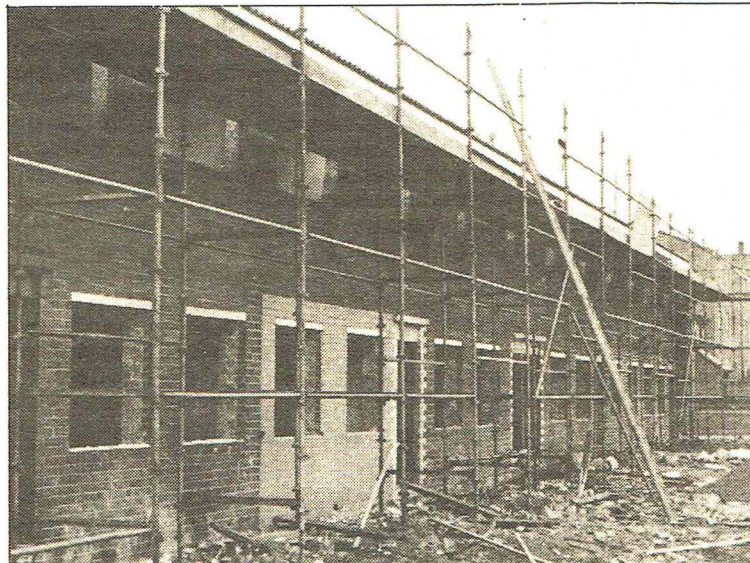
The policy document for the council's strategy was originally drawn up by the District Labour Party. It is updated each year, although this year it was sabotaged by the disbandment of the DLP.

It is party policy not to build flats or high rise, but to build houses with gardens front and back and access for a car to the front door. The aim is to do away with all communal areas such as common stairways and common entrances.

For the elderly it is Party policy to keep people in the community. A sixty year old widow who can get out and about would resist going into sheltered accommodation. We follow a 'mixed community policy' with the elderly in bungalows alongside families and so on. It has been a hundred per cent successful.

How does the policy of decentralisation work?

Emergency repairs are now done by mobile craftsmen as opposed to the previous system of working from a depot. Often the craftsman would travel to the job on a bus, then find no-one there—it could take ages. Now the small repairs are done from the neighbourhood office. Each housing management area has its own maintenance



'Top downing' of old walk-up flats to create houses and bungalows.

caravan which operates on a cyclical system.

The work-load is enormous. It is just a question of keeping your nerve until we've broken the back of it.

What is the council's attitude to housing co-ops?

Housing co-ops have built no more than 260 houses in the whole of their history.

The council is not opposed to co-ops in principle. But they have been used as a substitute for a proper housing programme. The Liberals weren't building any houses when they were in power, so people who were desperate and in a position to do something resorted to housing co-ops. But if there is no housing programme to replace run down estates then those who are most destitute get stuck in unfit housing—so ghettos are formed.

Labour has followed up the co-ops by building new houses and knocking down the old blocks. Then there is the problem of deciding who goes in the co-ops. The old man on the bottom floor who's a bit smelly and goes to the ale house a lot might not get invited to meetings. The lady on the tenth floor with half-a-dozen cats may not be invited.

Some groups only give priority to their own families or friends, the publican, or even to people who don't live in the city. That I can prove. The most recent co-ops are based on religious persuasion—the Green and Orange thing.

What involvement do the tenants' associations have in allocating resources?

Representation comes through the Labour Party. In every ward party there are people who live and work in the community.

In a city where the council is doing something and building houses then the tenants' associations are less important as points of

pressure. In other areas of the country tenants' associations have a different role.

To take an example: An Urban Regeneration Strategy (URS) is designated, financial approval is granted by the government.

All the lettable houses or flats in the area are refurbished. Then 'top downing' is carried out on some blocks. This means that the top one or two floors of three storey blocks are taken off to give houses or bungalows. The common stairways and entrances are blocked off and new front doors are put in. The transformation is dramatic. Then new homes may be built in another part of the area.

Then a new problem arises. Getting a new house is like winning the pools, or better. They are like any house you would want to buy. The tenants move in and they are allocated purely according to need.

But the tenants still living in refurbished flats want to move into the new houses. The community council people start kicking up a fuss, and the "squeaking wheels" came out and say that the tenants aren't getting a fair deal. The tenants outside the URS want their flats refurbished, or want to move into new houses. Even some living in houses built in the '60s want to get out because the houses are difficult to heat, or were built according to the trendy vehicular-free designs.

So by dealing with a need, the aspirations are increased, and a new need is created.

This demand, purely in a political sense is valid. Why can't everyone have a decent house?

But the council is operating within the severe constraints of the capitalist system. Within these constraints the most democratic way of allocating resources is through the District Labour Party and the labour movement.

Legacy of support

TERRY LINSAY, a General and Municipal union branch 5 shop steward, was taken on by the city council 18 months ago in the parks and gardens. He first got active in the Labour Party before the election in 1983 when Labour came to power.

He got interested in politics by reading the anti-fascist magazine *Searchlight*. "I've always been against fascism. *Searchlight* was good but it never explained why it happened," he said.

He started getting interested in *Militant* in 1982, and then began working for the city council election in 1983.

What did you think about the campaign?

"I didn't expect Labour to win at first" he says. "But I was enthusiastic about the campaign, especially with what had happened under the Liberals with the threat of 5,000 redundancies."

"The Liberals put up posters saying Marxists out, Liberals in. But it inspired us to do something. The Liberals were putting out all this crap and Labour was promising jobs and services."

With all the attacks on the council, what do the people you work with think about the possibility of Labour losing control?

"The lads that I work with know what they are up against. They are prepared to fight. They've been out of work for months or years. They see what the council is doing and they are prepared to repay that commitment."

What about Neil Kinnock?

"Well he came to Liverpool last year to see the slums. He keeps mouthing off about 'when Labour is elected'—but Liverpool has done it already."

"One of the lads at work said: 'I've been out of work for three years. I wasn't politically aware, and then got taken on by the council. Now I see Kinnock attacking them and I've seen him attacking the miners. And I wonder what kind of 'leader' he is—a so-called leader.'"

"Kinnock should be standing up at every opportunity and supporting workers in struggle instead of stabbing them in the back, and doing what the press want him to do."

How do you see the Labour Party developing?

I can see events developing with what has happened in Liverpool popping up all over the place. Liverpool is the most political city in the country. Workers elsewhere will be looking at Liverpool and will see what the council has done. They will start to get ideas. What happened at the Labour Party conference and Kinnock's attacks on the council.

Philippines, El Salvador

Philippines: right-wing threat not ended

THE COLLAPSE of the right-wing colonels' coup in the Philippines last weekend has given a temporary breathing space to President Aquino. But it has left her regime as unstable, if not more unstable than before.

No doubt the 500,000-strong demonstration at the funeral of murdered trade union leader Rolando Olallo, two days earlier, had warned the ruling class that a coup attempt would be premature.

The armed forces chief, General Ramos, stayed the plotters' hand. Aquino dissolved her cabinet, thus



Cory Aquino

getting rid of a stroke of Defence Minister Enrile, godfather of the right wing,

as well as the 'lefts' whose heads Enrile had demanded.

But Enrile's resignation, in itself, is a very qualified victory for the mass movement. Aquino's new government will remain a government of the parasitic ruling class. Enrile's replacement, General Ito, is a rabid anti-communist whose differences with Enrile have been only tactical.

The latest crisis built up around Aquino's futile efforts to end the peasants' struggle for land by signing a ceasefire with the guerilla New People's Army. Enrile totally opposed this and called

for all-out war to crush the NPA. Ito's views are only marginally different: "The communist New People's Army must be eliminated. But right now (!) the government is trying to find a peaceful solution."

Disappointed

While at the mercy of the capitalists and generals, Aquino at the same time looks for support to the workers and youth who put her in power last February, hoping to end the horrors of the Marcos years.

Their hopes have been

disappointed. The euphoria of February is changing into disillusionment, laying the basis for spreading apathy but also for the beginnings of a revolutionary opposition.

The capitalists will try to restore their naked dictatorship when they consider that the masses will no longer rise up to defend the Aquino regime.

Out of government, Enrile's hands are freed to prepare for 'the next time'. No restrictions have been imposed on him. He has received a stream of top visitors this week, including various

generals and Aquino's own Vice-President, Laurel.

Next time, Ramos might let the dogs off the leash.

The leaders of the workers and the youth are now faced more urgently with the need to provide an alternative to the failure of the Aquino regime. Mobilised around clear socialist policies, the mass of working people can crush the reaction, take control of society into their own hands, and begin to rid their society of poverty, joblessness and landlessness.

By George Collins

Febe's story: trade unionists under attack in El Salvador

EARLIER THIS month, Reagan signed into law his \$100 million military aid package for the right-wing Contra terrorists in Nicaragua. The arms have begun to arrive, and fighting has begun to flare up along the Honduran border.

Reagan's Republicans are desperately looking for a "success" in foreign policy in the run-up to the 1988 presidential election, following their defeat in the recent Congressional elections and the shattering exposure of

their secret arms deal with Iran.

Overthrowing the radical Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, and imposing a *pax Americana* in Central America, remains one of their main aims.

Reagan claims to oppose "extremism" of the right as well as the left, and to want nothing more than "democracy" in Central America. His real purpose is to stabilise regimes, backed by the local capitalists and landowners, which will enforce the interests

of US big business in the region. The semi-parliamentary regime in El Salvador is one that receives wholehearted US backing.

This exclusive interview with a trade union leader in El Salvador gives a graphic impression of the kind of "democracy" that Reagan is threatening to impose on the working people throughout Central America, and beyond.



Assassinations of opposition activists by right-wing death squads "still happen".

Photo: Pietro Gigli (IFI)



FEBE ELIZABETH Velasquez is a trade unionist who leads from the front. Her name can be seen scrawled all over the walls of San Salvador. Her activity as general secretary of the CIRCA Textile Workers' Union, and International Affairs Director of the National Federation of Salvadoran Workers (FENASTRAS) recently got her into the hands of the dreaded Treasury Police.

A few weeks ago, in San Salvador, she told me of her ordeal which began when she was abducted by men in plain clothes on the morning of 7 July.

"They threw me into the back of the car, where I was bound and gagged. Almost immediately they started shouting at me, accusing me of being with the FMLN" (anti-government guerilla movement).

Although Febe didn't know it, she was being taken to Treasury Police headquarters. They put her into a blacked-out, unventilated room. Eventually men in uniform came and began to interrogate her.

"They made me put on some dirty clothes... I was so frightened I wanted to pee, but they wouldn't let me. They asked questions about my fellow workers and tried

to get me to confess to being with the FMLN.

"More questions were asked about my family and my four children... they were trying psychological oppression on me. This went on for hours. I denied everything. I told them I was a trade unionist fighting for the workers, not a soldier or spy.

"Then a young man in uniform came forward, saying he didn't believe a word... Then he hit me a few times."

In El Salvador's recent history the Treasury Police have more blood on their hands than anyone. It was they who led the terrible repression which claimed the lives of 50,000 Salvadoreans in 1980-1984. President Duarte was elected as a "reformist" at a time when all visible opposition had been killed, driven into exile or joined the guerillas in the hills.

With "democracy" now established, Duarte is supposedly engaging in a noble struggle against the extremists of both left and right. Both Reagan and Duarte have been credited with the sharp fall in the number of assassinations. Of course, these things still happen, but the odd corpse here and there is 'better' than the truckloads of the past.



Slogan at La Bermuda refugee camp in El Salvador: "We condemn the savage repression of 20 comrades of Fenastras..."

But few in El Salvador believe that Duarte really has the military under control, and Febe Velasquez is not one of them.

"After the man who hit me left, another came who was more violent. He said there was no difference between men and women here...; if I wanted to suffer I could.

"They wanted me to sign a confession on video, stating that the unions of FENASTRAS were working with terrorists... They tied me to a bench, face down, with my arms up behind my back. When I wouldn't answer questions, they pulled the bench up from the floor until I thought my arms would snap..."

"When this didn't work, they tried to buy me off, saying they would give me a nice house and a car, things that would make me and my kids happy. But I knew I couldn't accept this because it would weaken the struggle..."

Little did Febe know that, from the moment of her arrest, workers were coming to

her aid. First her 300 co-workers at the CIRCA textile plant declared an indefinite stoppage and demonstrated outside the Treasury Police HQ.

This led to a wave of sympathy strikes as seven other affiliates of FENASTRAS communicated the news of Febe's capture to their members. The Social Security workers and the teachers' union also took protest action.

Solidarity

Meanwhile, trade unionists in the US, Mexico and Europe were taking up the issue. Within 48 hours over 120 telegrams were sent to President Duarte and Treasury Police Director Golcher. More than a hundred US trade unionists signed an ad submitted to a San Salvador paper, demanding Velasquez's release.

All this was the result of a campaign by FENASTRAS representatives in the US together with those in the AFL-CIO

who have come out against Reagan's policies in Central America.

Following this pressure, Febe was brought before the Government Commission on Human Rights: "That day they brought me back my clothes and shoes".

On Friday morning, 11 July, Duarte personally escorted Febe from the Treasury Police headquarters to the office of FENASTRAS.

"As we drove through the streets... I could see my name painted all over the walls. Not only this, Duarte showed me all the letters and telegrams he had received calling for my release. I knew then it was the solidarity of the workers which led to my freedom..."

The determination of the workers in El Salvador to free Febe Velasquez is just one more sign that the working class is back on its feet in that country. The unions which still support Duarte (mainly funded through the US State Department) have been unable to stem the tide.

These organisations are shrinking, as more and more workers join unions of UNTS (a coalition of unions opposed to Duarte's policies).

The growing unity of the working class constitutes a key threat to the government. There are signs that the war against the guerillas is now less of an immediate worry to Duarte and the US than the workers' struggle in the cities.

Febe's story demonstrates again the value of international solidarity among workers. However, if the military are to be immobilised in El Salvador, international solidarity must move onto a higher plane. With the death squads poised to move again, the need to forge direct links between Salvadoran workers and their comrades in Central America, the US and beyond has never been more pressing.

From a correspondent

Socialists not forgotten

Dear Comrades,
Readers may remember that in March last year, the allegedly 'socialist' Zimbabwean government imprisoned without trial and tortured a number of Marxists who were working in the trade unions or in ZANU-PF. Mugabe denounced them as 'subversives' and enemies.

These comrades should know that their struggle has left its mark on the consciousness of the working class throughout Southern Africa, and especially in South Africa.

On 11 October this year, when the new SA Railways and Harbour Workers Union was

launched in Port Elizabeth, one of the songs sung in Xhosa by the black workers went as follows:

Ezimbabwe bazitshisile, Ingalo zikaMarx, Bazitshisile ingalo, ZikaMarx, Zeziziphukuphuku, Zama Bourgeoisie, Ezicamanga ngencinezelo, Sizobanyathela-nyathela, NgeMarxism.

This means: "In Zimbabwe they have burnt the followers of Marx. The bourgeoisie are fools. They are thinking to push us down. We are going to tread them into the ground with Marxism".

Yours in struggle
A reader in South Africa

Tory fails survival course

Dear Comrades,
During my time in the Royal Navy I volunteered for a one week survival course.

During that week (which is burnt into my memory for life) I ate two slices of bread, one herring, a third of a squirrel, a third of an old hen and a handful of water

insects that I caught when I became desperate.

Tory MP Piers Merchant recently tried a similar experiment, surviving on the dole for a week. No lasting health risk here.

Whilst my experiment was an honest attempt to learn the harsh realities of survival, this Tory entered a

workers house with the sole purpose of justifying the agony of life on the dole, in order to inflict what he sees as 'real poverty' on the unemployed in the future.

Yours fraternally
Vic Dale
Isle of Wight

Poppies and Remembrance Day

Dear Comrades,
There is much discussion among socialists at this time of year about the wearing of Remembrance poppies.

Some claim it is nationalistic or warist. My view is that they are worn in memory. Not in memory of "God save the king"

or "rule Britannia", but in memory of the millions of ordinary people who died and suffered due to the rottenness of capitalism and Stalinism.

Yours fraternally
Nick Hewitt
Hounslow

Letters

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

Send us your views, comments or criticism.

Restart... start again and again

Dear Comrades,
I have just finished a restart course and surprise, surprise, I am still unemployed.

I took a course as a plumber which was an absolute waste of time. All you do is work in bays, fit in a bathroom, turn the water on, make sure nothing is leaking, then take it all out so someone else can use the pipes again.

Bricklayers build a wall about ten courses high, then knock it down again, clean the bricks and start again.

It reminds me of the film *Cool hand Luke* where he has to dig a hole then fill it in again, but he had committed a crime, my only crime is being unemployed.

Also Edwina Currie going on about people in the North not knowing how to diet properly: Well, in the canteen on restart, the menu was nearly always chips, and you couldn't even get a piece of wholemeal bread, and that is a government run establishment.

Yours fraternally
Phil Roberts
Birkenhead

Christmas-one big pain



The toys every child would like for Christmas, but these buggies at over £200 each are strictly for those with wealthy parents.

Dear Comrades,
"Please can I just look at the toys mum?" pleaded my seven-year old daughter Beverly as she dragged me towards the toy section in Woolworths last Saturday.

Christmas is a great time—if you're a kid. But for the parents, especially if you're on the dole or low wages it's just one big pain.

And what is Beverly expecting for Christmas this year? Well—in Beverly's eyes not a lot really, when you consider the constant round-the-clock toy advertisements that are bombard-

via the television.
"I'd really like a 'Jem' doll" comments Beverly as she stares up misty eyed at a £9.95 piece of glorified plastic dressed up in a bit of cotton and glitter.

As well as 'Jem' Beverly is also anticipating getting 'Ghost Castle' (a board game) at the cheap price of £8.99!

"That's it Beverly. We've done enough looking for one day" I said after what appeared to be a lifetime of looking at rows and shelves of Care Bears, Cabbage-patch kids and Barbie dolls.

There's one consolation for my daughter however. Having both a mother and father who are socialists Beverly learned the financial realities of Christmas long ago.

As we wandered out of "the wonder of Woolworths" Beverly pipes up: "Santa only delivers your presents, doesn't he mum—like the postman? It's your mums and dads who have to pay for it all".

By Jackie Mulholland and Beverly Walsh
Stevenage

Printers

Dear Comrades,
On visiting my local ward Labour Party in Plymouth this week, we were told of a demonstration that is planned by the Party in conjunction with SOGAT officials and in support of the Wapping printers boycott.

The circular explained at length that 'they' didn't want 'rent a mob' or 'just anyone' turning up and that party members wishing to take part must submit their names for approval in advance. Anyone disapproved of or just turning up might 'not be made welcome'. This at a supposed public demonstration in the shopping centre.

These undemocratic Stalinist methods will never win any gains for the print workers or for working people in Plymouth.

Yours fraternally
Chris Parry
Plymouth

Interpreters

Dear Militant,
This year at the Militant '86 rally, sign language interpreters were used for the first time.

It gave me great pleasure that as a profoundly deaf person, I had direct access to the speakers and entertainment and therefore enjoyed the experience equally with those around me in the Albert Hall.

The Militant '86 rally showed the way forward as an example to the whole Labour movement by providing such interpreters.

Yours fraternally
Clive Mason
Coventry

Different

Dear Comrades,
The article by Bob Wylie, (*Militant* 822) was brilliant. There was a tear in my eye at the end of it. I'm sure many of us would recognise the tragedy spelt out in story.

It was also a bit of a shock to read an article which was so different to everything else in the paper, but I was moved by the factual simplicity of it. I would love to see more of this in future issues.

Yours fraternally
Graham Smillie
Liverpool

For more information about the struggle for trade union rights in Zimbabwe, read *Jailed by Mugabe* (30p), from Zimbabwe Trade Unionists Defence Campaign, PO Box 77, London E8 4TB.

Celebrating Guy Fawkes

Dear Comrades,
For many years, the working class has been led to believe that we celebrate Guy Fawkes night because he failed to blow up Parliament.

In my area Guy Fawkes was celebrated with some extra enthusiasm this year. Is this because the real reason we celebrate it is because he made an attempt to destroy an

undemocratic institution, unrepresentative and oppressive of the working class?

If this is so then I anticipate Guy Fawkes night will be celebrated with increasing enthusiasm in coming years.

Yours fraternally
Tony McNulty
Liverpool 20

Public pays for de-regulation

Dear Comrades,
Late this afternoon, I saw a young mother with a baby waiting for a bus in the rain. There was no shelter, so she had to keep the toddler beneath the cover on his pushchair, rather than folding it up, ready to get on the bus.

When it finally arrived, five minutes late, she had to lift and squeeze the chair through the narrow door. The driver, under pressure from de-regulation, was impatient. The two were barely on the bus before it was moving again.

It was an old bus, the first along the route for over an hour, so that

it was crowded and steamy from the rain. The woman wrestled with the chair in the narrow aisle.

The bus company were no doubt delighted with the takings from a full load—it is the driver and the passengers who pay for their penny-pinching: no shelters; poor timetables; old buses and no conductor. Socialism can do nothing about the weather but it can at least ensure a comfortable journey home in all conditions.

Yours fraternally
Pat Bell
Gowerton

Priorities

Dear Comrades,
Women workers in Hackney may wonder at the decisions taken at Hackney Women's Council on 18 November. Two resolutions were put forward though only one could be sent to the Greater London Labour Party Annual Conference.

In the name of equality opportunities the Tories are to enable employers to expect both men and women to work longer and at whatever hour they wish. As it stands now women cannot be ex-

pected to work nights.
The resolution called for an extension of protective legislation and an end to non-essential night working.

Unfortunately, it was not this resolution but one on the five NEC women's places that was prioritised.

To Women's Action Committee supporters, so obsessed with these constitutional changes, clearly the real problems of working women are less important.

Yours fraternally
Louise Birch
Hackney Women's Council

Militant Posters

Set of four portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. Cost 80p each—set of four £2.50.

Tory war on council wages

Militant reveals the contents of a document prepared for the Association of County Councils

It reveals the secret plans of Tory councillors to further reduce the earnings and living standards of hundreds of thousands of council manual workers.

Nicholas Ridley MP, in a well publicised speech at the beginning of November, gave the green light to local councils to break away from the national pay agreements with their staff.

Already some Tory County Councils—mainly in the Southern half of England—have abolished national agreements for school meals and cleaning staff. Cutting pay by more than 10 per cent.

The ACC paper reveals their intention is:

★ to achieve more local flexibility in determining conditions of service in the light of local circumstances;

★ to remove certain national prescriptions which are outmoded in their complexity and do not permit local understandings and solutions;

★ to revise the system of enhanced payments to become more in keeping with present day working practices and choices."

In elegant and carefully measured words their objectives are those of Mr Ridley—smash the national pay agreement and cut manual workers' earnings.

They argue that before any job evaluation results are implemented "the employers side should give notice of their intention to seek comprehensive changes in the scheme of conditions of service."

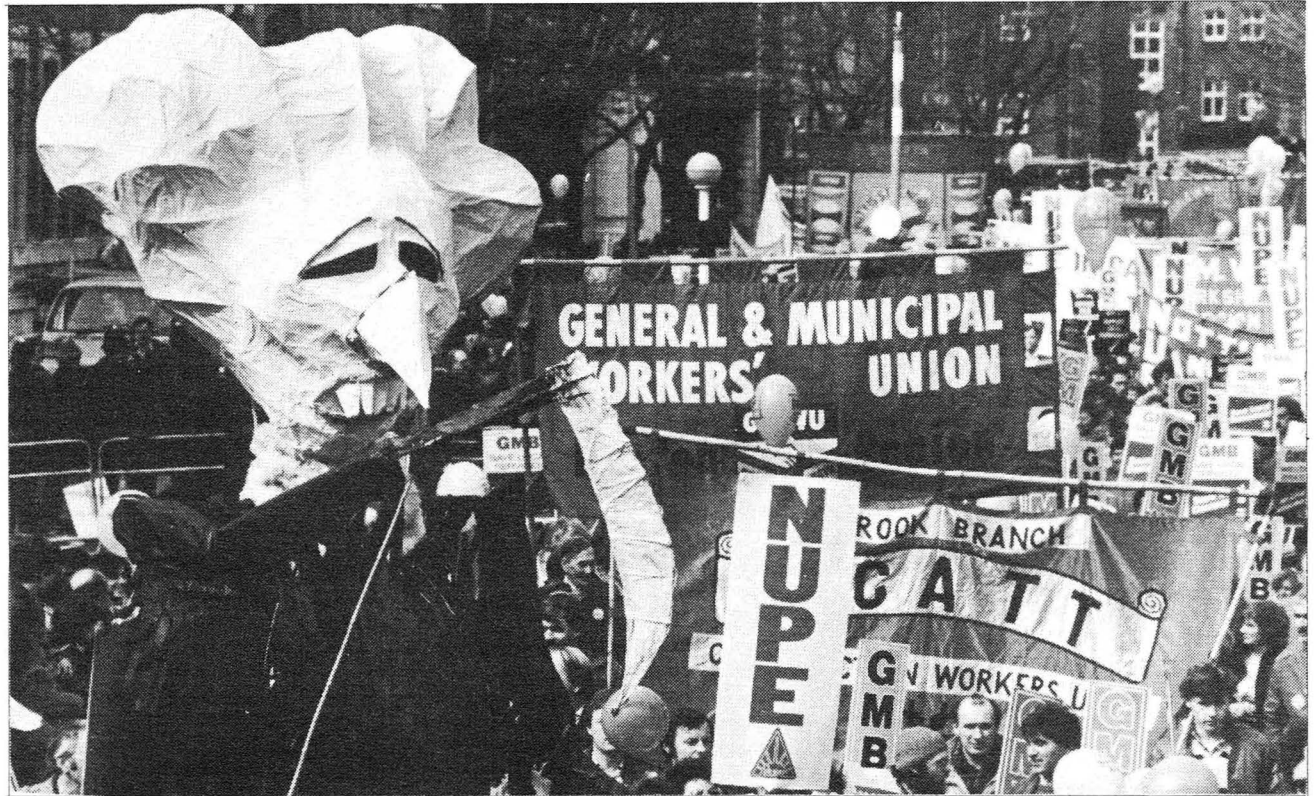
The ACC propose that "the detailed prescriptions of duties in relation to plant, machinery and working practices" of most grades of workers should be removed from the National agreement. They say "local authorities would then be able to allocate the particular duties to meet the needs of their services and grade their staff accordingly."

The document suggests that "all references in the National agreement to a prescribed five day working week should be removed to enable local authorities to determine the regular working pattern."

Many allowances should "be left to local discretion" including: "split duty, shift, rest day on public holidays, work on public holidays, standby duties, foul linen payments and plus payments."

They also suggest "guideline status" for "retaining fees and holiday entitlements for school meals staff, school bus attendants and escorts and crossing patrols and "free meals" for school meals staff."

However they specifically



recommend that many areas should be completely abolished including "national procedures for work study; working periods for caretakers and other school and caretaking staff; allowances for qualifications."

Many thousands of local council workers regularly work at weekends and public holidays. The ACC suggest that enhanced payments should be abolished and local plus rates negotiated in their place.

Double time for Sunday working should be abolished say the ACC.

They claim that if all this was implemented it would create a "modern national agreement" which "would

permit greater autonomy for individual local authorities." (For "modern" read Victorian!)

This document—considered by the ACC Policy Committee—represents a major threat to all council manual workers. If it were implemented its effects would be akin to the annihilation of the Red Indian people in America.

The Tory aim is quite clear. To turn the clock back to the pre World War II era when council manual workers were paid according to the "going rate" locally. The national employers side is very finely balanced between Tories and Labour. There can be no assumption that Labour has an

automatic majority. The trade unions must, therefore, declare their total and unequivocal opposition to the Tory proposals. There must be no trade off between the job evaluation results—currently being prepared—and the national agreement.

Our existing conditions—pitiful as they are—have taken many years to achieve. Manual workers will not give them up without a fight.

The trade unions must inform their members of this dire threat. Meetings, lobbies, pickets and rallies must be organised to galvanise support. The members must be drawn into this fight—it cannot be won by clever talking at Belgrave Square.

Most worrying for council workers is the sience of national trade union leaders on these ACC proposals. The national employers side is very finely balanced between Tories and Labour. There can be no assumption that Labour has an

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.

○ **Wanted**—A place in inner London. Socialist House or flat. Ring Harry 0708 44773.

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□ **Debate** Young Tories v Young Socialists. "This time it's war". Wed 3 December 7.30pm. House of Commons. Committee room 14.

□ **Halifax AEU Club, St James St** (by bus station). "The Impending socialist revolution in South Africa". Tuesday 2 Dec 8pm. Speaker: Mick Richardson.

○ **Public debate** "Which way to socialism?". Between Monty Johnstone of the Community Party and Peter Lawrence of the Socialist Party. Monday 1 December 7.30pm. 52 Clapham High St, Clapham SW4. Admission free, all welcome.

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○ **Campaign for a Socialist South Africa Raffle.** 1st prize NUM poster—168 (pink). 2nd prize Japanese AA pictures—26 (pink). 3rd prize COSATU T-Shirt—20 (pink Ann Holme).

□ **Gorseinon Militant Readers Meeting.** Tuesday 2 December, 7.30pm. Lime Street Institute. Speaker Felicity Dowling.

□ **Daisy Rawling Memorial Meeting** Manors Social Club, Warwick St, Newcastle on Tyne, Saturday 29 November 1.30pm Speakers include Ted Grant, Jane Harker.

□ **West Midlands Militant Day School on Women.** Discussions on 'Violence Against Women' and 'A Charter for Working Women'. Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham. Saturday 29 November. 10am until 5pm. Crèche organised, lunch available. Social in the evening. All welcome. Please contact Sue Wilkie (0782) 823541 for further details.

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Available from World Socialist Books. 3/13 Hepscott Rd, London E9 5HB. Order early to avoid disappointment!

Militant Meetings

□ **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.

□ **Hull Militant public meeting** "The socialist alternative to the Anglo-Irish agreement". Speaker Richard Venton (expelled Liverpool LP member and Irish socialist) Thursday 4 December 7.30pm. Hull Trades and Labour Club, Beverley Road.

In Brief... In Brief... In Brief

THE BRIGHTON Wheelers restaurant has sacked four chefs for asking for a pay rise granted to Wheelers staff in London. The owner, a Mr Bailey, said: "I haven't recognised the union and I've got the right not to. I believe we are a small outfit and we should be able to solve these problems on our own." This is his solution. Two of those sacked have worked for Wheelers for 12 years, one for seven and the fourth for five years.

Messages of support and donations to: TGWU office, 20 Church Rd, Hove, BN3 2FN.

NUPE members and students from all over Liverpool demonstrated outside Liverpool Senate House on Wednesday. They were protesting against the University management's decision not to allow cleaner Jeannette Herry back to work after maternity leave.

Both NUPE and students believe it is victimisation of a shop steward who has campaigned against privatisation. The demo and lobby were followed by a rally. Speakers invited included Terry Fields MP, Cathy Wilson of Liverpool Women's Council, Cheryl Varley of MASU and Jane Kennedy of NUPE.

THE DURHAM Mechanics have just staged a 24-hour stoppage at Easington Colliery. This was the last in the present series of industrial action in the Durham coalfield.

The stoppages have been in protest at the Coal Board's arrogant attitude to consultation procedures, back pay, the closure of Seaham pit, and the reinstatement of sacked

miners.

Even though the membership had been told of the payment of back wages and the possible reinstatement of 16 out of 22 sacked miners a few days previously the action still went ahead successfully to show solidarity with the rest of the coalfield.

Out of over 2,000 men only 26 crossed the picket line, 20 of whom were UDM members. Let this be a warning to Thatcher. The NUM fights on.

By Brian Gregory, Easington NUM

LONDON Brick Company, a subsidiary of multi-national Hanson Trust, are trying to introduce new machinery in the Bedford area which will result in completely different working conditions.

The workers, members of the TGWU, voted by 460 to 17 not to accept management's proposals. This was followed by an immediate and unofficial strike which has continued for a week.

The proposals involved changing from a two shift system, with a paid 30 minute dinner break, to a three shift system.

The previous paid dinner break still exists. However, the workers are expected to 'pay for' their dinner break by working every third Saturday for 7½ hours—free!

Pickets have been successful, with TGWU drivers refusing to distribute bricks. The TGWU will be holding a ballot to decide if the action should continue.

FISTS FLEW on Tuesday 18 November as Hangers

manager Tom Finnigan lost his rag and punched a photographer. Management at the Roehampton artificial limb makers are feeling the strain of the long running dispute.

A delegation of women from the Hangers support group had entered the factory. This aroused the fury of Finnigan who then attacked a freelance photographer. A copper who was there made no arrest. Would a Hangers worker have been let off?

On Thursday 20 November the workers marched round the factory to chants of 'Finnigan Out'. One worker at the factory is a member of the EETPU. On asking for his dispute pay he was told that a secret ballot would be necessary. He was duly sent ballot papers and following the one-man ballot was granted payment.

DIRECTLY EMPLOYED bricklayers and labourers were all sacked on the Sutton site of building firm McCarthy and Stone on 7 November in order to make way for cheap self employed lump labour subsidised by tax and national insurance evasion.

Union recognition had been won on the site after a dispute earlier this year following injunctions restraining trade union officials from entering the site. Once again the company is using the Tory laws. An injunction has been obtained stopping Ucutt and the TGWU supporting them and for an end to picketing.

Support on the picket line is welcome at Cedars Road, Sutton. Donations and messages to J Callaghan, 55b Goldstone Road, Purley, Surrey.

Industrial Reports

Teachers - oppose productivity deal

MEMBERS OF teachers' union the NUT attending their Special Conference on Saturday will be voting on a deal which would worsen teachers' conditions of service and fail to maintain existing standards of living. It certainly would not restore Houghton comparability pay levels.

The majority on the Executive claim that they have "succeeded in separating negotiations on salaries from those on conditions of service" yet teachers are presented with a package which is, in effect, a productivity deal.

They have argued that settling with the Local Authorities is the only way to prevent Baker imposing his deal, but on key issues they have conceded to Baker's demands. The '13 points' encapsulate the 19 points Baker demanded and the deal is within the cash limit he set.

On duties they have conceded three major points:

1) *Additional power to headteachers.* They will for instance be able to rewrite job descriptions annually or "more frequently if circumstances require."

2) *Appraisal.* Which it is claimed will not be linked to pay, yet LEA's are empowered to withhold a year's increment "when a year's service was viewed as being unsatisfactory"!

3) *Cover.* In High schools 80 per cent of all absences fall into the category for which teachers will be contractually obliged to cover. In Primary schools the deal is only superficially better. Teachers who are not classroom teachers (eg. ESL, Special Needs) will be used to cover. Planned absences—courses, trips, etc—will be organised to minimise the need for cover and to the detriment of teachers and pupils alike.

All of this must be set against an agreement that "no pupils are excluded from schools" and that where no supply staff are available cover will come from within the schools

By Anita Dickinson

"when required by the headteacher."

To these concessions must be added an increase in teachers' working year from 1128 hours to 1265 (21 days). The salary 'increase' on offer amounts to about 8 per cent. If this is set against a 10 per cent increase in 'contractual working hours' acceptance of this offer means accepting a pay cut!

The Scottish teachers' union EIS have said no to both Main and Rifkind. The NUT must join with them and say no on Saturday.

NUT members must be urged to fight for union policy: no entry grade; general class size of 27; one fifth marking and preparation time. And to fight against Nottingham: two year entry grade; class size maximum of 33; five days per year in Primary schools and about 1 hour 20 minutes per week in High schools.

Teachers should return to action for the full flat-rated claim of £1,700 for 1986/7 and the right to formulate another claim for 87/88 which will genuinely answer teachers' needs.

To launch a renewed campaign an escalating series of one day strikes should be organised nationally and a levy of the membership raised to sustain further strikes.

A programme of action should be drawn up including, initially, more prolonged strikes in the better organised areas. Unless the NUT is prepared to take action again, the attacks on teachers by the Tories will continue and the whole of the state education sector will be under threat.



1986 NUT conference—will the Special Conference let the leadership off the hook?

Photo: John Harris (IEL)

Hackney schools crisis

THERE IS growing desperation among teachers and parents in Hackney at the crisis in education in this inner London borough. 100 parents and teachers met on 20 November to plan a campaign of action.

In Hackney's primary schools there are 48 teaching vacancies. 13 classes have been sent home indefinitely. And headteachers are considering organising rotas for the new term so that all the children might share in the loss of education, perhaps a day a week.

During the first six weeks of this term, 6,200 children were sent home for half a day or more. There are just two supply teachers for the primary schools, although money is available to employ 80. But the Inner London Education Authority has not been advertising in the national press for the last few weeks, because it has over-spent on its adver-

tising budget.

The campaign meeting was interrupted by the late arrival of Bernard Wiltshire, ILEA Deputy Leader, who had not been invited. But he managed to further enrage both the teachers and parents present. Unbelievably he declared there would be no children sent home from the very next day. He seemed completely unaware of what was actually going on in our schools.

'Overstaffed'

He insisted he was on the side of the parents though his commitment to the teachers was clearly less determined. He condemned the teachers' unions in schools like Kingsland, where the classes are of 22 children and, he said, 'overstaffed'.

He referred to the latest agreement on

teachers' pay (which is yet to be confirmed anyway) where class sizes of 33 are mentioned, and said ILEA could not ignore national agreements! Apparently 33 is a minimum and a maximum.

None of this cut any ice with parents whose children's education is being threatened or with teachers whose conditions of work are under threat. Tory government cuts are responsible. But the Labour controlled ILEA, by its behaviour is alienating ordinary London families.

The Hackney parents and teachers have established a steering committee and have agreed to involve all the local schools in a day of action and lobby of ILEA headquarters on 12 December.

By Louise Birch
(Hackney parent)

DHSS strike against 'outstationing'

ELEVEN DHSS offices in the Central London area took strike action for a day on Thursday 20 November. At very short notice action was organised in support of the dispute over the outstationing of work from the Oval DHSS office to Chatham and in response to reports of plans to outstation work from all over London to Kent and Hampshire. A lobby by approximately 60 strikers from a number of offices took place outside the DHSS headquarters building at the Elephant and Castle where senior management avoided confrontation and slunk in the back entrance.

During the strike by CPSA and SCPS members in South London it became apparent that the DHSS had greater plans for outstationing than was first thought. An article in *New Society* (21/11/86) which appeared after the strike when details were still unclear to most activists confirmed reports by the Oval strikers that the department are considering outstationing work dealt



Strikers outside Oval DHSS. Broad Left general secretary candidate John Macreadie on right of picture was visiting the picket to show solidarity.

with in London offices to country areas where staffing and general costs are lower, and leave only three offices, apparently in the boroughs of Southwark, Hammersmith, and Islington, to deal with urgent callers.

These proposals, if implemented would be a catastrophe for London staff. Jobs would be slashed and life in these super-offices would be a living hell. Reception work is seen by CPSA members as the worst

job and in many offices a rota is organised to share round the misery. Worsening services, cuts in benefits and long delays for claimants has resulted in increased frustration and violence. Both Euston and Brixton had CS gas attacks this summer. Greenwich was petrol-bombed and staff were clubbed in Camberwell. These are just a few of the more celebrated incidents.

In the paper prepared by management it is blatantly

accepted that due to low pay, poor accommodation and high turnover, service is poor. Yet the union claims for more pay and staff have been ignored and only after limited strike action earlier in the year did management concede and increase in staff. Yet despite the major share of that increase going to inner-city offices, the crisis still continues. The DHSS answer in the form of outstationing will lead to job losses and a more bureaucratic and

According to the leaked London South DHSS document explaining management strategy, outstationing involves: "A network of offices in London dealing with personal callers and other work which needs interview facilities linked by effective communication systems with an office elsewhere to do the routine maintenance of benefit claims...As a starting point...2 or 3 outstations linked to specific offices...would handle all new claims at first and gradually take on other assessment work."

isolated service for the public. Management have added a further insult by claiming that London staff are "generally not effective" and that it is difficult to employ "quality staff" in London. Many CPSA members replied that the top bureaucrats in the department wouldn't last five minutes in a local office where the realities of Thatcher's Britain are very different to the free buffets and drinks that CPSA members witnessed top bureaucrats enjoying when visiting DHSS headquarters.

The action last week was taken at short notice with little information. Campaigning was often disorganised but nevertheless was successful and is an indication of the opposition to outstationing and the preparedness of CPSA members to take

solidarity action. Reaction amongst London members is one of alarm but also one of disbelief as these proposals had no major publicity. Both CPSA and SCPS have a clear policy of opposition to outstationing and an immediate campaign is essential to publicise these proposals and to make members aware of the consequences. The campaign is essential to ensure their quick death.

A London-wide conference of local CPSA and SCPS reps to discuss and plan a campaign must be called. The recent strike action by Oval and Battersea union members must be the beginning of this campaign. Where outstationing is proposed strike action must be waged to defend jobs and maintain that all aspects of social security are kept at the local office with easy access for the public.

Industrial Reports

Lewisham Labour provokes strike

and Hull council sack steward



Stephano Cagnoni (IFL)

Mass meeting of Lewisham Nalgo members votes to strike.

LEWISHAM COUNCIL Nalgo members are on all-out strike after the Labour council suspended workers without pay for taking industrial action.

By Gordon Hull

(Lewisham Nalgo and Deptford Labour Party, personal capacity)

The suspensions followed sympathetic action in support of striking workers at a Housing Advisory Centre (HAC).

The Centre was set up mainly to advise private tenants on problems. But the growing problems of this inner city borough such as unemployment and a two thirds cut in housing investment meant a large number of angry people went into the centre with a huge variety of complaints. There have been a number of violent incidents including an attempted strangulation and knife and bottle attacks.

HAC workers have demanded the protection of permanent glass screens in interview rooms and reception. They would prefer to keep a free and easy atmosphere and are prepared to give open interviews in the Centre's foyer but in one to one interviews they need protection.

Nalgo members in other areas backed their demands with industrial action; they felt workers should have the final say on safety matters. The council refused. The nearest they got was to offer rising screens which take time to erect in the event of attack.

So we started to prepare to escalate. But on 17 November all employees, manual and white collar were sent a letter from the chief executive saying: "If you take such action you will not be paid and you should not report for work until the dispute is resolved". Top management were sent details of how to deal with strikers. *Both letters were based on Tory anti-union laws.*

On the 18th, members of housing and social services departments were disciplined and sent home and workers walked out all over the borough. The numbers of strikers swelled to around 1,000 by Thursday as library and environmental health workers joined them.

A mass meeting on Friday voted by over 800 to 600 for all out action from Monday.

On the Saturday the council used school students to run the libraries. These workers have been agreed by Nalgo, with union pay and conditions for work experience, not as strike breakers. Some refused to cross picket

lines and we will be campaigning to get them all involved in Nalgo. The union has recruited many new members over the dispute.

The strike has split the Labour Party. Eight councillors backed the strikers. The annual conference of the borough local government committee on Sunday condemned the council's action by 96 votes to 41. Ward parties and constituencies are demanding accountability and disowning the councillors.

40 council employees are forming a workplace Labour Party branch and a number of strikers have joined the party to fight for jobs and services and their rights. Ken Terry, Nalgo branch chair and a Labour party member, condemned the Labour group action: "These Tory style tactics weaken Labour's chances locally at the next election. The Tories even claimed they supported the strike and invited Nalgo members to their group meeting. We refused of course."

Such disputes are inevitable if Labour councils do not fight Tory legislation. Tory attacks have left Lewisham council desperately short of funds. Now they are using Murdoch tactics to take the problems out on their staff. We will fight to win this dispute and make Lewisham a socialist Labour council.

LAST FRIDAY Alan Shadforth, secretary of Hull City Council workers Joint Shop Stewards Committee was sacked by a kangaroo court, passing as a disciplinary hearing.

As reported last week Alan had been suspended two weeks earlier for allegedly falsifying his job application form by not including a previous criminal conviction. But any doubts that this was victimisation were dispelled by management's own admission at the hearing.

They admitted to having received a tip-off from their 'anonymous informant' at the beginning of the binmen's strike (over a month before Alan was suspended) but chose not to act on it for fear of escalating the dispute. This proves that Alan's suspension and sacking were carefully prepared and timed, and has nothing to do with following procedure.

As well as victimising Alan, the Labour group are now proposing to withdraw all rights and facilities from the JSSC itself, in other words refuse to recognise it any longer, and replace it with a stooge Joint Consultative Committee.

Hull's right wing Labour council have felt the increasing combativity and confidence of their own workforce and the growing power of the JSSC in numerous disputes over the last year.

Privatisation

Now they want to behead and break up the JSSC to prevent any further opposition to their increasingly arbitrary and anti-trade union policies, particularly with privatisation of council services due next year.

This is the inevitable logic of refusing to fight the Tories—a Labour council fighting its own workforce and trade unions.

Management also admitted at Alan's hearing that anybody with a criminal record applying for a job would not even get an interview. Yet the council have

placed a statue by convicted murderer Jimmy Boyle in the City Centre gardens. What hypocrisy! If Boyle applied for a job he wouldn't even get an interview. So much for equal opportunities!

The campaign to get Alan reinstated and resist the attacks on the JSSC is underway. Alan's own department, parks, held a mass meeting and voted for a one day strike this Friday, which the JSSC are recommending support for and the march and rally of all other council workers. This must become the start of a campaign of industrial action to force the council to retreat.

Alongside this action, the campaign is being taken into the Labour Party itself with lobbies, resolutions and protests against the right wing's actions.

The Organiser

Central to the campaign is the role being played by *The Organiser*, a bulletin produced by local Labour Party and Young Socialist members and distributed amongst all the council workers. This is now in its third issue in just one week, and has been warmly received by council workers and stewards alike.

The actions of Hull's Labour council has embittered its own workforce. This has been reflected in some of the comments made while distributing *The Organiser* such as: "It's victimisation, it stinks", "It's a witch-hunt" "this isn't a 'Labour' council" "Call themselves socialists? They don't know the meaning of the word."

By attacking their own workers and Labour supporters instead of the Tories, the council are discrediting the ideas of socialism and the Labour Party itself. Council workers must join the party to transform it and kick out the 'phony' councillors who are doing the Tories' dirty work for them.

By a Militant reporter

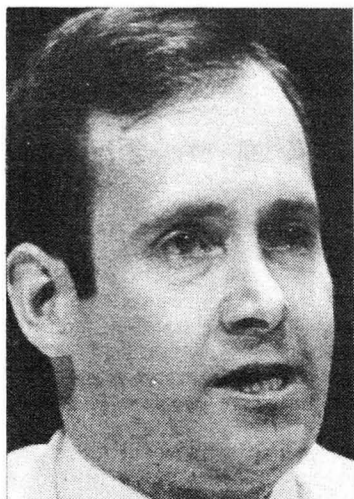
London transport sackings threat

JIM MACGUINNESS, chair of the Joint Convenors Committee of London Transport Building Department talked to *Militant* about management's intentions to make 461 redundancies.

The redundancies were announced on 21 November. Management want to decimate the direct labour force and bring in sub-contractors.

The new Transport Act meant the building department was set up as a separate company. We have to tender for jobs from LRT. One of the main reasons they give for the redundancies is that demand for building work within LRT is certain to fall.

Yet over the last three months LRT building management have given back over £3m of work which they had already tendered for and won. It shows that they had no intention of trying to keep this department going. They have also congratulated us for our 'flexibility' and 'increased productivity'.



Jim MacGuinness

Within the last eighteen months we have lost 500 jobs. This present attack will decimate the department completely. They have said that the 340 workers who would be left if these plans are allowed to go

through would have to take cuts in wages and conditions. They have told full-time officials that all their proposals are "non-negotiable" and that up to 9 January the redundancies will be on a voluntary basis but after that they will be compulsory.

Though workers would be made redundant on the same terms and conditions as those taking voluntary redundancy in effect they will be sacked. It is in the workers' interests not to sign anything as they will receive wages right up to February anyway and we will be fighting to ensure their jobs are safe.

The Joint Convenors Committee have set up an Action Committee covering all sections within the building department. We have already held a one-day strike to demand reinstatement of one member who was sacked for being absent from work whilst he was off sick. Their action in that case shows the

way they want to manage LRT if they are allowed to get away with it.

We will be holding a mass meeting this Friday or next to outline the Action Committee's strategy. Leaflets have already gone out explaining all the issues to counteract management propaganda. We hope to be organising a series of one-day stoppages, withdrawal of the 3pm to 11pm stand-by shift, ban on all over-time and to picket jobs given to outside building contractors.

Workplace ballot

The NUR are balloting their LRT members from 8 to 22 December on industrial action to defend jobs, wages and conditions. We will be going to our members early next year with a secret workplace ballot for a mandate to take industrial action.

LRT craft workers defy intimidation

London Regional Transport craft workers in bus garages all over the Greater London area and beyond are either on strike or being asked to join the walk-out following the sending home of workers at the Edgeware garage.

A work to rule had begun in protest against non payment of the 1986 pay claim, which should have started on 6 April. Management issued notices saying that if craftsmen refused to do bonus work

they would be sent home. On Wednesday management in the Leaside area told the men to do unscheduled work. They refused and were sent home and solidarity action is spreading as *Militant* goes to press.

The craft workers had voted 62 per cent against the pay offer of 5 per cent plus flexibility strings and the loss of 95 jobs. Semi skilled workers who had also rejected the offer are balloting on Thursday on the pay offer.

Militant

Lewisham NALGO strike page 15
Greece page 10

Macreadie victory to end low pay

AS CPSA delegates gather for their Pay Conference, reports from around the country indicate the enthusiasm and hard work of the Broad Left. John Macreadie can win the General Secretary position for a second time.

As voting enters its crucial final phase the Broad Left is confident of winning. A further big push for victory is essential.

John Macreadie stands for a fighting union, one able to defend jobs and abolish low pay. Members in struggle can look to him for support. His opponent, the right winger John Ellis told the "Independent" that he had in effect been in control of the union for much of the

past five years. In that time the Tories have cut 150,000 civil service jobs, reduced living standards by the equivalent of £20 per week and abolished trade union rights at GCHQ.

Ellis and the right wing have spent massive sums fighting the election on lies and the red scare. "Veto extremism, vote moderate" and "moderation versus communism or Trotskyism" is the programme they have laid before CPSA members.

Together with the millionaire press they are keeping up a constant barrage of smears and lies to try and frighten members into voting for them.

The red-baiting hysteria can be undercut if activists take the issues to the members and with boldness



John Macreadie and confidence spell out the policies, record and commitment of John Macreadie and the Broad Left. There remains tremendous anger but some confusion at the way the right wing overthrew democracy, because the result of the first election did not suit them. John Macreadie was completely cleared of the right's accusa-

tions of ballot rigging. This must be driven home.

The election remains a fight between John Macreadie and Ellis. In a higher turnout the votes of both already show an increase. As we forecast the vote of the Communist Party and BL '84 candidate, Lewtas, is being squeezed. Some of his former left supporters are even stating their preference for Ellis as opposed to John Macreadie.

The Pay Conference will graphically show the difference. Ellis says he is not prepared to campaign for "the catching-up what has been taken from the members over the past six years."

John Macreadie argued at successive NEC meetings for: 1) a £20 increase to

restore what members had lost. 2) a minimum wage of £115 per week. 3) the rate for the job. 4) six weeks leave and a 35 hour week. 5) unity of all civil servants to fight on the '87 pay claim.

The Pay Conference will deal a resounding blow to Ellis and the right wing. Ellis and co at the top of the union will mean a leadership hostile to conference policy.

The right wing portray John Macreadie and the Broad Left as undemocratic and extremist. But John Macreadie's record and commitment to democracy in the union is second to none:—

- 1) He supports election and re-election of all full-time officials.
- 2) He rejected the General Secretary salary, credit

card and car and has frozen his National Officer salary. He has consistently donated to the trade union and Labour movement and workers in struggle leaving him with around £160 per week.

- 3) Opening up of regional offices under democratic rank and file control.
- 4) The sovereignty of conference as the governing body of the union.
- 5) For workers' unity and socialism.

The social conditions are changing, members have no alternative but to fight to defend their interests. They need a fighter at the top of the union. Forward to victory—Macreadie again.

By Steve Dunk
(CPSA Inland Revenue Section Chair)

Labour's NEC steps up attack against Merseyside socialists

THE RIGHT wing on the Labour Party's National Executive at their 26 November meeting stepped up their attacks on socialists in Liverpool and other parts of the country.

An emergency resolution from Neil Kinnock decided to set up a three person inquiry into Liverpool Labour Group and Tony Byrne who was elected leader at the 20 November Labour Group meeting.

Kinnock originally denounced this meeting as unconstitutional despite the fact it was run by his own general secretary, Larry Whitty. But later Whitty had to admit that the meeting was valid, but he claimed that there was massive opposition to Byrne as leader.

Both Whitty and Kinnock argued that Byrne had acted outside the constitution by saying after the meeting that Derek Hatton still had a role to play.

The inquiry team will comprise confirmed right wingers Ken Cure, Cyril Ambler and Jack Rogers. Outrageously ex-left Blunkett dubbed Tony Mulhearn, Derek Hatton and Tony Byrne all as liars.

The NEC went on to set up an inquiry under a senior party official to look into whether Knowsley North Labour Party ought to be disbanded and then reconstituted.

Incredibly the justification for this given by National Official Joyce Gould was that the executive committee of Knowsley North party had passed a resolution to boycott the campaign, while *Militant* supporters participated in the campaign.

There was no decision to lift the suspension of Broadgreen party but other inquiries were set up to look into Redcar CLP and St Helens North and South CLPs where six party members are due to come up

before the National Constitutional Committee.

The only saving grace of this meeting was the re-admission of Kevin Scally and Amir Khan in Sparkbrook.

Despite the decision at Party conference to delay the question of one member one vote for re-selection to after the next election, the NEC decided to go ahead with a consultation of all party members now.



Deliberately published on the day the NEC met in the *Today* newspaper and quoted at the NEC were claims of the uncovering of *Militant* plots and manipulation, through the "confessions" of some previously unheard of individual, Tony Glover of Knowsley North. The article slanderously suggests

that he has given evidence despite being beaten up by two thugs in the street this week. *Militant* supporters have never resorted to such attacks and deny the insinuation that they were involved. It is Glover's friend the former MP, Kilroy Silk, who boasts in his memoirs of beating someone up at Labour Party conference.

Glover alleges *Militant* turned to people like himself to plot Silk's downfall and that he wasn't at first told he was attending *Militant* meetings. Presumably that's because he didn't!

The whole affair smacks of Stalin's worst methods; the right wing find a weak individual, get sworn confessions that suit them in their attacks on Party democracy, and will then dump him like a squeezed lemon.

It is implied that Jim McGinley,

Chairman of Knowsley North, has a teaching job in Knowsley through corruption. In fact Jim was teaching long before he even heard of *Militant*. And we are told *Militant* supporters jump the council housing queue in Knowsley. How does Glover explain that the right wing Knowsley Council, of which George Howarth MP was formerly deputy leader and Housing Committee chair refuses *Militant* a public meeting place as a policy!

Some of the people named as part of Knowsley North's *Militant* Top Ten are and always have been, politically opposed to *Militant*. What the NEC right wing cannot tolerate is that Knowsley North CLP *unanimously* rejected the imposition of Silk in 1983 and of Howarth in 1986.

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