

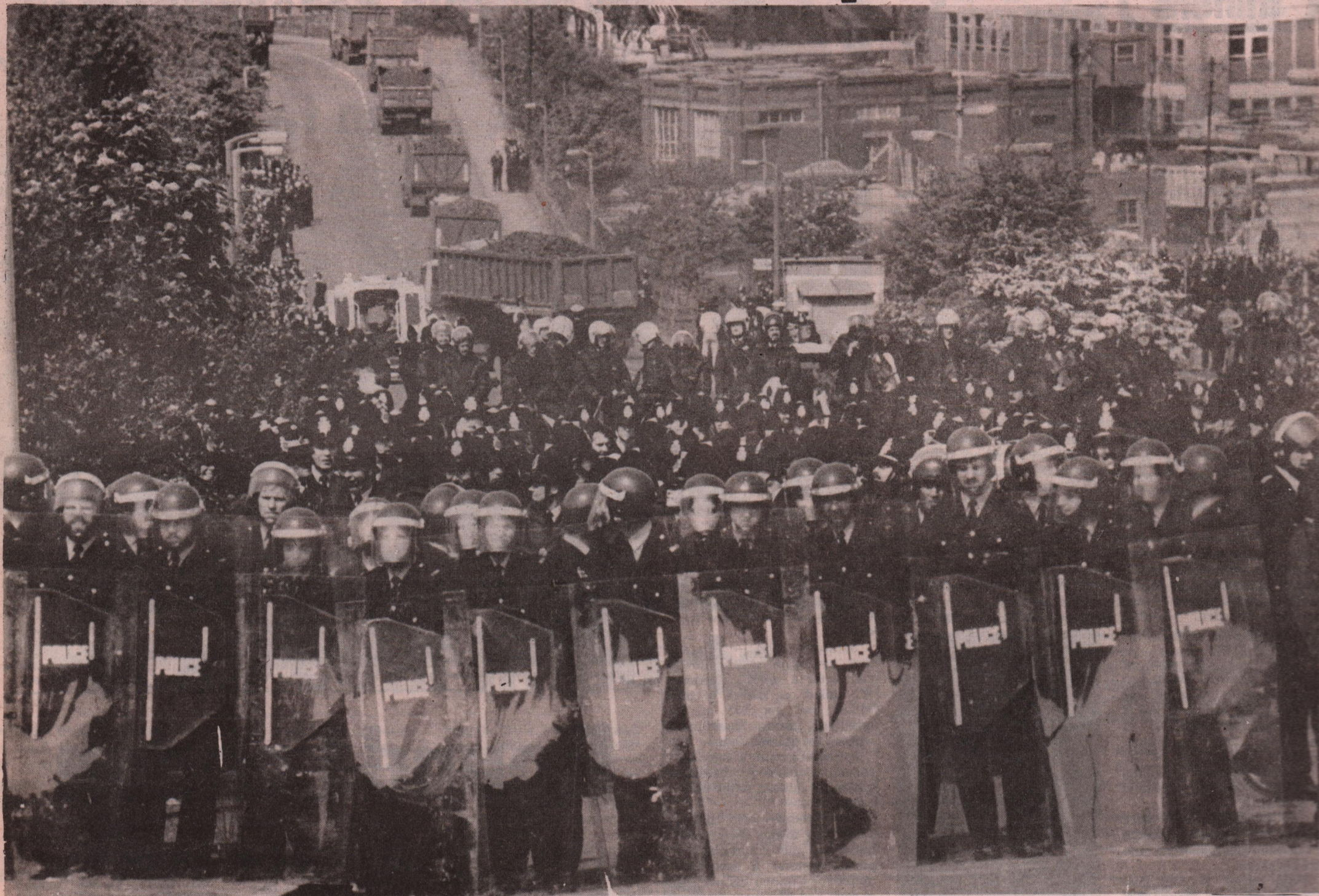
Socialist ORGANISER

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Police and courts help the Tories



Police at Orgreave

JOIN THE PICKETS

Help the miners win

By John Bloxam and Dan Duncan

Orgreave coking plant on Tuesday, 29th, from 4 am, was the scene of the fiercest confrontation between police and pickets yet seen in the dispute.

The police were determined to protect the scab lorries taking coke to the BSC plant in Scunthorpe. They sealed off the exits from a nearby motorway, and they swamped the entrance to Orgreave with up to 2,000 police.

Clements, the South Yorkshire Assistant Chief Constable said: "If it takes every man in the South Yorkshire police force and the surrounding police forces, that's what we shall do."

When the first convoy of scab lorries appeared at 9 am, sandwiched between ranks of police vans, the police by the gates reinforced the weight of their numbers by what Arthur Scargill later described as "almost unbelievable" scenes of police brutality.

Dogs, truncheons and horses were used against the two main groups of pickets,

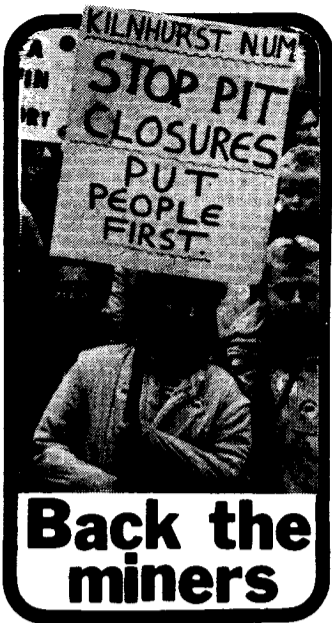
herded into two separate areas opposite the main gate of the plant and up the hill. Riot shields were also produced for the first time, as the police waded in. The performance was repeated when the second convoy turned up in the afternoon.

The 83 reported arrests and 41 injured pickets only give a hint of the damage the police tried to inflict. To cheers in the crowd, a number of police were injured as pickets defended themselves.

Other miners were attacked before they even got to the picket line. We saw one miner going back down the approach road to the plant, holding his bleeding head. He had never got to the picket line. The police had seen he was on his own and clubbed him from behind.

Thousands of pickets — mainly miners and women from the mining communities — had responded to the week-end call to turn the picket at

Continued page 4.



Notts strikers tour for support

'With this determination, it is hard to see how they can fail'

THE day's events officially started nearly an hour early with a call from a phone box at Basingstoke's town centre — "Hello Flower, we've landed."

At that stage, as Trades Council President, I was still trying desperately to confirm the day's itinerary with various convenors, and things were looking quite grim.

Our transport was off the road, I had visions of the Notts Rank and File Committee delegation car having to follow as the rest of us led the way on a bus and I wasn't even sure what we'd be meeting at the other end. In the event, I needn't have worried.

Stewards

We met the delegation — Paul Whetton, Secretary of the Notts Miners' Forum from Bevercotes Colliery, Mick McGinty and Lee Jackson from Ollerton, and Ida Hackett from the Family support group — and set off to Sainsbury's depot . . . but not before finding they'd had a parking ticket slapped on their car by a local Labour Councillor who is also a traffic warden. (Another Labour councillor later paid the fine for them).

11.20 — a delegation of about 30 stewards listened to Paul Whetton putting the case for the NUM action. It was a good meeting with lots of questions and discussion. Gordon Pointer, one of the Sainsbury's stewards, handed over the morning's collection of about £70.

The TV camera crew were there — for once sympathetic. Even the cameraman put into the collection.

From there to the Post Office Social Club. Many UCW reps were up at the Blackpool conference but there was time

Carla Jamison reports on "a great and inspiring weekend" when Paul Whetton, Mick McGinty, and Lee Jackson visited Basingstoke.

to talk to a few before going on to Lansing Bagnalls.

1.00 pm — There were about 50 Lansing Bagnall workers waiting outside the gate as we tipped out of the car like so many sardines. They were very impressed by the delegation. When Lee Jackson, a young miner from Ollerton, said he'd rather eat grass than go back, there was massive applause and hands went into pockets to contribute £48.35 with the promise of more to come.

From there, we went back to the town centre and on to a press conference in the TGWU offices and a well-earned break before the Trades Council Benefit in the evening.

The evening was very successful, raising a total of £210 on ticket sales and the raffle for a miner's lamp. It was the first chance we had had to talk.

Stopped

Although the delegation left Nottinghamshire early in the morning they were stopped three times trying to



Paul Whetton

leave the county. Mick McGinty showed us the back of his car scored and scratched by scabs.

However, despite the hostility, support is still growing. Ida Hackett told Socialist Organiser supporter Chris Whelan: "A woman living in a supposedly hostile neighbourhood wanted to start a wives' and families' support group, but thought she'd have trouble finding one or two other women sympathetic enough to help. At the first meeting in her front room, 22 local women turned up on the strength of word of mouth! A very efficient support group was instantly formed."

Women

Paul Whetton told Pat Whelan that conscience-stricken scabs try to slip dinner money to strikers' children.

Long after the benefit night was over, Ida was still sitting up talking over the issues with the SO supporters she was stopping the night with. Ida told Lesley Byrne: "During the 'women support' meeting, it was clear women were ready to fight alongside the men on the picket lines, instead of being stuck with the menial jobs seen as 'women's roles'".

With this kind of determination it is hard to see how they can fail.

Saturday, 19th — We all met up again in the town centre for a street collection. We doled out copies of the Miner and got £35 in 40 minutes. From there we went to the Labour Club.

It started with a subdued collection of £24. As the delegation got talking, so the interest grew.

Then people were almost scrabbling to buy their union badges and autographed picket posters! A local coal merchant emptied his pockets of cash and told them that the strike was hitting him hard . . . Bill Cowdrey was thousands of pounds in debt but he told them to stick it out, and insisted on having his photo taken with them in front of his empty coal lorry!

By the time we left the club £45 had been raised.

In total, over the 30 or so hours, we had raised over £670. Our next action will be to pay a return visit with food for them very soon.

It was a great and inspiring weekend for us, and hopefully the delegation too.

Connolly

Mick McGinty had a special reason to be happy, for alongside of all the pressures of being an active striker, he went back to Notts with a very treasured possession given by a comrade, a James Connolly badge.

For us it hadn't just been a one-off visit, it has been very special and we will hopefully be seeing them again soon . . . Like Chris Whelan said, they have probably done more for us than we did for them.



Sainsbury's steward Gordon Pointer hands over £70 collection to Paul Whetton. (In the middle: Lee Jackson).

Round London

IT WAS all at very short notice, but as soon as I phoned people and explained what I wanted I got a good response.

So although we didn't know Chris was coming until Wednesday night, we had a full programme of events from Thursday morning.

First of all we went to Jubilee Gardens, where the Greater London Council was holding a festival against abolition. It was a bit of a flop, because Chris's train was late and we ran into a load of other striking Notts miners.

So we went off to North London Poly, where students were picketing because fascist organiser Patrick Harrington was going to a lecture. Even though the coppers were quite heavy, we collected £15 in a very short time.

Then off to Central Hall, where the NAS/UWT had a rally. They wouldn't let Chris speak, but we collected £32 outside in about 20 minutes.

By five we were in the London School of Economics. We picked up the money from the collecting jar at the bar and talked to people. £30 there, and a meeting fixed up for Friday lunchtime.

Thursday night was busy. 7.30 Islington Labour Party Trade Union Liaison Committee — £25 and £10 worth of food. Straight over to Hackney North Labour Party to collect over £85, then down to Bow and Poplar Labour Party to collect over £85 again, including a

Jane Ashworth reports on a lightning visit to London by Notts striker Chris Hickling

cheque for £50 from one delegate.

Finally, Queen Mary College bar — collected a few quid and got turfed out at 10.31 precisely.

Friday morning: In less than an hour we took £15 on a street collection in Peckham, then to LSE for the meeting — £15 and expenses. Afternoon, ringing round stewards in Fleet Street trying to get a collection there.

No luck — not enough notice.

6pm: County Hall. £85 from the South London Support Committee. Rushed over to Leyton Labour Party, got lost, and collected £42. Back to Central London for a £10 whip-round at Central London Poly bar.

Saturday's plans were washed out by rain. The Health Emergency rally was tiny, and we collected only £5. On Sunday Chris went to Camden Labour Club to speak at their AGM. It wasn't quorate, but we collected over £25.

Chris is coming down again next week, and this time we'll have more mapped out in advance.

Notts strikers need money

The job of organising the strike from within Notts goes on with the Notts Miners Rank and File Strike Committee carrying out the bulk of the work.

Send money or invitations for fund-raising visits to me at 10 Nicholas Place, Tuxford, Newark. Tel: 0777 871500.

PAUL WHETTON (Sec., NMR&FSC)

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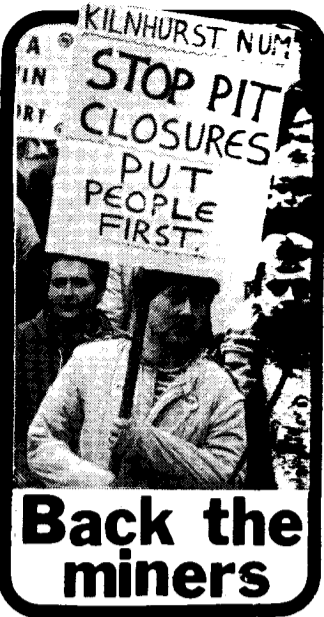


JOHN HARRIS

Strikers' soup kitchen at Ollerton, Notts

Editorial

Keep on going to victory



Back the miners

THE miners can win.

The record trade deficit in April is an index of the economic effect of the strike. The bosses' daily, the Financial Times, reported. "Extra oil imported to combat the effects of the miners' strike helped to push Britain's trade account into a record deficit in April."

The same day, Wednesday 30th, the Guardian claimed that the Coal Board is going for a compromise.

"The National Coal Board will withdraw its threat to close 20 pits in the next 12 months... The Board is expected to say that the matter [of pit closures] should be left to local management and union negotiation. As a gesture of good faith, the Board will withdraw its threat to close Cortonwood in South Yorkshire, one of the original flashpoints of the dispute..."

"The proposals... have been made possible by the impact of the miners' strike and by the determination of the government that the strike should not go on much longer."

British Rail's sudden withdrawal of the productivity strings on its pay offer (see page 5) is another index of how the strike is biting. The Tories preferred to make concessions rather than see railworkers taking industrial action alongside miners — a major step towards a general strike, weak though the rail unions' planned initial action was.

It is vital now that the miners' union leaders do not do what the rail union leaders did — grab the first offer as soon as the employers start weakening, and retire gratefully, rather than pressing home the advantage.

Labour Party and TUC leaders have made it unmistakably clear that they will be applying all the pressure they can to end the strike as soon as anything like a compromise looks possible. But Arthur Scargill has declared:

"There will be no settlement of this dispute unless and until Mr MacGregor and the National Coal Board withdraw their pit closure programme".

And he is right. The sort of settlement rumoured in the Guardian would represent only a temporary retreat by the Tories and the Coal Board. They would get their pit closures, only maybe a little slower.

Particularly insidious is the proposal to make pit closures a subject for local negotiation. This would split up the union as a force resisting closures in future, and should be firmly rejected.

Polish unionist slams scab coal imports

Miners' unions across the capitalist world have agreed to back the British miners' strike by stopping supplies of coal to Britain. In Australia, in particular, the miners' and dockers' unions have taken a bold stand of solidarity.

But meanwhile coal imports continue to come in — from 'socialist' Poland. A consignment of Polish coal went into British Steel's Scunthorpe works just this week.

The explanation is simple. The Polish military regime is not socialist. The official Polish 'unions' are not genuine trade unions at all, but stooges of the bureaucracy.

Members of the real Polish trade union movement, Solidarnosc, have a different attitude, however. Marek Garzdecki, editor of Solidarnosc's British information bulletin, spoke to Debbi Hindson from Socialist Organiser.

Have there been any moves to stop sending coal to Britain?

As the Polish 'unions' are entirely state run, any decision on coal exports will be taken at government level.

1972 and '74

The Stalinists shipped coal to Britain throughout the 1972 and 1974 strikes, and they are already committed to supplying 740,000 tonnes of coal this year.

Has there been any reaction to this?

At their meeting on May 18, the Polish Solidarity Campaign passed a resolution saying they "regret that the dramatic increase in imports of Polish coal, extracted by miners put under a military

discipline, and forced to work in semi-slavish conditions, is being used by the Polish military government to influence the course of the British miners' strike, causing great suffering to all British mining families."

What are the conditions like for Polish miners?

Semi-slavery is an accurate description. Most miners work ten hours a day for six or seven days a week. Safety levels have plummeted.

A miner from the Manyest Lipcowy colliery has said that "In the time of Solidarnosc there were fewer accidents. This year in the first month and a half we have already had three accidents, two of them fatal. They were not reported in the newspapers." Average wages are equivalent

to £10 a week in British terms, and with the huge increases in prices since martial law it is generally estimated that a Polish miner has to work three times as long as a British miner for the same goods.

Miners are tempted into these jobs, despite the conditions, through piecemeal privileges such as special ration books and special pit-head shops only open to miners. This only serves to set miners against other workers, creating divisions.

What can Solidarnosc hope to do now?

Solidarnosc is not finished. There are still up to a million and a half members underground. We regularly publish 400 or so bulletins. In Braniewo Prison, ten Solidarnosc organisers are entering their seventh week of hunger strike, in protest over appalling conditions.

Concerted

As regards the stopping of coal, there will have to be a concerted effort, especially from dockers and transport workers to stop the coal at British ports. Polish miners cannot stop exports at the moment.

What do you think of Thatcher's double standards in condemning the Polish government on the one hand and buying coal from them on the other?

We have no illusions as to who is on our side. Thatcher and Reagan have used the

union for their own ends and will continue to do so whilst they are trying to smash their own labour movements.

Obviously we must put our faith in the international trade union movement and build on the support we've had from Western trade unions.

Rank and file in Staffs

THE strike in North Staffs remains on the whole solid, but there are some signs of fraying around the edges. At Florence Colliery pickets report that there are now about 700 miners working out of 1100, though of these 700 only 500 are NUM members. At Holditch colliery there are about 80-90 miners working, and 20 lorry loads of coal are leaving the pit every day.

For the first time in the strike there is growing criticism on the picket lines of the national leadership for their failure to organise sufficient support for the picket lines in North Staffs.

This criticism is however, I think, largely misdirected. Much of the problem is lack of proper organisation of the strikers in

North Staffs.

There appears to have been no serious attempt by local officials to organise proper picket rotas, and to contact strikers informing them of when and where they are required.

Certain events also raise the question of whether some of the local officials want to involve the rank and file, or whether they are afraid of them.

Officials also tried to torpedo a public meeting at Hem Heath Colliery Social Club on May 24. A few days before the meeting was due to take place we were contacted by some local NUM officials to say that they had seen our notices for the meeting, but had no record of the room being booked.

Edinburgh support

The recently formed Edinburgh Trades Council Miners' Support Committee has now swung into action.

Collections were taken on Thursday — late shopping night — in Princes Street and some pubs were visited in Leith.

Over £250 was collected in two hours. We are awaiting

permission from the police to do street collections in working class areas on the outskirts of the town.

A collection was also taken outside the Playhouse when the Labour Party held a Eurofest, with Neil Kinnock and members of the Socialist Group in Europe.

And at the Miners' Wives' Support Committee meeting that week, Area President Joe Wills said that no one had asked him for permission to hold the meeting.

The meeting, however, went ahead successfully with over 30 miners attending.

Ollerton Miners' Rally
June 2 1984

Speakers include:
Tony Benn MP
Jimmy Hood, Branch Secretary, Ollerton

Sammy Thompson, Vice-President, Yorkshire Area

Assemble at 10 am in the Miners' Welfare car park

March starts at 10.30 followed by rally in Welfare football ground



Back the miners

From page 1

Orgreave into 'another Saltley', and answer BSC Scunthorpe management's move to rip up the existing agreement on coal supplies with the Yorkshire Area NUM.

As in Ravenscraig, BSC management appear to have taken the action to head off a move to cut back the generous 'dispensations' agreed with the Area leaderships. In provoking a crisis, they clearly hope to renegotiate at least as good a deal as they had before, if not better. But the level of police brutality - surpassing what happened at Ravenscraig and Hunterston - show the job is not going to be so easy.

To begin with, Orgreave is in easy reach of the whole Yorkshire coalfield. The miners also have the support of the majority of workers in the plant.

Yesterday, Arthur Scargill spoke to the TGWU members there. After this, they voted to approach the contractors both loading and driving the scab wagons on the plant to persuade them to stop.

To begin with, the police stopped them moving in their own plant to the stockpile area - and eventually only allowed a couple to go. A group of the TGWU members walked out yesterday in disgust at what was happening.

The police numbers and violence allowed the two scab convoys through on Tuesday - 70 wagons in all. The main body of pickets didn't get near them, unlike a much smaller group further up the long approach road.

Some of this group felt the lorries could have been stopped if many more of the pickets had held back, and not allowed themselves to be herded into the main groups by the police.

Saltley in 1972 showed it could be done and how. Arthur Scargill made the point:

"My advice to all our members and to the wider trade union movement is to ensure they come here in their thousands in order that we can make aware to everybody that we are not prepared to see this kind of brutality inflicted against working men and women."



Police move in with riot gear at Orgreave. On Wednesday 30th, after Arthur Scargill was arrested, there was full-scale street-fighting around the depot, with barricades and charges by mounted police.

JOHN HARRIS

'Police running amok'

What do you think of the police?

They're running amok. It's disgusting. The Notts Strike Committee have signed statements from miners about what happened to them in custody, what questions they were asked, what they overheard.

For example, one man, Robert Malone, from Scotland, was taken to Sherwood Forest and beaten up by police.

Police are there to define right and wrong, not to oppress the working class fighting for their way of life. At the moment they seem to be doing the opposite.

I saw police at North London Poly supporting fascism. It's unbelievable.

Could you have an independent police force?

Not under this system. Everything's geared to protecting capitalism. Before we get a socialist state the police have got to be brought into line.

What response have you had in the south?

I went to Weymouth for the National Society of Metal Mechanics conference. They donated £1,000 and had a whip-round which raised another £200.

Most of the money is going to Kent and South Wales from this area. I don't dispute that they need the money. But Notts needs substantial funds to keep the men that are out. It's the second largest area in the country with 31 branches. 12,000 are out which is more than in most areas

Chris Hickling, a striking miner from Hucknall, Notts, was in London last weekend. He spoke to Gerry Byrne.

where the strike is solid.

The solidarity has been amazing in London. I just wish the lads could see it.

Ultimately, what we need to get from this is a general strike. We can win on our own but it will take a long time. It would help if other unions backed us up. I wish Arthur Scargill would call for a general strike.

What do you think of Len

Murray?

If you leave out the swear words I'm speechless!

If it does go to a general strike, people at the TUC will sell the working class down the river. The people in those positions forget where they came from. They don't realise they're part of the working class.

What do you think the effect of the court case will be? How is the strike going in Notts?

Our union should be able to run its own affairs without the intervention of the capitalist judicial system.

I don't think it will make much difference to the picketing

as the lads who are doing the picketing are the hard-core. Some may go back, but not the ones who are doing the picketing.

There's 80-100 out in my pit, out of 972 men. Production is down 34%. There are only a couple of pits worse than that.

The Notts Strike Committee has just been reorganised. It's running as smooth as glass now. But few of the officials in the area are out. The majority are still working. It causes such a lot of hassle. They really hate me.

What about the call for a ballot?

I don't think any men should be allowed to skulk away in a corner and put a cross on a piece

of paper to sign away another's job in Kent, Wales or Yorks.

They didn't buy the job, they've got no right to sell it.

I won't go back till we've won. I don't care how long it takes.

I'm now 100% dedicated to winning and to achieving a true socialist society. I was thrown in at the deep end. I'd never been on strike before. I was politically conscious but not actively involved. Now I find myself totally dedicated to it.

What about the NUM-NCB talks?

They worry me. I can't help feeling somewhere along the line there's a sell-out. I don't think Scargill will sell out.

Court ruling has little effect

ON Friday 25th the High Court granted an injunction to stop the NUM instructing its members in Nottinghamshire to join the strike and respect picket lines, or disciplining them for not doing so.

Granting the injunction sought by union officials from Pye Hill and Sherwood collieries, Justice Megarry said that the NUM strike call had been "unfair" without a national ballot and in breach of union rules.

At a meeting in Ollerton on Tuesday morning, which considered the implications of the ruling, leading Notts strikers felt that the court's intervention would have little effect on the 12,000 miners on strike in the county. It changed the situation very little.

The official Area strike call, issued after last month's national delegate conference, had never been in the form of an instruction. And with most local branches controlled by the scabs, little money had been issued through this source for picketing.

The judgement didn't stop the strike and picket lines in Notts being official.

There is a change as regards the instruction to Notts branch

Moves for breakaway

SCABS in the Nottingham coalfield took a further step last week towards a break-away 'Spencer' union.

At the same time that union officials at Pye Hill and Sherwood were taking the union to court, others were officially launching the 'Notts Working Miners Committee' - at a secret venue and with police protection.

The existence of the Committee had been rumoured for a long time, and had been confirmed earlier when local Labour Parties received a letter from them asking for funds - to help repair damage to scabs' property, they say!

They claim representatives from all 25 Notts pits, say they exist for 'welfare and information'; and deny preparing a scab

officials not to cross picket lines or encourage other workers to do so, and the moves after the last NUM NEC to discipline officials who breach this. But militants pointed out that disciplinary

union. But even on their own admission, their activity goes beyond this.

They have a slate in next month's area elections; and in those pits where the officials have joined the strike they have started 'negotiating' with management.

Their support is predictable. Their fund-raising letter received positive responses from Tories, Liberals and businessmen. The NCB has given them every encouragement - including the use of their printing machines. In return they vet all the correspondence before sending it out!

And in the words of Mick Smith, chair of the Committee and a COSA member from Bevercotes, "... the police want us to carry on."

action could be initiated against scabbing officials for many other breaches of the union's rules.

The indications are that the Court's intervention to endorse scabbing will only strengthen the strike. This will only be clear next week, when the Coal Board reopens all the Notts pits after many of them have their annual Whit shut-down this week. Militants described the situation in the coalfield this week as "very quiet".

Following Friday's Court ruling, Arthur Scargill immediately issued a statement condemning the decision, which was "consistent with over a century of anti-working class judgements designed to weaken the power of the British labour and trade union movement. Workers should remember that judges and the legal system were used to deport those who founded our movement, the Tolpuddle Martyrs.

"It required men and women of resolve, determination and faith who refused to accept anti-working class laws and to fight for independent, free and democratic trade unions."

Policewatch

Sheffield Police watch: 73, West Street, Sheffield S1 4EQ.
Kent police monitoring group: Richard De Friend or Ian Greg Spall, 0227 66822.
Nottingham Co-ordinating Committee Against the Police Presence: Bob Ivan Wels, 11, Osborne St., Sherwood, Nottingham.
Ollerton strike HQ is collecting statements about police behaviour: Pete Mansfield 862790.

Rail deal: a blow to the struggle

By Rob Dawber
(Sheffield City NUR)

THE National Union of Rail- waymen has done the Tories a great service.

With a pay claim for a substantial increase, five weeks' holiday, and a 35 hour week without any productivity strings, the joint rail unions (NUR and ASLEF) claim threatened to add greater pressure to the Tories' falling credibility and to boost the fightback for jobs led by the NUM.

The BRB had made "offers" of 4% on the whole wages bill, and then 4% on basic rates, insisting that this must be paid for by getting rid of guards.

The NUR, at least, had declared this unacceptable. Our policy, adopted at the 1983 Annual General Meeting in resolution 69 stated: "This AGM instructs the NEC . . . to withdraw from any further talks on productivity, including One Man Operation of Trains."

Weighell

This had overturned Weighell's last service to the bosses when, after the Special General Meeting of October 1982 had accepted his resignation in the morning, he went on to plead for acceptance of productivity deals in the afternoon.

He succeeded in getting the SGM to accept productivity experiments with Driver Only Operation and to allow guards to be removed from the Bedford to St. Pancras line.

Nonetheless, after this policy of rejecting present and future productivity deals was adopted in June 1983, it took the NEC six months, to December, to accept it.

Previously, some noted right wingers had been arguing that it only referred to future productivity deals and we should go ahead with present deals.

Solidarity

Now the BRB offers 4.9% and accepts the union side argument that productivity issues should go, as is normal, to the Rail Staff National Council (RSNC).

And the NUR has abandoned its claim and accepted this.

Formally, this means that pay is not linked to job losses. But in truth the union has substantially shifted its ground for the sake of this formality — and accepted that job losses will be progressed through train running experiments without guards.

'Instead of pushing ahead, union leaders grabbed at the first crumb'

The inadequate overtime ban and work to rule has, of course, been called off.

Jimmy Knapp writes in justification: ". . . for the second year running the union has achieved a settlement free of productivity strings because the statement required by the Board of productivity requirements does no more than reiterate productivity initiatives still outstanding from RSNT (decision) 78 which was accepted by the SGM in 1982!"

The Tories can breathe a sigh of relief. This means that the NUM must continue to go it alone, without the aid of another major industrial union taking action alongside it.

It also takes the fire out of the solidarity action we are already taking to help the miners.

Guards who face the wrath of management for refusing to take out coal trains, signalmen who refuse to let them through, members who won't cross picket lines into colliery yards will now be asked or will be asking themselves — "If my own union has packed in the fight, why should I stick my neck out for another union to fight for jobs?"

What happened to a "substantial pay increase"? Or the "35 hour week"? Or "five weeks' holiday"? Like all trade union bureaucrats who think it's just about discussion with management, rather than rank and file action, the NUR leaders got frightened by their own success.

As soon as management started backing down, they didn't push ahead, but grabbed at the first crumb offered and then gave up.

The fact that they were able to back down would suggest insufficient rank and file pressure. That now needs to be organised at the coming Railworkers Broad Left conference.

As soon as they feel ready

Keep coal movements stopped:



Despite the setback on their own issues, it is vital that railworkers keep up the boycott on coal movements. Above: a convoy of coke lorries is escorted by police to British Steel's Scunthorpe plant.

JOHN HARRIS

the BRB will push ahead with getting rid of guards, workshop closures and redundancies: indeed they can now feel confident about speeding up the process.

BR want 4,000 BREL (workshop) jobs to go by the end of 1986, fully recognising that this would make Glasgow and Swindon workshops unviable and therefore candidates for closure. They also want another 12,000 jobs gone by the end of 1986 from the rest of BR. This is on top of the 1,000 jobs per month they have had for the last three years.

The NUR NEC has shown itself unwilling to fight — unless we make it do so.



Back the miners

TUC
does
nothing
to help
miners

THIS IS what the TUC General Council decided about the miners' strike on May 23, after TUC general secretary Len Murray's attempt to sabotage the Yorkshire/Humberside one-day strike on May 21.

"The General Council were informed today that, as had been decided by the Finance and General Purposes Committee when endorsing the statement made by the TUC Labour Party Liaison Committee on Monday, further contact had been made with the National Union of Mine-workers on the mining industry dispute.

The General Council fully endorsed the Liaison Committee's concern about the attempt by the NCB, abetted by the government, to force through a programme of pit closures, that would cause permanent damage to an industry which is crucial to the nation and destroy jobs and communities, and expressed full support for the NUM in the context of the Liaison Committee's statement.

They noted that there was contact between the NUM and the NCB, and agreed that the General Secretary should continue to keep in touch with the NUM."

And what did the TUC left have to say about this feeble position? Nothing. The Morning Star on the 24th just reported glowingly that the TUC was giving "full support".

Women against pit closures

Dalkeith, c/o Dalkeith Miners' Welfare, Dalkeith, Lothian.

Fish Cross, c/o Fish Cross Miners' Welfare, Fish Cross, Clackmannanshire.

Durham, c/o Heather Wood, 18 Halffield Drive, Easington Village, Peterlee, Co. Durham.

Kent, Kay Sutcliffe, c/o Aylesham Miners' Welfare, Aylesham, Kent.

Thurnscoe: Sheila Jow, 105, Lidget Lane, Thurnscoe, Near Rotherham.

Blidworth: Doreen Humber, 50, Thorny Abbey Road, Blidworth, Mansfield, Notts

Edlington: Veronica Balderson,

62, Blowhall Cres., Edlington

Doncaster, Maesteg: Teresa Parry, 13 Charles Row, Maesteg, West Glamorgan. (Tel: 738825).

Birch Coppice wives group, Wendy Coxson, Tamworth 896069

Barnsley: Ann Hunter, 5 Packhorse Gn, Silkstone, near Barnsley phone 791187.

Maerdy Wives Support Committee, c/o Maerdy Strike Centre, Ferndale 755 301.

Oakdale, Gwent: 82 Markham Cres., Oakdale, Blackwood, Gwent. 0495 220158.

Calyen North, Gwent. c/o

Dorothy Phillips, 13 Thorn Ave

Newbridge, Gwent. 0495 245000

Rugeley, Staffs: Mrs Jackson, Woodlands, Handsacre, Rugeley

Staffs. Mrs Southwell, Rugeley 6179.

Littleton, Staffs: 6 Tower Road High Green, Hednesford. Lind

Platen, Hednesford 76614.

Merton, Durham. Hetton-le-Ha 267641

Sheffield Women Against Pit Closures. Kath Mackey, Sheffield 381594 or 454163.

Sheffield Trades Council Miners Support Committee, c/o Sheffield TC, Trades and Labour Club Talbot St., S2 2TG. Phone 24964

Support committees

Cardiff: c/o Room 219, Transport House, 1 Cathedral Road.

Birmingham: c/o Trade Union Resources Centre, 7 Frederick St., B1 3HE.

South London: c/o Joan Twelves, 1 Alverstoke House, Kennington Park Estate, SE11.

Manchester: c/o FTAT, 37 Anson Road, Victoria Park, M14.

Brent Miners' Solidarity Committee, c/o Local Economy

Resource Unit, 389 Willesden High Road, NW10. Ken Evans 459 6221.

Maesteg Trade Union and Labour Party Support Group: Idwal Isaac, 10 Bridge St., Maesteg. (Tel: 738321).



Pickets at a car components firm in Neckarsulm, West Germany. The banner on the gate says: 'This factory is on strike'.

Socialist

By Martin

"IN place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal interdependence of nations". Capitalism was binding the world together into a closely-linked international economic system, wrote Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 1847.

The EEC is fundamentally a reflection of this drive by capitalism to knit together the world into larger economic units. But why did it come into existence only 110 years after 1847? Why is it such a limited and feeble form of integration? Capitalism first created the big nation-states in Western

Europe. The next stage was not harmonisation between those states, but sharpening competition between them for economic territory and colonies on the other continents and in Eastern Europe.

Towards the end of the 19th century tariff walls were built higher and higher. The process culminated in the First World War.

After that war, and especially after the Great Crash of 1929, the rivalry between the big capitalist states only became sharper. Tariff walls rose yet higher. After a new World War, it was not until 1950 that intra-European

trade (trade between one European country and another) recovered to its level of 1913.

Forward-looking capitalist thinkers had been proposing a United States of Europe since early in the century. The harsh competitive conflicts between national capitalist classes made this impossible. After 1950 two factors made a half-way, or quarter-way, house towards it possible.

Those were the unprecedented capitalist boom of the 1950s and '60s, which lubri-

Arguments from Marx and Engels

A PARALLEL can be drawn between the EEC's semi-unification of Western Europe and the process of unifying Germany in the 19th century.

The German Confederation set up in 1815 was a loose collection of some 39 states. (Before 1806 there had been 396 kingdoms, dukedoms, principalities, city-states and other units in the same area). Each state had its own laws, its own tariffs, its own interests.

Revolutionary democrats demanded a united German republic as a slogan against the panoply of provincial semi-feudalisms. The rising business class wanted a united Germany as a broader field for economic operations. They got a Customs Union, embracing 17 of the 39 states, set up in 1834.

The revolution of 1848 was defeated. But in 1871, after Prussia had established its hegemony in three wars (1864, against Denmark; 1866, against Austria; 1870 against France), it unified all the German states except Austria as an Empire under the King of Prussia.

Marx and Engels were far from supporting the new German Empire. Marx scathingly denounced its establishment as "masquerades reeking of the barracks, the Church, the clod-hopping junkers [Prussian squires] and above all of the philistine".

But Engels defined their attitude as follows:

"The good side of the affair is that it simplifies the situation; it makes a revolution easier by doing away with the brawls

between the petty capital cities and will certainly accelerate developments. After all a German Parliament is something quite different from a Prussian Chamber. The petty states in their totality will be swept into the movement, the worst localising influences will disappear and parties will at last become really national parties instead of merely local ones. (...)

"In my opinion, therefore, we have to accept the fact, without approving of it, and to use, as far as we can, the greater facilities now bound at any rate to become available for the national organisation and unification of the German proletariat."

Some Marxists argue that not even the broad principles of this attitude can be applied to the EEC today because capitalism was progressive then and is reactionary now. But that argument dissolves specific questions into broad generalities. On the same logic, we would oppose every technical innovation this century, since 'capitalism is now reactionary'!

In the 20th century the 'overhead costs' of capitalism have been terrible indeed, and it has been fully ripe for replacement by socialism. Yet capitalism has continued to exist. It has not simply come to a halt.

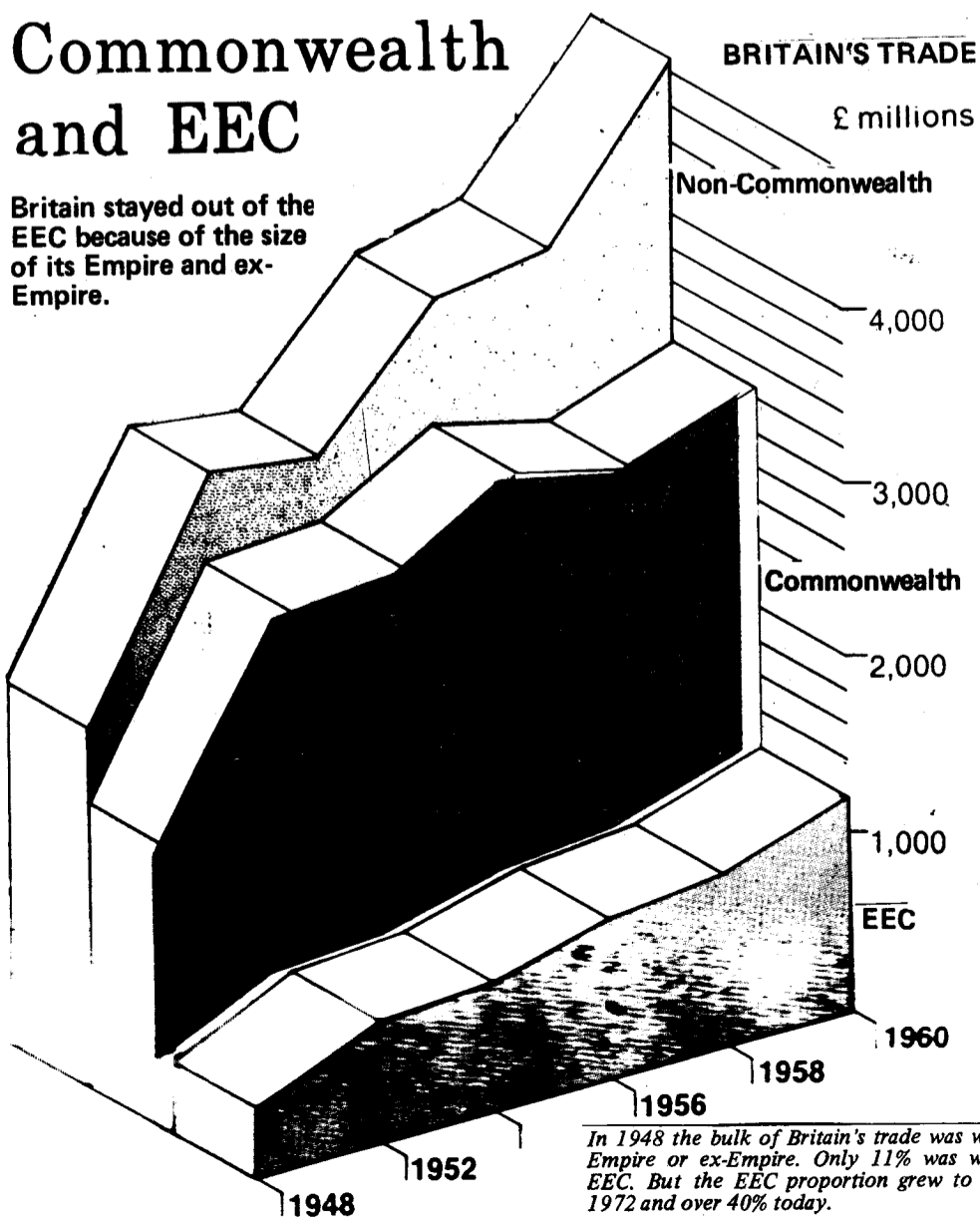
It has developed new forces of production; it has meshed the world more closely together; it has expanded the working class. These developments demand specific recognition, and specific responses.



Britain's alternative to the EEC: an estate manager in Malaya during Britain's

Commonwealth and EEC

Britain stayed out of the EEC because of the size of its Empire and ex-Empire.



In 1948 the bulk of Britain's trade was with the Empire or ex-Empire. Only 11% was with the EEC. But the EEC proportion grew to 31% in 1972 and over 40% today.

VOTE LABOUR ON JUNE 14

LABOUR'S platform for the June 14 EEC elections does actually include two quite radical proposals.

It calls for a 35 hour week without loss of pay, and it pledges Labour to get rid of nuclear weapons.

The problem is that these are swamped in a campaign which, overall, is not very radical at all.

Neil Kinnock explains his position like this: "The real voice of Britain must be heard in the Common Market. And that means getting Labour members of the European parliament who will defend the interests of all the people of Britain".

He thus defines Labour's role as to defend the interests of "Britain" — all classes included, rich and poor, exploiters and exploited — against other nations. It is not to defend the interests of the working class, of all nationalities, against the exploiters of all nationalities.

But "national interest" always turns out in the end to be the interest of the ruling class of the nation. Appeals to national interest can only weaken and divide the international working class.

Economically, Labour's platform calls vaguely for more investment EEC-wide, but does not say who should own, control and plan that investment. It does not even take up the recent timid EEC moves on disclosure of information by multi-nationals, still less boldly demand: open the books!

It makes no demand for increased powers for the EEC parliament to make the EEC commission democratically accountable.

While opposing nuclear weapons, Labour's platform does not question NATO. It calls for "effective and modern conventional defences for Britain" — defending the nation again, rather than looking to proposals like people's militia to defend the working people of all Europe against our enemies foreign and domestic.

The platform does not publicise Labour's commitment to repeal the Immigration and Nationality Acts, still less make a bold stand against the EEC-wide super-exploitation of migrant workers by demanding free movement across borders.

Even the 35 hour week demand which is there is not linked to support for West German workers' current tremendous struggle for precisely that demand, or for the British miners' fight for jobs.

But those links can be made, and those other issues raised, by local Labour Parties in their own campaigns. They should be.

Not so

THE mainstream international grouping of would-be Trotskyism, the United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USFI) — in Britain, closely associated with Socialist Action — has put out a statement on the European elections.

They appeal "to the workers of Europe to put no faith in capitalist integration", and "support the campaign of our comrades in the Spanish state and in Portugal against the entry of their countries into the Common Market."

So Spanish and Portuguese capitalism would be better if they were independent of European capital? The USFI go on to say that they are "sympathetic to the campaign of the British Labour left and the Greek left for the withdrawal of Greece and Britain from the EEC (our emphasis)."

What does 'sympathy' mean? They either support these campaigns or they don't.

And what about France? Or

A Socialist Strategy for Europe

Conference organised by the Socialist Society Saturday June 2

Caxton House, 129 St. John's Way, London N19

Workshops on 'Low Paid Workers, Unpaid Labour, and the Threat of Counter-Reformism', on EEC-wide working class link-ups, and on nuclear disarmament

m and the EEC

Thomas

cated the frictions of integration, and the unparalleled dominance of the US in the capitalist world.

The US provided the umbrella under which Western Europe was semi-integrated. The starting points were the Marshall Plan of US aid — in connection with which the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation was set up in 1948 — and the post-war US/UK/French control over West Germany.

The Allies had to allow West German capitalism to grow

and flourish, to provide a bulwark against USSR-occupied Eastern Europe. But they wanted to avoid a competition for supremacy in Western Europe between West Germany, France and the UK. The solution was a partial integration of the West European economy under US hegemony.

As the US/UK/French control over West German coal and steel was ended, the European Coal and Steel Commission was proposed and eventually set up in April 1951. It was a 'common market' in coal and steel, with the same six members — West Germany, France, Italy, Belgium,

Netherlands, Luxemburg — as eventually formed the full Common Market in 1957.

Britain refused to join — mainly because its trade was still heavily directed towards the Empire, or ex-Empire. (In 1957 only 15% of the UK's trade was with the EEC).

The aim of the EEC was to create a unified home market for West European capitalists, with free movement of goods, labour and capital, with common EEC policies for economic infrastructure — transport, basic industry, energy, agriculture — and with harmonised economic laws and regulations. It would be a home market on the scale demanded by the huge productive power of modern technology.

In that aim the EEC has been half-successful. A customs union was established in 1968. Trade within the EEC grew tremendously: by 1973 it was 21% of all world trade (in 1953 it had been only 5%). In 1957 the biggest EEC countries had 20-odd per cent of their trade with other EEC countries; by the 1970s, around 50%.

If the EEC today were a single country, it would be slightly bigger than the US in population and total output, and about twice as big as Japan in both respects. But it would be almost twice as big as the US as a trading power.

US multinationals benefited tremendously from the EEC, pouring in investment for this wider market in the 1950s and '60s. The paradoxical result has been to make the EEC today a challenger to the US's supremacy in the capitalist world.

The Common Agricultural Policy has been relatively successful in capitalist terms. Labour productivity in agriculture multiplied about five or six times over between 1950 and 1971 — a faster rate of growth than in industry. While production figures kept up, the percentage of the labour force in agriculture fell from 28% to 8% in France, 25% to 4% in West Germany, 41% to 11% in Italy, between 1950 and 1980.

Britain's trade with the EEC grew, to 31% of its total by 1972, and the UK, Denmark and S. Ireland joined the EEC in 1972-3. Greece joined in 1981, and Spain and Portugal



IG Metall leaders (left), with pickets in Stuttgart. The picket's placard says: on strike here.

35 hours: an international issue

NEARLY a quarter of a million West German trade unionists demonstrated in Bonn this Monday, 28th, despite pouring rain.

Their demand is the simple and bold one for a reduction in the working week from 40 hours to 35 hours without loss of pay. The giant metalworkers' union IG Metall has called out car components workers round Stuttgart and round Frankfurt, and the print union IG Drupa is running a campaign of 24 and 48 hour strikes for the same demand.

In contrast to the British and French unions, which have adopted an hour-by-hour strategy for cutting the working week, the traditionally conservative West German unions have gone for a more radical demand.

Their position was backed up this week by a report from the European Trade Union Institute, pointing out that unless cuts in the working week are sharp and substantial they have no real effect in reducing unemployment.

The latest figures in West Germany, for example, show that, with the pressure of lengthening dolé queues, employers have been

able to step up the intensity of labour to increase productivity by 11% per year. A small cut in the working week would be immediately counterbalanced by speed-up.

The employers, however, are refusing to budge an inch on the working week. The most they are talking of at the moment is a reduction in the working year by way of longer holidays.

The struggle is shaking up the long-established class-consensus ideology of West German politics. The ruling Christian Democrats have vocally backed the employers, and the opposition Social Democrats have supported the unions.

In parliament last week, the Economics Minister, Count Lambsdorff denounced the print union leaders as seeking "another republic". The Social Democrats replied, in traditional style, that the conflict must be ended "as soon as possible, in the interests of all concerned". Yet they added: "But, Count Lambsdorff, we Social Democrats do not want your republic."

are now negotiating to join.

Even from a capitalist point of view, however, the EEC is a very limited form of international integration. All sorts of barriers to trade within it still exist, and are increasing. To take a lorry-load of Dutch cheese into France, for example, the lorry driver has to complete literally dozens of forms.

A common monetary system is a long way off. Movement of capital is not fully free. 'Cross-frontier' mergers of companies have flopped; so have joint ventures like Concorde and Airbus.

At each economic or political jolt, the EEC is thrown into crisis, and only long, wearisome negotiations between the different states can patch together a compromise to keep going.

From a socialist point of view, a lot worse can be said about the EEC. It has all the vices of capitalism writ large. It faces the Third World as an imperialist consortium. The Common Agricultural Policy means not only high food prices in the EEC for the sake of fat profits for big capitalist farmers, but also massive surpluses while millions starve and high tariff walls round the EEC for agricultural producers in the Third World wishing to export to it.

The EEC, however, is not a particular 'bad policy' of capitalism — something like the House of Lords, or the Police Bill — which can be amputated from the system to provide better conditions for the working class to fight in. It is a reflection of the most fundamental economic trends of capitalism.

The economic integration of

Western Europe began before the EEC: the EEC is only a set of arrangements to accommodate and accelerate it. The economic reorientation of Britain to Western Europe was the cause of British entry into the EEC, not the effect.

No amount of calls for 'Britain out' will turn the economic clock back and abolish the huge scale of modern capitalist industry and its interconnections. If capitalism did not have the EEC, then it would inevitably have another arrangement differing only in details — or the only alternative is that it would have a murderous battle between the big capitalist states of Western Europe over which of them would integrate the region in the form of making the other states its vassals.

To call for countries to withdraw from the EEC is as foolish and reactionary as calling for the great capitalist multinational corporations to be broken up into smaller units.

We need an international working class fight against international capital.

We need the economic and social reconstruction of Europe in the interests of the working class — by way of building on the post-war integration of the West European economy, seizing control of it rather than seeking to unscramble it.



murderous war against the struggle for independence there.

international

Germany? Or Holland? Or Belgium? Or Italy? Does the USFI have 'sympathy' with campaigns to get them out of the EEC? Or is it not politically expedient?

And would the USFI favour a campaign in France to kick Germany out? Or keep Spain out? Or — worse — a campaign in Germany to keep Turkey out?

They used not to support such campaigns — until they became live issues in nationalistic left movements. In 1969, in France, they called for abstention in the

referendum on British entry. And in the last Euro-elections in 1979, the French LCR had a joint campaign with Lutte Ouvriere which did not campaign for French withdrawal.

Of course, they now oppose "falling back on the 'sovereign national state'" as an alternative. But that is the immediate alternative.

To support 'Britain out', or similar slogans elsewhere, on the basis that to you privately that means socialist revolution, is not internationalism.

Tony Benn

What they say: arguments on the EEC

The arguments that led us to say that we would have to break with the Treaty of Rome are unanswerable.

(...)

It is open to the British people if they choose to do so, at the next election whenever it comes, to defeat Mrs Thatcher and put in power a parliamentary majority that could alter legislation and benefit our people. But the Treaty of Rome would prevent it.

(...)

Every country has to develop in its own way. Socialism must be about people finding their own way forward.

To suppose that out of a crisis in capitalism, expressed in a Common Market that is

now outdated by events, you could produce a living federation, is just an illusion.

It may be a dream of those

who think like Trotsky that a Socialist United States of Europe would be a good thing. But a socialist world

would be a good thing. And we are here and now fighting very hard battles to defend our people.

Tony Benn in Socialist Organiser, August 18 1983

John Palmer

On the EEC, I don't regard withdrawal as a socialist policy.

It's always struck me as bizarre that the Treaty of Rome is described, quite correctly, as quintessentially capitalist and reactionary, and the structures of the EEC as anti-socialist, in a way that implies that the monarchy and the British state and the House of Lords and so on are in some more progressive category. We have to recognise the

inevitable integration of capitalism on an international scale. There is the emerging material basis for a European working class socialist strategy — a material basis created by the integration of capitalism.

The issue is not withdrawal or not-withdrawal. That is something for the future, depending on the balance of forces in an unpredictable situation where there could be workers' governments in one or other Euro-

pean country in isolation from the rest.

The issue now is the construction of a European socialist alternative strategy, based on the mobilisation around the peace movement, around the unemployment issue, the maximisation of benefits and social security payments at the highest level throughout the Community, women's rights, anti-racism, etc.

From Socialist Organiser, October 6 1983

Arguing



for
Socialism

LAST WEEK, I wrote about Neil Kinnock's failure to support working class struggles.

But there's another thing about Neil Kinnock. The man is quite clearly a sexist — a horrible sexist.

Most men are to one degree or another. But this man is blatant. And for somebody who takes such terrible pains

with his image, I find it a little hard to stomach.

Last autumn, City Limits asked Neil Kinnock if he did any housework. "Honestly, I don't," he conceded. "Well no. I tell you what I do — things like clean the fridge,

maybe in the holidays".

And what about Glenys? She works full-time as a teacher. So she has to do two jobs while Neil reaps the benefit.

But Neil Kinnock is very considerate. "I've spent years and years trying to persuade her to get somebody to help her (you know what women are like, knowing wink) and for the last year we've had a smashing woman come in four hours a week."

"It's a great help . . . but it took me years to persuade her.

"Glenys is aware of the vestiges of sexism in my vocabulary. She doesn't think I'm sexist, but she says I misrepresent myself if I'm not aware of the need not to use certain words like "bird" for instance."

Good for you, Glenys. In fact, on my limited observation you appear generally to be altogether cleverer, pleasanter, and more acute than Neil, "a man of hidden shallows".

City Limits obviously thought along similar lines. "Has he ever discussed the possibility of her rather than him going into politics?"

No. Not really, he hadn't. And that's that. What a lazy, pompous fellow he sounds, doesn't he?

Hattersley

There is also Neil Kinnock's partnership with Roy Hattersley. Hattersley is a supporter of incomes policy, an opponent of unilateralism, a man who believes not in socialism, but in benign capitalism.

Only 18 months ago he was calling for expulsions and stating we must return to the values of the Callaghan years.

He is not calling for expulsions now — but that's because the Kinnock-Hattersley coalition has marginalised the left.

If we do start moving again, you'll soon see Hattersley's true colours.

What can and should we do about it all?

We have to accept that Neil Kinnock came in as leader with tremendous support. We have to accept that the con-

stituencies, albeit through war-weariness, gave him 91.5% of the vote.

Even Roy Hattersley got 51%. The left's candidate, Eric Heffer, was nowhere. The union barons' block vote was even more monolithic: not one union voted for Eric Heffer.

The irritations of 1974-9 were in the past. Anything was better than the Tories. The left was a liability that hadn't delivered the goods. That was the mood.

Initiatives

The hard left is in no shape for major initiatives. The openings of four years ago no longer exist. There is some demoralisation. We need to rethink and regroup.

We, of course, unlike those who prate endlessly about it have always been 'turned outwards' to direct class struggle, and we will continue that.

Challenging the Kinnock-

Hattersley leadership is difficult at the moment. But they should not be allowed to think that they are there for years to come. Their politics will lead best a re-run of 1974-9.

We shall continue to urge the safeguarding and the use of the limited gains such as reselection. We shall oppose all witch-hunts whether in Wythenshawe, in Stoke, or in Birmingham.

We shall continue to explore how we can go beyond Labour's inadequate existing programme, how we can expand public ownership and develop workers' management, how we can take over the banks and finance houses, how we can withdraw from Ireland and give up nuclear weapons.

Above all we shall stand with our class — the NGA, the NUM, Liverpool City Council, in their struggles.

We shall, through doing all this, fraternally and constructively, eventually destabilise the hold the centre-right now have over the Labour Party and win it for socialism.

SCIENCE
By Les Hearn
Yellow rain

THE "yellow rain" story took a new turn last week with Professor Aubin Heyndrickx of Ghent University arguing his claim that Iraq has used mycotoxins against Iran to a conference of the world's leading toxicologists, biochemists and experts in chemical warfare.

These allegations have been widely publicised with, for example, the Wall Street Journal using them to claim that the Soviet Union is now "peddling like candy" the agents of chemical warfare it is alleged to have perfected in South East Asia and Afghanistan.

But Heyndrickx's evidence is less than impressive. Firstly, he claimed that symptoms of Iranian gas victims (skin peeling off, body turning black, blood and pus from the nose and mouth) could not be explained by mustard gas. However, these are exactly the symptoms described in First World War mustard gas victims.

Secondly, he claimed to find mycotoxins (fungal poisons) in blood and urine from Iranian solidiers in hospital in Europe, using the technique of Gas Chromatography (GC). But GC is not foolproof and needs confirming with the more exact technique of Mass Spectrometry (MS).

Correlation

Suspiciously, Heyndrickx found no correlation between blood and urine samples from the same victim, i.e. where the blood contained mycotoxins, the urine didn't, and vice versa. This points to poor experimental practice, with the GC machine being contaminated with the mycotoxins used to standardise the results.

When Heyndrickx repeated his measurements a few weeks later using MS, he found no mycotoxins. He said this was because they had decayed,

though other researchers have found no such decay.

Also, researchers in Sweden have failed to support Heyndrickx's findings.

On the separate question of yellow rain in S.E. Asia, US scientists at this conference repeated their assertions that Russia had used mycotoxins for chemical warfare.

Leading critic of this view, Matthew Meselson, caused uproar by presenting his explanation that yellow rain was in fact bee turds on which the Fusarium fungus had grown.

Fusarium produces the virulent poison trichothecene and, contrary to American assertions, is found throughout S.E. Asia, growing on all sorts of rotting plant matter.

Fungi

At times of food shortage, peasants are forced to eat food spoilt by fungi, and trichothecene poisoning may be naturally quite common, even without the intervention of the SE Asia bee.

Being social animals living in a small space, bees do not foul their own nests, but save it all up for a few weeks. By this time, up to 40% of the bee's weight may be faeces.

Then, all the bees in the hive go for a mass "defecation flight", peppering thousands of square metres with miniature turds. This is not as bad as it sounds, as the faeces are mainly pollen.

The US government has claimed that the Russians are actually using pollen to deliver mycotoxins to their opponents but there is no evidence to support this.

Fusarium thrives on stale bee faeces, but whether it actually produces trichothecene poisons on them has yet to be proved. If it does, the American warmongers will be left with bee faeces on their faces. Info: New Scientist

The left against Kinnock

John McIlroy sizes up the Labour leadership

JOHN HARRIS



The 'happy family' stunt that didn't quite come off. As Neil Kinnock was elected Labour leader at the 1983 conference, he put on a victory celebration complete with wife and flowers. But the applause was more embarrassed than enthusiastic.

Gays against fascism

By J. Carrivagio

THE main debate at this year's AGM of the Labour Campaign for Gay Rights was around the growing problem of racism and of fascist regalia being worn at gay clubs around London.

One club in particular, the Bell, has allowed known gay fascists through the doors. This led to racist abuse being levelled at black members.

The Lesbian and Black Gay Group has been approached over these incidents, and ways were discussed on how best to tackle the problem.

One of the options would be to boycott these clubs — leafletting at the door and persuading the members not to use the club until some action is taken

in combatting the fascist element in these clubs.

Another decision was not to accept members from the six counties of Northern Ireland. The main reason was that to accept them would mean that we were accepting a partitioned Ireland, though some people dissented, feeling that this would be isolating these people.

In discussion of a document which included a section on the right of children and young people to have control over their choice of their sexuality, objections were raised to the use of the word children, and it was felt that we could not wholly accept the views of paedophilia. It was eventually agreed to have a thorough discussion on this subject.

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Imagine there's no strikers...

Everybody's heard of 'fiddling while Rome burns' – the mad Emperor Nero is supposed to have done that. But how about "cooing sweet nothings on telly while the miners fight their prolonged bitter and uneven battle for the life of their industry"? Neil Kinnock and those who steer the Labour Party did that last Tuesday evening in a Labour Party political broadcast on TV.

The programme's theme was set by John Lennon's 1971 song "Imagine", (which is hymnal,

pleasant and vapid), sung in this programme by a group of Sheffield schoolchildren.

Cut to a scene of missiles flying through the air. Cut to three unemployed youth talking about what they think of Britain today. One of them delivers the message that we must pull together to put Britain back on its feet and make it great again.

NATO

Prunella Scales, the actress best known for her role as Sybil in *Fawlty Towers*, said what she imagined – peace. But, she said, "I'm not talking about pulling out of NATO tomorrow, or instant disarmament next week. I'm just imagining a defence policy in which, to begin with, we

Mick Ackersley looks at Labour's latest TV broadcast

shall refuse to add any further nuclear weapons to the arms race."

Cut to OAP's waltzing to "Imagine" and then to half a dozen babies splashing about in water...

So you don't particularly like "Jerusalem"? You will after you've listened carefully to Kinnock's new "Jerusalem".

"Imagine there's no countries, it isn't hard to do, nobody to kill or die for, and no religion too"

Tell that to the miners forced to fight massed ranks of police thugs in riot gear to stop the Coal Board and Margaret Thatcher smashing up their communities.

Of course, poor, well-meaning John Lennon isn't to blame for the fact this his dreamy pacifist yearnings are used as a theme song by a Labour Party leadership trying to pretend that the class struggle isn't raging all around us.

That struggle can give meaning and resonance to John Lennon's dream. But the dream comes out of the mouths of the Labour Party leaders as an alternative to class struggle.

Even the Daily Mirror the following morning had a front page showing a lone Arthur Scargill confronting a wall of police with riot shields and batons, and

a big headline. 'England, 1984'. What world do the Labour Party leaders responsible for putting out this sort of television bump live in?

Like Ramsey MacDonald, the first Labour prime minister, who went over to the Tories in 1931, Kinnock recognises the class struggle as a fact of life – but not as something to take sides and fight in. Not as something the Labour Party is part of.

But the Labour Party is part of that struggle. All over the country constituencies are collecting money, making their facilities available to the miners, and throwing themselves into the miners' fight. The Labour Party National Executive decided unanimously to levy each Party member 50p per week for the miners.

Such television programmes are an insult and an outrage against the members of the Labour Party and against the labour movement – one of whose pillars, the NUM, is scheduled for demolition by the Tories and the Coal Board.

The smart lads and lasses responsible obviously think it is good for the vote count to be bland and soft-focused. On that level they may even be right – though to this viewer it seemed awfully bad even by the standards it was aiming for.

Image

They probably know the ad-man's business very well. The Tories and the SDP think they do know their business. They have expressed alarm that Labour is playing their own game – image-making – better than them. David Owen said of the broadcast. "The act they are putting on is to give the impression that their policies have changed when they are exactly the same".

Which will ring in the years of Labour's PR people like praise indeed.

Owen knows about 'projecting an image'. And he knows how to lie: the idea that Labour's new leadership secretly has a 'barbed

Imagine there's no heaven,
It's easy if you try.

No Hell below us
Above us only sky.

Imagine all the people
Living for today.

Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do

Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion too.

Imagine all the people
Living life in peace.

You may say I'm a dreamer,
But I'm not the only one.

I hope some day you'll join us
And all the world will be as one.

Imagine no possessions.
I wonder if you can

No greed or hunger
A brotherhood of man.

Imagine all the people
Sharing all the world

You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one

I hope some day you'll join us
And all the world will live as one.

hard-left programme hidden in the cotton-wool is a deliberate Owen lie. Unfortunately.

Nevertheless we do not live in the world of John Lennon's make believe. Votes are important, but the class struggle is absolutely central.

It is scandalous for the Labour leadership to respond to Thatcher's aggressive knuckle-duster Toryism with whinings and vague yearnings for a different world. They express a yearning for a Britain that is 'one nation' and for social peace instead of aggressively lining up on our side of the class war, and that is unforgivable. The miners on the television news with blood streaming down their faces live in the real Tory Britain of 1984.

Labour needs to get its PR right – and the leaders responsible for it into line with the feelings and interests of the rank and file. It needs to get its feet back on the ground.

Politics isn't a song and dance act, Neil.

The wheels so still

It stands so proud, the wheels so still
A ghost-like figure on the hill,
It seems so strange there is no sound,
Now there are no men underground.

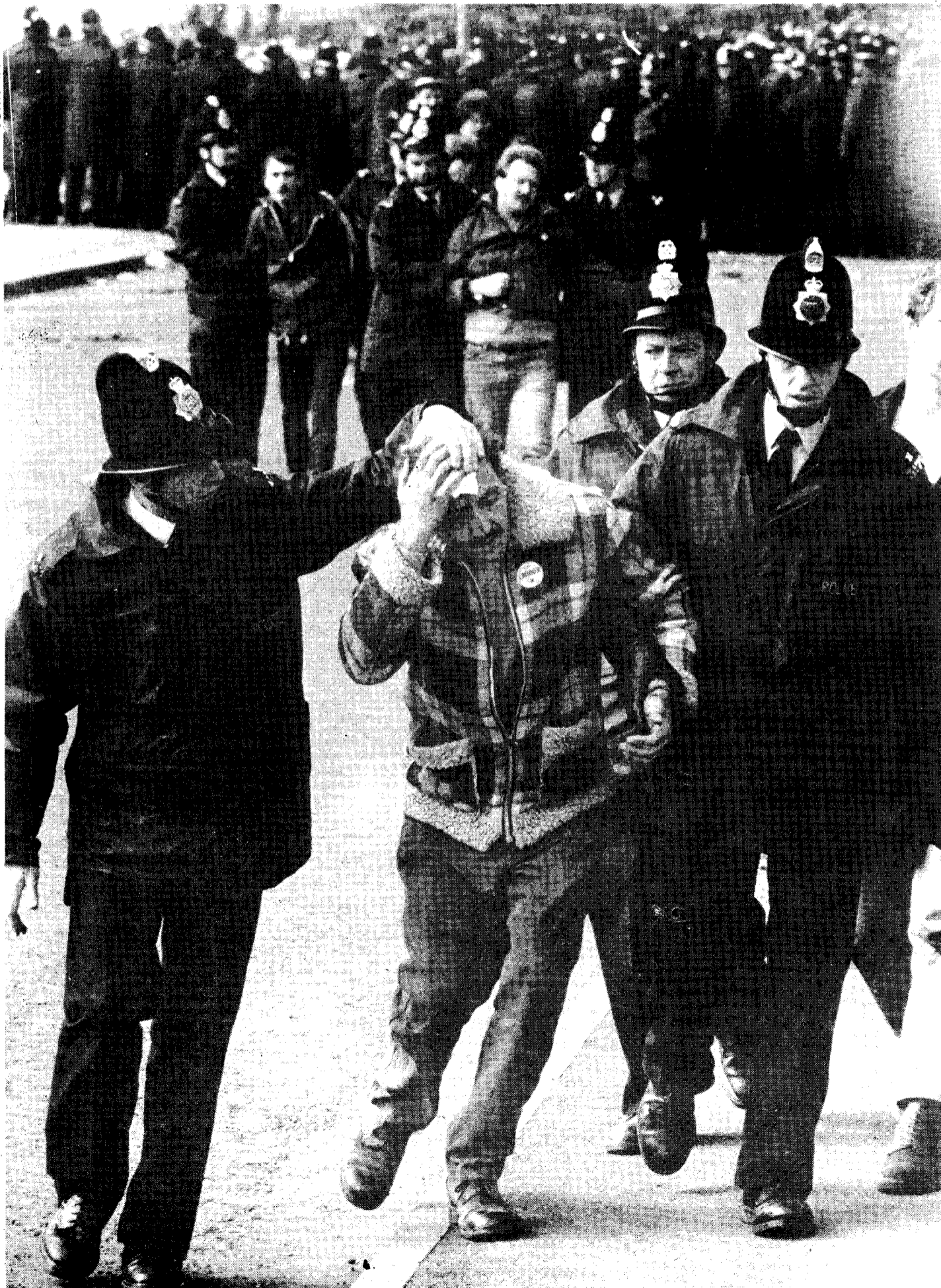
What will become of this pit yard
Where men once trampled, faces hard,
So tired and weary – their shift done
Never having seen the sun.

Will it become a sacred ground
Foreign tourists gazing round,
Asking if men really worked here
Way beneath this pit head gear.

Empty trucks once filled with coal
Lined up like men on the dole,
Will they ever be used again –
Or left for scrap just like the men.

There'll always be a happy hour
For those with money, jobs and power,
They'll never realise the hurt
They've caused to men they treat like dirt.

Kay Sutcliffe, Kent miners' wife



A battered picket gets arrested at the Orgreave picket line. He's campaigning for Labour – but what does Neil Kinnock have to offer him?



**Labour
Campaign
for Gay
Rights**

fighting in the Labour movement for lesbian
and gay male liberation

To join or affiliate, write to Chris Richardson, 21, Devonshire Promenade, Lenton, Nottingham NG7 2DS.

Industrial

Spread jobs fight in BL

By Stan Crooke

WORKERS at the BL Bathgate plant are sitting tight in their fight against the closure of the plant.

Closure would cost 1800 jobs at Bathgate itself, and another 1800 jobs in the "knock-on" effect, in an area where registered male unemployment is already 40%.

It would be the final stage in a long-running decimation of the plant: tractor production has been transferred to Gainsborough, truck cabs to Lancashire, vans to Birmingham, and a share of the axle production to Glasgow.

According to management's timetable, 500 jobs are to go straightaway, another 500 plus by the beginning of next year, when truck production at the plant will have ceased, and the remaining 700 jobs will be axed in 1986.

But, with support from the rest of the workers in the BL combine, the Bathgate workforce can stop management in its tracks.

A sit-in began as soon as closure was announced on May 22, and an embargo was placed on any production or machinery leaving the plant. As Bathgate supplies engines, gearboxes and axles to the whole BL vehicle division, the impact should be felt soon.

Talks were held between shop stewards and BL management in London on May 26, without management budging an inch. The following day a mass meeting at Bathgate voted to continue the sit-in. Clerical and administrative staff are now also supporting shopfloor workers in the occupation.

Management's initial counter has been to warn that the plant could be closed more rapidly and that the carrot of up to £9,000 redundancy payments could be withdrawn.

When workers sat in at the plant two years ago, management got a court injunction to force the workforce out. No doubt it will be prepared to attempt the same tactic this time round.

The sit-in and embargo are only the start of the fight. The rest of the BL workforce, in

RICK MATTHEWS (IFL)



Workers lock the gates after occupying the Bathgate factory

both the car and vehicle divisions, must rally to the defence of the Bathgate workers.

Providing moral and financial backing is only one element of the necessary support. Particularly important is a pledge to black any attempted transfer of production: management plans to transfer the remaining axle production to the Glasgow Albion plant, the Landtrain truck production to Scammell in Watford, and begin production of a new lightweight truck at Leyland to replace the Landmaster currently produced at Bathgate.

It is also necessary to campaign throughout the combine for solidarity strike action in the event of any legal actions being taken against the sit-in.

The recent Scottish TUC voted to back opposition to

anti-union legislation even where it went outside the law.

The same logic must be applied to the fight for jobs as well: if management gets an injunction again, it should be

openly defied.

And the fight for jobs at Bathgate must be the occasion for raising much broader questions about opening the books to trade union inspection,

workers' control over working conditions, and an alternative workers' plan of production, which can serve to draw BL's workforce as a whole into a united struggle.

Don't take fool's gold

Interview

local, regional and district councillors and the two MPs for this area, Robin Cook and Tam Dalyell, who all pledged full support.

"The MPs have pledged to raise the question in the House of Commons, and we are pressing for a meeting with the Prime Minister. The STUC will do everything possible in its power to assist and likewise the local council, but the Tory councillors don't support the sit-in, although they support retention of the plant.

"A demonstration and rally have been organised for this Saturday (June 2) in Whitburn, starting at 10 am, together with the miners. Miners are here today on the picket line and their support has been exceptionally well received.

"On Saturday's demonstration there will be miners from the local pit, Polkemmet, from Fife and from all over Scotland. It will be a national demonstration of solidarity.

"We have also been invited to the miners' gala in Edinburgh the following Saturday and will be participating in that as well.

"In the sit-in we have a 24-hour, round-the-clock rota and plenty of volunteers to take part in it. Security officers are securing the premises for us.

"The sit-in could have an immediate impact. Engines and other components for the new MT211 model have been blacked since January after the company could not give us any assurances about the plant's future. And the impact will also be immediate on people who have bought tractors and need replacement parts.

"Elsewhere in the BL combine we already have the resolution adopted at the meeting of representatives from all BL truck plants last February that no plants would accept work from another without the prior agreement of the latter.

"Albion in Glasgow has already agreed to reject the trans-

fer of manufacture of axles, so this could have dire effects on Albion, with management threatening 75 redundancies there.

"Components for the MT211 were also being blacked at the BL plant in Leyland. We have not made any approaches yet for financial support, but we know from previous experience that such support will be forthcoming and that you don't need to ask for it.

"We're taking legal advice on the interim interdict that BL are likely to seek in the courts against us.

"We've already spoken to people involved in other sit-ins in the area, many of which we actively gave support to while they were taking place. They have passed on a number of ideas to us. Support from Plessey has already been forthcoming."

Donations/messages of support should be sent to: BL Bathgate Sit-in, c/o Bathgate Burgh Chambers, Bathgate, West Lothian.

Industrial digest



Ferries

Cross-Channel, North Sea and Irish Sea ferry services face disruption this week when workers in the National Union of Seamen state a 48-hour strike on Wednesday and Thursday (30th-31st) in protest at the government's plans to privatise Sealink, British Rail's ferry subsidiary.

The strike, called by the NUS executive, is expected to get the full support of all 7,000 of its union members working on ferries and shut down all British-staffed ferries operated by the three major companies, Sealink, P&O, and European Ferries.

The NUS fear that if the sale of Sealink goes ahead 2,500 out of the company's 10,000 workforce will lose their jobs.

Tech teachers

On Monday (May 28) delegates at the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE) annual conference in Birmingham spurred on by the action being taken by the NUT and other teaching unions, decided to call a one-day strike in protest at the Tories' derisive 4.5% pay offer, and agreed to support a policy of no cover for absent colleagues.

Dreadnought

At last week's conference of the National Union of Seamen in Guernsey, delegates voted overwhelmingly to overturn its executive committee's decision to accept the closure of the Dreadnought Seamen's Hospital in South East London and the transfer of facilities to St. Thomas's Hospital in Lambeth.

This gives a much needed boost to the action by COHSE and the other unions involved in the fight to save the much-needed hospital.

No-strike deals

The General, Municipal and Boilermakers Union is joining other unions - notably the electricians (EETPU) - in offering complete "package deals" amounting to no-strike agreements, in negotiations with foreign-owned companies who are setting up factories in the UK.

Currently the GMBU is vying with the AUEW (with the TGWU dropping out of sight) for a franchise from the Nissan car firm, which intends to build a 500-job car assembly plant in Washington New Town. Both unions are offering far-reaching single union agreement virtually guaranteeing no stoppages by the workforce.

Already a number of single union agreements exist in large factories in the North East. The GMBU concluded the most recent deal by negotiating a three-stage disputes procedure for one firm ending with a commitment to independent and binding arbitration.

And we all know how "independent" arbitration rulings are!

Tales from the shires

BASINGSTOKE is a modern, still expanding boom town surrounded by the solid green wall of rural Toryism. This sometimes leads to some very odd goings-on.

Depressed inner cities may have their violence, but the Shire's ire is inspired by different causes. Here's an extract from a local paper.

TEN HELD IN DOG SHOW PUNCH UP.

Three people were injured and ten people detained by police

By Carla Jamison

following a punch up at a dog show. The trouble started when one of the terriers at a dog show in Heckfield, Hants, did a whoopsey in one of the tents. The owner refused to clear it up. A Hampshire police spokesman said: "In the following fight three people were injured, one with a broken finger, one had his ear bitten - by a human, I think - and another suffered bruised ribs." Ten people were helping police with inquiries after the bundle."

With this kind of hooliganism going on one dreads to think what will happen at the start of the Gymkhana season!!

POLICEMEN from Hampshire villages formed part of the contingent sent to Nottingham a few weeks ago to police the NUM picket lines. Their Superintendent grew increasingly distressed at the Yorkshire pickets' use of the word 'Scab'.

In fact, he told them not to say it any more.

They said 'Well, what can we call them then?' The genteel fellow thought a while and replied 'Well, you could call them... bounders!'

The Broad Lefts
What they are and what they must become
Socialist Organiser 35p

35p plus postage from SO, 28 Middle Lane, London N8

Two pamphlets summing up the ideas of Socialist Organiser.
'Where We Stand' - 20p plus 16p postage.
'How to fight the Tories' - 10p plus 16p postage.
Or the two together for 45p including postage. From Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8

Industrial

Barking: a fight for us all

AT THE end of March, Crothalls, a subsidiary of Pritchards, retained the contract they'd had since 1967 to clean the Barking Hospital.

They thanked their staff for the hard work they'd put in. Then they told the staff about the new conditions.

Total cleaning hours would be cut by almost half, leading to a drop in standards and cuts in pay for the workers.

Split shifts would be introduced and annual holidays reduced from four weeks to three. Rights to sick pay would be abolished as the

wages dropped below the Statutory Sick Pay level.

The cleaners went on strike. On May 31 NUPE shop stewards in London will be voting on a recommendation from the London Divisional Council for an all-out, indefinite strike of NUPE members in London hospitals with only accident and emergency cover, to support the Barking strikers.

Sue Smith, NUPE shop steward at the Barking, spoke to Jenny Fisher about the strike and some of the issues it raises about privatisation in the NHS.

We want to go back to work in the hospital, but we want better conditions. We want more hours in which to do the work, so the hospital is kept up to the standard.

We know that Crothalls are being penalised because the standard is not being kept up. They're bringing scab labour across the picket line now to do our jobs. But with 20 or so scabs a day, to do the work that took 90 of us, they're not getting a clean hospital.

The new specifications are for bathrooms and toilets to be cleaned once every 24 hours, which is just not possible. People are ill. We were cleaning those areas three times a day previously, and that is what's needed, because germs are being passed around in that area.

And we care about our hospital. We take pride in what we do. Some of us have worked here for 20 years, and it's like a second home. We really do want to go back to work in Barking Hospital, but we just don't feel that we can unless we can be giving a good service.

Most of us are in NUPE, with 20 or so in the GMWU. NUPE's been really good. But we've been lucky there's a GLC resource centre here, called LINK, which has provided us with office space, and publicity. NUPE have helped, but they just don't have that sort of facility.

NUPE has been paying for branches to send buses or coaches down, and we've been out speaking at meetings. We've been up to Cambridge, for example, to talk to stewards at Addenbrookes, where Crothalls have a contract that is coming up for renewal in September.

Inside the Hospital, we've had the catering staff and the porters support us. They were out on strike for ten days. Then we started to negotiate with Crothalls and also with ACAS. They thought that this was some sort of sign that we would be back at work, and so they went back.

Unfortunately, nothing came of the talks. The only new thing was that Crothalls offered us

£8,350, which we could divide up any way we wanted, either as disruption money to return to work, or as redundancy money for those that didn't wish to return to work.

But the women refused the offer. They didn't think that that was what they were fighting for.

There is a full privatisation plan for this district, so all the services in the hospitals in this area are under threat. By 1986, I think it is, they want all the ancillary services privatised. So it's a fight the whole of the District should be fighting.

I suppose everybody has got their own battle on their hands, haven't they?

But it'll hit everyone in the end. When you have Crothalls doing the domestic service, you could have OCS in the canteen. You have not got a united workforce if you're working for private contractors, and different private contractors, instead of all working for the NHS.

This will make the Health Service very fragmented. You won't get one group of workers to support another. I think this is maybe one of the aims of this government as well... well, besides destroying the NHS!

As well as keeping the number of scabs down, we've been turning back all sorts of supplies, so keeping the hospital open has been a real headache for management.

And we had a man come down to clear the drains, from Pritchards. He went into the Hospital, refused to do the work and went home again. So some of their employees are honouring our picket line.

We need all kinds of support. We're getting some strike pay, but donations to the strike fund would be really helpful. It's obvious, after being on strike for so long, some of us are really in trouble. Rent is being late, in arrears, bills are coming in.

We've got a list of members of the District Health Authority; people can write and complain to them. And we need support on the picket line.

Mass pickets continue

A group of 15 strikers and supporters, including a joint contingent from Tower Hamlets Unemployed Workers Centre and Tower Hamlets Health Campaign had an unexpectedly productive time at the picket line on Tuesday 28th. The police forgot to turn up!

The minibuses bringing in the scabs were held up at the hospital gates but eventually forced their way through, thanks to the private protection they'd brought with them. One of the "heavies" was wearing a NUPE badge!

The pickets pursued the vans into the hospital, waited while the

second van did a tour of the hospital grounds, and then were able to confront the scabs in the hospital when they eventually got in.

When the police finally arrived, the pickets returned to the gates, and were successful in turning away a lorry that was trying to deliver bacon.

Mass pickets continue on Monday mornings, and as we go to press there are discussions about holding an all-day mass action on Wednesday June 6, to meet possible evictions from the picket line.



Barking strikers picket the AGM of Pritchards, the parent company of their employer, Crothalls

Scots teachers debate pay

By Ian McCalman

DELEGATES to the annual conference of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), the main teachers' union in Scotland, in Rothesay on June 7-9, face a major decision over pay.

Scottish teachers find themselves this year in the invidious position of having settled for 4.5%, while their English colleagues are taking action to improve on the same offer.

The agreement to settle, however, was only achieved on the basis of a narrow (52 to 48%) vote in a postal ballot in which the union leadership offered no course of action if they decided to reject.

The ballot indicates deep discontent on the wages issue which will undoubtedly manifest itself in the session ahead.

Delegates to conference will be faced with voting on a motion from Council which calls for "a major independent review of teachers' salaries", a working party to examine the effects on teachers' conditions of service, of the increased work load arising from recent educational developments and a plan of action, including a withdrawal of cooperation with the employers, to achieve these objectives.

There is, unfortunately, a division of opinion among the left in the union on this issue, a left which has made some striking gains recently in elections in Glasgow, Strathclyde and on Council.

There is a body of opinion, mainly based on Lothian Rank and File, which advocates total rejection of the pay motion on the grounds that such a pay review cannot be "independent", will reflect management attitudes and will therefore state that any pay

increases should be linked to improvements in "productivity".

Moreover, they argue, the government will easily grant such a review and the union leadership will use that to justify calling off any action against the burdens of curricular development now being heaped on the teachers.

This seems attractive, but I think delegates should reject it. Advocates of this line admit that the resolution will be overwhelmingly endorsed. In that situation, the argument for rejection is an argument to do nothing until the ritual jousting on pay in March/April of next year.

Moreover, there will be an objection to the motion before conference, insisting that findings of the review only be considered for inclusion in the salaries claim insofar as they do not conflict with existing EIS policy of "no trade off" on jobs and conditions and are consistent with current EIS salaries strategy.

To claim that this objection, if passed, is "only a piece of paper" which the leadership will ignore if it suits them, is nonsensical. That view would suggest that all conferences, resolutions and arguments are a waste of time.

Of course, those who advocate voting for the Council motion, conditional on acceptance of the objection, are well aware that that is only the beginning of a struggle both to get the pay review and to guard against illusions in it. What we are not prepared to do is to prove our "purity" and militancy by cutting our

selves off from the possibility of immediately mobilising the membership on the salaries issue.

Secondly, there are no grounds for believing that the government will readily agree to such a pay review this time round. We are not in the situation of 1974 when we were granted the Houghton review. Nor are we in 1980 when the Clegg review came along.

We are in 1984, facing a Tory government determined to hold down pay increases, especially in the public sector, and to ignore any pleas from the unions. To get the review itself will require a major mobilisation of the membership on a policy of non-cooperation.

And if the review is granted, that will not automatically mean that action against the burden of an increased workload will be called off. Motions on the new "S" grades and the Action Plan stand separ-

ately from the pay issue and will be discussed as such.

Again, there are the dangers that a section of the leadership will try to link the two issues in the manner indicated. But the dangers should not stop us trying to rouse the membership to take issue on both fronts.

Although pay will be the central issue at the conference, it should not detract from other concerns such as the resolution calling on members on the Scottish TUC and the TUC not to cooperate with the Manpower Services Commission in relation to new YTS schemes.

The recent conference of the further education section of the EIS narrowly agreed to remit to their Executive a motion opposing YTS. Delegates to the EIS conference should go beyond that and give a lead to the rest of the trade union movement on this question.

June	
Monday	4 11 18 25
Tuesday	5 12 19 26
Wednesday	6 13 20 27
Thursday	7 14 21 28
Friday	1 8 15 22 29
Saturday	2 9 16 23 30
Sunday	3 10 17 24

Wednesday June 6. Streatham Labour Party Euro-election rally for the miners. 8pm at St Matthews Meeting Place, opposite Lambeth Town Hall London SW2.

Saturday August 18 A major demonstration in London for British withdrawal from Ireland is planned. Sponsors are sought write to August 18 Demonstration Committee, 27 Clerkenwell Close London EC1.

Monday June 4. Glasgow Socialist Organiser meeting on 'Socialism and Art'. 7.30 at the AUEW halls West Regent St.

Glasgow SO pamphlet. 'Hands off Glasgow', about the local government cuts. One copy 40p, five £2, ten £4 from S.Crooke, 63 Dixon Avenue, Glasgow G42.

Saturday June 9 - Monday June 11: Lutte Ouvriere fete, at Presles (Val d'Oise), near Paris. If you would like to join the Socialist Organiser contingent going over, please contact Ellen Taylor, 532 Abbeydale Rd, Sheffield 7.



ANDREW WARD (REPORT)

Socialist ORGANISER

JOHN HARRIS



The Gulf: US keep out!

THE situation in the Gulf is becoming more and more explosive.

Iran and Iraq continue attacks on shipping. Iran is reported to be massing forces for the biggest offensive yet in this long and massively murderous war.

A new element of danger is added by the involvement of the United States. The US regards the Gulf almost as its property — an oilfield to supply its economy and the economies of its allies.

A large part of the US's world-wide military planning is hinged around the contingency of US military interventions in the Gulf.

Saudi

So far the US has proceeded chiefly by beefing up its main ally in the area, Saudi Arabia. New weaponry, and US advisers, have been rushed there.

US planes and ships, however, are also operating in the Gulf.

A repeat in the Gulf of what the US tried to do in Lebanon could bring us to the brink of world war. The call from the labour movement should be: US, hands off!

Now mobilise for June 9!

Twelve thousand people marched for unilateral nuclear disarmament in Coventry last Saturday, May 26. CND activists are organising now for June 9 — the mass demonstration against Cruise missiles when Ronald Reagan visits Britain.

The closeness of the Euro-elections means that the European dimension of the fight against nuclear weapons should also be prominent.

Although Cruise is installed in Britain — for the moment — the

Cruise and Pershing missiles for other West European countries are yet to arrive. In Holland and West Germany, particularly, big movements are developing against them.

Unfortunately, the CND leadership — despite CND conference decisions — is doing nothing to raise the issue of NATO on June 9. CND activists should make sure that the slogan 'Britain out of NATO' is prominent nonetheless.

The demonstration assembles at Speakers Corner at 12 noon,

and will march to Trafalgar Square for a rally at 3pm. At the same time selected groups will be organising an encirclement of the US Embassy.

Liverpool against the cuts

Liverpool City Council has postponed its budget-making pending talks with Environment Minister Patrick Jenkin. A clear majority of the councillors, however, are still committed to going ahead with an illegal budget.

By law councils are supposed to balance their budgets. But drastic Tory cuts in central government grant to councils have made it impossible for them to balance their budgets unless they make cuts or impose huge rate rises.

Most Labour councils have slapped on rate rises for a period, then finally gone for cuts. But Liverpool's new left wing Labour majority has refused.

The important thing now is to make sure that Liverpool's fight is tied up with the miners' strike and the whole working class

struggle against the Tory government. Liverpool City Council has called a labour movement conference to rally support on June 23, and Socialist Organiser is asking readers to get delegates sent and push this resolution:

THIS conference pledges its full support to Liverpool City Council's fight against Tory cuts, its refusal to make the people of Liverpool pay through rent or rate rises, and its demand for more money from central government.

We resolve to argue in our delegating bodies for:

a) Industrial action on Merseyside in the event of the government sending in commissioners or troops, councillors being surcharged or penalised for their stand, or workers not getting paid. If the government does not back down, this should be developed into a local general strike.

b) Support from trade unions at national level for such action. Local government unions, in particular, should back up action by their members on Merseyside by organising supporting strikes elsewhere.

c) Other Labour councils to support Liverpool. If the banks cut off credit to Liverpool council, other Labour councils should respond by cutting off interest payments to the banks.

d) The Parliamentary Labour Party leadership to support Liverpool. Any Tory legislation to send commissioners into Liverpool should be combatted by Parliamentary obstruction.

To coordinate this strategy, we call for the extension of the

Merseyside Labour and Trade Union Campaign Committee into a broader delegate body, while rejecting any move to dilute it from a labour movement campaign into a 'broad' cross-class front.

Liverpool's battle is part of the same fight as the miners' strike, and the two battles should be linked as closely as possible with each other and with other struggles, with the perspective of organising for a general strike. To help build towards this, we call on the TUC to organise a 24 hour general strike in support of the miners and Liverpool council.

Another £5 for SO!

£90 this week to help pay for our work round the miners' strike — petrol, fares, cost of leaflets, phone bills...

Thanks to: Manchester supporters £40, Merseyside supporters £15, York supporters £20, Gary Scott £5, Andy Bennett £5, Jim Denham £5.

But the bills are still coming in. Some groups — Brent, for one — are already doing a second round of special collections to make sure Socialist Organiser can play a full role in supporting the miners' strike. They are asking for another £5 from every employed supporter, and £1 from the unemployed.

We need the same from every group to keep us ahead of the red ink and the creditors' warning letters. Send money to: 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.

Conference against the cuts called by Liverpool City Council Saturday June 23

Philharmonic Hall, Hope St. Liverpool

Invited speakers: Tony Benn, David Blunkett, Alex Kitson, Arthur Scargill, Rodney Bickerstaffe, Dennis Skinner, Ken Livingstone

Up to five delegates from labour movement organisations
Credentials £2 from Andy Pink, Central Support Unit
Liverpool City Council
Dale St, Liverpool



Join the Labour Party. Write to: The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT. Subscription is £7 per year, £2 unwaged, 50p OAPs.

NO TO BOTH!



DEMONSTRATE SATURDAY JUNE 2ND

Assemble 11.45 Speaker's Corner Hyde Park