

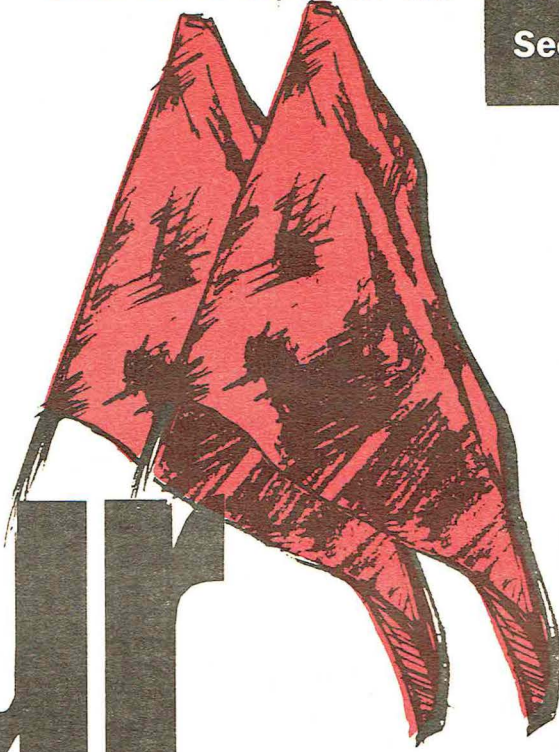
Militant

Solidarity price £1

The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth 30p

ISSUE 866 25 September 1987

Keep Labour socialist

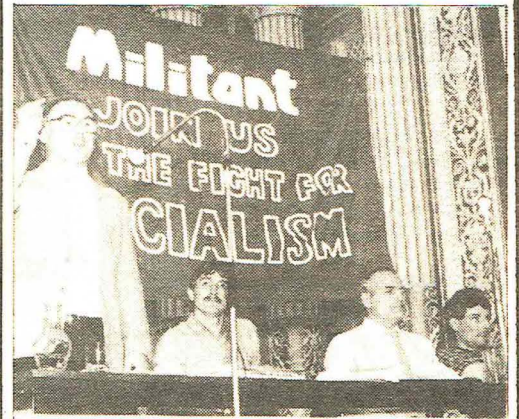


Students against the Tories

See Page 17

£35
A WEEK
minimum
LIVING GRANT

Militant Labour Party Conference meeting



Tuesday 29 September
7.00pm. Wagner Hall,
Brighton (corner of West St.
and Regency Rd.)
Speakers: Peter Taaffe, Ted
Grant, Tony Mulhearn, John
Macreadie.

AS THE Labour Party Conference gathers in Brighton, Thatcher is planning yet another round in her 'holy war' against health and social spending. Child benefits are to be taxed, free dental check-ups abolished, and education and house building attacked again, in a £3 billion cuts package.

By Jeremy Birch

Every working class family—in work or out of work, low-paid or better paid—will suffer. When could a determined and socialist Labour leadership, pledged to stand up for the interests of their class be more necessary?

For eight years the Tory Government has loyally dedicated itself to defending the interests of the wealthy few.

Workers desperately need a Labour Party equally committed to the defence of the overwhelming majority.

Thatcher's latest spending cuts prove not even she believes that capitalism is working. Her kept press has been gloating that at last industry is producing as much as when she was elected in 1979 (although not as much as 1974). Labour's Brian Gould exposed their 'booming Britain' propaganda: "Only Barbados, Fiji, Greece, Malawi, South Africa and Zambia have a worse rec-



ord and are still producing less than in 1979."

When could socialist planning of the economy, organising production for need not profit, be more vital?

But Gould and Kinnock intend to use the Conference to dispense with socialism. The amendment from NUPE for a "review of Party policy", will open the door to the Party leaders to trample upon all Labour's fighting tradi-

tions. They really think socialism is too old-fashioned with the assured, gradual increasing affluence of the electorate. But capitalism and the Tories have no alternative to attacking the quality of life of most of the population, with renewed savagery.

Former left winger, NUPE official Tom Sawyer, as head of Labour's Home Policy committee, is pushing for the Party to hold public

meetings around the country. But these meetings will merely be to ask voters why they did not vote Labour. And the Labour leaders are adopting the motto: "These are our principles, if you do not like them we will change them".

Why aren't these meetings part of a campaign, against the new Tory attacks or the poll tax, which could win mass popular support and convince millions of the socialist

case?

Militant, the Workers for Socialism campaign and thousands of rank and file Labour activists are determined to protect their Party's original socialist aims. Clause Four of Labour's constitution, if implemented in modern conditions, would mean the nationalisation of the top 200 companies, banks and insurance companies. With such a programme of full socialism the electorate

could be inspired with a realisable vision of jobs, a home, education and proper health care for every family.

The right wing Party leadership must not be allowed to destroy the very heart of Labour.

Labour Party conference supplement.
Pages 9,10,11,12

Militant

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Phone: (01) 533-3311

Nuclear threat

AFTER SIX years of negotiation, the governments of the two super-powers have reached an agreement to scrap all nuclear weapons with a range between 315 and 3,125 miles.

The agreement has raised hopes that the horrible threat of nuclear war has been lifted and the colossal waste of arms expenditure lessened.

But it is not the historic step towards world peace which Reagan, Gorbachev and the Labour Party leaders are all claiming. Even if the agreement is ratified and all the still unresolved practical details sorted out, only four per cent of the world's 60,000 nuclear weapons will have gone.

Russia is to scrap 683, mainly SS-20 rockets, with 1,435 warheads, and America will remove 332 Cruise and Pershing-2 missiles, with 400 warheads. This will still leave long-range intercontinental missiles, short-range 'battlefield' bombs, rockets and mines, and the nuclear arsenals of Britain and France. And there will still be huge stockpiles of deadly 'conventional', chemical and biological weapons.

Above all, the deal will not change the underlying causes of the arms race—the conflict of interest between the US capitalists and the bureaucratic regime of the USSR. For forty years there has been not peace but a stalemate, in which each side has amassed the capacity to destroy the other many times over. Each has been forced to expand its stockpiles to maintain the 'balance of terror', to prevent the other gaining an advantage.

The strategists of American imperialism know that to wage war against Russia would mean the destruction of life on the planet, leaving nothing for them to 'win'. But, on the pretext of needing a 'deterrent', they maintain sufficient arms to ensure that they are never at a military disadvantage.

There is also enormous pressure from the US arms industry, which reaps super-profits from the maintenance of the arms race.

But the price for the profits of the arms manufacturers has been the massive £150,000 million budget deficit. Big business as a whole do not want to pay higher taxes and face rising inflation to pay for ever more spending on weapons. And the missiles covered by this agreement are anyway of secondary importance now that the main priority is the Strategic Defence Initiative ('Star Wars'). So the capitalist class have powerful economic arguments for negotiating a reduction in missiles.

The Russian bureaucracy has no interest in starting a war. Although it retains a huge advantage in conventional forces in Europe, (which is why it is agreeing to scrap more nuclear missiles) there is no question of attacking Western Europe. Its priority is to maintain its power and privileges over the working class from whom it usurped control.

This is being undermined by the stagnation caused by bureaucratic mismanagement of the economy and workers' discontent at being forced to suffer the hardship and shortages which result. To stem the workers' anger Gorbachev wants to divert resources to production and economic regeneration, by reducing the 15 per cent of national production spent on arms.

On both sides therefore there is a powerful motive to reduce the level of arms spending, while maintaining the balance between them. But the agreement will give no more than a brief respite from their underlying social and economic problems. It does not mean the beginning of the end of the arms race.

Yet Neil Kinnock has described the agreement as "the greatest disarmament achievement of our age" which could provide "a foundation for future progress away from the arms race".

Such illusions in 'multilateral' disarmament through negotiation must not be used to justify the Labour Party abandoning its commitment to British unilateral nuclear disarmament. Super-power agreements are not the way to remove the threat of war. Instead of fostering such ideas, the Labour leaders should campaign for socialist internationalist policies.

Only by the workers in the West destroying capitalism and establishing a democratically planned socialist society and those in the East reclaiming their heritage of workers' democracy from the revolution of 1917, can genuine peace be achieved.

Linked together in a socialist federation, the workers of the world can destroy not only nuclear weapons but the underlying causes of war as well.

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Philippines strike leader murdered

FIFTEEN YEARS after ex-dictator Marcos's infamous declaration of martial law in the Philippines, President Cory Aquino was last week considering reimposing it—and decided, "for the time being", not to.

By George Collins

This reflects the heightened tensions following the murder of left leader Alejandro—an organiser of the recent general strike against fuel price rises—by right-wing gunmen last Saturday. Meanwhile Colonel Honasan, leader of last month's abortive right-wing coup, remains at large issuing virtual ultimatums to the 'democratic' government.

The right have insisted on the removal of top presidential aides Arroyo and Escaler—conservatives regarded by the military as being too "soft on communism". Mrs Aquino has

yielded.

This followed the resignation of two leading right-wingers, Vice-President Laurel and Finance Minister Ongpin, from the cabinet in an attempt to stampede Aquino more rapidly to the right.

Razor wire

With the top of society in turmoil, the barbed wire in front of Aquino's palace was replaced with razor wire in preparation for Monday's protest against Alejandro's murder. Ten thousand marchers heard the dead man's widow hold the government responsible for the killing.

Aquino's progress to the right is a grim confirmation of the Marxist perspective, advanced since the beginn-

ing of the revolution, that there is no room for stable democracy on the basis of the bankrupt capitalist system in the Philippines.

The "democratic space" won by the masses in struggle can only be recovered and extended by carrying through the overthrow of capitalism and landlordism, and the establishment of democratic working-class rule.

Cory Aquino's administration, dominated by the capitalists and landowners, are struggling to maintain the present rotten system. Despite empty promises of 'land reform', they have become committed to all-out war against the peasant guerrilla struggle for land, headed by the New People's Army.

Civil war leaves no room for capitalist democracy.

The logic of the war spells growing predominance by the military leaders, preparing the ground for Aquino's overthrow when her credibility among the masses has been eroded to a point where she is no longer useful to the ruling class.

Trade union and left leaders, increasingly driven into hiding from right-wing death squads, are being forced into opposition to Aquino. In the absence of a Marxist alternative, the NPA will gather increasing momentum from the polarisation in society.

But the best activists among the youth and workers can increasingly be won to Marxism in the explosive period ahead, and lay the basis for a mass socialist leadership that will show a way out of the deepening nightmare into which Aquino's false policies are plunging the country.

Thatcher's cold comfort for Teesside

LAST WEDNESDAY Margaret Thatcher visited Middlesbrough, the town with the second highest unemployment rate in Britain.

By Andy Walker

She inspected new factory units for small businesses in Thornaby and asked for her photograph to be taken against the background of grass and trees. No one mentioned this was the site of a steel works shut down since she has been in government.

At a new private housing development, hundreds of demonstrators had gathered to meet her. She was clearly unwelcome and only two people ventured forward to shake her hand.

One of the demonstrators was a man who had been interviewed for 1,000 jobs, yet was still on the dole. Thatcher's advice was to try the Job Club or the Job Training Scheme. He already had, so she just told him to keep on trying.

Middlesbrough Labour MP Stuart Bell was there throughout Thatcher's visit. The *Guardian* said the following day that he "found it hard to say a bad word about her". Workers in Middlesbrough are getting sick of Mr Bell's half hearted protests against the Tories.

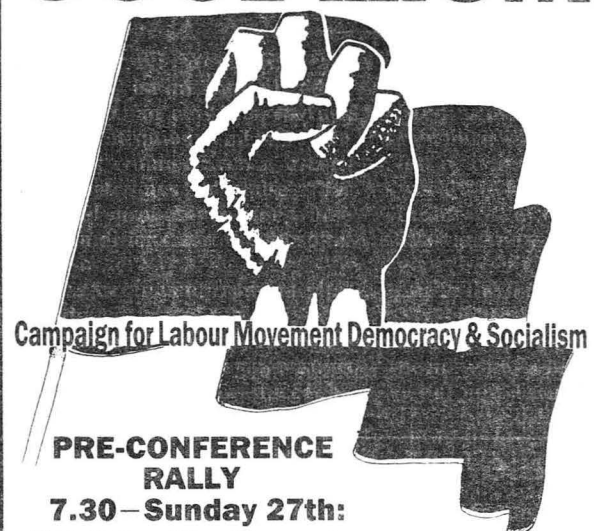
There was intense security even before Thatcher arrived. A few days before the visit special branch officers visited the Cleveland Youth Business Centre to tell two of its workers not to come to work on the day of Thatcher's visit. The two happened to be political activists.

Cosmetic

The whole visit was a cosmetic exercise to boost the Tories' image and give the impression that they care. Middlesbrough people will be more satisfied when the 24 per cent unemployment rate is reversed and jobs are provided for a town, once called the workshop of the North.



WORKERS FOR SOCIALISM



PRE-CONFERENCE RALLY
7.30 - Sunday 27th:
Brighton Youth centre - Edward St
Hear - ERIC HEFFER MP DAVE NELLIST MP
JOHN MACREADIE (CPSA) TERRY FIELDS MP

Message to new readers Welcome to Militant

MILITANT IS the paper that champions the cause of the oppressed and the exploited.

We are hated and despised by the bosses, bureaucrats and careerists because we threaten their privilege and power. If this is the first time you have read *Militant*, we appeal to you to join our fight for a just society by selling our paper.

If you are already a reader write for your paper, too. *Militant* is a workers' paper and the workers' voice must be

heard in its pages.

Here are some examples of the enthusiastic response *Militant* can get:

Shop sales: In Sheffield sellers stamp copies placed in the local newsagents with an address to contact. They have started to get letters asking for further information from readers.

Socialist medicine: We received a letter from Ken Taylor in Grampian, who says: "As a former reader who let his subscription lapse after moving house, I realise how much

I miss my weekly dose of socialism."

FE college sales: A seller in Mansfield sold 33 copies outside the local FE during enrolment week.

Swansea success: Even small businessmen can see the need for socialism. A manager of a Swansea firm paid the £1 solidarity price for a paper on the demo against cuts in the fire service. "I'll have one of them. If these cuts go through, who will I call out to stop my factory burning down?" he

said.

Lies of the World: An ex-*News of the World* worker told a south-east London seller: "I don't buy any daily newspaper because they are full of lies. I only read the *Militant*."

Our sales campaign should lead to this victim of Murdoch being able to buy a daily paper confident that it will put the workers' case when we move to a daily *Militant*.

By Gerry Lerner

Scab Sun backs CPSA right

THE RIGHT-WING General Secretary of the civil servants' union, CPSA, has enlisted the support of the scab *Sun* in the battle to keep his union-funded credit card and car.

Ever since the Broad Left-led National Executive voted to take these perks away, Ellis has been publicly vilifying us, especially our Deputy General Secretary, John Macreadie.

On Friday 18 September, an article in the *Sun* extensively quoted Ellis. It was by strike-breaker, Carson Black, an ex-NUJ chapel official expelled from his union for crossing the Wapping picket-lines.

True to the standards of CPSA's right wing, the article contained nothing but *Sun*-style personal abuse of leading *Militant* supporters on the National Executive. "Oddball", "Toughie" and "Mr. Nasty" are just some of the terms of abuse flung at us.

Outrage

You would look in vain for any comment on our work on behalf of CPSA members.

They will be outraged that Mr. Ellis should use his press contacts, not to highlight the poverty wages paid in the Civil Service, the gross understaffing and the difficulties we face trying to provide a public service, or the increasing harshness of the management regime, but to attack their elected representatives.

It is doubly outrageous that he should chose to use the scab Murdoch newspapers for this attack. What an affront to the 5,500 workers and their families whose lives Murdoch wrecked when he threw printing trade unionists onto the dole!

The *Sun* in particular has a reputation for venomous attacks on the labour movement. At this very moment, CPSA are suing the *Sun* for an earlier libel against John Macreadie.

Our members are sick and tired of seeing right wingers holding the union up as a laughing stock in the press. If union leaders cannot use the press to deal with members' problems, they should keep their mouths shut.

CPSA members must ram home to Mr. Ellis the clear message that he is paid to work with the NEC, implement its decisions and represent members' concerns in public.

By Steve Dunk
(CPSA National Committee, personal capacity)



Campaigners in Southwark last week.

Save our nursery

"YOU CAN'T have equal opportunities with no nurseries," said one parent on a lobby of Southwark council's social services committee last Thursday.

300 very angry nursery workers, parents and their children were protesting at the proposed closure of two nurseries and a drop-in creche.

John Bryan, Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Bermondsey, said: "We've got women as leader and deputy leader of the council who got where they are partly through talking about equal opportunities. Now we have hundreds of women demonstrating against their policies."

Notably, Harriet Harman, Labour MP for Peckham who employs a nanny, refused to sign the petition to keep the nursery open.

Sue Lomas, the spokesperson for the lobby explained: "Childcare means our livelihood. We might have to cut our hours or lose jobs altogether if the nursery closes. The Labour Council should oppose the Tory cuts."

A parent added: "Lots of parents can't afford private nurseries and don't have relatives near to help. It really cripples you losing the childcare. You can't do anything—no further education, no job, so you'll just be another person withering away."

Brian Kelly, Labour councillor who joined the lobby said: "I fully support the lobby. We've argued for years that the only way to defeat the Tories is by struggling along with the workers and tenants. To carry out Tory cuts is reneging on your responsibilities as an elected representative."

By Margaret Crear
Bermondsey Women's Section

Bermondsey women's section childcare conference.

30 Sept 7.30 pm.
Beormund Community Centre, 177 Abbey St.
Creche and transport will be provided.
Phone (01) 237 3457.
Speakers from the Southwark labour movement and other childcare campaigns.

Moat House day of action

Mersey ferries strike

MERSEY FERRY workers stopped work for two hours last Saturday in solidarity with sacked strikers at Liverpool's Moat House hotel.

Their strike was inspired by a march of 600 organised by the Labour Party Young Socialists and the strikers' union, the TGWU. It was part of the LPYS's national day of action to support the Moat House strikers.

The marchers heard Bill Morris, the TGWU's deputy leader, Tony Mulhearn, surcharged Liverpool councillor and John Ellen, national chair of the LPYS, speak.

£400 was raised from tra-

de unionists present. The LPYS National Committee pledged £100.

By Liverpool Young Socialists

London workers join the union

NEITHER THE pouring rain nor the management could deter the YS from their picket of Drury Lane Moat House hotel.

On arrival we entered the hotel in groups and blitzed it with leaflets appealing to the workforce to join the union and to the customers to boycott the hotel.

No immigration controls!

DESPITE ATROCIOUS weather conditions, over 50 people, predominantly Asian, attended a public meeting organised by Leicester East Labour Party last weekend. It was part of the party's divided families campaign on behalf of the victims of immigration controls.

The meeting was addressed by Keith Vaz, the

local MP, and Dave Nellist MP, who won applause when he called for Labour to totally oppose such controls.

It was at the end of the week when Renukaben Lakhani, an Asian woman taking sanctuary in a Hindu temple to avoid deportation, had been allowed by the Home Office to stay while applying for the right

to live here permanently.

This reprieve is a temporary victory. But the campaign by the Asian community and the local Labour Party and MP must continue so that it becomes permanent.

Over 50 *Militants* and *Socialist Youths* were sold.

By Don Finlay
Leicester East Labour Party

'Comrade Social Democrats'

RIGHT-WINGERS at Labour Party conference will accuse the victims of their witch-hunts of disloyalty to the Party.

But "Comrade Social Democrats", was how John Lloyd, editor of the Labour right *New Statesman* addressed a Fabian fringe meeting at the SDP conference. That is the utter contempt Lloyd feels for Labour's traditions. His 'comrades' in arms are the

SDP traitors who deserted Labour in 1981.

Witch-hunting MP, Austin Mitchell announced he "no longer knew what the difference was between social democracy, democratic socialism and socialism". When one SDP MP said to him "we all agree on policies," he nodded agreement.

"We need the people who left the Labour Party in 1981," said Mitchell. He is inviting them back undoubtedly to aid the witch-hunting of socialists, and to assist the attack on Party policy.

By Richard Morgan, Portsmouth South LPYS.

Scottish YTURC

demonstration
No to YTS
conscription
No to YTS
slave labour

Sat 3 October
Assemble: George Sq, Glasgow.
10.00 am.
March to Kelvingrove



Fight back with the LPYS

Gagging the youth

IN A blatant display of political victimisation a member of Swansea LPYS has been prevented from re-enrolling for his course at Ty Coch Further Education College in Swansea.

The Principal at the college used the excuse of poor attendance but it is seen by other members of the Labour Club as the latest step against him since he played a leading role in organising activity during the National Union of Students week of action last year.

Natasha Hale, vice president of the students union explained that "out of this day of action came Ty Coch's first Labour Club." The same student "was physically attacked in the canteen in front of hundreds of students for his part in organising a day of action"

Students feel that the college administration is treating them like kids, particularly since now the college authorities have banned the sale of sweets and crisps. This prompted canteen staff, worried about possible redundancies if sales in the canteen decline to approach the students union. Natasha explained: "We are planning to mount a joint campaign with the staff to make sure that if anything, services are expanded not cut."

PAUL SMITH, an 18 year old from Coventry South East, has had to roam the country to find work. When he joined Cheylesmore LPYS during the election he was employed on a building site over 100 miles away in Weston Super Mare. He now works as a milk deliverer waking at 2.30 am to start work at 3 am, six days a week.

"When I joined the LPYS it was because it was an organisation where the members had the same problems as me, where they were fighting for the same things that I wanted.

"The LPYS is the only real organisation where the collective voice of youth can be heard and policies and demands put forward in a clear and realistic manner.

"Socialist Youth, the paper of the LPYS, threatened with closure by the Labour Party, is a link between YS branches throughout the country. It is a real paper where the experiences of young people and their struggle for decent rights are reported without distortion.

The immense problems already faced by youth at the hands of the Tories is enough to deal with, must we now fight attacks from within the Party itself in an attempt to keep a fighting voice of protest for the youth of Britain?"



Photos by Dave Sinclair

Local LPYS branches regularly hold street meetings and activities, like this one in Southampton, to show who are the best fighters against the Tories.

I AM a college student. I left school at 16 and have been at college now for nearly two years. I'm at college because I see no prospects of getting a job and want to help myself that little bit extra, rather than walking the streets.

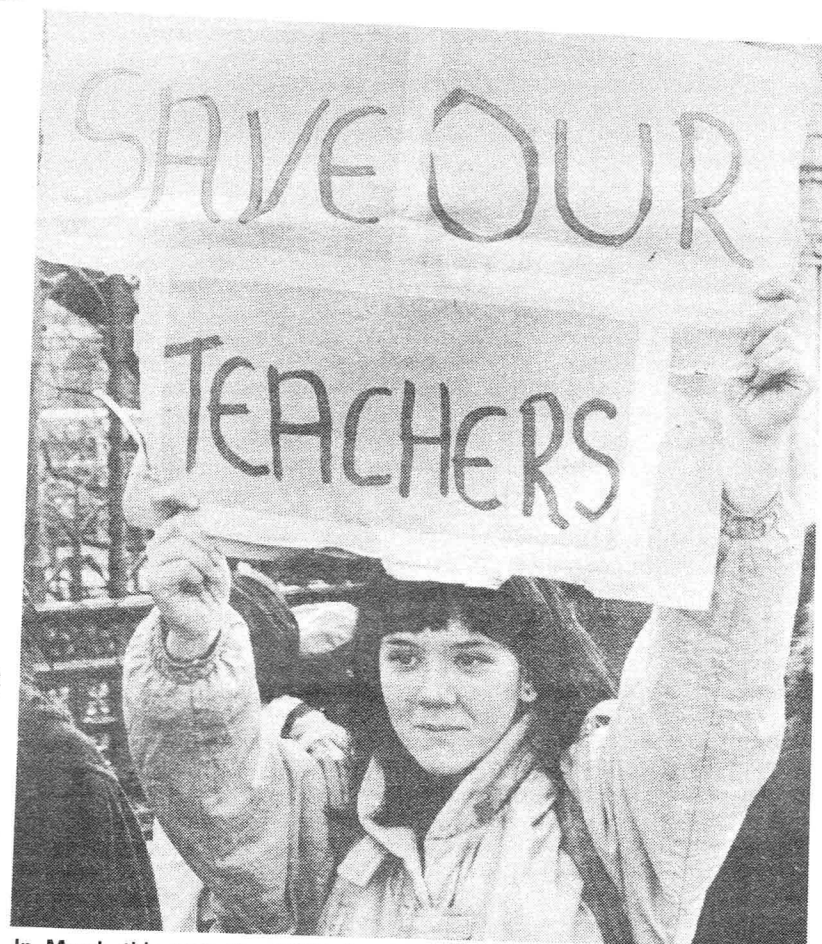
I am studying Community Care and have been offered a full time course next year. I have no choice but to stay at college until I'm 18 because like many youngsters I don't want to join a YTS.

I recently paid a visit to my local job centre. I was astonished to see a vacancy for a packer: packing clothes into plastic bags and preparing them to distribute to the shops. The hours were 8.30am to 5.30pm five days a week wages—£30! This is disgraceful and degrading, it's no better than YTS.

Youngsters should have the right to a job when they leave school. If not a job, then a proper training course with better conditions, a decent allowance and the prospect of a job.

I don't blame youngsters who become disillusioned. I didn't see a future either until I joined with the Militant supporters, now I see that something can be done.

By Elizabeth Young
Maryhill, Glasgow



In March this year the LPYS developed the spontaneous protests of London school students against the compulsory redeployment of teachers by the Inner London Education Authority.



IN THE PICTURE THE LABOUR Party Young Socialists in action during the past year. Above are just a few of the activities organised both locally and nationally by the LPYS.

MILITANT SUPPORTERS in Mansfield LPYS have been holding paper sales at our local technical colleges during enrolment week. 33 copies of Militant were sold during this period, with many students interested in forming a Labour Club when term starts.

When comrades went to sell at the enrolment for the Youth Training Scheme we thought we had got the wrong time and place because no one was about, but when we double-checked we found it was the correct place and time.

This shows how little support YTS now has, hence the Tories' plans to make YTS compulsory for unemployed school leavers.

The LPYS successfully defeated the same proposals in 1985 with a strike of 250,000 school students.

Mansfield LPYS are organising a march and demonstration against YTS 'conscription' on Saturday 28 November. When youth know the consequences of compulsory YTS they won't accept it and will fight back as in 1985. Thatcher beware!

By Adele Williams and
Martin Benn
Mansfield LPYS

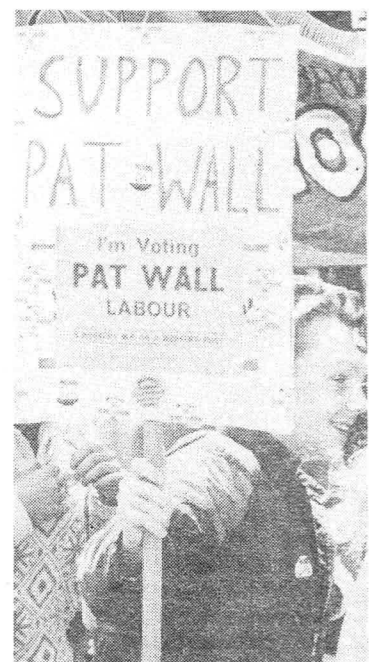
AFTER LEAVING school I was 'lucky' enough to go on a Youth Training Scheme at a local factory in Blyth. But after a few weeks I've soon learned the hard facts of working in a sweat shop in Thatcher's Britain.

My job is working on a sewing machine stitching bags up all day—it's enough to drive you up the wall. My total training was three weeks, now I do 42 hours a week before overtime. That means I get up at 6.30, for the 'pleasure' of my work I come home with £38.

If I didn't have the lasses at work to have a laugh with and my smoke break I'd crack up. I've joined the Labour Party Young Socialists to fight back against the system which puts people like me in slave labour with no prospects at 16.

That's why I donated £10 to the Militant fighting fund. It means I had to miss my Friday night out with the lasses, but that's a small price to pay to get rid of Thatcher.

By a member of Blyth LPYS



Young Socialists campaigned for Labour during the general election. The most enthusiastic support went to MPs who stood as 'A worker's MP on a worker's wage'.

Liverpool councillors appeal to conference

47 SURCHARGED and disqualified Liverpool councillors, who built homes, saved jobs and expanded services, face a demand for £4,000 a month from the District Auditor.

Failure to pay could mean personal bankruptcy. But the 47 are united in a commitment to raise the money and not let the Tories claim a victory.

One of the 47, Alan Fogg, makes this urgent appeal to Labour Party conference delegates:

“We are being fined because we carried out Labour Party conference policy. While other councils deserted their posts, we stood firm.

Now it is up to conference delegates who voted for that policy, and the Labour Parties and unions they repre-

sent, to find the money to pay these fines. The movement owes us this debt.

Everyone of us is worried about bankruptcy. I live in a council house, so I suppose they can't take that off me. But all my furniture, three-piece suite, television and video could be confiscated.

Great distress

They could impose attachment of earnings and deduct the fine from my wages. If they do, there'd be no point in going to work, as I could be on less than supplementary benefit.

It would cause great distress to my family. As well as my wife, I also look after my daughter and her young son.

There's no doubt about it, there'll be no mercy. This is a political bankruptcy and the ruling class want to make an example of us to warn other Labour councils from going down the same road.

Conference should also agree retrospective legislation to enable us to stand for office again.

I have no regrets as to what we did. Even if they take away my possessions, they can't take away the achievements of the council of building houses and creating jobs.”

Rush donations, standing orders and requests for speakers, and make cheques payable to the Liverpool 47 Defence Fund, c/o MTCURC, Hardman St. Liverpool. Standing orders to A/c no 502 111 95 at the Co-operative Bank, Liverpool Branch. Phone Alex Doswell on 051 709 4398 or 051 427 3071.

Labour Party Conference fringe meeting
Support the surcharged councillors.
Speakers:
Eric Heffer MP
Jock McPherson-Quinn (surcharged Lambeth councillor)
Tony Byrne, Harry Smith (surcharged Liverpool councillors)
Monday lunchtime. Curzon Hotel, Cavendish Place (5 mins from conference centre)

Mirror's belated support for council policies

THE DAILY Mirror is trying to rewrite history. Once it was foremost in attacking Liverpool City Council and Militant, describing the leadership of the council as 'aliens' and 'maggots'. It demanded that Neil Kinnock expel the leadership of the District Labour Party.

Now it says “The only criticism of the council might be that it has tried to do too much too fast—but it desperately needed doing.”

The Mirror, owned by millionaire Maxwell and keen supporter of Labour's right wing, has been forced to recognise reality. Its 21 Sept issue carries a report by Barry Wigmore extolling the achievements of the previous Labour administration, undemocratically removed from office by Thatcher's appointed District Auditor.

“Today” he writes, “the city is one vast building site. Everywhere you turn there is the new beside the vanishing old and ugly... Since May 1983, nearly 22,000 flats, maisonettes and houses have been done up or knocked down and replaced”.

He is forced to agree with Militant and the city council leadership that the Tory government have robbed the city of £500 million and that the Urban Regeneration Strategy has transformed the city.

What the Mirror conve-

niently forgets to mention is that the urban regeneration came about as a result of Militant's campaign, adopted by the District Labour Party, of taking on the Tory government and—demanding extra resources—which it actually won in 1984.

Ironically even those interviewed by the Mirror, Vinny and Maureen Brownless, were council house tenants who gave interviews to Militant years ago. There is no escaping the reality of Militant and its support and influence.

Clearly the Mirror thinks its readers are too stupid to remember these events. But their article will reawaken the memory and more importantly raise the question—if the surcharged councillors carried out such policies, why can the present administration not do likewise? And why are the disqualified councillors treated so shamefully by their own party leaders, who joined in the abuse and vilification of the Liverpool council?

Had they taken the trouble to visit the city and see the improvements recorded in the Mirror, they would be forced to recognise the brilliant achievements of the councillors for which they have been fined and disqualified, and in some cases expelled from the Labour Party.

By Dave Cotterill

Asbestos campaigners slandered by right wing

DISGRACEFUL ALLEGATIONS have been made by a right-wing Labour councillor against a tenants' leader who has set up an Asbestos Monitoring Group in Winsford, Cheshire.

Ken Unwin, one of nine who are threatened with expulsion from the Labour Party for supporting Militant, discovered that deadly asbestos was being ripped from gas warm-air heating units without proper health

and safety guidelines being adhered to. (See last week's Militant).

At a public meeting, tenants elected him and his wife, Hilda, as their representatives to liaise with Vale Royal councillors and

officials about asbestos removal.

But the following evening at the Tory-controlled council's Environmental Health Committee, Labour councillor John O'Brien accused Ken Unwin of setting up the Monitoring Group as “a front for members of the Militant tendency to embarrass the council”!

Tenants know that it does not need Militant to embarrass the council, who are doing the job very well themselves, by scandalously neglecting to protect their tenants' lives.

Guidelines

One Labour councillor on the committee actually had the nerve to ask Ken Unwin at the public meeting for a copy of his own council's asbestos policy guidelines, because he had never seen them before!

Worse still, a council official is reported in the local paper as claiming that their tests showed no rational explanation for the presence of asbestos waste in the heating flue where it was found by a couple on the estate. Chief Housing Officer, Bob Floyd is said to have written that “the circumstances in which the asbestos found its way into the flue are suspicious. I can say no more”. Is he implying that the asbestos could have been planted.

Ken Unwin has been a life-long socialist, proud and open about his support for Militant. He has been a leader of his local tenants' association and four years ago formed a Winsford Asbestos Action Group, which forced the council to adopt a code of practice for the safe removal of asbestos.

Now he is being subjected to lies and abuse by people who are trying to expel him from the Labour Party.

By a Militant reporter



Ken and Hilda Unwin.

Left and Right

Keep it secret

MEMBERS OF the Union of Democratic Miners (UDM) in Silverhill colliery are not sure how 'democratic' it is. The minutes of the UDM Council Meeting held on 21 May contain the following appeal:

“We, the Silverhill Branch, appeal to Council to insist that the full result of all ballot votes held in this Section are sent out to Branches. At present, it seems the most secret thing about UDM secret ballots is the result”.

Second-hand speeches

JOE BIDEN, would-be Democratic Party American presidential candidate, has been found to have lifted chunks of other people's speeches and TV commercials for his own use.

Some of the extracts were stolen from Neil Kinnock. When forced to

admit the source, he said that he “would be using Kinnock throughout this campaign”.

It is well known that few Democrat or Republican candidates have any original ideas, but it says something about the Labour Party leader that his speeches and commercials can be borrowed by a candidate of a big business party like the Democrats.

Assault rewarded

THE TORY tabloids love to pontificate about the need for tougher action against violent criminals. Yet the man who attacked Arthur Scargill with a snooker cue in Blackpool during the TUC, found himself besieged by reporters from six papers, each offering £500 for interviews and pictures. Crime does pay when it is perpetrated against militant trade unionists.

Supporters of
Inqaba Ya Basebenzi,
 journal of the Marxist Workers Tendency
 of the ANC send revolutionary greetings
 to the 1987 Labour Party Conference.
 We would like to thank all comrades who
 have contributed to the memorial fund for
 our murdered comrade Ivin Malaza.
**Asisoze sikulibale futhi siyoq-
 hubeka njalo nomzabalazo
 owawufela**
 (We will never forget you, we will never
 give up the cause you died for).
 ☆ Forward to a socialist Labour
 government
 ☆ Build a mass ANC on a socialist
 programme
 ☆ Forward to workers' power,
 democracy and socialism

**SITTINGBOURNE
 Militant
 supporters**
 send greetings to
 socialists everywhere.
 Forward to a mass
 "Socialist Youth"
 movement.

**Exeter
 district
 Militant
 supporters**
 send fraternal
 greetings to the
 labour movement.

ASTMS
**Liverpool Shipping and
 Freight branch no 618**
 calls on conference to give
 full support to the 47
 Liverpool Labour councillors
 disqualified and surcharged
 for carrying out party policy
 and defending the people
 of Liverpool from the Tory
 onslaught.

**Labour
 Conference
 1987**

Greetings from Marxists on the
**LPYS Scottish
 Regional
 Committee**

Don't cut the age limit. Build a
 mass socialist youth movement

**Hucknall and Nottingham
 Militant supporters**
 send fraternal greetings to the
 1987 party conference.
**Forward to a
 daily paper!**

**Niddrie
 Craigmillar
 LPYS**
 Our banner
 stays red.
 Forward to
 socialism

Edinburgh West
 LPYS
 Forward to the
 first Marxist
 on Edinburgh
 district council

**Govan
 LPYS**
 Youth need a
 future
 Labour needs
 youth
 Build the LPYS

**Edinburgh
 Central
 Militant
 supporters**
 Forward to a
 marxist Central
 CLP

Greetings from
**Supporters of
 Falcemartello,
 Italian Marxist
 paper**

**Musselburgh
 Militant
 supporters**
 Defend the
 Marxist regional
 councillor. No
 attacks on Keith
 Simpson for
 standing by the
 Labour manifesto

For an unconditional
 reduction to 35 hours. No
 sell out from Jordan.
 Forward to a democratic
 accountable leadership!
 Forward to a socialist
 labour movement!
**Militant supporters
 in Pilton AEU branch**

**Birkenhead
 Militant
 supporters**
 say Forward to
 more socialist
 MPs with socialist
 policies standing
 on a worker's
 wage

Southampton LPYS
 say "90 per cent of labour
 movement bodies can't be wrong.
 Implement the results of the youth
 consultation."

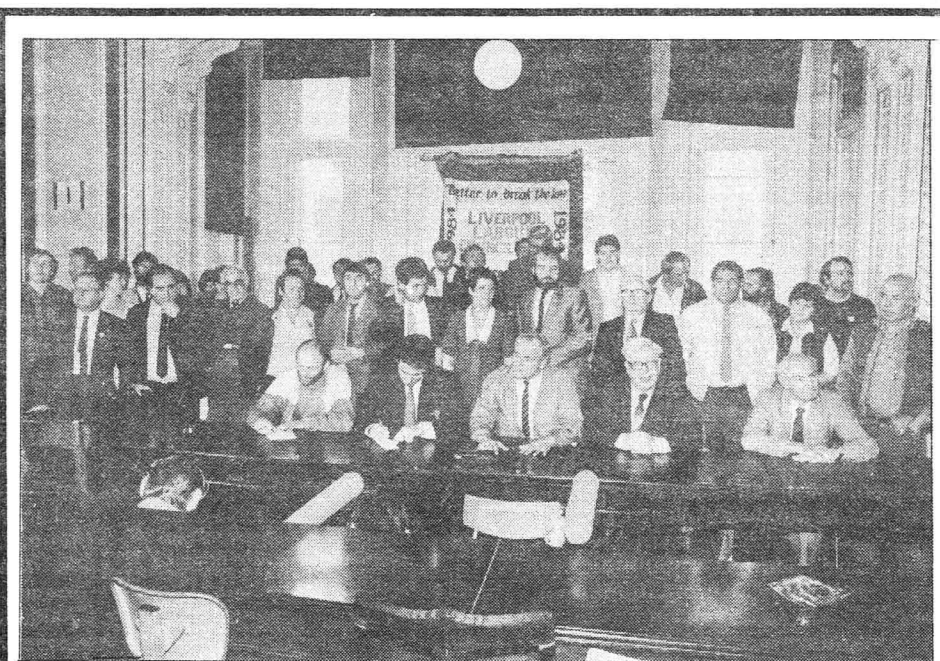
**Kate
 Packham,
 Gordan
 Wingate,
 Jackie
 Robson, Ted
 Watson**
 Welcome de-
 legates to
 Brighton 1987.
 No expulsions!
 No sackings!
 No backing
 down on social-
 ist policies!

**Moulsecomb
 ward (Brighton
 Kemptown
 Labour Party)**
 welcomes de-
 legates to
 Brighton. No
 to closure of
 Labour Weekly
 and Socialist
 Youth. No
 redundancies
 at Walworth
 Road

**Tenantry
 branch of
 Brighton
 Labour Party
 welcomes
 delegates to
 party
 conference.**
 No
 expulsions!
 No redun-
 dancies! For
 socialist
 policies

**Bow and
 Poplar
 LPYS**

say At
 Brighton turn
 the tide back.
 Organise the
 fightback.
 Read Militant



**Defend the
 Liverpool 47,**
 defend socialist policies in
 Liverpool and reinstate the
 district Labour Party.
**New Liverpool city
 council Militant
 supporters**

Greetings
 from
**GMBATU
 200 branch
 Liverpool
 cleansing
 department.**
 "Support
 the
 Liverpool
 47"

**Pilton/
 Muirhouse
 Labour Party
 say No to
 witch hunts**

Coxford Labour Party
 sends fraternal greetings to all
 the socialist delegates at the
 Brighton Labour Party
 conference

TGWU 1/1347
 say Support our
 brothers and sisters in
 Walworth Road. No
 redundancies. Say no
 to closing down Labour
 Weekly, Socialist Youth
 and New Socialist

Service with a smile?

Slave conditions in the fast food trade

"IF YOU TRY to start a union here the boss will kill you, you certainly won't have a job any longer," everyone said when I first raised the question of union organisation at the fast food shop where I work.

By a fast food worker

This multinational business has a very high turn over of both product and staff; it invests as little as possible. Their wages are not one penny over the absolute legal minimum in the catering industry.

There are no paid holidays in your first twelve months but very few people last one month let alone twelve. For the first week of illness you get no sick pay, after that you get half pay for six weeks.

That is if you don't get sacked the first day you take off. The shop often operates with everyone having severe stomach bugs or the flu because you can't afford to lose your job.

But picking up an illness is only one of the risks customers take in our shops. The chicken we sell has quite often gone off and smells badly but if we complain we are told we are paid to do as we are told, to wash the chicken and sell it. If other products are out of date they change the labels until they look or smell too unappetising.

Health and safety regulations are totally disregarded. When I cut myself I was told not to use any plasters in the very basic first aid kit. They were there for the Health and Safety inspectors and it cost too much to replace them if we actually used them!

One day a cooker full of boiling oil caught fire but there had never been even basic training or fire drill. One lad talked of pouring water on it. I went for the fire extinguisher, getting very close to the fire and inhaling fumes.

To my horror, I found it was empty. We found out later it had been empty for a year—another attempt to

save money.

We borrowed an extinguisher and risked our lives putting the fire out but the manager didn't thank us; he accused us of starting the fire, which turned out to be due to worn machinery. The only thing he was pleased about was that we didn't call in the fire brigade who might have charged for the service.

Staff often get no days off in four or five months and work several eighteen hour shifts a week; other shifts are nine hours. You work in dizzying heat (rarely below 110 degrees in the summer) and on your feet the whole time. You can be sacked if you are not on the counter within thirty seconds of a customer entering the shop.

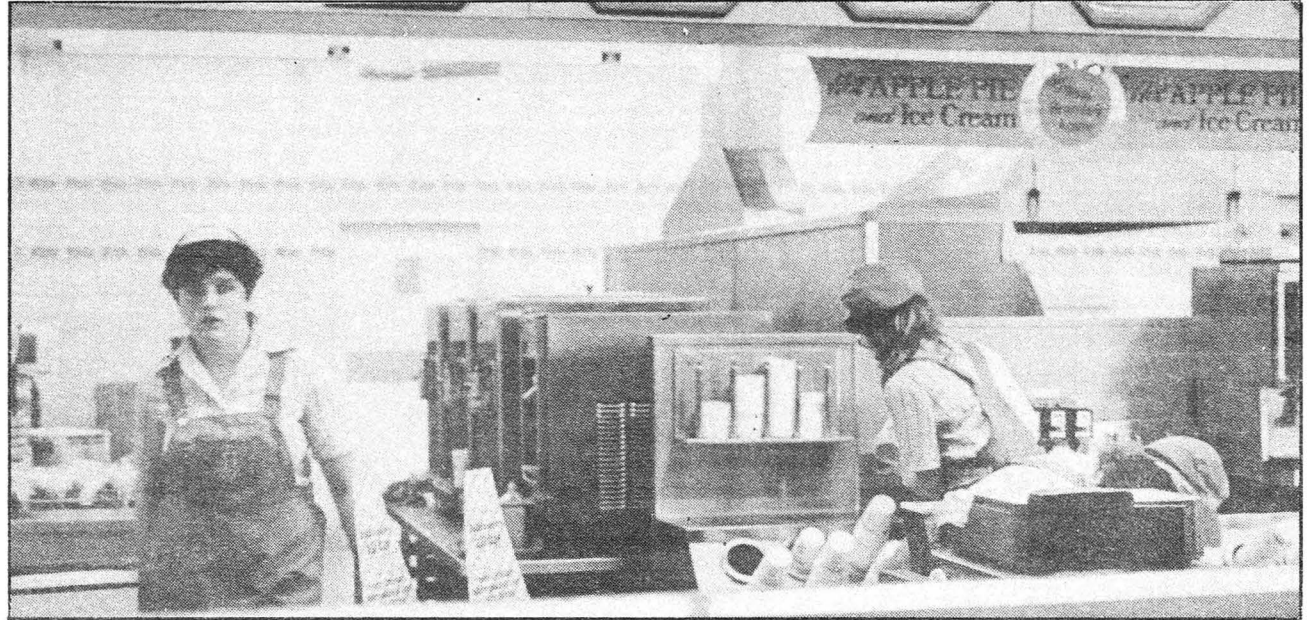
"We work in an atmosphere of fear, of the sack, of verbal abuse and violence."

In between serving we have to mop floors, scrub walls and counters, sweep the pavements outside and clean out oil and grease filled machines. And we have to smile all the time. A "mystery shopper" i.e. a company spy, shopped me the other day for not smiling.

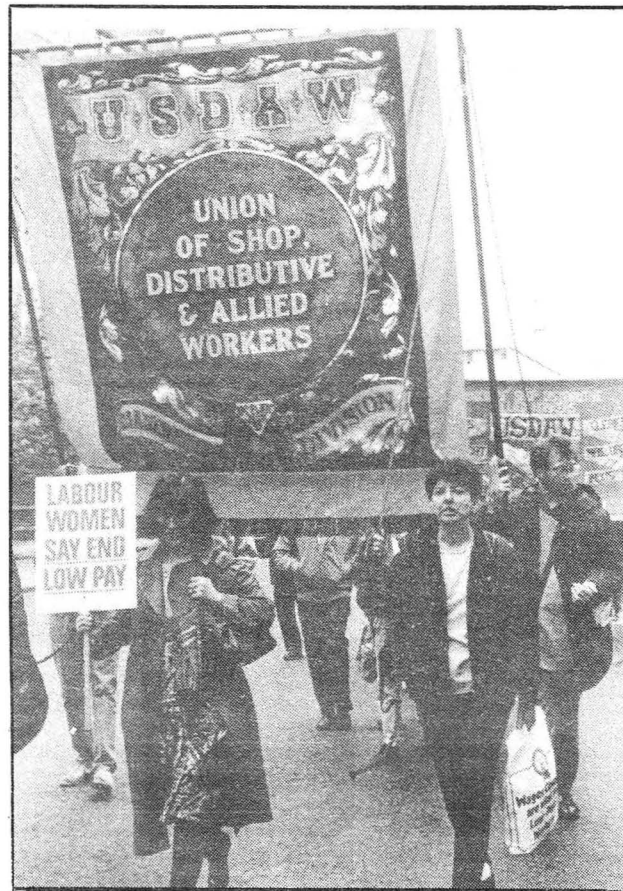
We work in an atmosphere of fear—of the sack and of a constant barrage of verbal abuse. We also get physical violence if we stand up for ourselves. If we object to being treated like animals, the manager will lose his temper and slap us round the face or throw us across the kitchen.

If you want to report this to the police or the company you need other people to act as witnesses and people are too scared to come forward.

We get insults and sexually oriented comments from customers too, particularly after they have been at the pub or night club. We accept as normal spending ten minutes trying



Workers in a fast food restaurant.



Demonstration against low pay in Manchester. Trade Union strength can stop slave labour.

to coax a bottle out of the hands of a threatening drunk, before he hits us with it.

We accept as normal having half eaten chicken bones thrown at us or mopping up blood from the floor. It didn't even

surprise me when I got stabbed by a customer. I just felt lucky I wasn't more seriously hurt.

We have video cameras there for our 'protection' but these are used far more to check up on us to see if we take a break and to

A Charter for Women Workers

Price 50p

Available from: Ann Bannister, 55 Lunt Rd., Bootle, Merseyside, L20 5EZ.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

Militant supplement Business as Usual available for your local seller. Price 10p

check no money goes, which is tempting when just one standard meal, served in one minute, costs more than we get paid an hour!

At the end of one shift, some money was allegedly missing. The police were called and we all had to endure the humiliating ordeal of strip searching for the sake of £7. Nothing was found but the money was taken from our wage packets anyway.

Nearly all the workers here have now joined a union despite their initial fears; only one is still too frightened. Workers in our industry, mainly women workers and youth, can only change conditions by joining together against exploitation.

Joining a union is only the first step on a road that at present seems uphill all the way. We need the backing of trades councils, union officials and leaders. The TGWU's campaign to recruit low paid workers is a big step forward. But it is not just a question of full time rights for full time workers.

Workers in our industry know only too well that the main fight is to take basic rights for every worker in an industry where at the moment they exist for none.

Our fight is only just beginning but with the right leadership we could show all workers the organisation and determination we all need and the future could be ours.

Fighting Fund

Finance the fight back

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 Wales	1161		4850
2 London	1640		9400
3 Eastern	477		3050
4 South East	348		2250
5 East Midlands	441		3250
6 Northern	553		4600
7 Southern	271		3100
8 West Midlands	432		4850
9 Yorkshire	773		8450
10 South West	124		1900
11 Manchester	245		4050
12 Scotland West	197		3500
13 Scotland East	193		2800
14 Merseyside	263		7500
15 National	2189		6950
Total	9,247		70,000

LOW PAID hotel worker Andy Bunn from Humber-side has shown the same determination to fight as the poverty wage workers mentioned above. He has sent £50 to the Militant fighting fund.

We appeal to delegates at Labour Party conference and especially to all new readers, to match this sacrifice and help build our paper.

Last week hundreds of workers, students and unemployed gave much needed cash to help fight back against the Tories. Readers in the Stoke area collected £101 and £45 came in through collecting tins and extras for papers in Liverpool Broadgreen.

Our sights are now on raising the £60,000 we need in the last six weeks of the quarter. Unlike Labour's official fundraisers who have left the party almost £1 million in the red, our main target won't be the "Citroen-driving vegetarian, terry towelled bath-robed Observer reading yuppies" Labour's marketing manager aimed for.

We're not prejudiced against money from vegetarians or Citroen drivers but we need the support of every reader. Regular donations and collections amongst your workmates or on your estate, going door to door selling Militant and taking appeal

sheets, will build support for a workers' paper.

It's easy to raise fighting fund. Over £20 was raised outside a London cinema showing *Business as usual* by sellers asking for the £1 solidarity price.

Fighting fund should be part of the sales drive. Be bold in asking for cash and always carry a rattling tin and appeal sheets on every sale. Organise a fundraising social like the video night in Battersea which raised £36 and the barbecue in Dover (£14). But first prize for mould breaking audacity goes to the comrade in Portsmouth who raised £10 around the SDP conference!

**Knowsley
NALGO**
greet all
conference
delegates.
**End the witch
hunt. Fight
privatisation
of local
authority
services.**

**West of
Scotland
Broad Left
CPSA
members**
Fraternal greetings to
all socialists
**Congratulations to
John Macreadie
(DGS CPSA) on
his election**
Support the
Broad Left
-the members'
choice

**Littlehampton
branch 1/874**
TGWU
say
Don't let them
evict trade
unions from
selecting MPs.

**Socialism can
give us a
bright future**
Stop the
denigration and
start
popularisation
**Friends of
Militant in
Arundel CLP**

**Shell
Workers for
Militant**
say build links
with South African
workers.

**Keep Labour
socialist.**
Explain socialist
policies
and win votes.
Fudge policies
and you lose
votes.

**Arun
District
Trades
Council.**

**Mansfield
LPYS**
greet conference
delegates.
**No
socialism,
no victory**

**West Glamorgan
Militant
supporters**
demand socialist
policies not 'social
democracy'
**Maidstone and
Mid Kent
Militant
supporters**
say socialist policies
win votes.
**Vote for a workers'
MP on a worker's
wage.**



**The Labour and Trade
Union Group**

sends fraternal greetings to Labour
Party conference delegates and
visitors.

**Support the LTUG candidates in
the West Belfast council by
elections on 22 October.**

Build a mass socialist
Labour Party based on
the trade unions in
Northern Ireland.

Supporters of Militant
newspaper in
Nigeria
send solidarity to Labour activists at
conference.

The election of three Marxists on
socialist programmes and as workers'
MPs on workers' wages shows that
Labour could win nationally on a
socialist programme. Activists should
keep up the struggle to protect Clause
4 calling for nationalisation of the
means of production.

Conference
greetings from
**Newcastle
Central
and
Jesmond
Labour
Party**

**Woolton Ward
Militant
supporters say**
"Support the
magnificent 47
councillors and
defend
socialism."

**Militant supporters
on the
National Committee
of Labour Women
Women's emancipation
and socialism are
inseparable.**

**Militant supporters on
Liverpool Labour
Womens Council**
Socialist greetings to all
delegates.

**Fight to defend patients'
rights and workers' jobs.
Save the NHS. Take the
right medicine...socialist
policies.**

CHESTER

Militant
supporters

say campaign
on policies not
personalities.

**Militant
supporters
on the
North West
Labour
Women's
Committee**
for a democratic
Labour Women's
Organisation.

**Further Education
Labour Students
No to compulsory
YTS!
We demand a
future!**

- ★ £35 a week minimum grant
OR
- ★ A real job with proper wages

Greetings from the FELS NC and Collette Williams
FELS member on the NUS executive. Fighting for a
socialist leadership

**DNS Glasgow
Broad Left**

offer fraternal greetings to all socialists in
the labour and trade union movement

The fight against the Tories continues.
No more cuts.

We support the campaign for CPSA to
affiliate to the Labour Party.

Fight the Tories!
No expulsion of socialists.!

**Militant supporters in the
National Savings Bank (Glasgow)**
offer fraternal greetings to all socialists in the
labour and trade union movement.

**No witch hunts!
Fight the Tories!
Build the Labour Party!
Join the Broad Left
in CPSA**

**Right
threaten
local
parties**

THE NORTHERN region
Labour Party conference
last weekend decided to put
out to the constituency La-
bour parties (CLPs) propos-
als by Labour's right to
fundamentally weaken the
influence of CLPs and the
active members.

A discussion document
set out a number of recom-
mendations for Party orga-
nisation in the region which
if accepted here could be
the basis for a new less
democratic national Party
structure.

These suggestions, sup-
posedly the result of a con-
sensus of opinions in the
region's labour movement
had yielded a mere ten
replies (only three from
CLPs) from more than 100
organisations affiliated to
the Party.

The right wing's propo-
sals included the
establishment of a regional
constitutional committee
(with powers of expulsion)
backed up by "teams of
specially designated full
time officers operating
from Walworth Road".

The right wing also want
to introduce regional rep-
resentation on the NEC, thus
undermining the influence
of CLPs. At the same time,
all CLP motions to the
NEC would first have to be
approved by the regional
party.

These plans will go round
the CLPs before going to a
conference in March 1988.
Socialists will fight hard to
keep democratic rights for
the constituencies.

By a Militant reporter

**Labour
staff
strike**

STAFF AT Labour's head
office in Walworth Road
struck on 22 September in
protest at national executive
plans which entail 40 redun-
dancies.

Labour's general secret-
ary Larry Whitty's propo-
sals for the closure of
Labour Weekly, *Socialist
Youth* and *New Socialist*
have been accepted by the
NEC.

Closure of these papers
would end a vital source of
news, information and ideas
for party members. But the
right wing seem to fear free
discussion and want to shut
down the papers in favour
of a glossy leadership mag-
azine *Labour Party
News*.

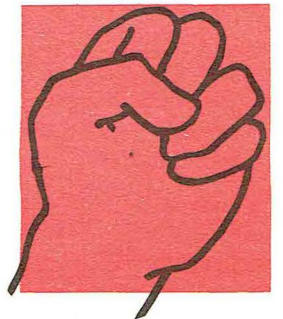
Staff unions have pre-
pared an alternative budget
showing the possibility of a
surplus next year and will
be lobbying the NEC meet-
ing before the conference.

Leading Labour Party
Young Socialists members
Linda Douglas and John
Ellen presented a resolution
of support from the LPYS
to James Tait, the secretary
of the head office TGWU
branch on the picket line on
22 September.



**Labour
Conference
1987**

Keep Labour socialist



THE LABOUR Party at present appears lost in a fog of new right wing ideas and fancies—in reality the old, discredited ideas of Gaitskell, Roy Jenkins and others in the past.

By John Pickard

But the social basis for these ideas: an expanding capitalist system, capable of affording reforms and advances in living standards, no longer exists. The real "middle ground" in society exists only in the minds of Labour right-wingers and other dreamers.

Many Labour Party members are perplexed and dismayed at this shift to the right in the Party, in parallel to the moves taking place at the top of the TUC.

At the TUC conference the issue of no strike deals was deliberately fudged, allowing the leaders of the EETPU to laugh in the face of the decisions and traditions of trade unionism.

The Tory press have commented on the alleged decline in the influence of the trade unions, as a result of the fall in membership by 3 million, and this analysis has been accepted lock, stock and barrel by the TUC leaders. So much so, that the union tops have launched another phase of "new realism", offering potential recruits no more than old-fashioned friendly society benefits in the place of union solidarity.

The Labour leadership have drawn all the wrong conclusions from the election defeat. It was the second worst defeat in modern times, but they still cling to the illusion that the slick packaging and presentation was a success. But all the gloss could not disguise the fact that Labour offered no real alternative, either to workers in jobs, or to those on the dole.

In particular, Labour failed to attract those workers in private industry, and workers in the South of England, who have managed in the last two years to

hold their heads above water or even increase their living standards to a small extent. Among these and other skilled workers, there was a swing away from Labour to the Tories.

Rather than issue warnings about an inevitable recession in 1988 or 1989, which will undermine the precarious living standards of all workers, Labour offered...tax increases. Now, three months later, the Labour leadership has belatedly realised that the "vote for me and I will increase your taxes" policy was a disaster.

Nor did Labour offer much hope for those workers in local authorities struggling against cuts and an increasing threat to their jobs. The Labour spokesman, John Cunningham, explicitly refused to give any commitment to "bale out" local authorities, or to offer any way out of the financial straitjacket in which councils find themselves.

Even Labour's non-nuclear defence policy managed to achieve the worst of all worlds. Without explaining properly the complete futility of Britain's so-called "independent nuclear deterrent" alongside the huge arsenals of the superpowers, the Party was committed to transfer expenditure from Trident to bankroll a big increase in conventional weapons. The main argument that workers and youth have against Trident—the enormous waste in expenditure—was therefore lost.

In contrast, wherever candidates put forward a fighting socialist case, there was a large swing to the Labour Party. If the results of Bradford North, Coventry South East, Liverpool

Broadgreen, and Southwark Bermondsey had been achieved throughout their respective regions, there would today be a majority Labour government. These candidates explained the relevance of full socialism to ordinary working people, and all achieved marvellous results, to which the Labour leadership and the press have replied with a deafening silence.

The Labour Party failed to advocate any perspective for socialist change and offered no way out from the insecurity of capitalism

The vote for Labour in Liverpool was especially significant showing the enormous support for the militant stand of the City Council against the Tory government. Although Labour's support hardened in its traditional heartlands of Scotland, Wales and the North of England, these results do not compare to the magnificent 57 per cent Labour vote in Liverpool, where there was a majority of Tory MPs up to 1964.

Unfortunately, the Labour Party failed to advance any perspective for socialist change and offered no way out from the insecurity and instability of British capitalism.

Now the leadership of the party, having lost the election with a right-wing programme are trying to recover the lost ground by heaving the Labour Party even further to the right. According to their arguments the increase in home ownership and share

ownership have been the main reasons for the Tories' success, and therefore the Labour Party has to garner votes from these new "upwardly-mobile" share-owners.

George Catchpole, Labour's Eastern Region Organiser, summed up this new philosophy by saying that the Party "must find ways of appealing to the person who had bought his council house, owned a car and had £500 of shares in former nationalised industries."

Neil Kinnock has made similar comments about a supposed decline in "collectivism", and the need for Labour to be the "party of the individual." It seems there is no limit to the 'Yuppie' counter revolution in the Party. Election mastermind Bryan Gould, talks about a "champagne party" and Sam McCluskie echoes the Tory arguments about "remote and unpopular state-owned monopolies".

Nigel Lawson last week boasted that the trade unions were in an historic decline, with almost as many shareholders—around 9 million—as trade union members. The Labour leaders have no reply to this argument and, in fact, agree with it. But what is the reality?

Having mortgages makes no fundamental difference to the political outlook of workers, nor their willingness to struggle when their livelihoods are in danger. There are many solid Labour constituencies where there are a majority of home-owners. In Rhondda where Labour has a colossal majority, there is a majority of owner-occupiers. The 70 per cent owner-occupation in Liverpool Broadgreen did not

prevent a 49 per cent vote for the Labour Party, despite the media campaign against the alleged 'extremist' candidate Terry Fields. Probably the big majority of workers involved in key national strikes in the last few years: miners, printers, teachers, would have been owner-occupiers.

The same argument applies to share ownership. According to the *Financial Times*, there is a "natural" limit to share ownership—around 11-12 million people—beyond which it is unlikely to spread. This represents a minority of voters.

But even this overlooks the fact that for the big majority of share-owners, their 'wealth' consists of a handful of shares, which would be unlikely to alter their life-style very much, if at all. For most share-owners, their holding is no more than a 'nest-egg' for a rainy day.

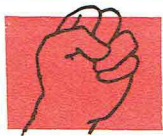
Labour Research recently published figures to show that the Tories' privatisation measures have concentrated the big majority of new shares in the hands of the City institutions, especially the pension funds. The total number of share applications for all the Tory sell-offs was 9.5 million, but the latest figures show the total number reduced to 5.5 million, as successful applicants quickly sold their shares at a profit.

Only three months after the share issue, 99 per cent of all BA shareholders (those with less than 10,000 shares) held only 16 per cent of the shares. About 80 shareholders (with one million or more each) held over 50 per cent of the shares.

Continued over page



Keep Labour social



The distribution of shares to BT workers clearly had little impact on their consciousness. It did not prevent the BT strike earlier this year, or stem the anger of NCU members when they thought their leadership had let them down. Only months after the election of John Golding as the 'moderate' general secretary, the engineering and white collar sections of the union both voted no confidence in him.

Nevertheless, the Labour leadership is determined to push the Party to the right, disguising the fact by dressing it up as a 'review' of Party policy. The policy of renationalisation of hived-off industries will be dumped, along with opposition to council house sales, and any other remnants of radical policies. Extreme right wingers, like AEU's Bill Jordan, have made it clear that they will also want a reversal of the non-nuclear defence policy.

The plans of the right wing leave no place for an active and critical rank and file. They really believe elections are won by TV and media presentation, and not by the hard slog of hundreds of thousands of Party members.

Labour's grass roots are, for them, so much unnecessary baggage which can be dumped at the first opportunity. This explains the welter of "discussion documents" and proposals for altering the constitution, of which the by-passing of the local Party general committees for the selection of Parliamentary candidates is only one feature.

Labour Weekly and *New Socialist*, through which the Labour Party membership were able to voice, however muted, their own views, are being ditched and replaced by a mailed newsletter—*Labour Party News*—which is an uncritical mouthpiece of the leadership. It has been suggested that the Labour Party conference itself may be changed into something more like a rally for the leader and the shadow cabinet, limiting resolutions and debate to set topics, like Tory conference.

The biggest attack has been launched on the Young Socialists, the most vibrant and active part of the Labour Party, but a source of embarrassment because of its advocacy of bold socialist policies. In the guise of a "consultation" (the results of which have been blatantly ignored, anyway) the leadership are determined to stifle the Young Socialists by reducing the age limit, abolishing its regional structures and, next year, if they can get away with it, abolishing the national conference.

In addition, the LPYS newspaper, *Socialist Youth*, has been axed on spurious financial grounds, although it has broken even for the last two years.

One of the most notable features of Labour's shift to the right is the collapse of the 'lefts', with only a few exceptions. The *Tribune* newspaper, for example, formerly left-wing, gives almost uncritical support to the right wing moves. Like-wise, the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, now "co-ordinates" little more than a "left" smoke-screen. At the centre of the Party leadership is a 'new right', Brian Gould is on both the LCC and the 'old right' Forward Labour slates for the NEC.

Some of those in the leadership most determined to witch hunt the Marxists and attack the Young Socialists are ex-left wingers like Tom Sawyer of NUPE.

The continued witch hunts

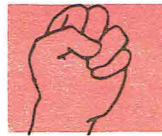
against the left and the movement of the party to the right have caused a decline in membership of 26,000 in the three years up to the end of 1986. More members are likely to have been lost this year. This is an indication that the shift to the right at the top is completely out of tune with the aspirations of the majority of the rank and file.

But whatever may be the wishes of the tops of the Party, their move to the right will be overtaken by events. The post-election mood, followed immediately by the summer period in which labour movement meetings do not take place, give a completely false picture of the months and years ahead.

After the Tories' victory in 1983, the press and TV pumped out the same arguments about the "share-owning and house-owning democracy". There were even TV programmes, in late 1983, specifically arguing that young miners owning homes and cars were not likely to take part in strikes. Within months the miners launched the longest and most ferocious industrial battle in modern history.

Similarly in France, after the election of the right-wing Chirac government, there was within months the biggest explosion of student unrest in almost 20 years, forcing the government into making important concessions, and a simultaneous eruption of strikes in the public sector.

Whatever the victories of the right wing at this year's conference, these will be temporary. They will be reversed by the workers in the Party demanding policies in their interests



The policies of this Tory government are a recipe for social convulsions. New struggles will inevitably break out in the public sector, in local authorities, in the health service, in education, the civil service and in private industry.

Local authority workers and those in public transport are already seething over threats to their jobs and living standards. Last month's all-London bus strike—the first for 30 years—was a protest against bus workers in South London losing almost £30 per week, as well as having their conditions made worse.

Despite the capitulation of allegedly left wing councillors, now prepared to sacrifice jobs rather than face up to the Tories, local authority workers are steeling themselves for a titanic struggle over coming budget cuts.

The votes of workers in the NCU, and the CPSA show the real mood developing in the unions. Despite a mountain of lies and distortions, the membership of CPSA voted for a left executive to lead a fightback on wages, and for John Macreadie as deputy general secretary. Although an all-out strike of civil servants was thwarted this year, because of the dissipation of activity in a prolonged period of partial strikes, the majority of CPSA members understand that the situation is no more than a "stand-off", a postponement of

a battle to come.

Even in private industry where there has been a partial economic recovery and where a number of workers have managed to keep up their real rates of pay, this has only been achieved by a general worsening of conditions, speed-ups and the abandonment of health and safety standards. But the recovery itself will give new confidence to workers in the viability of their industries and in their own strength and many sections will want to recover the ground lost to their bosses in the last eight years of recession.

In any event, a new recession is inevitable within the next two years or so, and with it will come a new round of struggles over jobs, closures and redundancies. What illusions there are in the economic 'recovery' will quickly disappear and in their place will come all the pent-up anger and frustration bottled up at present.

The bitter hostility to the Tory government is nowhere more apparent than among youth. Hundreds of thousands of young people will be conscripted onto useless YTS and JTS schemes in the future, with the threat of the removal of their unemployment benefit to coerce them.

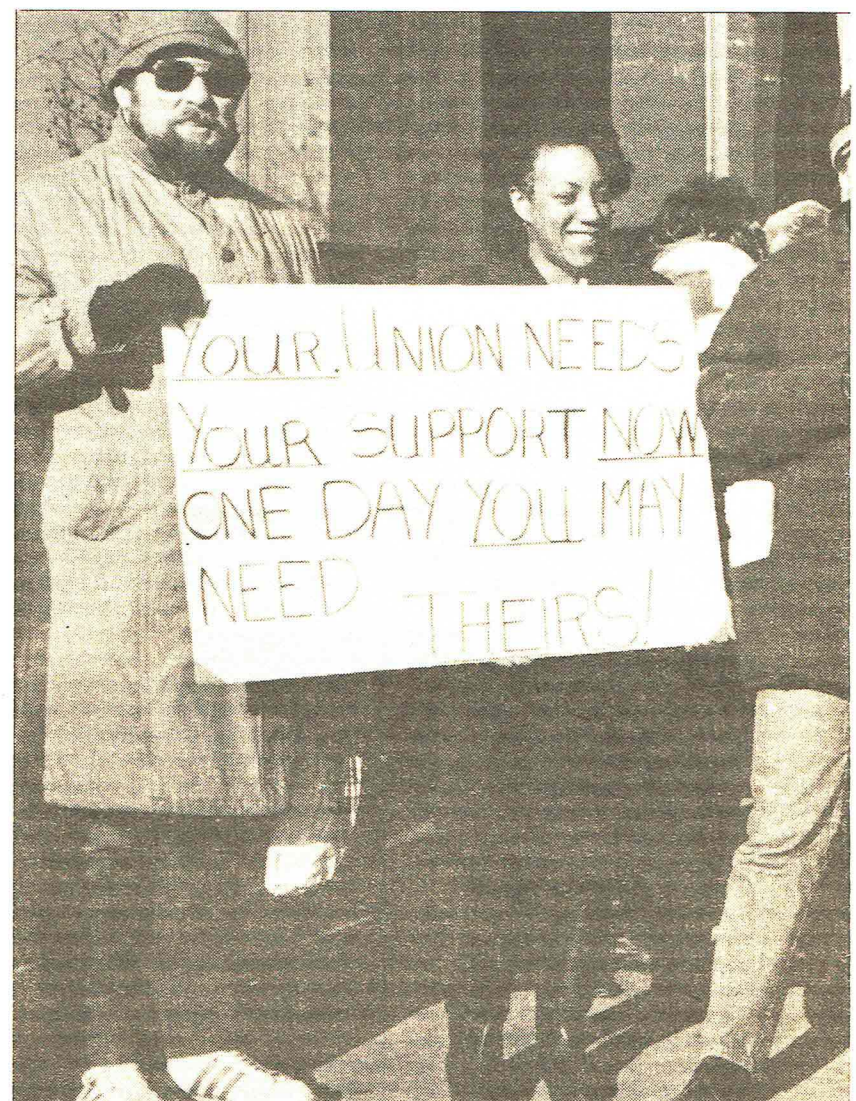
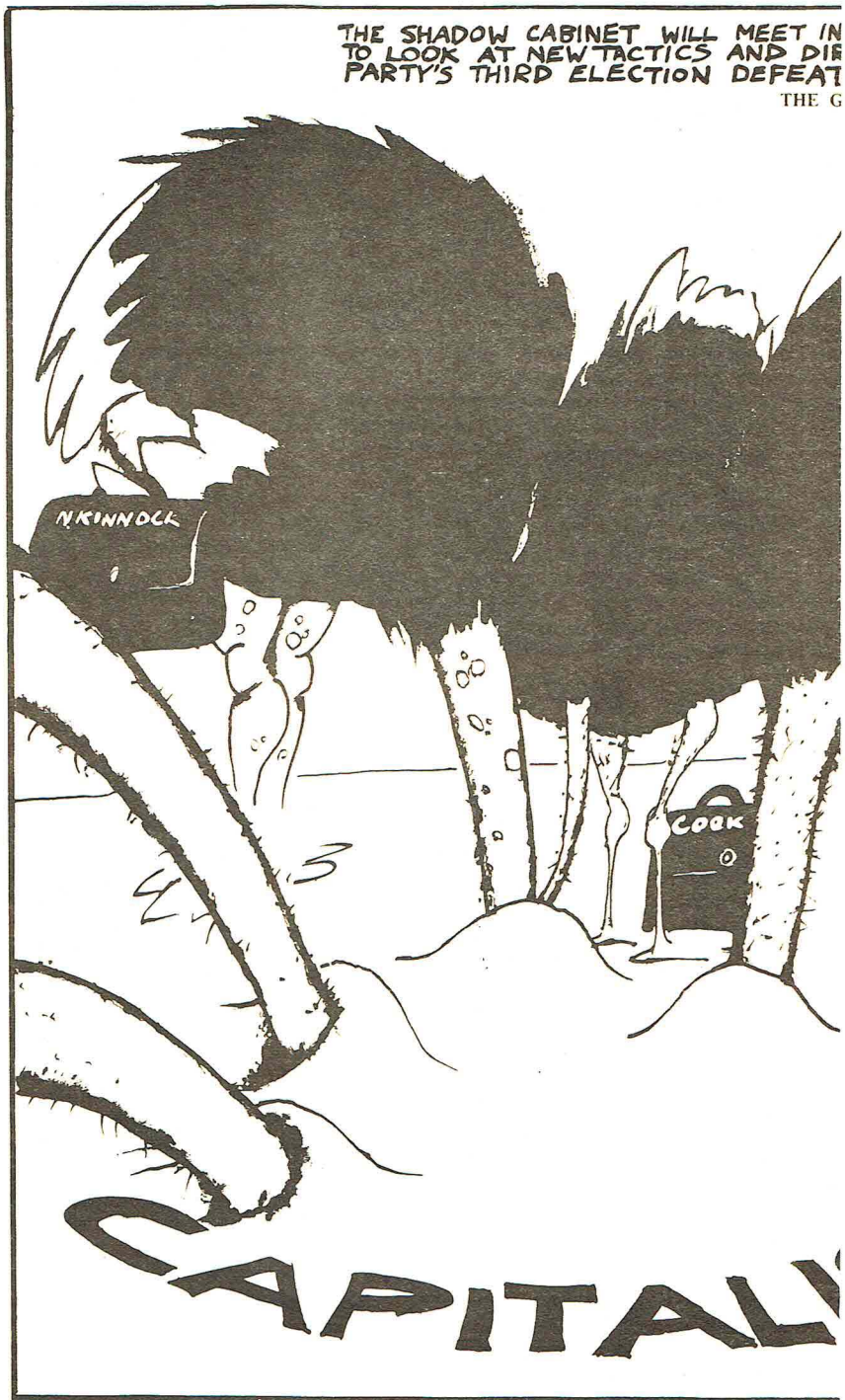
It was no Marxist, but ex-Labour renegade Robert Kilroy-Silk who wrote recently of "an anti-police culture among many of the young." He cited examples of unreported riots even in towns like Stroud in Gloucestershire, Mansfield in Nottinghamshire and "dozy Shrewsbury" in Shropshire, where police fought with 500 youth "and were sprayed with CS gas for their pains". It was the third time, he points out, that CS gas has been used in disturbances in Britain, "and not once by the police." Nothing could better sum up the boiling anger and the alienation from the government of millions of young people.

It will be the furious opposition of workers and youth, gathering in momentum and intensity in the coming years, that will confound the theories of all those 'yuppists' and the 'new right' inside the Labour Party. The huge ballot majorities in the major unions confirming their affiliation to the Labour Party are a testament to the trade unions' historic links to the Labour Party.

Workers forced in the direction of increased activity in their trade union—and there will be tens of thousands—will also find their way into activity in the Labour Party. The dead-end and the hopelessness of capitalism will become clear to millions. Real socialist ideas will have a greater relevancy than ever before to all sections of the working class: young and old, men and women, white and black, white collar or blue collar.

Whatever may be the victories of the right wing at this year's Labour Party conference, and for a period of time in the future, these will be temporary. They will be reversed by the workers who will join the Labour Party in the future, demanding changes and policies in their interests. However much the right wing try to witch-hunt the supporters of *Militant* and the Party youth section, it will prove impossible to separate Marxism from the Labour Party.

Workers are not changed fundamentally by a mortgage or a few dozen preference shares. They will be forced by their own bitter experiences to take hold of the party they have and mould from it the party they need. The ideas of Marxism will become the ideas of the whole movement.



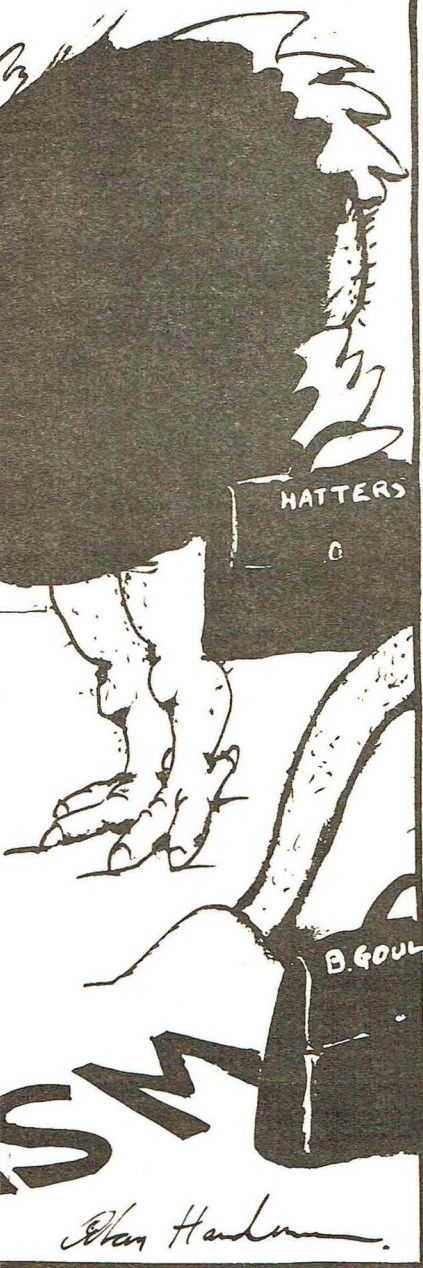
Telecom's clerical workers on strike in January this year. Workers with share struggle.

alst Defend Party democracy

Felicity Dowling appeals to conference

BRIGHTON NEXT WEEK
ELECTION. AFTER THE

GARDIAN Monday September 21 1987.



LABOUR'S LEADERS are hell bent on freeing Labour MPs from any meaningful accountability to the local Party members. Hand in hand with the attempts to throw overboard socialist policies, the right wants to fundamentally alter the hard won rights of Labour activists to mandatory reselection over their MPs.

By Davy Brown

Under the heading 'Party Franchise' over 40 resolutions and amendments are grouped together at the Conference. Even the term 'party franchise' is an attempt to hide the right's true intent—to attack Party democracy, and they hope, mistakenly, to see off left wing candidates by the less informed votes of the inactive Party membership.

Currently selection and reselection of parliamentary candidates is carried through by the democratically elected delegates from union and Party branches represented at the local Party general committees.

But in their blind haste the leadership could not even wait to find a workable alternative system.

Neil Kinnock pushed for local electoral colleges rather than a straight one individual Party member, one vote, in an attempt to win the backing of the block votes of the unions. Their branches would otherwise be excluded from participation in the selection procedure. It is the iron link with the unions and the workplaces that gives Labour its strength.

Complexity

But no-one on the right could devise any mechanism to tackle the complexity of individual trade unionists, who pay the political levy and live in the appropriate constituency, meeting together to cast a proportion of votes equal to the unions' weight on the general committees!

Kinnock, in private discussions at the TUC, sounded out the TGWU and G&M about dropping the electoral college, and forcing through a straight one member, one vote. But delegates at the TGWU conference had only been convinced to go along with changing the present system, on the understanding that union influence would be undiminished.

At its 15 September meeting the NEC confirmed its support for 'widening the franchise' but could not agree to recommend to Conference any of the specific constitutional amendments determining the method. Conference delegates from the unions and local parties now have the opportunity to vote down all amendments, and protect the democratic rights of both of them.

The right to reselect Labour MPs was not handed to the rank and file by a leadership wishing to 'extend democracy'. It was fought for. After the experience of the 1974 to 1979 Labour Government the ranks of the movement were determined that never again would a Labour administration bow the knee to the dictates of big business.

The demand for accountability and mandatory reselection of La-



Delegates at 1986 Labour Party conference—the right wing's proposals on reselection are aimed at reducing the number of activists.

bour MPs won support as a means of exerting pressure on a future Labour government. But it was only agreed after thorough debate, including at a number of Party conferences, and an elected working party that produced two reports, majority and minority. Compare that to the feverish attempts of today's right to turn the clock back.

The right to reselect Labour MPs was not handed to the rank and file by the leadership. It was fought for.

The leadership should be reminded that they have acted in direct defiance of the 1986 Party Conference. That decided overwhelmingly that this issue was not to be discussed again until after an election. Yet the right's consultation of affiliated organisations began before 11 June.

The Party was consulted while it was preparing and fighting the general election. While the ranks were dealing a death blow to the SDP, some sections were planning to revive the methods of Owen and Williams within the Party.

For it was the demand for reselection that finally revealed the true nature of the SDP traitors in the Labour Party. They left condemning the unwarranted interference with the 'divine right of Labour MPs to their seats', which they had previously enjoyed. But on the way out it was they who first raised the idea of selection by one member, one vote.

They banked on the unwarranted interference of the capitalist press on the Party members who do not attend meetings and are not involved in actively check-

ing their MP's record.

With the present system, every individual Labour Party member and affiliated union member can participate without exception or hindrance in the reselection procedure through their own branch or organisation. But full accountability is ensured through the general committees which meet monthly, hear their MP's parliamentary reports and carry through the final selection conference.

The right on the NEC are loudly proclaiming their commitment to Party democracy, and that is why they want to change the reselection procedure. But this is the NEC which has twice undemocratically intervened to impose parliamentary candidates—on Knowsley North and Nottingham East.

Now they are putting forward other constitutional changes which would mean that: 1. If the sitting MP is not reselected they have the right to appeal to the NEC which can intervene to reinstall them; 2. In an 'emergency' or 'in the interests of the Labour Party' the NEC can dispense with the procedures; 3. In a by-election the NEC or local constituency executive committee will select the candidate. The NEC can 'advise' the EC whom they should put forward. 4. The NEC will have the right to modify the procedures that Conference determines to select candidates, and then get Conference to ratify them afterwards.

The rights of Party members are under threat. Conference must not allow itself to be stampeded. It campaigned for the present democratic system for the reselection of MPs and it must not allow it to be taken away. The Labour leaders must be told—those who do the work, knock on the doors and lick the envelopes, and who are the Labour Party, will fight to preserve their democratic control over their parliamentary representatives.



FELICITY DOWLING, one of the heroic 47 surcharged Liverpool councillors, will be appealing to Conference against her expulsion from the Party. In fact she will be the last person able to appeal directly to Conference on expulsion. In a major attack on Party members' democratic rights, from now on appeals will only be allowed to the National Constitutional Committee. *Militant* spoke to Felicity.

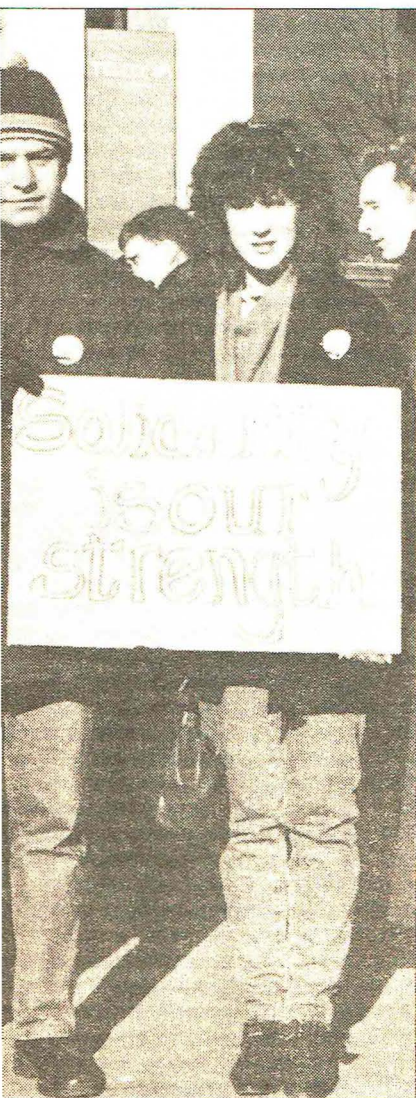
"In fighting for the people of Liverpool, I have been barred from office, surcharged and now face possible personal bankruptcy. The councillors have been slandered and abused by the Tory press nationally and locally. And now after 20 years' membership, I face delegates at the Conference, having been expelled by the leaders of my own Party.

"A stream of lies and allegations about intimidation and violence that were never substantiated, were thrown at us. But no such charges were ever put to us. The real charges were to do with the conduct of the District Labour Party. These in turn, were never taken on a legal technicality. All that remained were charges relating to *Militant*. I was expelled for my political beliefs and nothing else.

"The charges were changed time and again reducing from 27 separate charges to 3. At the time concerned I was Secretary of Liverpool District Labour Party, involved in running a massive campaign. I was also chair of the full sub-committee on the council in charge of re-organising Liverpool's secondary schools, and the councillor for a large council estate with massive problems.

"The witch-hunters clearly believed at this time that I possessed supernatural powers. They accused me of working full time for the *Militant* at the same time as undertaking all these duties. This charge itself was later dropped when it was proved to be impossible. The remaining charges were that an article had been printed in my name in the *Mersey Militant*, that I spoke at a *Militant* public meeting and that I moved an incriminating resolution in the District Labour Party.

"All of the charges were nebulous and boiled down to my political views being unacceptable to the NEC. Delegate should ask themselves whether they want their Party to stoop to deceit as the basis for expulsions. And whether the holding of Marxist views, which have been present in the Party since its very foundation, could be the final grounds and final excuse for expulsion."



and mortgages won't be put off from
Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (Report)

Save Labour's youth



THE LABOUR Party Young Socialists (LPYS) are campaigning hard to defend young people from the Tories' attacks. But Labour's youth now find themselves under attack from the Party leadership.

By Frances Curran
LPYS National
Executive rep, 1984-86

The National Executive are presenting two constitutional amendments to Party conference. They aim to destroy the LPYS, by cutting their age limit from 25 to 22 years and by abolishing their regional structures.

The NEC claim these proposals are to maximise Labour's support among young people. But how will preventing youth between 22 and 25 participating in Labour's youth section and the abolition of LPYS regional conferences and committees help this task?

In fact, they will prevent Labour winning support from young people and deny LPYS membership to young union activists.

Diana Jeuda, NEC representative from the shopworkers' union, USDAW, is guilty of breathtaking hypocrisy. She voted for reducing the LPYS's age limit, but wrote in



Is this the sort of youth section the right-wing want? Jimmy Hill, Hugh Gaitskill and other dignitaries make up the Labour Party Youth Commission in 1959.

her union's paper that the US-DAW youth section's age limit should stay at 26, because it would have "difficulty in basing activity on teenagers alone".

Obviously, Jeuda and the right-wing want to prevent young trade unionists being involved in the Party's youth section.

Previously they claimed to be in favour of it. But the involvement of trade union youth in the Party's youth structure, supported by the LPYS for the past eleven years,

was used by Tom Sawyer and others as a red herring to cover up wholesale attacks on the LPYS by right-wing union leaders and the NEC.

The way the NEC have ignored their own consultation exercise into youth structures confirms this. An overwhelming 85 per cent rejected lowering the age limit. Yet the NEC are 'democratically' backing a proposal which got 0.5 per cent support! How can Party members have any confidence in

an NEC which treats their views with such contempt?

The abolition of the LPYS regions has even less support. The vast majority of submissions backed democratically elected Youth Campaign Committees, as an addition to, not a replacement for, the LPYS Regional and National Committees.

The NEC argues that regional LPYS structures be immediately abolished, to be replaced by regional campaign committees which will not be set up till some time in 1988! How, or if, they are to be elected is not even mentioned.

This proposal is a mixture of bureaucratic planning and malicious spite against the LPYS. It is part of the right-wing's strategy to close down regional Party offices and tamper with the women's sections and regional committees.

This over-centralisation must be vehemently opposed by all Party members.

Party members can be proud of the LPYS, who are planning a campaign to force the Tories to back down over YTS conscription, as two previous campaigns have succeeded in doing. The two constitutional amendments must be opposed by Party members and trade unionists, whose support the LPYS deserves.

Kicked out for being socialist

LABOUR'S SUICIDE tendency has further pursued its witch-hunt this year, oblivious to the Party's election defeat.

Militant supporters have been left almost alone in fighting them. With a few honourable exceptions, even the Party's left have failed to fight the right-wing assault on Party members' democratic rights.

Star Chamber

46 members have now been expelled since 1983, six in the last year. 19 cases are waiting to be heard by the Star Chamber of the National Constitutional Committee (NCC). Another 40 cases which could lead to expulsion are now being pursued in different constituencies. 19 Party members have injunctions stopping their local parties from expelling them.

The introduction of the NCC at last year's Party conference was supposed to give Party members a fairer hearing. *Militant* warned at the time that it would become a Star Chamber, rubber stamping expulsions. This has now been confirmed.

Those who have attended NCC hearings have been confronted by dossiers of malicious and fabricated charges. The defendants have not been allowed an adequate chance to challenge them or cross examine the witnesses for the prosecution. The NCC even has the right to decide which witnesses should be called on a defendant's behalf and how long they can defend themselves for.

A number of people have been expelled in their absence despite giving legitimate reasons for not attending hearings.

The witch-hunt has taken on a more sinister character over the last year. *Militant* supporters have been beaten up, had photographs taken of them selling *Militant*, and some have lost their jobs.

In some constituencies, spurred on by the behaviour of the Party leaders, fanatical right-wingers have tried to institute a reign of terror in some areas.

It has only been the stern resistance of the most committed fighters that has held back the spread of a much wider witch-hunt, accompanying the removal of the Party's socialist principles. The struggle to maintain Labour as a socialist party is also the battle to stop the witch-hunt and to get rid of the witch-hunting star chambers.

By Ken Smith.

Scottish 'model' excludes youth

THE NEC want to model Regional Youth Campaign Committees on the Scottish Youth Campaigns Committee. But this committee's 'success' is a myth.

None of the youth from the LPYS, Scottish Labour Students or trade unions are allowed to vote. Only the three Scottish Party Executive members have a vote. The union 'youth' are hand-picked appointees. Incredibly, the TGWU's representative is a 40-year old full-time official and NUPE's a 30-year old one!

The LPYS demands that union reps are youth, who are democratically elected from their unions.

Apart from organising Billy Bragg concerts during the 1986 Edinburgh festival, this body has talked much about campaigning but done very little. During its entire existence, this 'model' has not initiated a single campaign. It did not even issue a leaflet during the election. Despite being televised discussing a campaign around the Fowler Review, after the TV lights went out it did nothing to carry it out.

The Scottish Youth Campaigns Committee is simply being used as a means of shackling the enthusiastic activity of the LPYS.

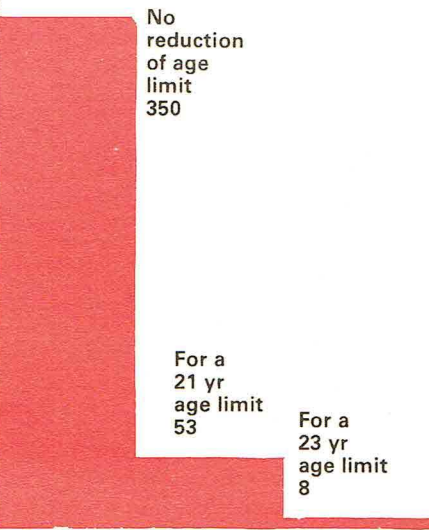
The LPYS welcomes the establishment of Regional Campaign Committees as an addition to LPYS regional bodies, as long as the trade unionists and students are elected and accountable to their organisations.

Without these democratic provisos, they will merely be talking shops like the Scottish 'model'.

The unions must develop national and regional youth structures, as the TGWU is beginning to, so as to involve the thousands of young workers who could become activists in them and in Labour's youth section.

Consultation on LPYS age limit ignored

(Results of questionnaire sent to all affiliated organisations and Party branches.)



LABOUR PARTY staff demonstrate against threatened redundancies. The cost of the NCC shows the misplaced priorities of Labour's officials. In the first year of its existence, a staggering £100,000 has been spent on running it. On top of this a quarter of a million was spent on the Liverpool inquiry and expulsions. But now the Party claims to be in a dire financial crisis and wants to sack workers at Walworth Road.

Is PR the way to win?

"FROM LABOUR'S point of view, however, a commitment to electoral reform means one thing above all else. The party would have to abandon all hope of ever governing alone again...Is it not a sad fact that Labour's greatest feasible ambition is to deny the Tories outright victory next time?"

By Andy Beadle

This is the miserable pessimism of Labour's right. Peter Kellner, formerly of the New Statesman has embraced proportional representation. Ex-left, Robin Cook, also now backs electoral reform. And there are a number of resolutions on the agenda for Party Conference backing it.

Proportional representation is presented as some major extension of democracy. The Thatcher government received 42 per cent of the votes, but won 59 per cent of the seats. Would it not be more democratic for parties to be allotted a number of seats more in keeping with the votes they gain?

A supporter of electoral change wrote in the Guardian: "Our present electoral system produces governments which represent only a minority of the electorate". Too true—a tiny minority of bankers, landlords and capitalists.

From the standpoint of the labour movement, there are far more important and menacing threats to the full enjoyment of workers' democratic rights, than the method of counting the votes. What about the Tory monopoly of the press, and the media? Who voted for the owners of the big capitalist monopolies who finance the Tories? They wield more power than any democratically elected Labour government.

'Spycatcher' Peter Wright has exposed just how little democratic control Labour ministers can exert over the security services. And the same applies to those at the head of the other arms of the capitalist state—the police, army and judiciary.

What Labour needs is not electoral change, but fighting socialist policies that can inspire working class voters, those in and out of

work, low paid and better paid.

Implicit in the support for PR is coalitionism, or a minority Labour government tolerated by other parties. Either way it means a parliamentary agreement between Labour and parties of capitalism, inevitably on their terms. Perhaps that explains the enthusiasm of Kellner, an arch opponent of further nationalisation and full blooded socialism. His plan is "to embrace electoral reform and construct a radical alliance with the Liberals". But now when the Alliance is in disarray, there could be no better time to win away their voters instead of even contemplating compromises with their leaders or proportional representation.

Unfortunately Arthur Scargill also supports proportional representation. But it involves if anything erecting an extra difficulty for Labour winning an outright majority.

Armed with a real socialist programme Labour could overcome all the obstacles placed in its path, and clear the way for the extension and protection of full democracy.

North West LPYS Regional Committee Militant Supporters
Labour needs a fighting, democratic, socialist youth movement

Chorlton LPYS
The youth will need a fighting socialist lead!

WITHINGTON LPYS
Forward to socialism!

ECCLES LABOUR PARTY MILITANT SUPPORTERS
say keep Labour socialist We will win!

Labour councils must fight Tory cuts! Socialist greetings from
Manchester Labour Women's Council

Fielden Park College Labour Club

Fight YTS conscription! For a living grant for all FE students!

You can expel individuals, but you can't expel ideas
BLACKBURN MILITANT SUPPORTERS
Still fighting for a party committed to socialist policies

CHILE SOCIALIST DEFENCE CAMPAIGN

Smash Pinochet! For a socialist Chile and a socialist world
Forward to workers' internationalism!

For details contact: CSDC sec. 1 Sevastio PO Box 448 Emma Street, Bethnal Green, London E2 1AA

STOKE CENTRAL LPYS
Stop Thatcher!
Youth Get Organised
Forward to Socialism!

COVENTRY YOUTH
say bring back the Red Flag!

USDAW London Metropolitan Branch
sends greetings to all delegates
Fight the Tories' immigration laws!

Greetings to Labour Party conference
SMASH ZIA
for a socialist Pakistan
The Struggle
voice of socialist forces in the Pakistan People's Party and labour movement
Contact: Box 46 136 Kingsland High Street London E8



Southern African Labour Education Project
sends fraternal greetings to the delegates and visitors at the British Labour Party Conference
★ Campaign to release Moses Mayekiso and all political detainees
★ Support workers' self defence in their struggle against vigilantes, Inkatha, and the State
★ Workers' sanctions to defeat the South African bosses

West Wales Militant Supporters
Kick out the Tories—not the socialists!

Swansea LPYS
This far and no further!
Fight the Tories not the socialists

NATIONAL MINERS' BROAD LEFT
call on all conference delegates to stand by socialist traditions of the movement
Reject 'new realism'
Support workers in struggle

East London workers unite against Tory cuts and privatisation
★ No cuts in jobs or services
★ No privatisation
★ No rate or rent increases to compensate for Tory cuts
★ For a genuine level of services based on need
★ Trade union and labour movement unity to beat off Tory attacks
From Militant supporters in Newham, Barking, Ilford, Havering, Dagenham

Glasgow District Council Militant Supporters
Defend local government
Stop privatisation!
Socialist polices now!

WITHINGTON Militant Supporters
Revolutionary greetings from Manchester

Garston CLP Militant supporters
Defend jobs and services!
Support the 47!

Bromsgrove Militant Supporters
Defend Bill Murray
Defend socialism!

Militant Supporters in SE Coventry Labour Party
send fraternal greetings for socialist policies mass campaigning and a fighting leadership!

No more witch hunts!
Forward to a socialist Labour government
Macclesfield Militant supporters

Fraternal greetings from
BRISTOL WEST LPYS
Defend Party democracy
Forward to socialism

Glasgow Shettleston CLP Militant supporters
From the struggles of the past we will build the future!
Socialist polices NOW!

Southampton Militant Supporters
call for a socialist Labour Party
Hands off the LPYS
Hands off democracy!

Australian Labor government

Hawke surrenders to the millionaires

IT IS ironic that, precisely as the most glaring evidence emerges of the bankruptcy of private ownership (see *Miners strike against jobs butchery*), Bob Hawke and Minister Bob Hawke and Labor's right-wing leaders are pressing for a round of Thatcherite privatisation.

By Laurence Coates

The call to sell off Telecom, Australian Airlines and Qantas was first raised by the business journal, *Financial Review*, within days of Hawke's re-election. But this surrender to big business pressure has sparked the fiercest row inside the Labor Party and the unions seen in five years of Labor government.

Every state Labor Party has unanimously rejected the proposals. Even supporters of the Prime Minister's own misnamed 'Labor Unity' faction have lined up in opposition.

The trade union federation ACTU has for the first time declared outright opposition to Hawke at its Annual Conference.

Unfortunately, despite this mood among the rank and file, leading left-wingers have not been prepared to mount a serious campaign of opposition.

Their 'strategy' has been to entrust the anti-privatisation campaign to the right-wing ACTU leaders, supporting their efforts to 'lobby' Hawke rather than to mobilise the



Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke.

members.

The flaws in this position are already emerging. ACTU leader Simon Crean (himself now a director of Qantas) is beginning to backtrack. They now accept the need to "attract private capital into the public sector", and support a "minority shareholding" for private speculators.

This somersault, just weeks after the ACTU conference decision, will provoke enormous anger in the unions and the party.

Young Labor's New South Wales conference last month unanimously resolved to organise a meeting open to all party members to protest against the Hawke proposals.

The YL leadership subsequently refused to act on this resolution. But already sections of youth are taking their own initiatives to implement the resolution, and showing how the rank and file can be mobilised to stop the right wing.



'Let's stick together' was Labor's election slogan. Hawke has stuck close to millionaires like Rupert Murdoch.

THE MONTH after Thatcher's victory in Britain, Labor won its third successive election in Australia.

By Tony Cross

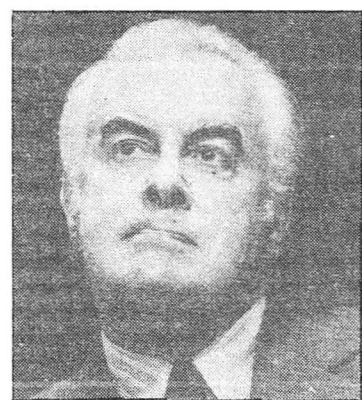
The Australian Labor Party prided itself on its slick campaign. Party leader, Bob Hawke, avoided what he called "irresponsible promises".

The British Labour right-wing may try to glean some comfort from the Australian result. But the record of the Australian leadership in office tells a different story.

Capitalists throughout the world comment with glee on the Labor government's readiness to kow-tow to big business. Especially Prime Minister Hawke and Treasurer (the equivalent of Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer) Paul Keating have won their applause.

Journalist John Pilger recently revealed how Hawke started building close personal links with top bosses when he was supposed to be representing workers at the head of the Australian TUC. Hawke brags about his wealthy "mates". British workers would be shocked to learn who they are.

Most notorious is none other than Rupert Murdoch. Murdoch's Australian papers had campaigned against the earlier Labor government of Gough Whitlam, which was toppled in 1975 in a constitutional coup by the Governor General, the



Former Labor Prime Minister Gough Whitlam.

Queen's representative in Australia. Shortly afterwards, Hawke had a secret meeting with Murdoch and laid the basis for their future collaboration.

British printers sacked by Murdoch would be further outraged to hear of another of Hawke's associates: Sir Peter Abeles, owner of TNT, the transport firm that carried scab newspapers through their picket-lines every night, and helped to defeat the unions at Wapping.

Other dubious friends of Hawke are broadcasting tycoon Kerry Packer, and the man who bought his television network, Alan Bond. Bond recently bought up most of Australia's gold-mines.

Pilger reports that even Packer was embarrassed that Hawke was "so damned deferential in public" at a recent 'Businessman of the Year' beano.

One of the reasons Hawke

MOST WORRYING of all the revelations about Hawke are the contents of a leaked CIA document.

It says that Hawke was involved in the constitutional coup against Whitlam's Labor government. He had "considerable influence over the timing of Whitlam's dismissal", says the document.

While categorising Whitlam as a "security risk" to the interests of imperialism, the CIA regarded Hawke as "the best qualified figure" for Labor leader.

Straight after the dismissal Hawke was the main agent in quelling the eruption of spontaneous protest strikes. As TUC leader, he called upon workers to 'cool it' and return to work.

cultivates these grasping money-maniacs is that they dominate the Australian media.

Murdoch controls 60 per cent of Australia's newspaper circulation. A Media Bill passed last May allowed a similar monopolisation to take place in commercial TV.

The Murdoch/Packer media reciprocated by backing Hawke in the last election. Indeed most big capitalists backed the return of a Labor government at this stage.

Hawke's re-election was mainly because of the loyalty of the working class and their fear of the savage attacks promised by the opposition Liberals. Despite this, some Labor voters abstained in

The Whitlam government's dismissal was a warning to the labour movement in Britain as well as in Australia. It showed that the monarchy is not a neutral force above politics, but is prepared to use its power to dismiss democratically elected governments in the interests of big business. It also appears that the notorious CIA had inside knowledge of the plots against Whitlam.

The Australian labour movement would be well-advised to have an inquiry into the allegations that its present leader was involved. The findings of such an inquiry would be important for the British labour movement, too.

protest at the government's right-wing policies in areas where they were confident Labor would win or where it stood no chance.

Big business, however, wanted Labor re-elected at this stage because Hawke's government has cut back living standards in a way that would have been impossible for a government to which workers felt no loyalty.

As one grovelling Labor minister told the bosses: "remember while the accord was delivering low wages, Thatcherite confrontationism in the UK was failing to achieve its main aim of lower real wages, despite unemployment rates in excess of 12 per cent."

Miners strike to stop job butchery

BOB HAWKE'S supposedly blissful 'accord' with Australia's trade unions was shaken earlier this month by a week-long miners' strike. Thirty thousand coal miners walked out to mark the beginning of a campaign of industrial action to prevent a Macgregor-style butchering of the industry.

Faced with falling prices, Australia's private coal bosses want a ten per cent cut in costs and 3,000 job losses. Night shifts and public holiday working, stamped out more than 50 years ago, are now back on the agenda.

Nearly two million metric tonnes of production were lost during the action in this busiest month for exports.

Unfortunately, the leadership of the wider trade union movement have offered no support to the miners' struggle. The most that Labor Prime Minister Hawke was prepared to do is negotiate a one-month 'truce' between the workforce and employers, which the bosses soon broke by laying off men.

Miners' leaders are demanding a 'National Coal Authority' to fix coal prices—in effect, a bosses' cartel. But only nationalisation under workers' management could really ensure the industry's future.

Meanwhile the bosses have been pampered. Like Thatcher, Hawke has encouraged 'entrepreneurs' to squander the long-term interests of the capitalist economy for the sake of their personal short-term gain.

Australia now has the third highest foreign debt in the world. Seventy per cent of this is owed by Australian capitalists who have borrowed abroad to finance take-overs. The Hawke government has encouraged this dangerous process by allowing tax deductions on the interest they have to pay.

The bosses are happy to let Labor take the odium that goes with anti-working class policies and its attempts to deal with an increasingly unhealthy economy.

But workers' patience will not last indefinitely. The miners are on the brink of a national strike. Other workers are likely to move into action as happened in Britain towards the end of the Callaghan Labour government. Then the British bosses turned to Thatcherism to tackle the workers head on.

When Hawke's government can no longer restrain workers' demands, the capitalists will turn against it. Despite Hawke's disgusting servility, they will reject Labor and form an openly pro-big business government.

These experiences will be the hard school in which the Australian workers will learn the need for a clear socialist programme and a leadership committed to it.

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THE SARMCOL WORKERS CO-OPERATIVE PRESENTS

THE LONG MARCH

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The Sarmcol workers' group will be performing at Labour Party conference on 27 September.

Labour must act to free Mayekiso

TRADE UNIONISTS in Britain are mounting a major campaign to free Moses Mayekiso, General Secretary of the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa, (NUMSA, formerly MAWU) who is on trial in South Africa for high treason—a hanging offence.

By April Ashley

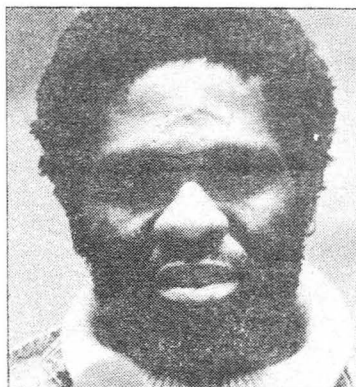
This is a deliberate attempt by the state to halt his political influence in his home town of Alexandra, and more significantly, in the trade unions as a member of the Central Executive Committee of COSATU.

Moses has a long record of fighting for his union members. He has been involved in MAWU since 1976. In 1983 he became MAWU's Transvaal secretary and played an important role in the unity talks that led to the formation of COSATU. He was one of the organisers of the magnificent Transvaal two-day general strike in November 1984, and was detained and charged with 'economic sabotage'. The charges were eventually dropped.

Class fighter

His work in the stayaway led him to join in community organisations in Alexandra, linking the workers and the local community.

When he was arrested and detained in March 1986, workers and youth demanded his release. In the Transvaal many thousands of MAWU members downed tools in protest. Soon after his release Moses, a strong advocate of direct links between workers internationally, came to Britain to



Moses Mayekiso speaking at LPYS conference, Easter 1986.

build support for the BTR strike.

"When I first joined the union," says Moses, "I thought the struggle was against whites. But I was wrong. Now I think the workers must struggle against their bosses and the government. People must come together in organisations. But the leaders must do what their members say."

By making an example of Moses Mayekiso, the regime hope to intimidate others from following down this road. They will fail.

MAWU's programme calls for the 'building of socialism under the leadership of the working class'. Its fighting approach has resulted in an explosion of growth. Following the merger with other metal workers' unions, NUMSA now has a membership of 125,000.

The labour movement must demand the release of Moses Mayekiso and all other political prisoners in South Africa, and prepare to back this demand with action.

Messages of support to NUMSA, PO Box 9451, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa. Protests to: SA Embassy, South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, London WC2.

Review of the play

THE STRIKE at BTR Sarmcol in South Africa is one of the great strikes of the decade in terms of sheer tenacity and courage.

By George Collins

A thousand black workers came out (legally) in May 1985 to enforce recognition of their union, MAWU—now amalgamated into the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (NUMSA). The company, owned by the British multinational BTR, responded by sacking the entire workforce.

Since that time the workers have campaigned for reinstatement and union recognition. They have taken the struggle to the local community, to the wider labour movement—with a brilliantly successful one-day general stoppage in Pietermaritzburg in July 1985—and to the labour movement internationally.

They have also taken their case to the regime's Industrial Court, which upheld the bosses' ruthless action.

Month after month they have struggled, literally, for survival, forming cooperatives to organise food supplies, producing T-shirts and other articles for sale.

Through all this they have faced vicious attacks by the apartheid regime and its auxiliaries, the reactionary Inkatha vigilantes led by Chief Gatsha Buthelezi.

Hundreds have been arrested. On 5 December 1986, large gangs of vigilantes invaded Mpophomeni township where the Sarmcol workers live, shouting "Down with the strike!" Twenty people were wounded on the streets. Three shop stewards, as well as a worker's daughter, were abducted, tortured and killed.

One of the murdered workers was Simon Ngubane, author of *The Long March*.

The enormous, pent-up energy, the down-to-earth realism, the humour and the towering determination of the South African working class, which have sustained the Sarmcol workers through two gruelling years, shine through this play—an enactment by a group of Sarmcol strikers of scenes from their struggle.

In a series of sketches, with dancing and songs from the working-class townships, the workers give us glimpses of the unfolding South African revolution, more vivid than pages of prose.

In one scene, for example, they are leafleting for their day of action. The responses they get reflect every layer of consciousness within the black population—"I support you very

The Long March

Forthcoming performances

September: 29—Brighton, Cop Hall. 30—Wales.
October: 1—Wales.
2,3—Bristol. 5—Leeds, Trades Club. 6—Sheffield, Memorial Hall. 7—Huddersfield. 8—Hull, Trade Union Centre. 9—York. 10—Barnsley. 12—Glasgow, Jordan Hill College. 13, 14, 15—Edinburgh, Traverse Theatre. 16 (pm)—Stirling, Trade Union Hall. (late pm)—Glasgow, Tran Theatre.
17—Glasgow, Maryhill Community Central Halls.
19, 20—Tyneside. 22, 23—Lancashire. 26-31—East Anglia,

including Cambridge, Norwich, Colchester.

November: 1—London, Brixton.

LABOUR MOVEMENT activists should make every effort to see this play and meet the players to discuss support. Labour parties, LPYS branches and shop steward committees should make block bookings and discuss plans of action to swing the weight of the British labour movement behind the strike and break BTR's opposition to trade union rights.

For more information about performances in your area, please phone 0533-712041.

Material on the struggle can be ordered from: SALEP, PO Box 77, London E8 4TB.

much because I'm black") and the students ("One day!! No, man, make it at least two weeks!!") to the middle-class types who don't want to know.

And the revolutionary mood awakened by the struggle is shown by a woman's response to the men who come to repossess the strikers' furniture: "That has stopped a long time ago. No more accounts, no more rents."

Continued financial and material support is essential to sustain the workers.



BTR chief 'Sir Owen Green' tells 'Thatcher': "Politics and economics are the same Maggie! You're getting too soft, Maggie!"

But determined solidarity action is needed to smash BTR's stubborn and reactionary refusal to meet the workers' demands—by COSATU, the trade union federation uniting 750,000 South African workers, and also by the trade union leadership in Britain and other countries where BTR operates.

Armed defence organisation is essential to make Mpophomeni a no-go area for the armed, police-backed vigilantes, and safeguard the strikers' homes from murderous attacks. This danger faces workers in many parts of the country.

The youth have shown their

willingness to struggle shoulder-to-shoulder with the workers, and take the offensive against Buthelezi's gangsters; but a lead by COSATU and the African National Congress is essential.

Clearly, this struggle cannot be separated from the wider struggle of the black people of South Africa—overwhelmingly a working-class population—for an end to apartheid and capitalism.

The players, in their slogans, sum up the aspirations of millions of black workers and youth:

"Long live NUMSA! Long live COSATU! Long live socialism!"

The title of the play itself refers to the struggle for a socialist republic of South Africa, under the democratic rule of the mass of working people.

It is still not too late for the TUC and unions organising BTR plants in Britain to make a serious effort to put the screws on BTR management to withdraw their support from the South African managers and order a climbdown. Campaigning by the Southern African Labour Education Project (SALEP) since 1985 in a series of BTR plants has shown the potential for action.

The TUC should encourage maximum attendance by workers at this outstanding play, organise block bookings from BTR plants and the holding of workplace meetings, in laying the basis for a real campaign.

The conviction and confidence of the thousand Sarmcol strikers and their families, who have defied the apartheid regime for over two years, who have sent their emissaries halfway round the world to build support for their struggle, should remind the British labour leaders of their duty.

TUC conference votes direct links

AT THE TUC conference in Blackpool delegates voted overwhelmingly in favour of a resolution by the print union SOGAT calling for direct links with sister unions in South Africa.

In the past, the right wing of the movement along with the Communist Party have consistently argued against direct links. The adoption of this resolution therefore can be seen as an historic victory. It is also a complete vindication of the British marxists' call for direct links with South African workers. As one delegate pointed out the fight against apartheid is inseparable



from the fight against capitalism. Now the resolution has been passed it is important that it be implemented. With Britain the biggest single investor in South Africa, direct links are a concrete example of assisting workers there. A blow against apartheid is a victory for British workers too.

Strike in Alberta

A STRIKE has broken out amongst building labourers and carpenters in Edmonton and Southern Alberta, Canada. This is an industry where unions were smashed a couple of years ago through vicious anti-union laws. The unorganised workers walked off the job on 20 August demanding wage increases and union recognition. A more detailed article will follow. Please send messages of support to: Calgary Dist. Council of Carpenters, 301 10th St., North West Calgary, Alberta. T2N 1V5 Canada

Shooting to kill

Dear Comrades,

A recent article in *Militant Irish Monthly* "RUC shoot to kill joyriders" once again highlights the Rambo-style policing presently operated by sections of the security forces in Northern Ireland.

Not only were two teenage lads lucky to escape with their lives when the stolen car they were in was riddled with automatic fire from an RUC patrol in an unmarked car, but it seems half the population of Hamill Street were also fortunate not to be killed as round after round rattled in all directions.

The RUC statement justifying their 'Bonnie and Clyde' actions claiming the car 'may have been used by the occupants for a bomb attack in the city centre' is a pathetic cover-up for the 'shoot to kill' policy.

Even if it were true then

to deliberately open fire on a car believed to be packed with explosives in a street full of men, women and children shows yet again a total disregard for people's safety.

There was nothing stopping the RUC and their mobile back-ups from following this supposed 'car bomb' to its destination and arresting the occupants as they withdrew on foot. To my knowledge no paramilitary organisation in Northern Ireland has yet resorted to suicide bombings.

The Labour and Trade Union Group in Northern Ireland must be supported by the entire Labour movement in their call for an end to all repression as well as sectarianism.

Yours fraternally

Bob Harker
Gateshead East Labour Party

Ken for yuppies

Dear Comrades,

Ken Livingstone recently stated that in order to win an election the Labour Party must attract the Yuppie vote as the GLC had

done.

Perhaps Ken's desire to get closer to the Yuppies is the reason why he takes the full £22,000 or more, plus perks, and refuses, point blank, to take a wage resembling anything like that of the workers he is supposed to represent.

Yours fraternally

Jon Driscoll
Middlesbrough

No good just asking

Dear Comrades,

Stoke-on-Trent Labour city council have published a document which they will be presenting to the Department of Environment.

It reveals that 12,000 homes in the city are unfit to live in or lack at least one basic amenity and the council is unable to keep up with housing renovations.

28,000 council homes need urgent repair, the council can only carry out 100 repairs a year and it will

be the year 2000 before they would all be completed.

Even with the sale of council houses which has brought in £30 million, the council had to give out £17 million for mortgages.

The private sector will not co-operate with the council over the building of new homes due to low house prices in Stoke-on-Trent.

This year the council asked the government for £22.5 million and only got

£6.6 million. Next year they will be asking for £27.6 million. Our council has not yet learnt that you will never get anywhere by merely asking a Tory government for money, you need to mobilise the Labour and trade union movement and fight for what is ours.

Yours fraternally
Ms M Al-Baldawi
Secretary Stoke central Women's section (personal capacity)

Throwing it away

Dear Comrades,

The leader of the Labour council in Birmingham recently sent a letter to the NALGO Executive meeting in which he explained that as far as privatisation was concerned, this Labour council would "not break the law of the land".

Following this a job advert appeared on a circular for the post of Principal Accountant (£15,567-£16,773) where we find amongst the duties of the post "you will also be involved in the implementation of the proposed competitive tendering legislation for Refuse Collection, Street Cleansing and Repair and Maintenance of vehicles".

Not only will they refuse to break the law to defend jobs, they will help the legislation through.

Yours fraternally

Ian Leech
NALGO shop steward

Cost of right's attacks

Dear Comrades,

I was appalled to hear that the Labour Party leadership has decided that it cannot afford to retain all the staff at Walworth Rd and that forty must go.

But what really makes me seethe is the way the leadership squanders the money it has.

On the weekend of 12/13 September a hearing was held in Cardiff to finalise the expulsion of two socialists. By my calculation it cost about £600.

So did the right wing get the result it wanted? No, not yet. They spent £600 deciding to adjourn the case until 10/11 October.

I'm sure a clerical worker at Walworth Rd would have been grateful for another month's salary instead of it being put into the coffers of the hotels in Cardiff and British Rail.

Yours fraternally
Member of Bridgend Labour Party

Party joke

Dear Comrades,

I work at Alvis Ltd in Coventry and am senior steward for APEX. Recently I was called to a meeting by the personnel manager, Frank Devine, who was the SDP candidate against Dave Nellist in the general election.

When I got to the meeting some of the reps were already there. Frank Devine was telling them about the SDP split. He said that he was following David Owen and joked that the new party would call itself the Bolshevik Party because it was the minority.

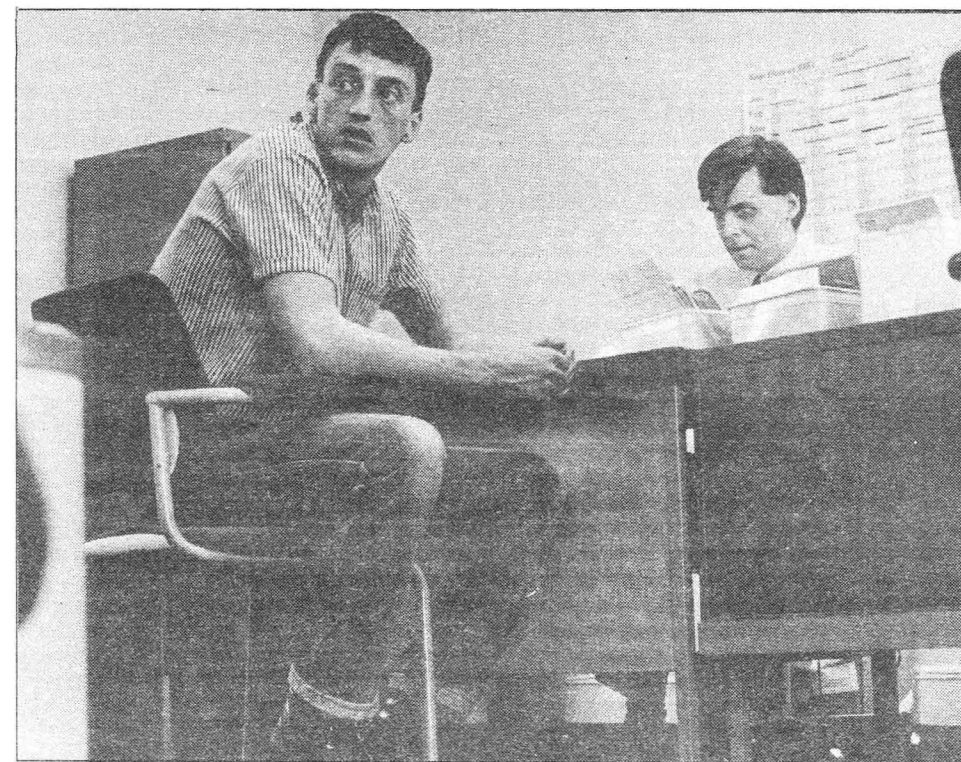
One of the stewards present quietly asked if a more appropriate name might be the Blue Party because there's no recognisable difference between them and the Tories. Could *Militant* come up with something better for the new party?

Yours fraternally
Steve Gee
Nuneaton

Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism.

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



Unemployed youth from Liverpool gets temporary job in London.

Classified ads

20p per word, minimum 10 words. Semi-display £3 per column centimetre. Three weeks for the price of two. Militant meeting ads free. All advertisement copy should reach this office by first post on Friday, the week before publication.

□ "Militant for Labour and Youth" enamel stud badges now available £1 each. Red plastic fighting fund collecting tins £1 each. A3 size posters of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky and Luxemburg, 50p each. Stickers available in rolls of 250; 'Kick out the Tories', 'No slave labour on YTS', £2.50 per roll. All available from fighting fund dept, 3/13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB. For all orders add 25% p&p.

SALEP publications

Sifuna Konke Marxist study guide (3 sections)..... £1+p&p
Isolate the South African Bosses SALEP broadsheet..... 20p+p&p
SALEP's socialist education work—why does the Labour Party NEC want to ban it?..... 40p+p&p
ASINAMALI pamphlet exposing the bosses' arguments for paying poverty wages..... 30p+p&p

Videos

All videos for hire £10 LPYS and Women's sections. £20 LP's and trade unions. The launch of COSATU! 1985 launch of the Congress Of South African Trade Unions.
South African Workers Struggle! Film of chemical workers' struggle against the relocation of their factory to a cheap labour bantustan by a major multinational; NUM education caucus and the 1987 NUM Congress.
Women fight apartheid and capitalism! Footage of women in struggle in the 1950's and of strike action in 1986.
Mayfair Working class whites in a suburb of Johannesburg struggle against government plans to relocate them under the Group Areas Act.
Goldfields Super-exploitation of SA mineworkers by a major British multinational. We Live Like Dogs The life and conditions of a black South African mineworker. Please return videos immediately after use.
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September edition of Militant Irish Monthly out now.

Articles on Socialist candidates standing in Belfast city council by-elections. A preview of this month's Southern Irish Labour Party Conference. The latest situation in the North and South and lots more.

Cost 25p or £1 solidarity price. Get your copy from your local Militant seller or from Militant, 3/13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB.

On Maggie's farm

Dear Comrades,

The chance to accumulate a few possessions is not easy. My friend and I had managed to get a few things together—only to be burgled.

I spent an afternoon at the social claiming a special needs payment for the £40 dole that was stolen from our home together with a colour television and 400 7" singles that had taken years to collect.

What's most galling is that the youths who stole from us are probably in the same boat as ourselves, unemployed or low paid.

The social was the same as always—murder. Aggra-

vated school leavers were running all over town from DHSS to D of E offices, discovering that unemployment benefit is not handed out as easily as the papers tell them.

The two young civil servants had patiently been dealing with my claim, along with dozens of others when a tramp tried to claim his second giro of the day.

The young woman behind the counter tried to explain that he would receive £5 still due to him at his hostel next day.

He wanted the fiver there and then. He made his point clear by calmly drawing a

fish filleting knife from his coat pocket and cutting his throat.

Amazingly the staff came from behind the counter, risking their lives, to offer First Aid. An ambulance was called and he was taken away. (Without Giro).

If he was stupid enough to attempt to kill himself for £5 fair enough (he was certainly drunk enough). But why should a 20 year old woman have to come to work and deal with situations like that for £75 a week?

Yours fraternally
Nick Walker and John Rathbone
Grimsby

Golding feels pressure

Dear Comrades,

What is the present position of John Golding ex witch-hunting Labour MP and now leader of the National Communications Union?

In the past this arch right-winger could hardly be distinguished from the Tories he supposedly opposed. However, at the TUC conference in Blackpool, it would appear that Mr Golding had moved slightly leftwards!

On the debate over share ownership with particular reference to his own industry, British Telecom, he was vociferous in his call to

congress to "seek an end to privatisation and press for British Telecom to be renationalised to ensure a centrally-planned communications strategy for Britain".

He went on to argue that individual share ownership inside BT did not give workers effective control of the company as had been claimed in some quarters.

It left me wondering whether John Golding had really had a change of heart, or whether under pressure from an increasingly left-dominated NCU executive and growing



John Golding.

Broad Left grouping he had opportunistically decided to say the things he thought his left-moving members would want to hear.

Yours fraternally
Dave Pollock
Scarborough

Pay as you learn

FOR MANY, the image of a student is a scarf-wearing, duffel-coated snob with a *Brideshead Revisited* accent, or else the pot-bellied beer-monster who spends his time drunk and singing rugby songs. When I arrived at university last year these illusions were soon shattered.

The first glimpse I had of the crisis in education was when I received my sixth or seventh rejection from university. The frustration of the admissions tutor was plain in his letter: "I am sorry to disappoint you, but I cannot conjure university places from the uncaring heart of an anti-academic government."

Last September I arrived at Salford University. Most students here are battling against financial constraints, with their families finding it more and more difficult to pay the parental contribution which has risen by 207 per cent since the Tories came to power.

"Since 1979 the grant has fallen in value by a massive 21 per cent."

The grant soon disappears, and when it does the banks are ready to ensnare students in heavy debts.

Since 1979 the grant has fallen in value by a massive 21 per cent but that figure does not take into account the huge increase in accommodation charges or the cost of books.

A major expense is accommodation. For over £1000 a year from a grant of £1900 (provided that parents pay their full contribution) Salford students are allocated tiny rooms. The best rooms have access to a bathroom and kitchen shared between 11 or 12 others. The worst are in dismal tower blocks. In the second year the university provides no housing and students are pushed into the clutches of unscrupulous landlords or forced to live miles away.

As my course progressed we were inundated with book lists. We are expected to fork out hundreds and hundreds of pounds on books each year.

While the rest of us are being held back by lack of books those students being sponsored by big business are allocated thousands of pounds' worth of equipment each.

If many students can't afford books, even more can't afford a decent diet.

By Paul Richards
University of Salford
Labour Club

Meat becomes a luxury. The meals provided in the Halls of Residence are of poor quality, unhealthy and unimaginative.

The Tories' solution to the financial problems of students is to replace grants with so-called 'top-up' loans. This will force many students out of education and tie education even more closely to big business.

The myth that students spend most of their time at parties was also soon dispelled. Not many students can afford to go out to the pub regularly and even if they had the money they couldn't spare the time.

Another major expense is travel. For those who come from far afield the basic six journeys a year to and from Salford are crippling. (This used to be paid by the government but the Tories abolished that in 1984). Any further travel becomes impossible and for many the campus becomes a prison.

As the economic crisis deepens, the living standards of students will fall even further. Salford has already suffered a 44 per cent cut in funding. The National Union of Students (NUS) must defeat the Tories' attempts to introduce student loans and demand a living grant for all students. This must be linked to the struggle to end low pay. A real living grant would open up education to all workers.

As the Tories snatch back the post-war concessions so more and more working class youth will be denied the chance of Higher Education. It is the duty of students all over the country to fight these attacks on education and strive for a Labour government to carry out socialist education policies.

A living grant not loans. * For the full NUS grant claim—£400 increase now and £35 a week minimum grant for all FE students. * A living grant equal to 2/3 average earnings 52 weeks a year. * End low pay. A living wage for all workers.

S African meeting ban

LABOUR STUDENTS in the West of Scotland were shocked last week when Charles Gray, leader of Strathclyde region's Labour council used provisions in the Tory anti-student union 'code of conduct' to ban a series of Labour Club meetings on South Africa.

The ban, stopping the use of college halls and lecture theatres, was imposed because the speaker was a supporter of SALEP and could in his eyes be controversial.

The ban was too late to stop a meeting at the College of Commerce where 85 attended. At Langside and Cardonald colleges petitions were immediately organised and a campaign launched to contact the press and prominent figures in the labour movement.

Cardonald students defied the ban on Thursday when 120 came to hear about the Campaign for a Socialist South Africa. More details next week.



Students demonstrate in London for living grant.

Student union officers under attack

THREE DEMOCRATICALLY elected student union officers in Liverpool have had their wages withheld by the new Labour Council since 1 August.

By a Militant reporter

Despite opposition from the left in the Labour group, the ruling right wing majority with the support of the Liberals, forced through a decision to withhold the wages in the July council meeting.

This unwarranted interference in the democratic procedures of the student union has national implications. Recognising this and under pressure from their members NUS leaders have threatened legal action against the council.

Ominous

An ever increasing number of Labour Party wards and constituencies and trade unions in Merseyside have condemned the council and demanded the immediate restoration of the sabbaticals' wages. This dispute opens up more ominous questions about whether Labour leaders with a £40 million shortfall to make up, are contemplating cuts in education.

However, under growing pressure, the right wing leadership have indicated that they are prepared to settle.



Collette Williams, one of the three SU officers to have wages withheld.

Unfortunately the emergency Education Chair's meeting which was to agree to restore the wages has now been postponed twice.

NUS must now use to full advantage their strong legal position. Already queues of students with grant, housing and welfare problems are inundating student union officials. It is intolerable for this situation to continue. Within a short

space of time the labour leaders could see lobbies and demonstrations of thousands of FE students outside the council.

With the prospect of a battle over privatisation of education with the Tory government, the Labour council should immediately restore the wages and begin to mount a campaign against privatisation, alongside students and trade unions.

Link up with low paid workers

RECENTLY THE Nupe journal highlighted the plight of low paid manual workers in universities. In a series of interviews with the staff at Sussex University, the journal explained that take home pay of under £70 for a 39 hour week is common. Many workers have to claim state benefits to survive.

The Nupe branch secretary there said: "Most of our members are in a state of perpetual financial anxiety .. we are in fact working for poverty wages. We fall within any definition of poverty."

University porters earn £92 before stoppages for a 39 hour week. Cleaners take home £40 for a 20 hour week. One groundsman on £69 said: "Our wages are disgusting. You just can't live on it." A housekeeper in the university explained that she had to get up at 6 every morning to start work at 7.30 for a miserable £61 a week for 32 1/2 hours!

If students are to fight to win an increase in the grant they must link up with low paid workers in the colleges, polytechnics and universities.

Housing benefits to go

BY THE end of the academic year 1987/8 the Tories aim to take away students' rights to claim housing benefit during the long vacation. It is even possible that the right to claim supplementary benefit in the summer could be withdrawn. For many students this will mean a loss of income of about £250 a year.

The Fowler Review, initiated in 1985 by Norman Fowler, then Secretary of State for Social Services, has already taken away the right for students to claim unemployment benefit in the short vacations. Nor can they claim housing benefit for college accommodation during this period.

The college accommodation crisis forces thousands of students into private accommodation which, given the student grant, they can only afford with the housing benefit.

The Tories appear to be committed to realising their aim of "removing students from dependence on social security benefits." (as they stated in a report to parliament December 1985). But they aim to fill the gap with loans—we must fight for a living wage.

Photo: Dave Sinclair.

Industrial Reports

Now step up overtime ban

FROM WESTOE Colliery, South Shields, a miner commented to one of our sellers: "You can always tell when things are picking up, because the *Militant* sellers appear at the pit," and another said, "All the lads in the pit are chuffed. Everybody thinks if the *Militant's* are there we must be back in the front line of battle. It's lifted everybody's confidence."

Durham area

DISGUST WAS the feeling of delegates at a Durham Area NUM meeting on Saturday, according to Stan Pearce, the delegate from Wearmouth. They were incensed by the attitude of British Coal, pursuing the 'Tyrant's charter' disciplinary code.

Militant asked Stan about the effectiveness of the overtime ban and the next moves which the NUM had to make.

"I don't feel the ban is going far enough—and only faceworkers are paying for it. We need a full overtime ban with minimal safety cover. The NEC isn't meeting for another month. It must meet sooner. We are calling for the re-convening of the NEC to take the Durham resolution calling for an effective overtime ban. If British Coal throw down the gauntlet by trying to impose 'flexible working' we must pick it up."



Kent miners on the march during the great strike.

Littleton colliery

"EVERYONE'S ANGRY about what's happening," Nick Platek, a branch committee member at Littleton Colliery, Staffs, told us. "The NUM committee here is meeting weekly with the Power Group committee. The general attitude is that this is okay as a first stage

but it isn't harsh enough. The blokes want a full overtime ban. We'll be calling on the National Executive for that."

Another miner at Littleton described the overtime ban as 'Mickey Mouse'.

Snowdown

ACCORDING TO Peter Jaconelli everyone at Snowdown Colliery in Kent has been fed-up for three or four months over the disciplinary code.

"We've given the Coal Board enough. They're not going to take any more. We've been told 90 men must go to keep the pit open, but even then they've told us there is no guarantee it will be open in 12 months time. As usual they say there are 'economic reasons' for closure."

UDM losing members

RICHARD ASHLEY, a member of Ere-wash LPYS, met his miner cousin who was previously a member of the UDM at a party recently. He came over to Richard telling him that he had left the company union to join the NUM along with 25-30 others in North Nottinghamshire.

His reason? "The UDM was nothing but a gaffers union, controlled by the Tories." So much for the *Sun's* announcement that the UDM's influence is growing!

Longbridge strike

ON WEDNESDAY 16 September, management at Austin Rover's Longbridge plant sacked a deputy senior steward, Colin Rolinson and another worker Chris Maguire for a minor clocking offence (3-5 minutes).

This led to anger amongst the workforce of Cab Two, where Colin worked, due to the inconsistency of management. There have been no sackings for clocking offences for two years at Longbridge. Only a few weeks ago 15 paint sprayers were let off with suspensions for more serious offences.

The real reason Colin Rolinson was sacked was because of his union activities. The workers realised this and rejected the Works

Committee recommendation to delay any action until appeal. On 17 September 200 workers, mainly trimmers in Cab two, downed tools and walked out after a union meeting.

Defiant

They left in a defiant mood, shouting, singing, banging the track and hooting the horns of the cars on the track. They have voted to stay out until 28 September. Their action has halted production of the Rover 200 and at least another 250 workers have been laid off.

Management obviously miscalculated, expecting the mood to ebb with the week long Longbridge shut down holiday starting on 18

September. The visit of Graham Day and Lord Young, Minister for Industry on Friday was deeply embarrassing to the Rover Group and management sent out three threatening letters to the workers in 24 hours, trying to stop the strike.

At the moment there are waiting lists of 6 to 8 weeks for cars from Longbridge and this dispute is set to lose the company a lot of money. But through studying the recent dispute around the sacking of Darren Kelly the workers realise that the dispute must not remain isolated and there have been calls for a full shop meeting and an emergency shop stewards meeting to spread the action to the rest of the plant.



Austin Rover workers walking out at Cowley.

ASTMS/TASS merger conferences

BOTH ASTMS and Tass at their conferences at the weekend voted in favour of merger. £22 million in membership subs, the biggest union in insurance and aerospace and in the top three of engineering unions. That would be the prospect if the membership vote in favour in the ballots to be held between 9 November and 4 December.

The vote at the Astms conference was 176,080 in favour and 30,980 against, whilst only two delegates were opposed at the Tass conference.

Ron Thomas, from Avon branch, made the point that the merger was needed but that it was not size but effectiveness which determined whether a union defended its members and therefore a democratic rule book, including a branch-based conference and elected, accountable officials, would be vital.

Militant supporters and other lefts in both unions will be campaigning vigorously in the workplaces and the branches to get the maximum support for the merger although the left must get together to ensure that the new union can be provided with the rules, policies and leadership which will enable it to meet the challenges of the future.

By Dave Clark
(Liverpool Shipping and Freight branch, personal capacity)

BTR—solidarity with Metalastik

500 WORKERS are out on strike at the Metalastik Vibration Control System (Dunlop) factory in Leicester.

In a show of international solidarity, striking workers from South African BTR Sarmcol Plant (part of the same multinational) are taking part on the picket line on Tuesday. The South African workers are in Leicester with a play about their dispute and are returning the support Leicester Metalastik workers have given them in the past.

Dave Richardson, deputy T&GWU convenor, spoke to Steve Score: "The strike is 100 per cent solid, though four workers tried to get in today

and were persuaded to turn back. It began over new machinery being brought in. We would like to make it clear that we are fully in favour of new machinery, provided no jobs are lost.

"Our dispute is over the way management select who works on the new machinery. We believe it should be done on a length of service basis. However the management want to pick and choose and arrange the conditions, including 'general attitude of the worker'. This could mean anything and could be used to attack the union, just like the coal board tried to victimise NUM activists.

"Our branch has already been labelled 'revolu-

tionary' by the chair of BTR, Sir Owen Green, for supporting South African workers. We also suspect racism could become a factor in preventing some members from being used on the new machinery. We have already had the Commission for Racial Equality here in the past, investigating selection and promotion in the staff. We actually have a majority of Asian members and don't want the management to use race to split black and white workers.

"Those prohibited from using the new machinery would obviously be the first threatened if redundancies come. If we lose this compulsory redundancies could be on the agenda."

Industrial Reports

Council workers fight back

London Bridge

"THE TORIES will not grant concessions unless the working class is mobilised to take them on." These were the words of surcharged Liverpool councillor Tony Mulhearn at a London Bridge conference of over 150 local authority stewards from 19 authorities.

Tony outlined some of the rich lessons of Liverpool City Council's epic campaign against the Tory Government between 1983-7, notable among which was the massive mobilisation of working class people in defence of homes, jobs and services.

Local authority workers

in London are now facing cuts because of Tory attacks and the capitulation of the "left" Labour councils. In the middle of TUC conference week, a resolution passed by the London Bridge conference was like a breath of fresh air: It called for opposition to cuts in jobs and services, opposition to privatisation and rent or rate increases to cover for Tory cuts, and support for a genuine level

of services based on need.

Action

Words must now be put into action. Joint shop stewards committees have to be strengthened or set up where they don't exist, in all the London boroughs. Most important, the campaign of explanation and preparation of all local authority workers has to start

now.

The London Broad Left Organising Committee conference (see advert) will be a good opportunity to build on the mood which exists amongst council workers.

London Bridge are planning a lobby for 28 October and a major demonstration in February (details to follow).

By Ian Page
ILEA Nalگو steward

Hackney council

HACKNEY COUNCIL leaders are recommending the 'path of compromise' to Saturday's Borough conference, which they admit "will certainly involve a rent increase above the level of inflation and the disposal of council assets...It may involve some kind of limited recruitment policy and a more flexible working arrangement with our workforce. It will require sophisticated tactics to deal with privatisation."

Already we have seen several committee meetings disrupted by angry tenants who have been told rents will be going up and long-awaited repairs will not be carried out.

Redundancies

Stewards have been warned by the Chief Executive that they will have to look at the possibility of compulsory redundancy. Building workers are in dispute with the council. These policies flow inevitably from the leadership's belief that there is no chance of a fightback.

Stewards and tenants have threatened to lobby the Town Hall on Saturday and efforts are being made to link up the workforce, tenants and councillors to ensure a coordinated fightback, through the Broad Left.

Up to 20 councillors are rumoured to be considering resignation rather than implement cuts, but we hope to win some of these to a properly organised opposition rather than them opt for the Pontius Pilate position.

The council leadership say we face 'a determined class enemy which has learned from its own mistakes.' What lessons have they learned?

By Lynne Faulkes
Hackney councillor

Liverpool NALGO Executive fudge

LIVERPOOL NALGO branch executive committee failed to take a position on the critical issue of re-determination. If the council went for this option it would mean handing over the City finances to Ridley and the Tory cuts machine. Thousands of jobs would be at risk.

A resolution from the City Engineers opposing re-determination was deferred. The resolution was called a 'quaso Militant plot' (sic) by a supporter of the Black Caucus. More importantly the Nalگو branch leaders, Peter Cresswell and Graham Burgess refused to commit themselves to a clear position in relation to the city's budget crisis. One member of the branch executive committee commented after the meeting: "Cresswell and Burgess have returned to their familiar positions of sitting on the fence."

It is vital that Nalگو adopt a clear and unequivocal position of opposing re-determination and cuts. Nalگو must now approach Labour councillors together with the other council unions to build a joint campaign in defence of jobs and services.

by Mick Whale



GMB branch five members lobbying Liverpool City Councillors.

Liverpool GMB victory

COUNCIL CEMETERY workers in Branch Five of the General and Municipal Workers' Union (GMB) have returned to work after winning their dispute with Liverpool City Council. Mick Whale spoke to members of the branch:

"The dispute was provoked by management, when they regraded seven drivers in the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), giving them a £10 a week increase. GMB drivers and the other TGWU drivers doing the same work had lost out. We put in a parity claim.

"We think the dispute was engineered by certain

councillors who wanted a showdown with us. For the first two weeks the council refused to meet us.

"When they finally did, it became clear that Alan Dean, deputy leader and chairman of the Industrial and Public Relations Committee was keen to settle, but other councillors seemed determined to frustrate a settlement.

"At this first meeting it was agreed that neither side could take action to escalate the dispute whilst talks were going on. Then just when we finally made some progress, the management tried to break the strike by asking grave-

diggers to carry out materials by wheelbarrow that would normally be carried by the striking drivers.

Concessions

"Even though they were taken off the clock, the diggers refused and the strike was solid. Once the management realised they could not use the diggers to break the strike, they made concessions and we were able to reach a compromise.

"Alan Dean agreed to pay the diggers who had been taken off the clock as soon as the dispute was settled. But Vicky Roberts

London Broad Left

MYRNA SHAW, deputy secretary of the Tower Hamlets Health District branch of NUPE, spoke to *Militant* (in a personal capacity) about working in the National Health Service and the importance of the Broad Left Organising Committee.

"Anyone involved in the NHS unions in Tower Hamlets must have noticed a hardening of attitudes amongst all health workers—not just the low paid. There is a readiness to take up the small issues which previously would have been ignored.

"This coincides with many of the Labour and trade union leadership having convinced themselves that further struggles in defence of jobs and services are useless.

"In Tower Hamlets, hospital cleaners are for the first time in my experience really sticking to their overtime ban, incensed by a local management that have kept their own bonuses whilst docking the cleaners' to keep the domestic tender 'in-house'.

"Nurses who have previously refused to take industrial action over pay and closures threatened to walk off wards if night security for patients and staff is not improved. Ward sisters come forward as stewards, admin and clerical workers see the threat of job 'flexibility'.

"What's the union going to do about it?" they ask. Why is the Nupe national leadership going against union policy, when they are recommending acceptance of a derisory pay offer. Our branch rejected the offer on the understanding that rejection nationally meant industrial action.

"We are restless, grumbling and stirring. What is lacking is the political understanding that it's capitalism and not just health cuts that kills.

"The London Broad Left Organising Committee conference provides a brilliant opportunity for workers in health, local authorities and elsewhere to come together to give the direction and leadership necessary to overcome our joint enemies".

'In-house' misery

HEALTH WORKERS are under attack from all sides. If it's not cuts then there is privatisation and all that that entails. Even if a contract stays 'in-house' that will probably mean worse conditions for the hospital worker.

A comment from hospital domestic Ruby Wells, who has been through the experience of tendering, sums up the problems faced by thousands.

"We only have one good wage packet between us. My husband is a porter at Newtown hospital and is low paid like me so I have to work. We haven't been able to afford a holiday since 1984 and now the bonus has gone I can't see us having one in the foreseeable future. My daughter is getting married in September and I've been saving a bit each week—but now I can't afford it. During the cold spell we had

in January, we had to run up big fuel bills. The gas bill alone was over £100 so we have had to pay it off in two parts. We've had to pay off the electricity in instalments too. It was hard managing on my wage before—but now it's impossible. The choice for us now is not between which luxury to do without, but which basic necessity comes first."

London Labour Movement Conference

Broad Left Organising Committee

Saturday 24 October York Hall, Old Ford Road, Bethnal Green, E2 10.30 am to 5.30 pm Speakers include John Macreadle and Tony Mulhearn Fee: £3 per delegate; £1.50 per visitor Return to BLOC, c/o 106 Draper House, Walworth Road, SE1 65X Please indicate if you require creche.

Militant

Labour conference LPYS meeting

Wednesday 30 September, 12.30-2. Lewes Room, Royal Albion Hotel, Old Steyne. Speakers include Linda Douglas, NEC. Invited speaker Peter Heathfield NUM.

Miners say step up the action

THE GLOVES are off in the mining industry. British Coal chairman Haslam has given the clearest indication yet of his plans.

By John Cunningham,
NUM Northumberland
Area Executive,
personal capacity

In his own words, the new code of conduct is to get rid of "troublemakers" (that is, union activists). Compulsory redundancies, further pit closures, and suspension of the five day week

are the order of the day.

The "new face of British Coal" seems like the old face without the plastic bag.

In the first financial quarter of 1986, before Haslam arrived, there were 112 disputes at coal producing collieries, but for the same period this year there have been 133.

Of a total of 146 disputes during the first 13 weeks of this financial year 57 have occurred in South Yorks, but the sharpest increase in militancy is in North Yorkshire with 30 disputes in the first quarter.

The massive 77.5 per cent vote for industrial action reflects the

feelings of the membership nationally. Even a majority of the most moderate section of the NUM, the Colliery Officials and Staff Association (COSA), voted for action. Feelings are running high.

Haslam and Co. are recognised as Tory marionettes. Board members' salaries have been doubled by the Government. Their total emoluments increased from £216,253 in 1985/86 to £546,099 in 1986/87.

Redeployment

Despite an unprecedented move by the NUM Executive to accept independent arbitration as binding in cases of dismissed miners, the board insist that nothing will be binding and that any sacked miners who are reinstated can be re-deployed to other collieries.

The Tories through their stooges want to privatise the industry for the benefit of a handful of capitalists. In the process they would like to destroy the NUM.

They would like to. But the miners are preparing for a bitter struggle against the code of conduct and the Wheeler Plan.

British Coal may well attempt to impose "flexible working" at one or more pits in the course of this dispute if any signs of weak-



At this year's Yorkshire miners' rally, Yorkshire miners have been increasingly angry at British Coal bosses' provocation.

- ★ Step up the overtime ban—minimal safety cover
- ★ Prepare for wider action
- ★ Prepare national strike against imposition of "flexible working"

ness, hesitation or division are apparent among the NEC or the Area leaders.

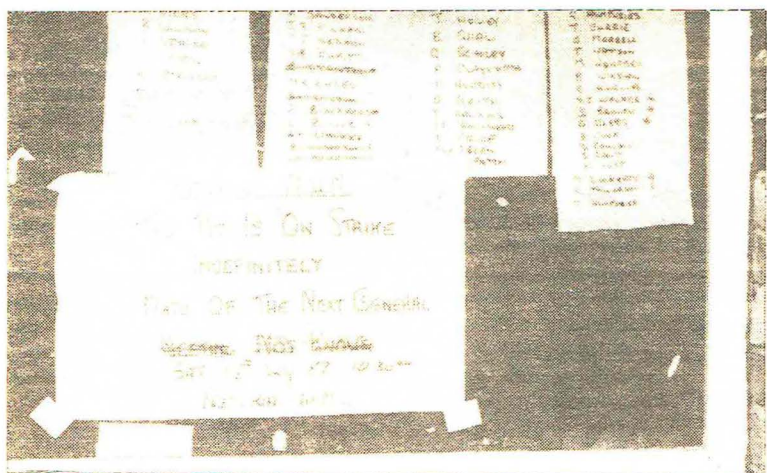
Such a move would have to be met with all-out strike action. The campaign on this issue should be undertaken now with open branch meetings and rallies addressed by the national officials, throughout the coalfields.

A national delegate conference with representation from every pit, branch or unit should be convened as the campaign develops. Thus all sections of the membership would be involved

and consulted.

In the meantime, the current overtime ban is seen as inadequate by the vast majority of miners. It must be stepped up immediately to include a ban on all maintenance work at weekends and all midweek overtime. Minimal safety cover should be provided. This would be a sharp answer to Haslam's threat to suspend the five day week agreement.

Weakness invites aggression. It is time to stand up and fight.



Frickley NUM office shows the militancy that Haslam's intransigence is fuelling.

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What we stand for

- 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.