

Inside...

Fighting for socialism in
Liverpool Broadgreen

Pages 8-9



Defeat Tory extremists

VOTE X LABOUR

**A vote
for the
Alliance
is a
vote for
Thatcher**



THE TWO Thatcher governments since 1979 have been the most extreme and most savage this century. No action is too heartless for them in defence of the rich and privileged.

By Roger Shives

The only constituency they care about is the ten per cent of the population who own over half the nation's wealth.

Tory extremists have forced up unemployment from 1.3 million in 1979 to over 4 million and tried to cover their tracks by *nineteen* fiddles of the dole queue figures.

They have condemned 18 million people, including four million children, to live around or even below supplementary benefit level. Millions live in poverty even while Thatcher boasts about economic miracles.

What could be more extreme than a government that allows old people to freeze to death in the winter and forces thousands into deep despair? Suicide rates among young men have risen 39 per cent in ten years.

The Tories should not be standing for election; they should be standing trial for their callous treatment of ordinary families.

Poverty pay

Britain's top executives earn about £50,000 a year *in perks alone*. But 8.5 million of us earn under £125 a week. Sir Richard Lygo, British Airways boss, suggests that the better off should get tax concessions to take on servants! That's the kind of job 'opportunities' Thatcher wants to provide, skivvies for the rich.

And what is all this suffering for? When the profits and the oil revenue run out, the next government will face more serious economic problems than ever before.

A vote for Labour is the only way to end the Thatcher years. Fight for a socialist alternative to the real extremists—the Tories, and the wealthy minority they represent.

John Macreadie wins CPSA vote

"MY VICTORY proves beyond doubt that an uncompromising socialist campaign wins support. CPSA members have backed me and the Broad Left because they want a fighting leadership in the battles on pay, on jobs and against the Tory government. I hope they will follow up this vote, by helping to vote out Thatcher on 11 June."

John Macreadie, Deputy General Secretary, Civil and Public Services Association (personal capacity).

THE LEFT have also taken a clear majority on the national executive of the CPSA. The composition of the new NEC is 20 supporters of the Broad Left, seven right wingers and two members of 'Broad Left '84'.

★ SEE PAGE 15 for more on the civil service pay claim and John Macreadie's victory.

Militant

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Get the Tories out

THE TORIES must be stopped. Thatcher says she wants socialism 'eradicated'. They have made it clear that if elected they would try to wreck the welfare state and crush the power of the trade unions. Millions of workers and their families would face poverty and hardship on a scale not experienced for generations.

Education would become a privilege rather than a right as schools were allowed to opt out of democratic control by local councils.

Tenants would face the prospect of having to pay their rent to profiteering landlords.

School leavers would have to join slave-labour YTS schemes or have their benefit stopped.

Trade unions would face crippling legal actions from scabs denied the right to break strikes backed by the majority.

The poll tax would mean a new financial burden for millions and the compulsory registration of every resident on pain of a fine.

Those are just some of the *new* measures the Tory Party has threatened. They would also continue the economic policies which have already led to the destruction of two million manufacturing jobs and a £12.4 billion deficit in manufacturing trade.

More than three million would face another five years on the dole, while the millionaires in the City of London would make even bigger fortunes. Nothing says more about the class basis of the Tory Party than the panic selling of shares every time an opinion poll shows the smallest dip in the Tory lead.

Workers in good jobs will not be spared the effects of another Tory term. As the capitalist world moves towards a new period of recession, with the threat of trade wars, the shaky 'boom' which the Tory leaders are boasting about will come crashing about their ears.

All the figures about the relative success of the British economy, which the Tories have used in the election, say more about the bleak prospects in every other capitalist country, than about any revival in Britain. The future would be grim. There would be a new wave of redundancies, in the service as well as the manufacturing sector of the economy.

But none of this would happen without a fight. The labour movement would be forced to defend both itself and the old, the sick and the disabled, in a battle even more bitter than the social conflicts of the past eight years.

This need not happen however. Already in those constituencies featured in these pages, where Labour has taken the political fight on to the doorsteps and the streets, and explained the socialist alternative to the miseries of Thatcherism, the Tories and the Alliance are on the run.

In the last week of the campaign, there is every chance of defeating the Tories, but only if the Labour Party can get the message through to all those voters who are still undecided or not intending to vote at all, that the Party has a solution to their problems.

It is obvious from canvassing in working-class areas that there is a desperate desire for change. The problem is to convince and enthuse many very sceptical voters that Labour really has the will to bring that change about.

To do this it will have to demonstrate that it is not only the Tory government which has to be defeated, but the capitalist economic system which they defend.

If the next Labour government is going to show the same loyalty to the working-class voters that the Tories have shown to their millionaire backers, they must be prepared to break with a system which depends for its 'success' on driving down the living standards of those workers who create wealth in industry, while rewarding the City speculators.

They must end a system which condemns millions to the scrapheap because their labour, which could do so much to provide the goods and services other workers need, does not make enough profit for the tycoons who run giant multinational companies.

A Labour government, backed up by the industrial might of the trade union movement, which took over these industrial and financial monopolies which control the economy, would be able to turn back the tide.

Under workers' democratic control and management and a democratic plan of production, jobs could be created and the country's resources mobilised to build the houses, hospitals and schools which are so needed and raise living standards for all.

That is the alternative socialist programme which could bring about a famous Labour victory next Thursday.

Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office.
 Published by *Militant*.
 Printed by *Militant* Publications,
 3/13 Hepscoth Road,

Labour's class fighters

Coventry SE

Tory and Alliance voters switching to Labour

THE TORIES are scared to come to Coventry. Last week education secretary Kenneth Baker came to visit a local school, but turned away in his car rather than face local teachers, students and LPYS members protesting about Tory attacks on education.

Norman Fowler, a few days later avoided health workers, angry at the cuts in the NHS and the threatened closure of Whitley hospital.

Thatcher also decided to come—by helicopter and with a vast police security to visit the new Jaguar Factory. But the well oiled election machine misfired when Labour Party member Paul Astbury, a contract worker in the paint shop made his first TV appearance taking the prime minister to task for the 5.45 ITN News.

Paintshop workers were falling over themselves to congratulate Paul on a job well done.

Clearly the Tories are worried about their supporters turning away in droves. In Coventry SE more and more are turning their allegiance to Labour's candidate, Dave Nellist.

The Alliance must be wondering why there are so few of their posters up. It's because voters are taking them down in favour of Dave Nellist ones. One Labour canvasser spent some time talking to an



Dave Nellist at demonstration to save Whitley Hospital.

Photo: Dave Sinclair.

Alliance supporter—half an hour later down came the yellow poster from the window and up went the Labour one.

Later on Labour canvassers came across the Alliance candidate. He was obviously getting edgy. "Do you ever sleep?" he asked. "Yes" quipped one of our canvassers, "but only when we've finished you lot off!"

It's not just Alliance supporters. Even some Tories are going to vote for Dave

Nellist. In Willenhall one canvasser was told by a voter that he would be voting Labour even though he was a member of the Conservative Party and a past secretary of the local branch. "If we had more MPs with the energy and go that Dave Nellist has then this country would be a better place to live" he said.

Dave Nellist's socialist ideas are getting enthusiastic support. One woman told us that her husband, who

works in Bristol, was taking the day off from work to come back to Coventry on 11 June just to vote for Dave!

Another elderly woman said: "I'd crawl up to the polling station on my hands and knees to get her out!"

AT THE weekend 180 Militants were sold on the Willenhall estate where residents were keen to read the centre page article on the estate.

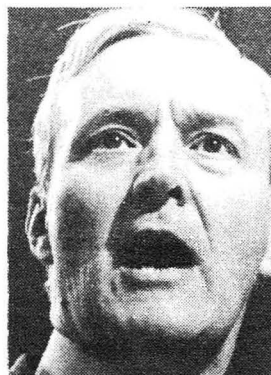
700 at Benn meeting

700 PEOPLE flocked into Coventry South East Labour Party's public meeting on Thursday evening, including 14 and 15 year olds at their first ever meeting, Rolls Royce and Post Office workers with their banners.

One group of pensioners, so impressed by the meeting, donated a marvellous sum of £50, out of a total of £700, for the Labour Party funds.

To cheers, Labour candidate Dave Nellist told the meeting: "I want revenge on a government full of millionaires that tells trainee hairdressers on £27 a week 'you're pricing yourselves out of a job.'"

"I want revenge on a system that sacks Longbridge workers



"The day we tie our ropes together, no power on earth can stop us"—Tony Benn.

because they make too many cars, that sacks steel workers because they make too much steel. It's not the Militant Tendency that's the enemy, it's the 'millionaire tendency'."

Tony Benn, addressing the meeting explained that the role of capitalism

was to 'divide and rule' so that "nobody blames capitalism, the real cause of unemployment. The Tories are frightened of democratic challenge to unaccountable power, but capitalism doesn't depend on 300 MPs (if so it would be over by Tuesday!). It's the multinationals, the banks and big business".

In a passionate plea to end Tory rule he concluded: "Working people must band together again as did our forefathers... the day we tie our ropes together, no power on earth can stop us".

As the meeting finished a pensioner remarked to a steward: "That's what all meetings should be like. A thousand meetings like that up and down the country and Labour will romp home—with or without the TV".

Arrested! —with a rattling tin

COVENTRY LABOUR Party Young Socialist members are having to think about the three 'P's - precinct, permit and police! Every time they go into the city centre the police are sure to follow!

"Last Tuesday we were in the precinct having a street meeting", explained Melanie Storer of Coventry SW LPYS.

"Then up came the precinct manager and said: 'This is not allowed'. Then he called the police who arrested one young member, Ian Dalton, for not giving his name quick enough, took his collecting tin and said it would be used as evidence.

"Ian was released some three hours later and charged with 'possessing a rattling tin and collecting money in the precinct without a permit.'"

So much for dealing with real crime.

Historic meeting of Asian women

BRADFORD NORTH Women's section held an election rally aimed at Asian women, with an all-female platform, lifts to the meeting and a creche.

20 local working-class Asian women and three other local women attended. The creche, with 16 children was run by men.

As the speech from Nasima Patel from the LPYS was translated, women leant forward and nodded in agreement as she described the Tories' attacks on jobs and maternity grants and use of immigration laws to divide black and white workers. In a lively discussion, one woman told how, when she had been given medical treatment, her children had to look after her; their education was suffering, as no support was provided.

The main message was that you should not just vote Labour, but get involved in the party and the Women's Section. At the end, two Asian women asked to join. It is totally wrong to see Asians as "voting fodder" for the Labour Party and this meeting is a first step to drawing Asian women into our movement.

Bradford North

Tory vandals at work

JUST AS the Tory government has vandalised Bradford's industry, so the Bradford North Tories have resorted to vandalism against a graphic illustration of their party's record.

An 8ft by 12ft cartoon by Alan Hardman, depicting Thatcher's demolition of industry in Bradford North was fixed onto the side of a Labour Party member's house.

It was put up at 7pm; the Tory agent drove past at 7.15pm. The occupants returned home at 11pm to find the cartoon vandalised, with oil, paint, eggs and margarine splashed all over it.

The culprits were obviously the local Tories. So great is their fear of socialist ideas that this one sharp cartoon had to be immediately destroyed before workers could see it. They have posters all round Bradford North, yet not one been vandalised.

The Tories claim to stand for law and order and private property. What they mean is their law, their order and their property.

Their actions, while outraging many Labour Par-



Bradford's industry, and Labour's cartoon, wrecked by Tory vandals.

ty members in Bradford North, will only strengthen their resolve to work for the return of a socialist candidate.

"We will not be set back" said cartoonist Alan Hard-

man "We've got the energy and enthusiasm and we'll come straight back and do another one".

By returning Pat Wall, Bradford North socialists will be implementing the

message inscribed on the cartoon: "Keep the Tory extremists out—vote Labour for the return of a Labour government".

By Keith Narey

LPYS see off Baker

WHEN KENNETH Baker visited Bradford and tried to do a walkabout, an effective demo of teachers from NATFHE and NUT and the LPYS forced him to cut short his public meeting.

He showed his real view of teachers by calling the demonstration a rabble. A council street cleaner working nearby came over to see what the commotion was. When he saw Baker he started waving his fists and shouting "Maggie out".

Baker went to a shop to try to buy a pair of socks. He held a suit up to the cameras to brag about selling

clothes to Hong Kong. One youth heckled that it would take a month of giros to buy such a suit.

Baker was visibly shaken and sped away in his car, running over the foot of a NATFHE member. What a way to win votes!

Labour candidate Pat Wall commented: "Baker doesn't send his kids to state schools, so how can he be trusted with our kids' futures?"

"Look at Moorfield school, where the roof is rotten; they have to put polythene sheets on the roof to stop the water coming in.

"At Feversham school, they put chicken wire on the walls and ceil-

ings to stop the plaster falling on the pupils. Yet plasterers go to the Job Centre vainly looking for work.

"When the Tories were in charge of the council they wept crocodile tears over Bradford's 136 pre first world war schools. Tory ministers came here and promised millions to build new schools and repair old ones, but then withdrew most of their promises to meet the demands of their more privileged friends in the Tory shires.

"The latest proposals by Baker are just another disguised way of transferring education spending from the worst off to the best off."

Sell

Militant

IN A new departure for us, both this and the previous issue of *Militant* have been produced in two editions.

In 850 we had centre-page features on the election campaigns in both Bermondsey and Coventry. This week we have one edition featuring Bradford and another on Liverpool Broadgreen. If any readers want a copy of the alternative edition, they should write, with an appropriate donation!

Door-to-door sales of issue 850 reached a record level in Coventry, where 475 were sold over the weekend alone and we expect this to have increased over the week.

Although not as spectacular, we have had many other examples of good sales on the doorstep. In Tuebrook, Liverpool, 62 were sold on Sunday, while in Camberwell 30 copies were sold out of 70 doors knocked.

Also in Camberwell, three sellers sold over 100 copies of issue 849 between them. Any challengers for this record?

We aim to have a full analysis of the election result in the next issue, 852. To do this we will have to delay production and distribution. Could sellers please contact us for details.

By Gerry Lerner

Bermondsey

Worried Liberals start red-scare campaign

THE LIBERALS in Bermondsey are running scared, not surprisingly, given the campaign Bermondsey Labour Party are putting up against them.

In a desperate attempt to stem the voters flooding away, they have tried to whip up a red-scare campaign by putting out a leaflet condemning Labour's John Bryan as a 'hard and dangerous' revolutionary!

There was no clue as to its source other than the name of Simon Hughes' election agent at the bottom.

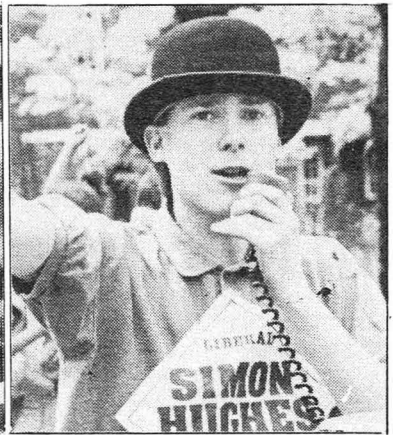
At their meeting, rather than put forward Liberal policy, Hughes launched an attack on John Bryan as *Militant* backed. He had a copy of the paper with a photo of John Bryan. But he obviously hadn't read the report of the Liberal canvasser who tried to persuade Labour's candidate to vote Liberal because their policies were the same as the Tories.

Rosie Barnes also concentrated on the *Militant*, saying that they were behind Deirdre Wood and that Labour had not eradicated the *Militant* and never could (which I suppose is true!).

David Steel came in to a standing ovation. He went among the audience of middle-class Liberal activists, shaking hands. One young man, who was featured on the Nine-O'Clock News, told him: "Well, I had been thinking of voting Liberal Alliance, but after hearing what you have got to say I am definitely going to vote Labour."

The 20-30 local people in the audience were in the main not applauding and certainly didn't give any standing ovations. If these leading Liberals have to bus in an audience, that shows the real level of their support in Bermondsey.

By Simon Donovan



"I WISH we could have general elections every year, because we've never had anything as brilliant as this happen on our estate." said 11 year old Debbie, during an open air meeting organised by Abbey Ward Labour Party and Bermondsey Labour Party Young Socialists.

There were posters arranged in the windows on each floor of the flats to spell out the name JOHN and banners proclaiming John Bryan (above left) as 'a workers' MP on a worker's wage', and 'Tories out'.

People came onto their balconies and joined in the fun as first "Mrs Thatcher" spoke, followed by Nigel Ponsonby Smallpiece, the Liberal spokesman (above right).

But by far the biggest cheer of the day was reserved for John Bryan.

Hunt the Liberal

SIMON HUGHES got an unexpected response when he went canvassing on the Tabard estate in Bermondsey.

It is an area with many black families, and as soon as the local Labour Party and LPYS activists heard of Hughes' presence, armed with a megaphone, they made tracks to hunt the Liberal candidate down.

As he went from door to door, Hughes was asked through the megaphone about the racist policies of Tower Hamlets Liberal council, why for instance, 72 Bengalis were being evicted.

As this went on, more and

more people came out to see what was going on. An impromptu street meeting ensued, in support of John Bryan. Speeches were made to loud applause from the residents.

Hughes was looking more and more dejected. When it finally twigged that he was receiving a bashing, he asked if he could borrow our megaphone. He was politely told to buy his own.

Thoroughly dejected Hughes and his sour-faced Liberals got into their black and orange cab and taxied away into oblivion.



Photo: Tina Carroll.

Arthur Scargill supporting Terry Fields' election campaign.

LPYS

Youth take action

LPYS BRANCHES throughout Britain are gearing up for the final push to convince young people of the need to vote Labour on 11 June.

★ Clydesbank. Over 400 young people turned up to the 'Youth for Labour' rally to hear live bands and speakers including Tommy Sheridan LPYS national committee. Over 40 youth expressed an interest in the LPYS. Over 50 copies of *Socialist Youth* were sold.

★ Cardiff Central. In just one evening 15 young people signed up to join the LPYS and 27 *Socialist Youths* were sold.

★ Hucknall, Nottinghamshire. 60 LPYS members and other socialists picketed Michael Heseltine when he arrived in town. 30 Tories from out of town were drowned out by chants of "Maggie Out". A four foot long UB40 card for Thatcher was unfurled. Heseltine left for a 'friendlier place'.

★ Southampton. Following their recent stardom on BBC *Newsnight*, Southampton LPYS were again performing in front of TV cameras on Saturday in Southampton city centre. Over 30 names were collected for the LPYS

during the colourful day of action with Labour's two candidates.

★ Mid-Sussex. 40 people turned up to hear Linda Douglas, LPYS rep on Labour's NEC, even in this Tory heartland.

★ Niddrie, Edinburgh. 60 youth from the council estates turned up to an LPYS debate between Alex Shanks from the YS and a speaker from the Scottish National Party. No Tory speaker turned up.

The Red Wedge Tour has started with a lot of success, selling out at most of the venues:

★ Leeds. The Housemartins and Billy Bragg attracted 1,600 youth. LPYS members sold 78 *Socialist Youths* and signed up 40 young people to the Labour Party.

★ Southampton. Over 700 young people came to see Billy Bragg at a community centre. LPYS members signed up 70 to the LPYS and sold 40 copies of *Socialist Youth*.

At a press conference Billy Bragg and the two Southampton Labour candidates were full of praise for the work the LPYS has done in attracting young people to the Labour Party.

Onward Christian Soldiers

THE LORD Taylor of Hadfield, 'Founder and Life President' of the building firm, Taylor Woodrow, has sent a letter, on company stationery, to all his employees.

'Dear Team Friends' he begins: 'Mrs Thatcher has not only continued to maintain her reputation as a person of integrity, persistence, ability, caring... but, further... has restored international confidence in the British government...'

'The Conservatives', he drones on 'are our only hope for this country. Any alternative... would be horrific.'

'Onward Christian Soldiers' he concludes and signs himself 'FT'.

As a 'team member' from West London comments: 'I feel that this is scandalous and there is a general feeling amongst my workmates of hostility to being told to vote Tory in this way.'

'Can you imagine 'FT's' reaction if he caught someone using company time and resources to promote the Labour Party? They would probably be sacked.'

Broadgreen

Scargill rouses voters at Liverpool meeting

A THOUSAND people crammed into a Broadgreen election meeting to hear NUM president Arthur Scargill and Labour candidate Terry Fields. The room was so packed that an overflow meeting had to be organised.

Arthur Scargill was given a standing ovation even as he was taking his seat. Every speaker was cheered, as well as the chair, Jackie Crowley, when she introduced herself as one of the 47 surcharged and disqualified councillors who had fought for the people of the City.

Far from feeling intimidated by 'extremists'

workers in the audience interrupted speakers frequently to make a point. Whether it was the problem of youth unemployment, drugs, the miners' struggle or the City council's heroic fight, those present could see the link they all had to the fight for fundamental change of society.

Terry Fields gave a vivid description of the kind of support he has been getting in his campaign when he described how a pensioner had given him a bag full of pennies and twopences that she had saved up. When he went to thank her personally, she said she would try to save some more. "You cannot buy that kind of con-

fidence," Terry thundered out, to applause.

Arthur Scargill was interrupted by applause no less than *eighteen* times. The hundreds of workers present acclaimed every call from the platform for genuine socialist policies: for the nationalisation of the Press, a Labour government loyal to the working class, a repeat of a 1945-style Labour government, the reinstatement of sacked miners, the sacking of Coal Board management, sale of cheap coal to pensioners, the ongoing resistance of the miners to job cuts, and for the solidarity of Liverpool City council and the miners.

This meeting, like the one

addressed by Tony Benn nine days earlier in the campaign, was a living refutation of the notion that working class people are afraid of, or do not understand socialist ideas.

Arthur Scargill's final comment, accompanied by the second standing ovation, claps, cheers and whistles summed up what the meeting meant for those present: "On June 11th we can make a start to building the basis of a socialist society, a society of peace, one that caters for people's needs and not profit. Vote Labour on the day, vote for Terry Fields!"

Support and welcome for Terry Fields

THROUGHOUT HIS campaign, Broadgreen candidate Terry Fields is addressing workplace and factory gate meetings, as well as union branches and shop stewards' committees.

At Edge Lane Bus depot, he addressed a meeting of 40 bus crew, winning an enthusiastic response. "We need more MPs like him" one commented afterwards.

The workers agreed especially with Terry's condemnation of the bus deregulation.

The enthusiastic re-

sponse for Terry was evident in the rapturous applause he was given and the pledges to help Terry in his election campaign. Two bus drivers applied then and there to join the Labour Party.

A WOMAN came into one of Labour's committee rooms with a donation of £10, explaining that her husband ran a small haulage company and that he wanted posters to put on all his lorries and vans.

A VOTER canvassed in Childwall ward offered £50 to the Party.

COMMENT FROM a worker in St. Oswald St. flats, Broadgreen: "We're all Labour here... The missus will only buy us red underpants!"

Doorstep confrontation: "Excuse me, I'm from the Labour Party..." "Bugger off!" "Sorry, I, er..." "Bugger off and canvass someone else! I'm solid Labour and you're wasting good canvassing time!"

THERE HAS been an excellent response to a petition organised by Liverpool Labour Women against threatened hospital closures. One woman pushing a quadraplegic child in a wheel chair signed the petition and expressed her determination to vote Labour. It brought a lump to the throat of the Labour Party members there when she turned to her child and commented bitterly, "If they close the Children's, that's you finished."

Reports on the campaign trail

Mansfield

FOR THE first time in years Mansfield Labour Party is conducting an energetic election campaign. Activists are out canvassing the estates every night.

Local party members have been enthused by the good results in the local council elections. The newly formed Moderate Labour Party lost all its seven seats (which had come from five Labour defections and two SDP).

Whereas Labour picked up all three seats in a ward previously held by the

Alliance.

However, workers in Mansfield have been angered by reports that retiring MP Don Concannon will not vote Labour in the General Election.

But this is not expected to have much effect. Local activists are confident that Mansfield can not only be held for Labour but with an increased majority.

By a Militant reporter

Barnsley

TORY novelist Jeffrey Archer made a surprise visit to Barnsley on 27 May and was greeted by the angry workers and youth of the town.

His walkabout turned into a lively demonstration and march against the Tories when local LPYS members started shouting and challenging him about the decimation of the mining industry in the area and mass unemployment (now at 19 per cent in Barnsley).

The crowd took up our chants of "Maggie, Maggie, out, out, out" and "We are the Tory haters".

A couple of women said they were meant to be

visiting someone in hospital or hurrying with shopping, but the appearance of the Tories in town had made their blood boil so they joined in.

No police were present and the demonstration was peaceful, although very angry. The Tories beat a hasty retreat as the crowd pursued them demanding they get out of town.

Several youth signed up for the LPYS during the visit and our paper sales increased considerably.

By a member of Barnsley LPYS



Ron Thomas.

Bristol East

RON THOMAS, Labour's Parliamentary candidate for Bristol East is campaigning on the slogan 'a full-time MP on a worker's wage.' He points out 'We must plan production for need not profit. But you cannot plan what you don't control and you can't control what you don't own.'

'Working class people must take into common ownership the commanding heights of the economy as the only way of controlling resources within society.'

Alliance - the Tories' B-Team

LIBERAL COUNCILLOR, Simon Knott, is the Alliance parliamentary candidate for Hammersmith North. In his election leaflet, under a heading 'Uncaring Tories', he says: "The Conservative Government has had eight years to get education, the health service, unemployment and law and order right. Despite the Tories massaging of statistics, we all know they have failed to get these services right. And yet they expect you to believe they can get these important areas right in a third term."

Liberals in a Knott

Knott does not remind the electorate that as leader of the very small group of Alliance councillors, he himself kept the Tories in control of Hammersmith Council, for a similar period of eight years. During that time he voted 300 times with them and only once with Labour.

With 10,000 on the council house waiting list and 13,000 registered unemployed, the Tory-Alliance council cut the staff by 1,012 (that is 20 per cent), sold a brand new estate built by the previous Labour council to their proper-

ty developer friends before it was occupied, and built not a single council house.

Again omitting to mention their own complicity, Hammersmith Liberals' local election leaflet last year said the Borough: "Has the highest proportion of overcrowded homes in London; a quarter of all homes need over £3,000 spent to put them right; two thirds of all the homes in the Borough were built before 1919. Incredibly, despite these problems, spending by the Council on improvement grants has been cut. After allowing for inflation, the capital programme has been cut by at least a third since 1979."

It was against this background that Labour was swept back to power in the Borough in 1986.

Like the Alliance nationally Knott is likely to be given a message by the voters, that will be more appropriate than their slogan 'The Time has Come'; they will be singing: 'Now is the Hour for us to say Goodbye!'

By Keith Dickinson

The time has come



Media watch



Medium's message

"WHEN I hear the words of Kinnock and his treacherous ilk I feel ashamed for England that such fools could be considered suitable to lead our once-mighty nation." So Queen Boadicea told *The Sun* last Monday under the heading, 'Why I'm backing Kinnock by Stalin'. Speaking through medium Nella Jones, Boadicea went on "when the Romans laid claim to the kingdom of Icen (Norfolk) would Kinnock have razed Camulodunum (Colchester) to the ground as I did...? No! But the Falklands crusade proved Thatcher would."

More startling revelations are made. 'Winnie'—the admirer of Mussolini not Pooh Bear—is worried that Labour's true face is unknown to "the man in the street... he must be told that a vote for Kinnock's Red Labour Party would be a disaster."

Strangely *The Sun's* medium did not ask Churchill why, despite his smear that Labour would establish a Gestapo police state, he was unceremoniously booted out in the 1945 Labour landslide. Still, we learn that Genghis Kahn, the 12th Century Mongolian war lord, is disillusioned with parliamentary democracy and will not be voting! And *The Sun* calls left wingers loony?

This *Sun* 'exclusive' came via an impeccable source: Nella Jones has been a "psychic investigator all her life and often works with the police." What a shame that so authoritative a reporter could not be employed for their 'exclusives' on 'loony left Labour councils'. (See article on page 6)

SDP election agent quits to vote Labour



Photo: Andrew Ward (Report)

Angry Bengali tenants facing eviction by Tower Hamlets' Liberals, confront David Owen.

THE SDP agent in Nottingham North has resigned and will vote Labour. "I'm completely disillusioned with the SDP" he said: "it's now no more than a junior Conservative Party."

David Owen in particular has emerged in this campaign not so much a 'Tory in disguise' as a candidate to succeed Thatcher as Tory leader. He has already admitted he would prefer a Tory victory to a Labour one and has consistently tried to out-Tory the Tories on policy.

On trade unions, he has backed all the Tory laws and claimed that "Mr Kinnock's Labour Party would handcuff the police and hand over the streets to Arthur Scargill's and anybody else's

private armies".

He has even attacked the Tories for not using criminal sanctions, including the law of incitement, against the miners "even though the Alliance urged its use after the Orgreave picketing".

He favours restoring the right of GCHQ workers to join a union—but insists there would have to be a strike-free agreement!

On nuclear weapons, Owen has tried to outbid Thatcher in his enthusiasm to see the entire population of Britain exterminated in a holocaust, rather than abandon nuclear weapons.

But perhaps the most conclusive proof of his arrival on the far right of the British political spectrum is a speech he made in support of

Reagan's policies in Central America.

He described the Nicaraguan Contras as "freedom fighters" who are defending "US vital interests". He called upon the Sandinista government to hold "genuinely free and fair elections".

Yet when they did hold elections, two Alliance Lords and a Tory MP were among the international observers who reported "no suspicion of malpractice."

Whatever 'radical' gestures some Liberal candidates may be making in the campaign, Owen has made it clear that a vote for the Alliance is a vote for Thatcherism and Reaganism.

By Pat Craven

WHAT THE Alliance says on education sounds fine in theory. But their record should be judged on that of the Isle of Wight, the only local education authority they have controlled for any length of time. It has the worst secondary pupil-teacher ratio of any LEA in England (ties with Tory Kent). It is seventh from the bottom for the percentage of three and four year olds in nursery education.

TORY AND Alliance members have formed a coalition on Milton Keynes borough council and agreed a budget which will mean cuts.

Extremist candidates of Tories' rabid right

THE TORY Party are resorting to desperate smears of "extremism" against Labour

The Alliance's attack on 100 Labour candidates, the so called '101 damnations' was seized upon by the Tories. But if you want to see extreme or 'loony' candidates look no further than the Conservatives.

Many Tory candidates could get a job with the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse and no questions asked. First of all look at the honourable members for war. It is difficult to upstage the nuclear Boadicea who leads the party but the former Tory students' vice chairman David Hoile, has been on patrol with the Contra terrorists who have spread death and destruction in

their dirty war against the Nicaraguan revolution.

Labour Research has found 26 Tory MPs in the last parliament who were or had been members of the Monday Club. This group openly supports the South African government's war against its own majority and against neighbouring Mozambique and Angola.

Tory disease

Representing famine and pestilence are the five Tory MPs, Sir Patrick Wall, Neil Hamilton, Stefan Terlezki, Bill Walker and Nicholas Winterton. They support an American far right grouping who want to take charitable status away from War on Want, Oxfam and Christian

Aid. Private schools and hospitals will get tax relief through being labelled charities but not organisations which relieve famine and fight disease!

And finally the members for death. Take Peter Bruinvels MP for Leicester East. He backs capital punishment and is prepared to do the dirty work himself. "I like the idea of a firing squad of five with only one bullet so no one knows who did it. Hanging is not bad. Or drugs. The electric chair has been very successful in America."

Warren Hawksley, candidate for The Wrekin, favours the birch and is meticulous in specifying exactly the size and weight and

part of the body to aim at.

More seriously extreme right winger Hawksley is getting assiduous backing from Garth Cooper, a man who stood for the fascist National Front in three elections. Cooper recently stood and lost as a Tory local authority candidate. His views have not changed since his NF days, but he decided to join the Tories because he thought Thatcher the best prime minister this century!

Far right

The anti fascist magazine *Searchlight* regularly reports other Tory links with far right parties. Piers Merchant, Tory candidate for Newcastle Central, is alleged to have been a member of

the far right National Democratic Party in the '70s. The Southend East Tory party chairman Frank Paveley is an ex National Front member.

Reactionary ideas abound in the Tory party. Apartheid loving John Carlisle thinks giving women the vote was a retrograde step. Rhodes Boyson thinks single parents are 'evil'. And this extremism is not restricted to the back benches. Tory candidates pander to racism and prejudice against homosexuals to hide their real policies of defending the rich and attacking the poor.

Don't give the rabid right another chance. Ditch the Tories on 11 June.

By Roger Shrivess

MYTH: 'Baa, baa, black, sheep' was banned as 'racist' by Islington council, who ordered it to be replaced by 'green sheep'—*Star, Sun, Mail, etc.*

REALITY: Untrue. The story was originally concocted on the basis of alleged practice at a voluntary play group, and has never been council policy. **MYTH:** The word 'manhole' was banned as sexist by Hackney council, which ordered employees to adopt the term 'access chamber' instead—*Sun*.

REALITY: Untrue. Totally fabricated by *Sun* hacks.

MYTH: 'Wendy houses', by order of Ealing council, must now be called 'corner homes' to avoid sexism—*Daily Express*.

REALITY: Untrue. Never discussed by Ealing council.

MYTH: Haringey council banned black bin-liners as 'racially offensive'—*Mail on Sunday*.

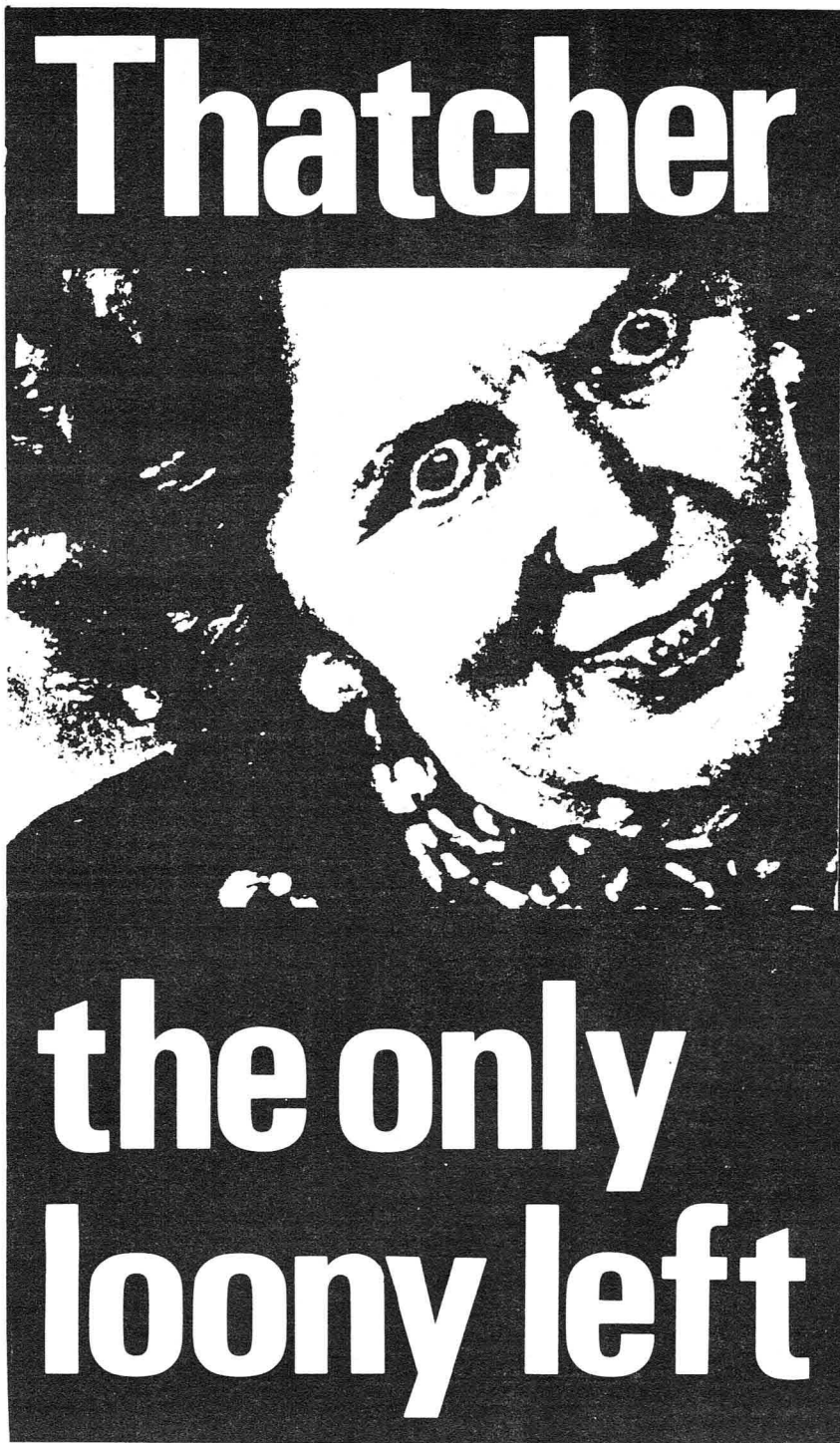
REALITY: Untrue. The *Mail on Sunday* admitted this the following week.

MYTH: Haringey 'banned references to family life during sex lessons'—*Daily Mirror*.

REALITY: Untrue. Later the *Mirror* was forced to admit that the story had no basis whatsoever.

MYTH: Brent council is 'splashing out' £9,000 to send 'a group of black teenagers on an expenses-paid jaunt to Communist Cuba'—*Sun*.

REALITY: The voluntary group, Caribbean Exchange is planning a trip, but has been offered no subsidy by Brent council.



LOONY BID TO BAN CLEESE! **Kick out loonies** **MPs tell** **Labour Kinnock** **'must act on Loony Left'** **GAYS PUT KINNOCK IN PANIC**

THE DAILY abuse in the Tory press against the left-controlled Labour councils, has risen to a shrieking crescendo.

The muck is being thrown because these councils are an obstacle in the way of the Tories' drive to slash public-sector services, housing, and jobs.

Through cutting central government grants, the Tories have stolen £21 billion from local authorities since 1979, mainly from the London boroughs and major cities. This is criminally insane policy, when people in these areas are already suffering most from the collapse of industry and economic decay.

Even worse cuts would have been imposed but for the fight put up by Liverpool, and the resistance of councils like Lambeth and other London boroughs.

The tabloids' 'looney left' propaganda, however, is stained with racism and reactionary prejudice.

Labour councils, especially in areas with significant ethnic minorities, are fully justified in taking long-overdue steps to reverse the discrimination suffered by black people. Contrary to Tory myth, they have never obtained a proportionate share of jobs, housing, education, and welfare services.

It is also right that Labour councils should defend people from discrimination, abuse, or attack because they happen to be homosexual.

Militant does not defend all the policies and statements of some of these Labour-left councillors. In some cases, they have pursued basically correct policies in a one-sided and counter-productive way.

Unfortunately, they have often provided an opening for the Tory media. Although the amounts of money involved are tiny in relation to total council budgets, the Tory press has been able to create the impression that left-wing councils champion the interests of minorities while ignoring the problems faced by working people generally.

The aim of this dirty campaign is to divert attention from the Tories' own savage policies, and undermine support for Labour by confusing working-class voters.

When there are multi-million pound scandals in the City and criminal cover-ups in Whitehall, the fearless investigative journalists are all otherwise engaged—probably propping up bars. But when Tory editors suggest another 'looney-left' story, the hacks are suddenly intoxicated with their own powers of invention.

The 'looney-left' stories do not examine issues or policies. They are based on exaggeration, distortion and downright lies. But by embroidering them daily, the gutter press has spun a dangerous political myth.

During the campaign Labour must shatter the myth and counter it with Socialist ideas and policies.

One law for them, one for the rest

THERE IS is one law for Labour councils—and another for the Tory government!

★ The Tories are attacking Labour councils for putting out 'propaganda on the rates'. So flawed were their proposals to curb councils from explaining the adverse effects of government policies, however, that Tory Environment Secretary, Nicholas Ridley, had to drop the gagging clauses from his local government bill in February.

But it has now been revealed that Thatcher and Co have spent massive amounts of tax-payers' cash on Tory propaganda.

Shortly before the 1983 general election, Thatcher set up a special new department of the Defence Ministry, DS19 under Heseltine, to promote Tory nuclear policies and discredit CND and Labour. It drew on secret M15 files in its efforts to smear leading CND members.

The Foreign Office also trebled its grant (to £58,000) to the right-wing

British Atlantic Committee, and spent £200,000 of public money on a propaganda film. The Defence Ministry's public relations officer said: "You could say it's using government funds for party purposes."

★ The Tories have accused Labour councils of breaking or bending the law in their struggle to limit the worst effects of rate-capping, penalties, and other measures to force councils to carry out Tory cuts.

Illegal payments

Last December, however, it came out that the Tory government had for six years been administering (or manipulating) the rate support grant in an unlawful way. Payments of £68 billion had been illegal.

Ridley then introduced a law to legalise this retrospectively - at the same time prohibiting any legal challenge to government grant decisions.

Even Lord Denning, retired Master of

the Rolls, described the Tories' new law as: "Unprecedented, unnecessary, and contrary to the basic principles of executive accountability under the law."

★ The Tories have attacked Labour councils as 'dictatorial' and 'spend-thrift', allegations which they particularly hurled at the Labour-controlled GLC. Despite the fact that 60 per cent of Londoners opposed abolition, the Tories wound up the authority—claiming it was to save money.

But the extra cost of running London services, now that GLC functions have been divided between the boroughs and dozens of quango-type bodies, is currently £180 million. If the Tories were returned and successfully forced the Inner London Education Authority out of County Hall—which they want to sell off to property developers—the cost of it moving to new premises could be another £236 million.

The ratepayers of London will be paying dear for Tory economies.

Fighting Fund

| Area | Received | % of target achieved | Target |
|---------------------|----------|----------------------|--------|
| 1 Northern | 1291 | | 4600 |
| 2 Scotland West | 851 | | 3500 |
| 3 Wales | 1139 | | 4850 |
| 4 Scotland East | 618 | | 2800 |
| 5 West Midland | 1018 | | 4850 |
| 6 London | 1731 | | 9400 |
| 7 Yorkshire | 1353 | | 8450 |
| 8 East Midlands | 491 | | 3250 |
| 9 Eastern | 419 | | 3050 |
| 10 Merseyside | 895 | | 7500 |
| 11 Southern | 320 | | 3100 |
| 12 South West | 196 | | 1900 |
| 13 Manchester/Lancs | 292 | | 4050 |
| 14 South East | 133 | | 2250 |
| 15 National | 8248 | | 6950 |
| Total | 18994 | | 70000 |

WITH ONLY one week left until the election the Tory press will step up their campaign of smears and unfounded allegations in order to try and prevent working people voting Labour.

While the Tories can rely on the support of their big business allies like Hanson Trust, who have given £50,000 over the past 18 months, we need the financial support of all our readers to put *Militant's* case for a socialist alternative.

There are thousands of new readers of our paper and we appeal to you to send a donation to build that alternative. Over the last few weeks financial support has been flooding in from workers who want

to kick out Thatcher. Follow the example of C.Hewison who has sent £100; C.Staney, secretary Wittington Women's Section £50; S.Pragnell, Southampton LP £10; M.Williamson, Belgrove LP £5.

Sellers in Glasgow last weekend raised £22 selling the 'Kick out the Tories' stickers, while in Derbyshire over £12 was raised in a street collection.

Support from trade unionists this week: £319 raised at NUPE conference; £85 raised at UCW conference; £100 Wales TUC expenses; £13.20 Jim Gelent (UCATT member); £4.50 C.Scullion (NALGO expenses).

Thanks also to: Mr Kemsley, OAP from Sit-

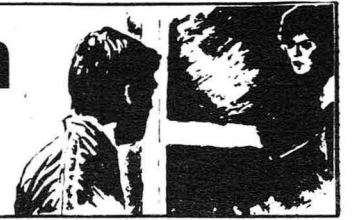
tingbourne, who normally pays £1 every week for his paper and this week saved up £10; £8.70 from a 'FA Cup Social' on the Isle of Wight; Gloria Wilson, P Jenkins, A Griffin and Richard Talbot, who each donated £5; Colin Clare, Hull AEU, £10, and H Deeney, North West London who sent £44.50; £1 C Allum, Isle of Wight.

These are some of the many examples which make up the £7,107 we received last week taking our total so far to £18,994.

Election fever is reaching its highest pitch now. Send us the resources so we can get across the socialist alternative to the Tories.

The 'race card' is once again being played by the Tories. The aim is clear: Divide and Rule. Stir up confusion and prejudice to divide working-class voters and undermine support for Labour.

Campaign Forum



Militant looks into the election issues

Beware: Tory racist trap

"CONTROL OF immigration into Britain," Thatcher told the Indian parliament in 1981, "is essential if we are to maintain good race relations."

What hypocrisy! On television at home she had been saying that "people are really rather afraid that this country might be rather swamped by people with a different culture..." (30.1.78)

'Immigration' is a pernicious Tory slogan. The real message is: Black and Asian immigrants are to blame for all your problems—unemployment, bad housing, inner-city decay, crime, and so on.

The black community is used as a scapegoat to divert attention from the real cause of the crisis facing working people: the bankruptcy of the bosses' system and the disastrous effects of Tory policies.

In the run-up to the election, the Tories deliberately took a number of measures to whip up racial prejudice. The *Sun*, the *Express*, and the rest of the gutter press naturally gave them unstinting help.

After promising tougher and tougher immigration controls, the Tories faced a small problem. Their own 'nationality' laws (which on some points have been ruled by the European Court to breach human rights) left them with little scope for further restrictions.

"There is no racism in the Conservative Party." Thatcher 1984. Yet Thatcher's West Midlands election rally opened with racist jokes from television comedian, Ted Rogers.

So the government turned to tightening the rules for visitors—not immigrants—from five Asian and African countries. The headlines were predictable:

"Asian flood swamps airport," screamed the *Express* (15.10.86): "Heathrow airport was under siege today after a mass invasion of illegal immigrants trying to beat the midnight deadline for getting into Britain."

The travellers held up at Heathrow were not immigrants, but visitors here to see relatives, and they were not here illegally. The massive 'hold up' of passengers was the direct result of the government's sudden imposition of a new visa system.

Inflammatory publicity around this episode provoked more attacks on the

By Lynn Walsh

homes and shops of black and Asian families. It added to the poisonous propaganda which helped incite the 20,000 racist attacks officially recorded last year.

One of the measures rushed through by the Tories on the last day before the dissolution of parliament was a law to fine airlines for bringing any passenger to the UK without all the documents now required by this government.

This clamp down on allegedly 'bogus refugees' was particularly linked to the arrival of a few dozen Tamils from Sri Lanka. Although many had suffered repression and torture at home, Tory ministers pronounced that they were not really facing persecution.

The self-proclaimed champions of 'British democracy' take a stance on the traditional democratic right to asylum worthy of Chile's general Pinochet.

Victorian values

And then, to symbolise their hostility to black immigrants, black visitors, and black refugees—in case anyone had not noticed!—the Tories announced in May that they would be using a disused Sea-Link ferry to detain those awaiting clearance—or deportation. Mrs Thatcher's notorious 'Victorian values' means a return to the prison hulk!

The government's own statistics show that in 1985 only 15 per cent of new UK residents came from the so-called New Commonwealth and Pakistan, most of these being the spouses or children of UK residents. Existing laws and the arbitrary, bureaucratic enforcement of the immigration rules made the Tories' new measures totally redundant, from any point of view.

The Tories' latest moves are pure propaganda measures, aimed at whipping up prejudice and sowing dissent amongst workers. Racism is not only the persecution of the black community, which socialists condemn. Racism is a weapon, used by the Tory representatives of big business, aimed at diverting and splitting the labour movement.

Labour must answer the Tories' racist lies. The rights of the black community must be defended. Above all, the labour movement must unite all workers, black and white, against the Tory enemy and in support of Socialist policies to wipe out the rotten conditions in which racism is spawned.



Capitalism guilty, not immigrants

WHEN THEY needed extra hands during the boom period, Britain's bosses exploited immigrant workers economically as cheap labour. Now their system is in crisis they are exploiting them politically to stir up racism.

Tory governments encouraged workers to come from the Caribbean, India, and Africa. The pre-Murdoch *Times*, when it was still a serious mouthpiece of big business, admitted: "Conservatives themselves allowed the main flood of immigrants into Britain in the 1950s and early '60s to let in cheap labour and check wage inflation..." (22.2.1968)

Far from enjoying favourable conditions, as *The Times* (11.7.68) again pointed out, "The immigrants mostly live in the areas in city centres which are in any case socially unsatisfactory... The reason for this is the simple one that the immigrants have been brought in to do jobs which British people were not prepared to do for the low wages actually paid."

Far from being a burden, immigrant workers made a huge contribution to this country's economic growth. They have been vital to the NHS, transport, and other public services.

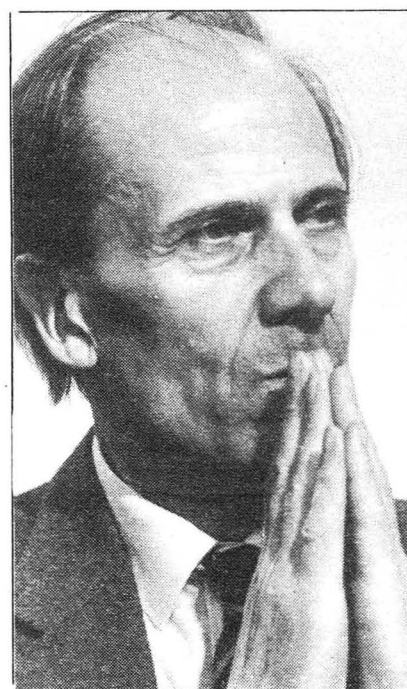
The blame for Britain's helter-skelter decline lies not with super-exploited black workers, but with the bosses who have for decades refused to re-invest their profits in the modernisation of industry.

Huge contribution

Waving the Union Jack, singing *Land of Hope and Glory*, the Tories claim they are protecting the 'British character' from being 'swamped'. But when it comes to their profits, the Tories' big-business backers are not so patriotic.

Cuts in workers' living standards and services have enormously swelled the bosses' profits. Last year, profits rose by 14 per cent while dividend payments to shareholders were up 25 per cent. Yet investment in British industry is still 13 per cent lower than 1979 in real terms.

But investment overseas by Britain's bosses rose to a record £13,600 million in 1985. Total investments abroad by the big institutions alone (not counting private companies and millionaires) is estimated by the Treasury to have reach-



"I have no time, no time whatever, for racial prejudice. It is an irrelevance whether you have spent more time in the sunshine than I have been able to do."

Norman Tebbit, speaking to Confederation of Indian Organisations, in London on Wednesday night.

ed £90,000 million.

What really damages the economy? 232,000 people settling (in 1985) in a nation of 56 million people? Or £13.6 billion invested abroad?

Most of those taking up residence were British citizens (110,000) and 20,000 were EEC citizens. Only 55,000 non-British/EEC-citizens were granted settlement in 1985, the great majority being the wives, husbands, or children of people already living here.

Of the 1985 total, 65,000 were professional and managerial people, and 36,000 were students.

For the first time in decades,

moreover, the 1984 and 1985 totals showed more people coming in than leaving. This was mainly due to the long queue of overseas relatives of British residents deliberately held up over several years by the Tories' inhumane and racially discriminatory enforcement of the immigration rules.

The official Office of Population Censuses clearly regards the 1984-85 figures as exceptional: their population projections assume a net outflow of 17,000 people annually up to the year 2021.

The figures themselves explode the myth that a big influx of migrants is the cause of Britain's economic and social problems.

Far from enjoying a privileged and pampered position, as the Tories and their gutter press try to suggest, black workers and their families suffer from a disproportionate share of the problems faced by millions of workers: unemployment, poverty, and appalling living conditions.

The unemployment rate for ethnic minorities, for instance, is 20 per cent, while that for other workers is 11 per cent, which is bad enough. The idea that unemployment is caused by black workers is refuted by the figures for the worst hit regions.

Worst hit

The Northern region tops the GB league, with 15 per cent out of work—yet ethnic minorities make up less than 1 per cent of the economically active population (0.8 per cent). Scotland suffers from 14 per cent unemployment, while ethnic minorities make up a mere 0.6 per cent.

Any attempt to repatriate the black population of Britain (even if the Tories seriously thought it to be possible) would lead to horrendous conflict, threatening to tear the labour movement apart with racial strife. None of the workers' problems would be solved—they would be multiplied a thousandfold.

The Tories exploit the real grievances of workers to whip up racist and jingoistic prejudices. We must fight this by going to the roots of the problem: the rottenness of the system. Eradicate the roots of racialism with socialist policies and action!

Terry Fields: A proud socialist record

"A WORKING man in Parliament should go to the House of Commons in his workaday clothes—he should address the Speaker on Labour questions, and give utterance to the same sentiments and in the same language and in the same manner that he is accustomed to use when addressing the President of the local Radical Club. Above all he should remember that all the Conservatives and Liberals are joined together in the interests of Capital against Labour."

These are the words of Keir Hardie, Labour's first MP. That is the tradition carried on to this day by Terry Fields. He lives on the wage of a fireman (his previous job) and donates everything else to the labour movement. His accounts are open for all to see.

No issue is too big or too small for Terry. Whether it be a matter of fighting against electricity disconnections of elderly pensioners or publicising the cases of imprisoned South African trade unionists, he would use exactly the same enthusiasm and energy.

Campaigning

Since the day he was elected to Parliament Terry has pressed the case of the working class both within and without its walls. He stood with the miners struggling to defend jobs and their communities. He defended the magnificent stand of the Liverpool and Lambeth councillors. His voice is ever present at countless rallies fighting against NHS or education cuts.

But he has also been on the picket lines of those struggles which go unpublicised and often unnoticed: the Silentnight strikers, the Hangers dispute, the Nove Leather struggle and the current Moathouse dispute in Liverpool.

Always ready to offer advice, assistance, to listen and produce practical results, his efforts have gone beyond the labour and trade union movement. He has involved himself in anti-drugs campaigns—particularly helping the mothers who are terrified for their children.

Even a seemingly secondary issue, but highly important to many mothers—for the introduction of safety tops for household bleach bottles—has been championed by Terry.

But above all Terry Fields has shouted from the rooftops his opposition to the Tories' rotten system and his answer, socialism.

AT THE start of the election campaign the kept Tory media eagerly anticipated Labour's defeat in Liverpool Broadgreen. Granada Television even commissioned a special Mori poll for Broadgreen to 'prove' that the socialist, campaigning record of Terry Fields was 'unpopular' with Broadgreen workers. But all their hopes are being confounded! The Mori poll showed support for Labour at 48 per cent, with the Alliance at 30 and the Tories at 21 per cent. The 9.5 per cent swing to

Labour since 1983, if repeated nationally, would see Labour storming to power.

Their previous assurance having given way to despair, the Tory press can only scratch their heads in amazement! But the answer to this 'mystery' is quite simple. It lies in the conditions of life that face ordinary working people in Broadgreen, and in the campaigning record and socialist policies put forward by Labour's candidate, Terry Fields.

In his maiden speech Terry Fields said: "A militant fight against unemployment and the issues facing Broadgreen workers, not just in Broadgreen but in the rest of the country, is the only option but to 'get a socialist alternative'."

Fighting for socialism BROADGREEN



Photo: Tim

Jobs: Tories are the real extremists

ON JUNE 9, 1983, the day Thatcher returned to office, some workers at the United Biscuits Crawfords factory in Broadgreen sported blue rosettes as they went into work. On the 14th they read in the newspapers that Crawfords was closing. Many of the 2,000 workers broke down in tears as they faced unemployment, bitter that the bosses had cynically delayed the announcement during Thatcher's election campaign. This was just a foretaste of the Tory extremism suffered by working people in Liverpool and Broadgreen since.

Twenty years ago, at 4-30pm, you couldn't move in Edge Lane, as workers surged out shoulder to shoulder. At the time Edge Lane was the most concentrated small industrial complex in Western Europe with a range of jobs and apprenticeships to choose from in engineering, telecommunications, food processing, retail firms, bus depots etc. Today, it is becoming a wasteland dotted with warehouses employing

handfuls. Perhaps the most fitting monument to Thatcher's rule is the flattened site where Crawfords used to employ 4,000 prior to 1979.

The devastating list of total closures since 1979 includes Crawfords (4,000 jobs), Lucas Aerospace (12,000), Hunters (350), Paton and Celvert (240), Delgano and Denby Print, Pecksware Textiles, Crosville Garage, and Wingrove and Rogers engineering.

Plessey

Plessey have shed over 12,000 jobs, with further redundancies likely as British Telecom increasingly buys equipment abroad. And as Terry Fields has exclusively revealed, BT are planning 1,200 job losses in Liverpool, adding to the uncertainty of jobs in Plessey.

The Liberals are just as bad as the Tories on jobs. For all their radical postures during elections, they cut Liverpool City Council's

workforce by 4,500 when in office before 1983. During the recent one month Liberal 'junta', they cancelled contracts signed by Labour to build 750 new homes, and other environmental works, threatening thousands of building workers' jobs.

The Tories and Liberals try to smear Terry Fields and the Liverpool working class in general, as 'extremists' hellbent on conflict for its own sake. On the contrary. The real extremists are the employers who have thrown thousands into the despair of unemployment.

Several firms have been chopped despite a history of 'moderation' from the workforce. The Crawfords workforce had annual lectures from Sir Hector Laing on their model productivity levels and their strike free history. The workers tried every means of co-operation with management to save the plant. They cut all overtime, and volunteered 1,000 redundancies prior to 1983. As some of them told us in 1983, "I

voted Thatcher last week. I thought I was safe. Now some of us feel suicidal".

The recent spate of privatisations, and the Tories plan to sell off more public assets if elected, is stripping Broadgreen of its remaining public sector jobs. The buses have been blitzed. Now Manweb and the Water Authority are threatened, and local hospital closures planned. The resulting unemployment levels are reason enough to vote Labour; from 13 per cent in Childwall to 33.5 per cent in Kensington. Overall the number unemployed has risen by 50 per cent since 1981, over half have been jobless for over a year.

Poverty grows

It is no wonder that poverty is plaguing Broadgreen families. Even in Childwall, 22 per cent of all children qualify for free school meals; it is 44 per cent in Old Swan and Broadgreen wards; 47 per cent in Tuebrook

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DOZENS OF Labour Party members turned out to a lobby of the Area Health Authority organised by the Liverpool Labour Women's Council, protesting against a plan to close four local hospitals—St Paul's Eye Hospital, Oxford St, Mill Rd, and the Alfred Jones Hospital—and convert another, the Myrtle St Children's Hospital, into a casualty unit. All these services are to be moved into the old Royal Hospital, a Victorian-style building only kept by the AHA, Party members say, "because they couldn't sell it off." The reorganisation is part of a £5m economy exercise by the Authority.

"No-one except Thatcher—who hasn't used the health service in her last three trips to hospital—believes the national health service is safe in Tory hands", Terry Fields told the lobbyists. "The health service belongs to us, not to a bunch of bureaucrats, and we have to fight for it."

Carroll.

mists

and 52 per cent in Kensington. Terry Fields has a proud record of assisting all workers in struggle. Living on a worker's wage keeps him in touch with the problems of ordinary working people....unlike Plessey Personnel Manager Richard Pine and stockbroker Mark Seddon, the Liberal and Tory candidates.

Terry's election does not just represent hope for the unemployed and school leavers of Broadgreen. He offers a socialist alternative for those in work, whose very lives are filled with uncertainty and dictated over by a handful of millionaires who own the workplaces. Together with the trade unions, he will campaign for a 35 hour week without loss of earnings, massive increases in public services, and a socialist society where the working class who produce the wealth of society also own it, providing secure well paid jobs for all.

By Richard Venton

'Preserving the NHS must be a central issue'

THE TORIES have already done incalculable damage to the National Health Service, but their latest proposals for a second wave of privatisations will reduce even further quality and reliability.

Top health service bureaucrats, urged on by Tory ministers, have suggested hiving off the ambulance service, sterile supplies, portering, building and engineering and other parts of hospital services.

On Merseyside, district health authorities have been circulated with proposals. A Wirral health manager has already proposed privatising nurses' homes and pathology labs. *Militant* spoke to some health service workers in the Broadgreen area of Liverpool about the enormous problems facing workers and patients alike, and why NHS workers were rallying round in support of Labour candidate Terry Fields.

NICOLA LOVELL, staff nurse at the Royal Liverpool Hospital:

"I've been in the health service for five years and in that time I've seen a marked deterioration in health service staff levels and in the availability of equipment.

In the last few years because of the Tories' privatisation measures, wards have been cleaned by contract labour. In most wards cleaning staff have been halved and through no fault of the cleaners themselves, who have lost staff and wages, obviously standards have fallen.

Standards have fallen to such dangerous levels that there has been an increase in the number of infections on the wards. Infection is rife. Very few patients will come in without sustaining some form of infection....

Many student nurses spend time doing jobs that should be done by others, especially cleaning lockers and other things. This is not what we should be doing. This is all time that should be spent looking after patients.

Too many staff become resigned to shortages. When I worked at Broadgreen we often had to wait for dressing packs because it is policy to keep ward supplies to a minimum, to encourage economy. There are even shelves with the prices of the items printed on them, so the nurses are made conscious of the cost. It seems wrong to me to have to be calculating the cost as you give a patient a new dressing....

It's especially annoying when we know that consultants use health service facilities for their own private patients. They use haematology and other tests in the NHS and charge the patients yet if a porter took a bag of sugar he would be sacked.

I work on a surgical ward but the bed shortage is so desperate that we get geriatric and orthopaedic patients, because of lack of beds elsewhere. We get patients in the surgical ward who have infections like pneumonia or other acute chest infections -

and these alongside surgical patients. Yet it's a cardinal rule in nursing that infectious patients should not be put in with others. The bed shortage is always especially desperate in the winter. Patients sometimes get cancelled on the morning of their operation because there are no beds. It must be terrible after waiting a long time and planning for an operation.

"There are even shelves with the prices of the items printed on them, so the nurses are made conscious of the cost... It's especially annoying when we know that consultants use health facilities for their own private patients."

Because of the low staffing levels, and to cover for illness and holidays, the health service is increasingly having to use agency nurses....

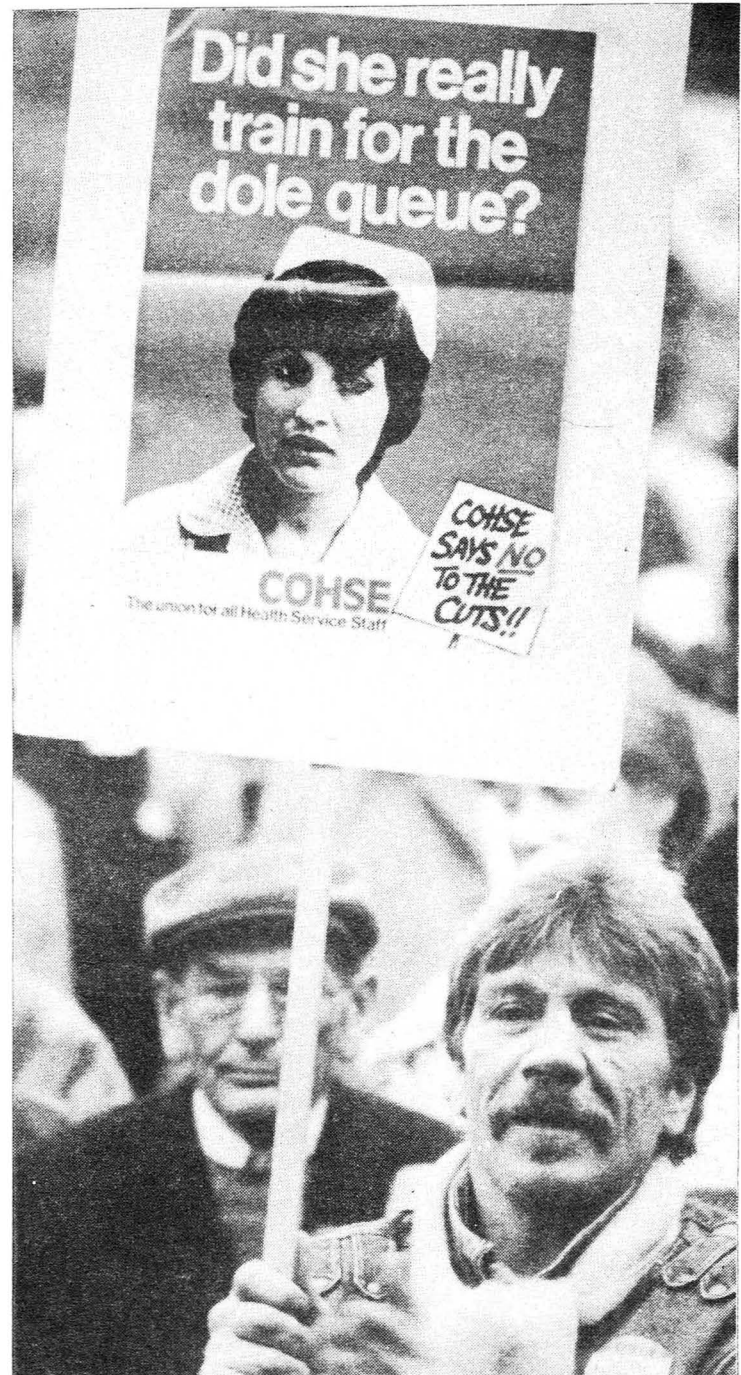
What is most ridiculous is that it is more expensive for the NHS than hiring NHS nurses.

When I first started at Broadgreen you never saw an agency nurse, now they are quite common.... It's like a creeping privatisation of the nursing service.

The Tories have shown that they are not committed in the slightest to a national health service....

I've got no doubt that the majority of health service workers in Liverpool will be voting Labour in the election. The preservation of the NHS must now be one of the central issues of this campaign."

- ★ The chairman of the Merseyside Health Authority, Sir Don Wilson, a Cheshire farmer, is a strong Thatcherite and was knighted in the New Year's Honours list.
- ★ Merseyside region has suffered the biggest percentage of bed cuts in the country since 1979—3,518, down by 16 per cent.
- ★ The number of non-urgent cases waiting more than a year is up by 20 per cent to 1,443. The total waiting list is almost 30,000, of whom 1,500 need urgent treatment.
- ★ With over 20 per cent of the workforce out of work, Merseyside's death rates for 'social' diseases are way above the national average: 61 per cent for cervical cancer and 83 per cent for tuberculosis. The incidence of hypertension is 89.9 per cent above the national average.



LIZ STAVELY (NUPE) works at a psycho-geriatric hospital in Broadgreen, Liverpool. She has worked for the NHS for ten years, all in psycho-geriatric care:

"Over the eight years of Tory government the NHS has been devastated. So far the laundry and cleaning services have not been hived off, but with a new manager this is now on the cards.

Psycho-geriatric care is rapidly growing in demand, particularly long-term care for the over 80's, but there's no provision for them. In order to make room the current patients are farmed out to private residential care....

I dread to think what'd happen if the Tories got in again. They'd move to privatise the entire NHS, not just the ancillary and cleaning services, but ambulances, theatre staff etc. If they won another term there'd be a mass exodus from the NHS into private health or out of health altogether.

Vote Labour

Turnover, particularly of qualified staff, is very high. When I left my last hospital, out of 15 qualified nurses on our three wards, five of them left at the same time as me. The average stay at any hospital for staff is only about 18 months.

Two workmates joined me for a day of action outside the Royal to campaign for the local elections. One has since joined the Labour Party. The idea many nurses have that they are 'professionals' and shouldn't get involved in politics is completely wrong. It is a 'political' job. The farming out of patients to private homes shows how 'political' it is....

YTS trainees have been in the health service for six months now. The unions should demand that all the trainees get trade union rates of pay, trade union protection, proper training and



education and the guarantee of further training and a job in the service.

At Fazakerly hospital, YTS trainees are being used as a sit-in service in the homes of the elderly and disabled to give 'carers' a break. These trainees are only 16 years old. They've supposedly been given basic auxiliary training, but the age limit for auxiliary training is 18. They've used them in the community to get round it. Yet this scheme recently won an award!

The Tories aim to fill in the loss of experienced auxiliary nurses from the service with YTS trainees....

Under a socialist Labour government we could have more staff and more training which could lead to a higher level of self-care among the patients, a more stimulating environment and higher morale among staff....

NHS workers can't look at their problems in isolation. We shouldn't just look at ill-health but towards preventing illness by improving conditions.

Nurses must vote Labour on 11 June, but more than that they must fight for a Labour government to put socialist policies into practice if any of the problems we face in the health service are going to be put right."

Peace and disarmament

Thatcher defends bosses' profits

THE TORIES are trying to whip us defence hysteria, to try to halt the advances of Labour. Thatcher is banging the patriotic drum, hoping to recapture the Falklands mood, on which she rode back to power in 1983. By concentrating on defence, she hopes her crimes against the working class, the savage attacks on health, welfare and jobs will be forgotten.

But the only defence Thatcher is really concerned about, is the defence of the profits and prestige of her class, and the defence of her Tory majority and the capitalist control of Britain.

For she has declared war against ordinary families in Britain in her hidden manifesto. She will inflict more cuts, more job losses, more tax increases, more privatisation of essential services. What defence will there be for workers' living standards if she is allowed to "go on and on"?

The only government expenditure she will protect will be on arms. Already the Tories devote more resources to defence than to education. The ageing Polaris nuclear missile system costs £500 million a year. The bill for its replacement, Trident, will reach £10 billion.

However, it is a dangerous lie that this frightening weaponry affords the British people any protection. The financial burden of Trident is heavy for a relatively small nation, but compared with the firepower of the two superpowers it is puny.

Thatcher brags about Britain's 'independent' nuclear 'deterrent'. It is neither. It is entirely dependent on the military strategy of American imperialism, which is insisting on Britain's nuclear capacity, to help justify its own nuclear programme. And by itself it is too tiny to threaten the might of any super power.

Yet Thatcher still wildly retorted, to the question whether Polaris would be launched in the event of a Russian attack with conventional weapons: "Of course, I would actually fire it". She would be guaranteeing nuclear retaliation from one of the two most heavily armed nuclear nations in the world. The British Isles would be blown out of the sea, and their people wiped out. That is not a defence policy. It really is the 'shortest



So much for Thatcher's 'defence policy.' One H bomb dropped in the Channel would create a giant tidal wave, drowning 99 per cent of the population.

suicide note in history.'

The truth is, it is a huge bluff. For all her bluster about Britain's nuclear weapons, even Thatcher knows they could never be used.

But what possible motive would there be for the bureaucratic elite in Russia to attack Britain or Western Europe? Capitalist countries go to war for markets, profits and economic interests. In Russia, where capitalism has been abolished, the economy has no need for the seizure of new markets.

Wasted resources

Where the Red Army has been used to invade or threaten Hungary, Czechoslovakia or Poland, it has been in panic at the prospect of the overthrow of the bureaucracies in those countries and the installation of workers' democracy and the revolutionary example that would be to the Russian workers. With the simmering discontent of the East European workers, how could Gorbachev contemplate holding down the working class of Western Europe with their traditions of democratic rights, as well?

As for the possibility of a Russian nuclear strike against Britain, what possible interest would be served by the bureaucracy successfully conquering a nation where all productive resources, including the working class itself, had been

utterly destroyed.

Thatcher's nuclear programme represents a criminal waste of the resources created by the labour of the working people. It is not a policy to defend the people of Britain. It is based on the Tories' pretence that Britain is still a world power, and it is to gratify the greed for profits of the arms manufacturers.

The Labour leaders must expose the class interests Thatcher serves, in her defence policy as in any other, and stick firm to their commitments to unilateral nuclear disarmament and the expulsion of US nuclear bases. But they have restricted their own opportunity to smash the Tory arguments, by their determination, even against the express policy of Party conference, to spend the money saved by scrapping Trident, not on vitally needed hospitals and schools, but on conventional weapons.

If £10 billion worth of nuclear missiles are no deterrent, even less are £10 billion worth of tanks and artillery. Labour is missing the chance to promise major, popular reforms for working people through the cash saved from Trident.

But for as long as capitalism continues, the horror of full scale world nuclear war and the annihilation of mankind will persist. Whatever minor, temporary agreements are struck between the



Montage: Dave Sinclair.

- ★ For the cost of one nuclear submarine, £200 million, Labour could build 6,000 council houses.
- ★ For the cost of one anti-tank missile, £7,000, Labour could supply a kidney machine.
- ★ For the cost of one general's pay, £36,000, Labour could employ six nurses.

super powers, the fundamental class divide between a system based upon profit, and a regime presiding over a nationalised economy, is unbridgeable.

At the same time as they discuss limiting some types of weapons, their scientists are devising still more fiendish and more efficient means of mass extermination. And they continue to strive for that elusive first strike capability.

Disarm capitalism

For now, imperialism is constrained from unleashing a nuclear crusade against Russia, by the strength and democratic rights of its own working class, and by the understanding that nuclear war inevitably means the end of life itself. No victor would inherit the planet, the fertile earth would be left a desert.

But a defeat for the American working class, the destruction of democracy under the iron heel of a Pinochet-type dictatorship, could usher in a regime that would be unbalanced enough to press the button, plunging the world into a life

starving nuclear winter.

A guarantee of world peace requires the disarmament of capitalism, and the final removal of the conflicts that create war. Let the Labour leaders in Britain make a start. Pledge themselves to transform society, take industry out of the hands of the capitalist class that can offer no economic or military protection to workers.

A socialist democracy in any one country would be a beacon to the workers in the West to defeat capitalism, and in the East to overthrow the pampered bureaucrats and to assert workers' control. Workers in Britain must stretch out a hand of friendship to workers internationally, especially in America and Russia. They have much more in common with them than with their own bosses or Thatcher. International workers' solidarity is a far more powerful weapon than nuclear arms.

Only a world socialist federation could ensure peace and prosperity for the peoples of the planet.

By Jeremy Birch

Tory press taxes belief

THATCHER IS prepared to use any means to get back into office—any lies, any tricks. She and her Fleet Street groupies have been plugging the great tax lie for all its worth, over the last three weeks.

After their budget tax cut of 2p in the pound, the Tories are now dangling the carrot of 'vote for us and we will cut another 2p'.

But every worker must be warned—they are not the party of low taxation. They are the party of tax cuts for the rich, which they make workers pay for by higher taxes and spending cuts in essential services.

98 per cent of workers pay more tax now than in 1979. Anyone earning less than £400 per week pays

more. But the Tories' wealthy friends on £962 per week pay 13 per cent less tax, and those on £100,000 a year pay 18.5 per cent less.

THE FLEET Street lie machine has pulled out all the stops to assist Thatcher's campaign. She knows and they know that the tax bribe is nothing but a con. The Tory press is loyally prepared to con its own readers, for the greater good of returning Thatcher to Number 10.

They all know that with the crisis brewing for British capitalism, far from cutting taxes further, they will be compelled to grab back what has already been given. In fact the Tories are already planning to raise income tax above the pre-budget

level, after the election.

Of course not a word of this finds its way on to the front pages.

The *Daily Express* shortly before the budget, trumpeted the Tory myth of 'booming Britain' well able to afford tax cuts, as its lead article. But in the very same issue tucked away on its City page, away, it thinks, from the gaze of ordinary workers, it reveals the truth—income tax will have to be increased by 4p by next year.

Forget tax cuts, Lawson urged

CHANCELLOR Nigel Lawson is today advised to avoid tax cuts in his March Budget. A tax-cutting Budget is the last thing the British economy needs, say economists Alexander Laing and Glen Davies from stockbroker Alexander Leung and Crutchbank.

Consumer spending rose strongly last year. That rise will continue, they say, in the broker's Economic and Monetary Review. "British industry failed to take advantage of the year and a half of low interest rates. There is little reason to believe it will do so this year. Tax cuts, therefore, will simply serve to raise imports."

The Government is trying to dampen hopes of big tax cuts in March. But a reduction of at least 2p on basic rates is widely forecast.

Resisting the temptation of a 2p cut could keep Britain's foreign trade balance in the black last year, say Smith and Davies. Otherwise, the Chancellor will have to raise taxes by 4p in 1988 to bring the current account into balance.

Outlook rosy as the economy picks up

By PAUL WILENIUS Industrial Reporter

THE engine room of Britain's economy is rapidly picking up speed pointing to a boom year ahead.

Glowing forecasts today from the building industry and the Chambers of Commerce are impressive backing to the Confederation of British Industry predictions of a big forward.

Construction chiefs, in one of

their brightest reports for many years, reveal that work on new houses, offices, supermarkets, and other civil engineering projects is increasing.

Fifty six per cent of building firms expect this year to be better than last, the highest level of confidence seen in the industry since the seventies.

In 1981 less than 10 per cent thought the outlook for the next 12 months was good.

And 11 of the nation's 12 Chambers of Commerce report a "significant up-turn in home orders" during the last quarter of 1986.

There are more export orders, jobs, investment, and hopes of profits from thousands of companies.

The fall in oil prices and the value of the £ is helping. Chancellor Nigel Lawson, the CBI and the TUC all agree that British industry has the best prospects for improvement for 25 years.

A give-away Budget on March 17 would add to the recovery and give Mrs Thatcher her election launch pad.

Tory foreign policy

Dancing to Reagan's tune

RONALD REAGAN, in his pre-election message to the British people, expressed the "greatest admiration" for Margaret Thatcher's policies, both domestic and foreign.

By George Collins

Coming from a President who has lost all credibility in the US itself, who is either a liar or someone who can't remember what he said yesterday, this is a dubious honour. But it does make clear the real nature of Thatcher's foreign policy.

While the Tories' election manifesto trumpets their favourite illusion, "Britain is once again giving a lead in world affairs," the only lead is that round Thatcher's neck, with the other end held by her doddering master in Washington.

Thatcher is one of the few western leaders capable of sharing Reagan's simple-minded view of world politics as a struggle between the good guys (US imperialism) and Gorbachev's evil empire. She has obsequiously applauded each and every reactionary move by the US administration, and glorified Britain's so-called "special relationship" with the US.

What this amounts to was shown by Reagan's use of Britain as a launching pad for his air attack on Libya in April 1986. But, as Thatcher gushed at Conservative Party conference only a few months earlier:

"The West could have no better or braver champion!"

Even Reagan's loony Star Wars scheme leaves her breathless with admiration:

"It is absolutely right that President Reagan considers SDI, and thank goodness people considered nuclear research before the last world war."

Britain's real 'lead', under the Tories, has been in the field of economic disaster. In 1980, Britain's unemployment rate was



equal to the average for the OECD (industrialised) countries. Today Britain is 'ahead' by 45 per cent.

But delusioas of imperial grandeur are not the only fairy tale in the Tories' manifesto on foreign policy. "We are forthright in support of freedom and justice", they declare.

How does this square with the facts?

On coming to power in 1979, Thatcher had to be restrained from recognising the hated puppet regime of Bishop Abel Muzorewa in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), and from getting "tough" with China over the future of Hong Kong.

Torture

Today Lynda Chalker, Minister of Overseas Development, shows the same indifference towards detentions, torture and murder by the right-wing, pro-US regime in Kenya:

"I will ask some questions about what is going on there. But they do have a better human rights record than many other countries."

Human rights are not the point. The Tories have happily resumed aid to the bloodstained, pro-US dictatorship in Guatemala. What concerns them are the profits of British multinationals, and the strategic interests of western imperialism.

This is shown most clearly by their consistent support for the apartheid regime in South Africa in its vicious fight against the revolutionary movement of the black workers and youth.

For diplomatic reasons the Tories are forced to disapprove politely of apartheid. (They 'disapprove' of racism in Britain also.) But they firmly oppose any action that might interfere with the smooth functioning of the capitalist system in South Africa. And their very real sympathy for

the Botha regime is never far below the surface. (See box)

"Trade and economic sanctions", claims their manifesto, "would only serve to entrench apartheid, increase the risk of bloodshed and inflict severe hardship on black South Africans without bringing a settlement nearer."

Hypocrisy

This is complete hypocrisy. The oppression of the black South African masses is inflicted by Botha's regime and his capitalist backers, foreign as well as local.

Foremost among these are the Tories' own paymasters—the British multinationals (see below). Many pay wages below the poverty line; some, such as BTR, are among the most vicious anti-union employers in the country.

No wonder the Tories' position on economic sanctions is a straight



Nicaraguan 'Contra' terrorists, illegally funded by Reagan and supported by Thatcher.

echo of Botha's own position. True, Thatcher was forced to swallow the token sanctions agreed by the Commonwealth last year. But, as she publicly sneered, they were just "a tiny bit" of sanctions!

The Tories claim to be "in the forefront of the fight against international terrorism" (unless, of course, the terrorists happen to be pro-capitalist and pro-US, such as the Contra gangs in Nicaragua. See *Militant*, 18 May.)

A deadly weapon in the hands of terrorists would be the British Blowpipe anti-aircraft missiles, capable of shooting down an airliner from the shoulder. Blowpipe missiles have found their way to Islamic fundamentalists fighting the Stalinist regime in Afghanistan. This could not have happened without the Tories' knowledge.

Unfortunately, Thatcher's fundamentalist friends have also obtained the more efficient US Stinger missiles, and have started selling off the Blowpipes. It is reported that Blowpipes are now on sale in the Pakistani arms bazaars.

What a way of fighting terrorism!

Thatcherism in Britain has fed on Reaganism in the USA. But time is running out for both. Reaganism, following the Irangate scandal, is dying on its feet. Even if Thatcher survives the election, the 1988 presidential election in the US will mark a break with the Reagan years.

Even before then, the cold winds of economic crisis will be sweeping through the capitalist world. British capitalists will be trampled underfoot by their stronger 'allies' in the scramble for survival. Their savage clients, the pro-capitalist dictators in Asia, Africa and Latin America, will face huge new waves of revolutionary struggle.

Together with workers and youth internationally, British workers and youth must prepare to sweep Toryism from the face of the earth.

Tories' South Africa pay-off

QUESTION: WHAT lies behind the Tories' support for South Africa's racist regime? Answer: the £6 billion of British capital invested in South Africa.

This is 7 per cent of total British investment abroad, but accounted for 13-16 per cent of total overseas earnings in 1979-1983. 364 out of

1,068 foreign companies operating in South Africa in 1985 were British, including half the top 100 companies in Britain.

The Tories' immediate interest in the profiteering of British multinationals in South Africa is explained by the huge donations which they receive from these com-

panies. Their present election campaign is undoubtedly financed to a significant extent out of the profits extracted from sweated black labour under the guns of Botha's police.

Tory supporters with interests in South Africa are too numerous to mention. Below are some examples.

Murder

In a class of its own is Consolidated Gold Fields, a brutal employer even by South African standards. CGFSA, drawing 44 per cent of its profits from South Africa, is notorious for its company police force which is on hire to other mining bosses for crushing workers' struggles, and for the recent murder of five black mineworkers on its Zincor mine. This company has called

Paying wages below the poverty minimum of £145.59 per month were the following companies, with their donations to the Tory Party stated.

- Dunlop: £1,000.
- Northern Engineering: £45,000.
- Hall Engineering: £13,000.
- BICC: £16,746.
- British & Commonwealth Shipping: £97,942.
- Cadbury Schweppes: £15,000.
- Glaxo: £30,000.
- Guardian Royal Exchange: £79,234.
- Midland Bank: £6,719.
- Minet Holdings: £6,500.
- Portals Holdings: £2,500.
- SGB Group: £2,500.
- 600 Group: £8,029.
- TI Group: £25,000.
- Willis Faber: £41,850.
- George Wimpey: £34,000.

in the regime's police to drive the families of mineworkers out of the compounds where the men are forced to live.

Its donation to the Tory Party was £50,000.

In return for this kind of money, no wonder the

Tories turn a blind eye to their activities in South Africa, and stand foursquare behind the Botha regime in its efforts to defeat the movement of the working class and youth.

Is your employer on the list above?

Tories back apartheid

AN EARLY day motion tabled by Sir Patrick Wall, John Carlisle and four other Tory MPs in parliament: "This House congratulates the State President of South Africa, Mr P.W. Botha, and the National Party on their re-election... and looks forward to the continuation of further constitutional reform that will benefit the people of that country."

British companies in SA paying less than the "minimum living level" to black workers. (Minimum wage for 1985/86 in brackets, followed by donations to the Tory Party or its front organisations during 1983-1984.) Facts from *Labour Research*.

- Automotive Products (BBA Group) (£88.37): £2,500.
- Babcock International (£89): £7,500.
- Chloride Group (£103.95): £3,500.
- Cookson Group (£63.85): £10,800.
- General Accident, Fire & Life Assurance (£107.81): £40,000.
- Norwich Union (£95.63): £10,000.
- Scapa Group (£75.88): £4,000.
- Trafalgar House (£98.11): £50,000.

Swinging to Labour

Dear Comrades,
Leicester South is the country's number one marginal. The Tories held it by just seven votes.

There's been a big swing to Labour though. In the council elections, we won the total vote by over 3,000 on a 60 per cent turnout.

It's got inner city deprivation, student halls of residence and posh areas in the suburbs. The working class are solidly Labour and the middle class are fluctuating a lot.

Out canvassing, I met a

woman who voted Tory in '83, SDP in the council elections and is now voting Labour on 11 June as "the only way to get Thatcher out".

Two young girls said at first they were going to vote Alliance, but they support CND and heard David Owen singing the praises of nuclear weapons. Now they've put up a Labour poster in their window.

Yours fraternally
Mike Pullin
Leicester

Margam disappointment

Dear Comrades,

I read the *Militant* regularly, however, I was disappointed with the article on the proposed new pit at Margam, South Wales. It contains all the relevant economic arguments for the continuation of the five day working week, or the introduction of a four day week, which I wholeheartedly support. But it contained no mention of the severe physical or psychological damage that the prolonged stress of a six-day week would cause.

I appreciate that income from profits is necessary, particularly in today's economic situation but I believe the paper should reflect good socialist policy—people before profit.

Yours fraternally
Siân Harris
Portsmouth

"Alliance" with the Tories

Dear Comrades,

In the six months leading up to the election, the leaders of the 'Alliance' have constantly denied that after the election, they would form a coalition government with the Tories if the Tories didn't have an absolute majority in the new parliament.

But since Thatcher called the election, the Alliance

have changed their line, so that they "will do whatever is in the best interests of the British people". Translated, that means keeping in office a government that will continue the vicious reactionary policies of the last eight years.

Yours fraternally
Kevin Blake
Fokestone

Winning over Tories

Dear Comrades,

On 7 May, polling day I was at one of the polling stations in Garston constituency. I was to ask people on their way out how they had voted.

A young woman and her mother came out of the polling station and I asked them the usual question.

The young woman said "As a matter of fact we are first time Labour voters. We have never voted Labour before in our lives, but we have today." When I asked her why, she told me that she, her husband and her mother had always voted Conservative.

On this occasion they were voting Labour because the husband, a policeman stationed at one of the Liverpool city centre police stations, had told them of the fantastic job the council had done in replacing miserable pre-war slum tenement blocks in the city centre, with lovely little semi-detached houses. And had put them up in such a short time.

On that basis he, his wife and his mother had all voted Labour instead of Conservative.

Yours fraternally
John Smith
Liverpool, Garston (GMBATU)

Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism.

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

Working for peanuts



Labour women fight low pay on a demonstration in Manchester last year.

Dear Comrades,

Behind the smart window dressing of your average John Menzies shop lies a not so alluring story of low wages and poor working conditions. Despite being one of Britain's top hundred millionaires (owning shares to the value of £27 million) Mr Menzies will grant his staff a meagre 80p rise on their £60 take home pay this year.

There is one consolation though. If you've worked for Menzies for a few years you get two hundred shares in your own exploitation. Of course, that makes it all worthwhile...

Yours fraternally
Bill Williams
Swansea

JOB CENTRE

JOB NIGHT PORTER (MAN OR WOMAN)
DISTRICT SCARBOROUGH
PAY £55.00 PER WEEK
HOURS 12 MID-NIGHT TO 8AM 5 DAYS PER WEEK TO BE
DETAILS ARRANGED.
TO WORK IN LOCAL HOTEL AS NIGHT PORTER. DUTIES WILL INCLUDE ASSISTING WITH CLEARING AWAY AFTER THE BAR IS CLOSED, THEN SECURITY DUTIES AS REQUIRED. MUST BE HONEST AND TRUSTWORTHY. GOOD REFERENCES REQUIRED. SMART AND PEASANTABLE PERSON ESSENTIAL. MUST BE ELIGIBLE FOR NEW WORKERS SCHEME.
ASK FOR JOB No. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT THE AGE 18-20 CAREERS OFFICE - THIRD FLOOR

Dear Comrades,

This card advertising a job as a night porter, appeared in my local Job Centre. If this is an example of one of Thatcher's 'real' jobs then it bodes ill for unemployed and employed alike.

The Tories' claim that benefits are too high is precisely because they are

continuously driving wage levels down. The idea being that benefits will be driven down to such a level that eventually the lowest wage rates will seem attractive.

If the Tories are elected for a third term the unemployed will be made to work for their benefit. The real scandal though, is

that the Labour Party and the trade union leaderships haven't focussed on these issues. Maybe if they had it would be Labour that was 9, 10 or 18 points ahead in the polls.

Yours fraternally
Dave Pollock
Scarborough

Dear Comrades,

I have just finished my last day at college, training as a nursery nurse, and one of our last lessons was a briefing from a Mr Russell from the Manpower Services Commission, who was giving us advice about getting a job.

He stressed that we should accept any job that's going, and if this is not possible, work voluntarily, as this would look favourable to your future employer.

Of course he is right, any boss who sees that you're willing to work for nothing will be pleased. I think it is totally unacceptable to suggest that working class people should be forced to take on any job that's going no matter what the conditions or pay is like.

Yours fraternally
Brenda Peoples
Broadgreen

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.

Jack Collins Memorial Meeting and Social. 13 June 6pm. Chislet Miners Welfare Club Hersden, near Canterbury. For invitations please phone 0304 367840 any weekday morning, or write to: Magness House, Mill Hill, Deal, Kent.

Flat to let, 3 months, suit 1/2 sharing. Reasonable rent and bills. SE London. Phone 693 3521, evenings.

Workers Education Group. Socialist Summer Camp '87. Saturday 8 August to Saturday 15 August. Bracelands campsite, Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. Courses on Marxist Economics, Youth and the struggle for socialism, the Russian revolution, USA, the third world. Plus rallies, debates, discos, sports, creche. Cost £40 (£75 for family booking). Brochure available now. Write to Workers Education Group, PO Box 332, London E15 33Y.

Female comrade moving into inner London seeks accommodation before 26 July. Tel Carol Moya 07375 57587.

Offensive camp in Sweden. Monday 6-Saturday 11 July 1987. For information write to Offensive Brahegatan 2, S-415 01 Göteborg, Sweden. Tel 031 844 162.

TRAVEL X. We cater for ALL types of holiday and flights at competitive rates. Tel 01 942 1234 or 01 942 7156. 7A Coombe Rd, New Malden, Surrey, KT3 4PX. 24 hour answer phone service available.

New stickers "Kick out the Tories" and "No slave labour on YTS". Now available. Cost £1 per 100 plus 25p p&p. Available from 3/13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB.

Cassette tapes with two issues of *Militant* (one each side). Available fortnightly. Tapes £3.50 per quarter, £13 per year. To be returned or send blank C-90 tapes. Contact Dave: 14 Harrowby Road, West Park, Leeds 16. Tel: 0532 624917.

Marxist Discussion Groups

Salford every Monday, Black Horse, The Crescent. 8.30pm.

Barnsley: The Victoria Pub, corner of Sheffield Road and Cemetery Road. 8.15pm. Tuesday 9 June. "Private industry or public ownership."

Wigan every Tuesday, 7 Stars, Wallgate, Wigan. 8.30pm.

Bolton every Wednesday, Clarence Hotel, Bradshawgate, Bolton. 8.30pm

Eccles every Thursday, Duke of York, Church St, Eccles. 8.30pm.

Chorlton every Thursday, The Southern Hotel, Mauldeth Rd West, Chorlton. 8.30pm.

Chapelton: The Commercial Pub. 8.15pm. Tuesday 9 June. "Private industry or public ownership."

Blackburn every Wednesday. The Trades Club, 8.30pm

WORLD SOCIALIST BOOKS

Lenin *Left wing communism, an infantile disorder* 55p. The basic arguments why Marxists participate in elections and how to use Parliament in a revolutionary way.

Jenness—Lenin as election campaign manager 30p. Chronicles the Bolshevik involvement in elections, the reasons for it, how they worked and what they got out of it.

Militant History of the Labour Party 35p. The record of past campaigns and past Labour governments.

Labour Party Breaking the nation: a guide to Thatcher's Britain £2.50. Facts and figures for canvassers on all issues.

Labour Research Dept pamphlets:
Defending the NHS 85p
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Prostitutes from the ruling class

Dear Comrades,

The review of *The Frontline* (*Militant* 849) was interesting. But it isn't just poverty driving millions of women (and men) into various forms of prostitution.

Under capitalism, Marx explained, people are objects of commerce, and there is a 'hypocritically concealed community of women', also among the rich.

For example, the latest US pornographic superstar, 'Missy', is the daughter of a wealthy conservative businessman and an ex-campaign worker for Ronald Reagan!

'Morality' of any kind is a reflection of some social purpose. Today, capitalism's lack of future breeds not only greater poverty, but greater cynicism and self-indulgence among the privileged as well.

Yours fraternally
George Collins
Hackney

Police priorities

Dear Comrades,

Once again social workers have hit the headlines of the national news following the terrible abuse, torture and killing of a little girl.

Working for social services in conjunction with our social worker, caring for the elderly and noting a marked increase of break-ins, our 'community bobby' was approached for a discussion on security.

The old folk wanted to set up a neighbourhood watch scheme, but most important of all they wanted a regular bobby on the beat.

We were told this was not possible for at least six to eight weeks because the community policeman was 'fully booked up' and no others were available.

Less than a quarter of a mile away is the HFW Plastics factory. Every morning there are 40, 60 and sometimes 70 policemen on the gates making sure scab labour gets in and arresting honest working class men and women!

Yours fraternally
Bob Harker
Gateshead

Election
Special Offers

Tories want a scabs charter

THE TORIES boast their anti-union laws have won popular support and shackled the organised workers. Their recent Green Paper and the current manifesto propose to continue the attacks. Above all they are a scab's charter. They intend to give individual workers the "right" to scab on a strike even after a majority vote for it in a secret ballot and provide yet further protection for individuals refusing to accept a closed shop after over 85 per cent have voted for it.

These attempts to undermine the ability of trade unionists to defend jobs and living standards are an attack on all workers as the bosses attempt to unload the crisis on to the working class. They must be resisted and defeated at every stage - from parliament to the factory floor. But the idea that by the stroke of a pen anti-democratic and anti-working class laws can override the realities of the class struggle is a delusion.

BRYAN BECKINGHAM examines the background to the current situation and argues that despite temporary setbacks the trade unions remain potentially the most powerful force in British society, once mobilised by a leadership worthy of the rank and file. The balance of class forces will be the decisive test of Tory legality not the wishful thinking of parliamentarians.

New traditions of militancy

DURING THE two decades of post war boom the right wing tended to rule the trade unions. Class relationships became softened. Bosses conceded wage rises and other concessions in conditions of economic advance and relative prosperity for the advanced capitalist countries.

But beneath this apparent calm enormous explosions were being prepared. The trade unions became massively strengthened both in membership and organisation. The devastation of the 1930s was left far behind.

In the 1970s, however, capitalism again moved into crisis. The class struggle between workers and bosses sharpened. This was an enormous shock to trade union leaders of left and right.

For the rank and file it was a time to reassess and renew. The methods of plant and even lower level bargaining based on shop steward leadership and sudden unofficial action proved inadequate.

The official structures became increasingly important as employers' resistance stiffened and it became necessary to get official backing and broaden disputes.

The struggles of the 1970s began changing the unions and the Labour Party. Generally shifts to the left occurred at the tops of the unions in response to the pressures from below.

Table 1 shows that the days lost in strikes in the '70s soared. We went through defeats and victories; the defeated seven week postal workers' strike in 1971 to the miners' victories in '72 and '74.

From the latter emerged Arthur Scargill, eventually to become leader of the NUM and the most outstanding representative of rank and file militancy. There were strikes of building workers, lorry drivers, dockers. And the near general strike against the arrest of the 'Pentonville Five' in 1972.

A LULL in industrial struggle followed the election of a new Labour government in 1974. But it soon gave way to a rise of

new struggles as that government failed to deliver its promises.

This ended with the rising of the low paid public sector workers in 1979, with the so-called 'winter of discontent' against the stringent wage controls Labour was attempting to impose.

1979 recorded the highest number of days lost in strike action since 1926 (table 1). It also saw the highest recorded trade union membership—13.5m (table 2). The TGWU had nearly two million members. 55 per cent of the workforce was organised.

SINCE 1979 we have had recession, mass unemployment, trade union laws and Tory governments. The 1980s have seen reversals for trade unions and the Labour Party.

By 1986 the level of trade union organisation was down to 46 per cent of the workforce, with membership down to 9.5 million, a loss of four million in seven years. Last year also saw the lowest number of days lost in strikes since 1938.

But those statistics hide enormous contradictions. The level of trade union membership and organisation remains high. And in the past seven years we have seen a series of national trade union struggles, culminating in the tremendous miners' strike of 1984/5.

That struggle opened a new tradition and militancy for the post war generation. During the strike widespread support was gathered but at the top of the trade unions the leadership mainly wrung their hands in horror. The miners were left by the TUC to face defeat—though as the miners' recent strike record shows, not to the extent many had thought.

This defeat allowed the trade union leaders to shift to the right and further hold back new struggles. Despite this many workers were still forced into action.

There have been some noticeably hard battles. The printers fought Murdoch for over a year. The teachers' dispute has gone on for two years. A series of prolonged local struggles



Photo: Andrew Ward (Report)

"I don't believe people who go on strike in this country have legitimate cause." —Margaret Thatcher.

What the Tories plan

The Tory Green Paper "Trade Unions and their members" proposes:

- ◆ Any individual member can demand a right to a ballot before any industrial action in breach of contract is taken;
- ◆ Once a ballot is held and the majority have decided to take action, any individual would have the right to ignore the union call without risk of disciplinary action from the union;
- ◆ Individuals can take their union to court to enforce these rights;
- ◆ All industrial action to create or maintain a closed shop will be unlawful;
- ◆ No individual could be fairly dismissed for refusal to join a union;
- ◆ Only postal ballots are to be valid for elections to executive bodies of the union and for political fund ballots. Postal ballots are to be supervised from outside the union;
- ◆ All general secretaries, presidents and members of the union's principle executive committee are to be elected by postal ballot every five years;
- ◆ A new Commission is to be set up to give legal advice and assistance to individuals wishing to take legal action against their union.

From *Bashing the Unions*, Labour Research Department's guide to the green paper 70p plus postage, World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscoot Rd, E9 5HB.

at Silentnight, Hangers and many others have taken place.

The massive politicisation of the trade unions was most graphically shown in the political fund ballots. The Tories thought they could fatally undermine Labour's trade union base. But of 5.2m members balloted 83 per cent voted in favour in an average 50 per cent ballot.

AS A rule the full time officials at the top of the unions' do not understand

the period of history we are in. They hanker after the post-war boom period when they became consultants in the corridors of power, when wage rises and concessions could be granted without much fuss or struggle.

Today's union leaders are in the main a very privileged layer of well paid office workers. But they will be removed by new layers of class fighters being developed in harsher conditions.

Capitalism in crisis has

no middle road. The bosses are forced to take on the trade unions as the main obstacles to unloading the crisis on the backs of the working class.

Despite the move to the right at the top of the trade unions and even in the lower levels of older bureaucrats the rank and file are increasingly bitter. They will move into action in new industrial battles, forcing existing leaders into struggle or replacing them. The next period will be enormously turbulent.

CONTRARY TO the professional pessimists in the media and labour movement, the trade unions remain the decisive force in British society. Whole new layers have joined the movement, including teachers and civil servants, who are displaying a previously undreamed of militancy.

Women are now massively organised into trade unions. Huge numbers of youth and women work in part-time and low paid jobs. They are waiting to be organised—as the TGWU

in particular has recognised. The recent decline in membership can and will be reversed in the coming explosions.

The basic strength of the unions remains, as several recent academic studies have shown. The bureaucracy cannot stand in the way forever. They will have to change or be forced out. These struggles are inevitable whether a Labour or Tory government is elected.

Already in 1987 days lost in strikes are increasing. In January the total was 866,000—46 per cent of the whole of 1986. The struggles of the next decade will require a different leadership.

The movement requires an organised form to speed this change. The Broad Left bodies, growing in nearly all the unions on the basis of open and democratic structures will provide an invaluable avenue for the rank and file seeking to transform their existing organisation.

Tory anti-union laws will be swept aside with new waves of the class struggle.

Trade union membership (selected years)

| Year | Membership | Density |
|------|-------------|---------|
| 1892 | 1.576m | 11.2% |
| 1917 | 5.499m | 30.2% |
| 1920 | 8.348m | 45.2% |
| 1923 | 5.429m | 30.2% |
| 1933 | 4.392m | 22.6% |
| 1951 | 9.535m | 45% |
| 1970 | 11.187m | 47.7% |
| 1979 | 13.447m | 55.7% |
| 1980 | 12.947m | 53.5% |
| 1981 | 12.182m | 51% |
| 1982 | 11.594m | 50.2% |
| 1983 | 10.510m | 49.8% |
| 1984 | 10.082m | 47.3% |
| 1985 | 9.580m | 45.4% |
| 1986 | approx 9.5m | 45% |

Days lost in strike in millions, selected years.

| | | | |
|------|---------|------|--------|
| 1926 | 162.233 | 1978 | 9.405 |
| 1927 | 1.174 | 1979 | 29.474 |
| 1934 | 0.959 | | |
| 1938 | 1.334 | 1980 | 11.964 |
| 1947 | 2.433 | 1981 | 4.266 |
| 1957 | 8.412 | 1982 | 5.313 |
| 1973 | 7.197 | 1983 | 3.8 |
| 1974 | 14.750 | 1984 | 36.4 |
| 1975 | 6.012 | 1985 | 6.3 |
| 1976 | 3.284 | 1986 | 1.9 |
| 1977 | 10.142 | | |

Industrial Reports

NEI Make Nalgo leaders accountable

Peebles one-day strike

AT NEI Peebles' Edinburgh plant 500 of the workforce walked out on Monday 25 May over management plans to make 160 compulsorily redundant.

The workforce has been cut by 500 over the last year or so after a recruitment drive to install newer machines from a factory NEI closed in Birmingham.

This move, which includes a high number of staff, traditionally cushioned from major redundancies, is seen as an indication of NEI's willingness to shut the whole plant in the near future.

The job cuts all come from the 'Parsons Electrical Machines Division', a previously more buoyant sector of the plant's work. Speculation now exists as to the viability of the plant existing on the production of gear for the power station sector, itself in a poor state. Despite a previous lack of coherent leadership from the shop stewards committee, the pressure was enough to force that one day strike.

Many of the targeted members are concerned that this will be the only action against the redundancies and want to see a more sustained campaign against the massive job cuts that have taken place recently.

The local unions, of which the AEU is the largest, must link up with the other NEI plants to fight what can only be seen as an attempt to close the plant piecemeal.

A national campaign against the plant closure is vital.

By Russell Taylor
(AEU Pilton Branch)

THE ANNUAL conference of Nalgo takes place in Blackpool during election week. After seven years of Tory attacks on local government delegates will be hoping for the election of a Labour government on the Thursday.

It is important however, that the general election is not seen as the only issue facing Nalgo members, since even a Labour government may attack public services if they are unable to solve the problems of the capitalist economy.

The narrow Labour majority on the employers' side of the National Joint Council has resulted in a pay offer which still leaves many local government members earning less than the Council of Europe's acceptable earnings level. It should be rejected.

Conference agenda reflects the problems faced by Nalgo members. There are calls for a moratorium on Community Programme Schemes and to reject the proposed slave labour Job Training Scheme.

A rule change proposed

By Roger Bannister
(Knowsley Nalgo)

by the Knowsley and Leeds branches seeks to make the NEC accountable to District Councils. Kirklees branch puts forward a fighting programme for local government and several resolutions call for an end to low pay and for a decent national minimum wage.

Liverpool

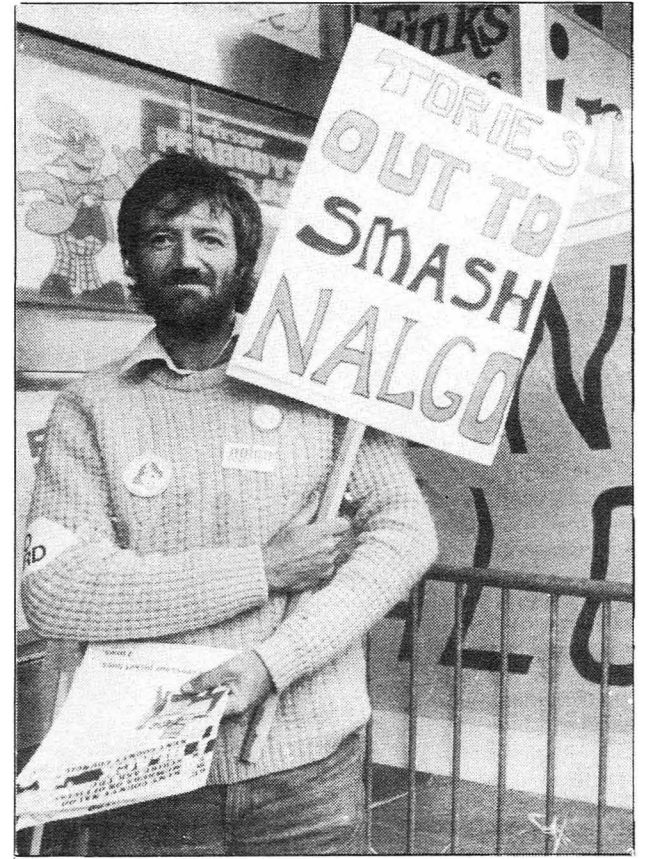
The problem in Nalgo is that annual conference tends to pass good policies which are ignored by the right wing NEC. Witness their ferocious attacks on Liverpool City Council in 1985 despite conference policy supporting Liverpool.

The task of the left in the

union is to continue the campaign after conference to have their policies translated in to action. Already the Agenda Committee have decided to put controversial debates, such as low pay and the economy off until Friday so as not to embarrass the Labour Party. This from a non-affiliated union!

At the time of writing members of the Conservative Trade Unionists are taking Nalgo to court in order to have literature from the union's "Make People Matter" campaign illegal.

Conference delegates must press for resolution 130 to be debated. It calls for a ballot on the establishment of a political fund, with a recommendation for a "yes" vote. Last year Nalgo lost a valuable opportunity to establish a political fund when the bulk of other unions scored successes in their ballots.



Hawker Siddeley Gloucester subsidiary stay out

ON MONDAY, 18 May, 130 shop-floor workers, members of the AEU, TGWU, and five other unions were locked out of Gloucester Saro Ltd, a Hawker Siddeley subsidiary.

It followed a half-day token strike the previous Friday concerning their current pay claim, aimed to bring wages up to the area average for 1986! The current top skilled weekly wage is £136.53. After nearly seven months of fruitless negotiations—management offering only 43 per cent—the workers voted overwhelmingly to ban overtime and to hold a token half day stoppage on the Friday.

Despite a management warning that the action would lead to the men being suspended, it went ahead. The next day, when they collected their wage packets, notices of dismissal were inside as

well as offers of their jobs back on management's terms—4.3 per cent (backdated to April only) plus complete skill's flexibility dictated by management. Take it or leave it!

A picket has been maintained ever since. Despite management blackmail only a handful of people have gone back on their terms. The vast majority are angry and determined to win their jobs back.

Over the last few years the unions have accepted redundancies and cut-backs. This is the thanks they are given for their co-operation. The men are bitter and highly critical of management's tactics.

"Nothing like this ever occurred at Saro before", convenor Brian Wellington told us, adding that the members had complied to the letter with the government's "industrial relations" laws.

Des Trehearne, Gloucester TGWU District Secretary, said management's actions were a

"typical example where Tory legislation is being used against working people."

Des Trehearne and Brian Wellington reported the latest developments to a mass meeting on Tuesday 26th May. No approach had been made by management, although the union side was ready to talk at any time.

Flexibility

It was agreed that skills flexibility could be negotiated, but certainly was not acceptable on the present terms. Des Trehearne indicated that the union's legal departments are investigating the legality of the company's lockout.

John Prescott, Labour's front bench spokesperson on employment addressed the meeting as well as David Hulme, Labour's prospective parliamentary candidate for Gloucester.

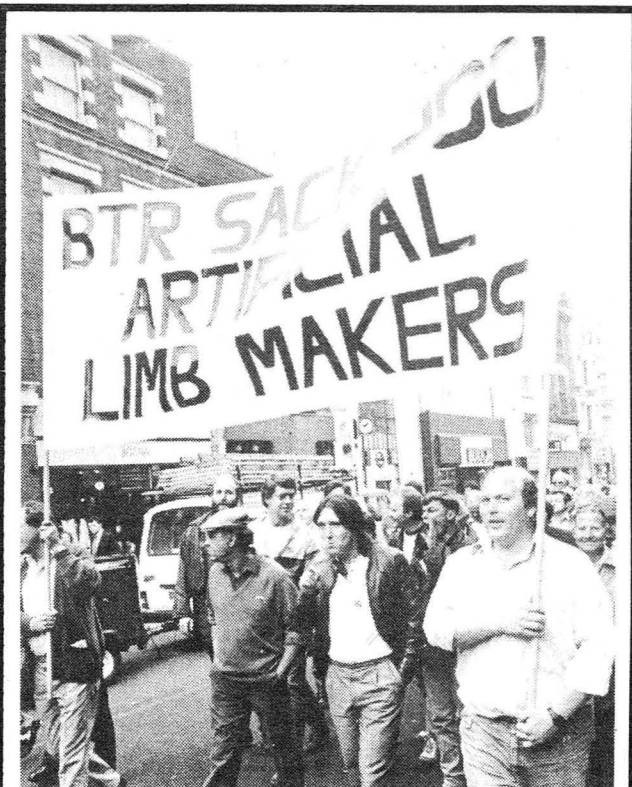
UPDATE: Management have

offered to let the men return on previous conditions of service and with pension rights intact if the unions will agree a joint objective of worksharing and roster flexibility under continual review. If the men achieve 90 per cent of agreed output they will receive 1 per cent over the original offer and further productivity would lead to further increases.

A majority voted at last Friday's mass meeting to stay out and try to continue negotiations. The sticking point is management's refusal to backdate the offer to 1 January.

Messages of support to: Brian Wellington, Convenor of shop stewards, Gloucester Saro, c/o TGWU, 18 Worcester Street, Gloucester.

John Ewers and Ian Butcher (Gloucester CLP personal capacity) spoke to Brian Wellington, TGWU and convenor of stewards and pickets



JE HANGER Artificial Limb dispute

We send our fraternal thanks to all who supported Hangers' workers in our fight against Hangers/BTR over the past eight months.

Building workers' national pay agreement

BUILDING WORKERS have been yet again sold out by the national leadership at this year's wage negotiations.

A lobby of the talks took place on Monday 18 May at New Cavendish Street. About forty people attended, twenty six of these from the Yorkshire region alone.

We were assured by the executive council members taking part in the talks that the abysmal 4 per cent offer made by the employers no way met with the union's aspirations (the claim being £5 per hour for a 35 hour week) and that a consultative conference called for the following day at Lam-

beth Town Hall would decide whether to accept or reject the offer.

I attended the conference the following day as a delegate. I was appalled at the antics of this so-called democratic union.

New offer

The employers had raised their offer overnight to 5.2 per cent. But the mood of the delegates and regional secretaries was for a ballot of the membership and a call for industrial action.

Every speaker bar two or three were in favour of this. However, at the

end of the meeting, Albert Williams and Jack Henry speaking from the platform informed the meeting that the delegates' points would be taken into consideration by the EC, but the final decision would rest solely with the EC.

No vote was taken on the offer as it was clear that the miserable 5.2 per cent had already been accepted by the EC. This now means that the basic rate for a craft operative is £103.35 plus a guaranteed minimum bonus of £15.21, which is still only £2 above the EEC official poverty line, and for labourers £88.14 and £12.87 GMB.

Blakes Engineering strikers Labour support

LATEST developments at Blakes Engineering of South Fort Street, Edinburgh include further management intimidation and a hardening of attitudes on both sides.

The strikers have hardly seen a union official from one week to the next but the role of the local Labour MP, Ron Brown, has been outstanding.

He has approached management to pressurise them but as yet no significant change has been seen in

their attitude.

Blakes Engineering has traditionally carried out a lot of work for Lothian Regional Council, now Labour controlled. After the intervention of the Chair of the Economic Development Committee responsible for contracts, Tony Kinder, all contract have been suspended until the dispute has been resolved to the satisfaction of the strikers.

Despite the support of the local labour movement however the management

were able to replace 15 of the strikers with unemployed workers, four of whom have been paid off for "not being able to handle the work."

YTS

The strikers are ensuring that the staff at the local Jobcentres are aware of the situation and are not taking part in any strike breaking operation.

The MSC has also been contacted about the use of YTS labour to replace the

strikers.

They have been informed that the YTS trainees have been offered apprenticeships if they continue working through the dispute.

Leith Labour Party Young Socialists have been supporting the dispute and are organising collections at workplaces and on the street in an attempt to ensure that the men are not forced back to work or into giving the fight up.

Left victory in CPSA

Macreadie wins - fight now for pay

CPSA AND SCPS members look to have voted for a 2-day national strike on the 8/9 June, to be followed by further regional strikes. This action follows a 6 week rolling programme of regional and selective strikes during April and May.

By Marion Dennison
[DE South London MSC Personal Capacity]

For the first time in the pay campaign, the full power, cohesion and unity of the unions will be demonstrated. This will show civil servants the strength they have and how vital they are in society. The strike will effect DHSS and Employment offices, airports, ports and all Government services.

Enormous discontent has been building up below the surface in the Civil Service on poverty wages, job cuts, services and working conditions. The big vote for action demonstrates the hatred towards the Tory Government by civil servants. For 8 years, the Tories have not only attacked the conditions of civil servants, but have attacked their very worth and value in society. They have used civil servants as examples to other employers. The ballot is in response to the refusal of Thatcher to settle the dispute. When Treasury officials met the Unions on the 18/19 May, additional money was talked

Broad Left executive and deputy general secretary

about, but only if the Unions would accept regional pay and pay by performance results.

CPSA and SCPS members [and probably IRSF members later in the year] have shown their hostility to these schemes. "We want a decent living wage for all members" has been the message at ballot meetings.

The strikes are a warning to the new government that it will need to settle with the civil servants if it wants to administer the Civil Service and secure civil servants co-operation.

Lies and smears

The confidence and combativity of CPSA members will have been lifted by the election of John Macreadie as Deputy General Secretary. His election augurs well for a Labour victory in the General Election. For over 12 months he has had lies, smears and abuse thrown at him. He won despite this.

John Macreadie [Broad Left] - 22,399
Terry Ainsworth [Right wing] 16,542
Veronica Bayne [Communist/BL84] 11,584
Pat Womersley [Democratic Moderate] - 8,530

Peter Desmond-Thomas [Ind.] - 3,703

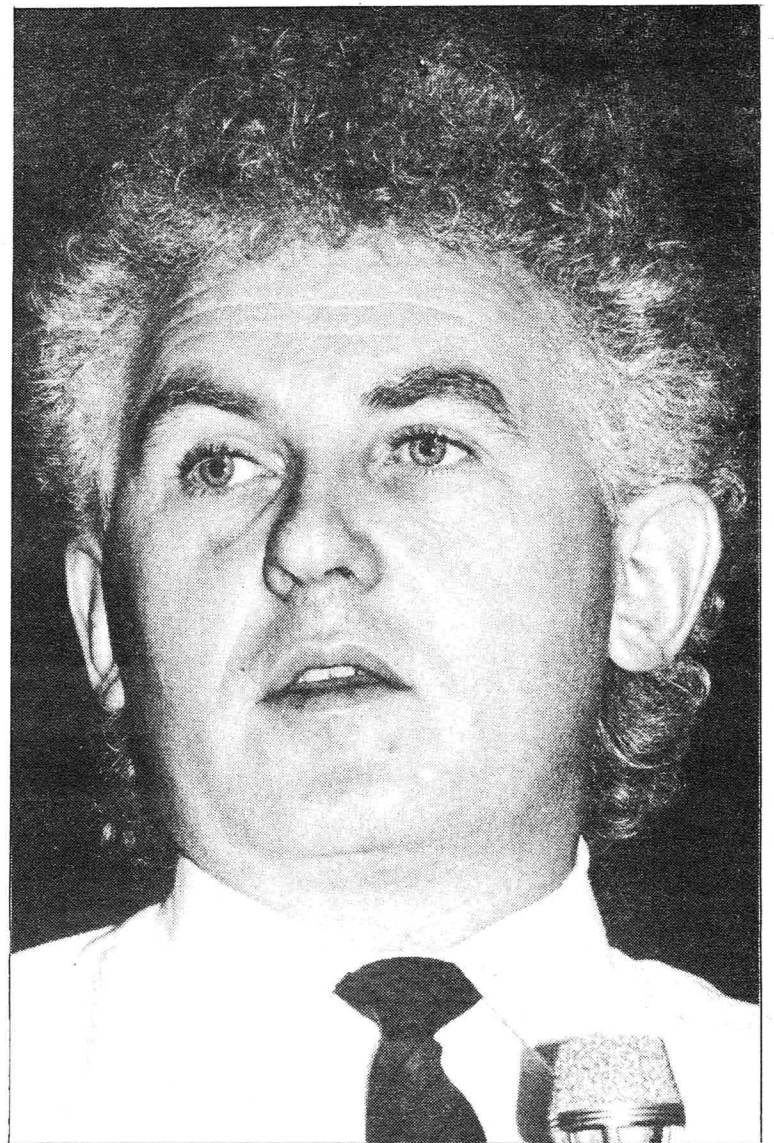
If it had been a straight right wing versus left wing fight then John Macreadie would still have won with the BL84 votes going to him and the others going to Ainsworth.

Labour is now the target of the same lies, smears and abuse by the Tories, the traitors in the Alliance and the press barons. As CPSA members have, so will workers generally, see through these attacks and support Labour.

In a press statement issued after hearing the result, John Macreadie said: "My immediate task is to help win the pay and jobs campaign. My election and the election of a Broad Left national Executive, will increase members' confidence to step up the fight against poverty wages and cuts in jobs and services to claimants and the public.

In the remaining days of the general election I will also be working hard to help Labour win. I will call upon all civil servants to vote Labour. Labour must act for CPSA members and for all workers, as the Tories have done for the rich and privileged."

He has already frozen his National Officer salary and will not



John Macreadie—new CPSA deputy general secretary.

be accepting the £26,000 and credit card that goes with the DGS job.

Labour MPs must be on every strike platform on the 8/9 June. Capitalism can no longer guarantee civil servants, or any worker, a job, a decent living wage, a future. Only a Labour Government with a socialist plan of production can produce the necessary public wealth to meet the needs, aspirations and hopes of working people.

The message to all CPSA and SCPS members must be:

- ★ All out on the 8/9 June
- ★ YES to an indefinite strike
- ★ Vote Labour
- ★ Labour to power on a socialist programme

NCU elect Broad Left executive

Golding's resignation demanded

JOHN GOLDING, after only one year as General Secretary of the NCU has been called upon to resign. For the second year running, NCU conference called for his resignation. Last year he was instructed to resign as an MP as he would be unable to carry out both jobs, and as one delegate said afterwards: "Now it appears even one job was beyond his capabilities."

The call for his resignation arose from his mishandling of the 1986 pay dispute and strike. During the debate, delegates from normally solid right wing branches were stating their members had overwhelmingly mandated them to vote in favour of the motion.

The outgoing Engineering Group EC huddled in confusion and Golding sat with his head bowed. From a total income last year when first elected and still an MP of over £80,000 including expenses, he now faces the prospect of joining the growing ranks of the unemployed.

Anger

In the afternoon session the executive council and Golding attempted to turn the tide. He attempted to defend two year pay deals. He received another thrashing by conference. His abysmal performance was greeted by points of order in mid-speech complaining about his waffling and straying from the issues. At the end

By Bernie Roome
(Delegate from Swansea)

of his contribution he sat down, defeated and dejected.

Throughout the conference there has been a mood of muted anger at the right-wing NEC's actions during the national strike. Conference also voted to censure them. Despite this feeling of being betrayed, delegates also look to the future, with motions restating the Broad Strategy calling for a 32 hour, four day week as the number one priority of the union, and defeated those calling for redundancy agreements.

A further motion calling on the EGE to fight short term contracts and casual labour, only fell due to the right-wing's tactics of preventing a vote being taken. The need for a united, unified, single union was also highlighted with motions calling for pay and new technology to be dealt with by the national executive.



The incoming Broad Left executive have been given a clear mandate to fight to maintain jobs, the members have shown throughout their actions there is a need for a strong determined leadership. The big majority in favour of Phil Holt's nomination to the Labour

Party NEC again is a confirmation of the left mood.

We need a campaigning Broad Left to counter the attacks on jobs and conditions which the membership face. A leadership with Broad Left policies together with united action will victory to the union.

THE 1987 NCU Clerical group conference was dominated by two main issues, the lessons of the pay dispute and strike earlier this year, and the need for integration of the clerical and engineering sections of the union. A long debate on pay drew out the fundamental lessons of the dispute, the need for one union and one leadership.

The debate also provided an opportunity for the rank and file to pass a verdict on the executive council's leadership of the dispute. A motion of no confidence in the EC was moved by *Militant* supporter, Clive Walder. During the debate, vicious personal attacks were made on the mover by executive committee supporters, reflecting the anxiety of the right-wing and the soft left at the growing support for the ideas of *Militant* in the trade union movement.

The executive committee defended their lack of leadership by blaming individual branch officers. Due to the lack of success in the dispute, and the mood of caution, this argument held the day. However, this didn't prevent another motion censuring the executive being carried.

The demands of the rank

and file members on the picket lines for greater unity between the two sections was reflected by the concern at the lack of progress on integrated pay bargaining and the agreement to pass responsibility for the 32 hour four day week demand to the national executive committee.

Dissatisfaction

The conference succeeded in transmitting the dissatisfaction of huge sections of the rank and file membership. The leadership however, continue to deny the demands of the rank and file for unity and joint action, purely to protect their own positions.

The resolution in favour of affiliation to the Labour Party is a big step forward, but it must be acted upon by the leadership.

The Broad Left must take up the campaign among the rank and file, giving direction to the anger of the new layer of activists coming to the fore and creating a leadership worthy of the sacrifice and struggle of the members.

By Tony McKenna
(National Executive Committee, personal capacity)

Militant

Answer Thatcher's arguments

Racism—page 7

Defence—page 10

Extremism—page 6

Youth against the Tories

"Any young person under 18 who tells you that he or she is unemployed has chosen to be unemployed."—Kenneth Clark, Scottish Tory Conference, 15 May.

Bradford YS on the march



TORY CHANCELLOR Nigel Lawson was pursued through the streets of Bradford in an impromptu protest by the Labour Party Young Socialists during his election visit last week. Now Bradford North LPYS have organised a 'Kick Out The Tories' demonstration on Saturday 6th June, assembling 12-30pm at the Tyls, Bradford. Speakers at the Rally include Arthur Scargill and Labour candidates Pat Wall, Bob Cryer and Max Madden.

"I'M LEAVING school this year, at 16 free to enter the world of 'competition and enterprise'. I've witnessed eight years of the Tories and like hundreds of schools throughout Britain, we have seen education cuts leading to teachers' strikes and book shortages.

To top the lot we are now faced with the daunting prospect of YTS, dole queues and decimated college courses.

Last month the Tories announced that they will make YTS compulsory for all school leavers up to the age of 18. The Tories are doing this because they can't offer us a job and these training schemes bring the unemployment figures down.

The (Un)Employment Secretary Kenneth Clarke told the Scottish Tory Party Conference in Perth that it is wrong to pay able-bodied young people benefit who had refused the offer of "quality training" on YTS.

This so-called 'quality training' has already led to 21 deaths and hundreds of injuries. None of the trainees were covered by the Safety At Work Act.

He also said that "the two year YTS offers a sound basic training leading to a proper qualification and an inside track to a job." If this

job." Now that most of the apprenticeships have gone, the only way a girl in my year can go into childcare, for example, without going to College, is on a YTS scheme for £28 a week.

Thatcher talks about freedom - but what freedom is there for school-leavers who can't find work and are forced without choice onto these slave-labour schemes? The Tories have shown they've really got it in for us.

The only future for young people is to get rid of Thatcher and fight for socialism which is the only system which can provide us with real education, training and a job—things that should be a birthright."

By Caroline Austin
(School Students Union and Bexleyheath LPYS)

is so, then why is it that only 14 per cent of YTS trainees receive a job from the same employers when they finish? And only 30 per cent get jobs from other employers?

Most of my school friends, like thousands of school leavers at 16, already see that their only option is to go on YTS saying "it's not much money but it is a

THE TORIES RECORD

- ★ The proportion of 16 year olds with a job has fallen from 61 per cent in 1975 to 18 per cent in 1986.
- ★ Fifty per cent of the organisations which run YTS training programmes do not satisfy even the minimum quality standards laid down by the Manpower Services Commission.
- ★ Since 1979 the wages of school leavers relative to adult wages have fallen by 8 per cent for boys and 12 per cent for girls.
- ★ All workers under 21 have been removed from the scope of the Wages Councils, responsible for setting minimum rates of pay.

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Militant.

• Tories out, for a majority socialist Labour government.

• The immediate introduction of a 35-hour week without loss in pay as a step towards the elimination of unemployment.

• Reversal of all Tory cuts and a massive programme of public works on housing, education, the health service, etc.

• A minimum wage of £120 a week tied to the cost of living for all, including sick and disabled people.

• A socialist plan of production democratically drawn up and implemented by committees involving the

trade unions, shop stewards, the unwaged and small business people.

• Opposition to the capitalist Common Market, the EEC. For a socialist United States of Europe as a step towards a World Socialist Federation.

• Workers' management of the nationalised industries. These should be run on the basis of one-third of the places on the management board coming from the unions in the industry, one-third from the TUC representing the working class as a whole, and one-third from the government.

• Opposition to the Tory government's anti-union

laws and reversal of attacks on the trade unions.

• Massive cuts in arms spending. Support for unilateral nuclear disarmament, but with the recognition that only a socialist change of society in Britain and internationally can eliminate the danger of a nuclear holocaust.

• Nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, including the banks and insurance companies which control 80 per cent to 85 per cent of the economy. This should be through an Enabling Bill in Parliament with minimum compensation on the basis of proven need.