

# Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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20p

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# EXPULSION



Photo: Denis Doran (Militant)

## for their socialist ideas!

Labour Party members and trade unionists will be appalled at the expulsion of five socialists from the Labour Party.

The Tories will be rubbing their hands with glee at this decision. The right-wing leadership of the Labour Party have opened up the sluice-gates of McCarthyism, plunging the party into a bitter and unwanted internal conflict.

Tragically the right wing have got their way and at the National Executive Committee meeting of the Labour Party on Wednesday the five members of the *Militant* Editorial Board, with 120 years of Labour Party membership between them, were thrown out of the Party.

It is a scandal that the

meeting took place at Labour Party headquarters which overlooks the Bermondsey constituency, and was held on the eve of the important by-election.

It was almost, as Peter Taaffe pointed out in a press conference as if the right-wing controlled NEC consciously set out to sabotage the by-election. When the five protested at the NEC meeting at its timing, Sam McCluskie, the chairman, and Eric Heffer, vice-chairman of the Party, appeared to nod in agreement.

Incredibly, still no action has been taken against O'Grady for standing against the official Labour

CONTINUED ON  
PAGE TWO

South Wales miners are bitter and angry. And determined to save their jobs.

This week's Area Conference on 23 February was unanimous in favour of striking to stop closures.

A ballot is taking place at all pits in South Wales this week for an all-out strike for Monday 28 February. Already a number of pits are out.

By Tyrone O'Sullivan  
(Secretary, Tower Lodge)  
and Ian Isaacs  
(Secretary, St John's  
Lodge, NUM)

At the Conference many delegates spoke in favour of all-out action now. The mood was bitter and angry as miners from Lewis Merthyr pit, threatened by closure, lobbied the conference. They cannot be left to fight alone.

For all miners this is a make or break situation. Either we stop the closures now, or we will be trampled

## MINERS FIGHT CLOSURES



Photo: Militant

on. The Coal Board made that quite clear. The January conference backed down on this account on the basis that new discussions would continue. The promises proved empty and nothing has been forthcoming—except more closures. We are told there

will be no investment or recruitment. Instead the Board took our last decision for weakness.

The revolt against pit closures has come from below. Miners from Lewis Merthyr were assured that they still had the support of

half a dozen pits when details of their closure became known. Last weekend, when the miners at Lewis Merthyr heard the Coal Board planned to close the pit in July, a sit-in began. This was followed by a  
*continued on page 14*

## Join in the fight-back

*Militant* needs your help more than ever before!

We are now fighting for the very right of Labour Party members to argue for socialist policies!

The right wing, of course, have the powerful mass media on their side in their blatant attempts to turn the clock back on policy and on democracy.

Our resources are small, and, if our enemies had their way, they would even have our print-shop closed down!

To fight back we have to travel up and down the country to put our case at meetings. We have to produce hundreds of thousands of leaflets, posters and pamphlets. And, unfortunately, we still have to fight the right wing's attempts to trample the constitution and conference decision of the Labour Party, through the courts.

All this requires a lot of money.

We are calling on everyone who reads the *Militant* to express their indignation at the NEC's decision to expel us by making a bumper donation to our Fighting Fund.

We are nearly 1/2 way through our Fighting Fund quarter with less than £10,000 in to date. We need £5,000 this week...that means a 'tenner', a 'fiver' or a 'oner' from YOU!

Please help us to get back on target and back into the Labour Party!

**Militant Editorial Board**

# EXPELLED

continued from page one

candidate in Bermondsey. His expulsion from the Labour Party will only be "considered" at the next NEC meeting!

The five were accused of being 'members' of the Militant Tendency. At no point, despite several requests from the five Editorial Board members, was any evidence produced to prove that Militant was an "organisation" or that the five had violated Labour Party rules. Ted Grant described the situation later as "an Alice-in-Wonderland world. It was a trial and conviction without the evidence."

When the five asked about the evidence and described examples of how full-time Labour Party officials had spied on *Militant* supporters they were met with an embarrassed silence. As Peter Taaffe said afterwards, "Some officials have been acting like a poor man's Eddie Shoestring. When the nature of this so-called evidence comes out, it will stink in the noses of the labour movement."

The move to expel the five was passed by 19 votes to 9. Those voting for included Michael Foot and Neil Kinnock. Those against were Frank Allaun, Tony Benn, Laurence Coates, Judith Hart, Eric Heffer, Jo Richardson, Tom Sawyer, Dennis Skinner and Audrey Wise.

Already there have been over 1,000 resolutions from labour movement organisations opposed to the witch-hunt. This opposition is continuing. In Merseyside alone, since 15 December, 52 Labour Party and trade union bodies have opposed the witch-hunt. In Scotland, eleven MPs, 42 CLPs and 41 leading labour movement and trade union figures have condemned the expulsions.

Far from being thrown out of the Labour Party, Peter Taaffe explained, the five were being "expelled into the labour movement." There will be mass support amongst the rank and file of the movement for the right of the five to remain in the Party. This will be seen at the coming 50 meetings opposing the expulsion which are to be held up and down the country (see back page).

This is not the end of the affair but the beginning. *Militant*, alongside the ranks of the labour movement will campaign unceasingly for the reinstatement of the five, who have more right to be in the Party than those right wingers who lead witch-hunts or those cynics who have carved out careers on the backs of the labour movement. As Ted Grant pledged: "We shall be back."

**The NEC meeting was only a formal affair with the minimum trappings of natural justice. Dennis Skinner pointed out that a session had already been held which had agreed on restrictions on the type of questions which could be asked so he would use the "Parliamentary" method of questioning!**

He asked the Editorial Board if we were aware that the reason why we were not allowed to see any of the evidence was that most of it cannot be corroborated. In his opinion "a lot more heads would follow and the press would want to change policies or those remaining policies that had not yet been changed."

Tony Benn asked whether we thought natural justice had been applied to our case. We replied that we had been treated undemocratically and unconstitutionally. No evidence had been presented but all the questions which the Party had asked had been answered. No fair hearing had been organised, in effect at each stage show trials had been arranged. In the movement there had been no revival of bans and proscriptions but in effect this is what the NEC had returned to.

The General Secretary had read from his letter to us: "The allegation against you is that as a member of the Editorial Board of *Militant* you are actively involved in the organisation and activity of the Militant Tendency and may, therefore, fairly and reasonably be regarded as a member of the Militant Tendency. As outlined in preceding paragraphs of this letter the party conference decided that the Militant Tendency is an unconstitutional organisation operating within the Labour Party. In pursuance of conference decisions the National Executive Committee decided that Militant Tendency is not eligible for affiliation to the Party and that members of the Militant Tendency cannot, therefore, under the rules of the Party (Clause II (part 4)) be individual members of the Party."

But *Militant* is a newspaper and there is no



A large crowd of protesters gathered outside Labour's Walworth Road HQ on Wednesday to lobby the National Executive committee. Unfortunately, once again, the voice of the rank and file was not heeded.

Photo: Denis Doran (Militant)

connection with any organisation. It is the capitalist press who invented "Militant Tendency". In effect the *Militant* represents a trend of thought in the labour movement and the *Militant* Editorial Board is responsible for organising support for the paper.

## It's the Militant today but who's turn tomorrow?

Michael Foot questioned why the issue of expulsions should be taken to the courts, his contention being that in the past those threatened with expulsion, or expelled, were prepared to appeal to the Party conference. He pointed out, however, that if the NEC of the Labour Party had abided by the constitution, there would have been no need to go down the legal road. The right wing have lost the hearts and minds of the rank and file and having done so, have bent the rules in order to expel their opponents from the movement.

We explained that we will fight this decision politically and appeal to Labour Party Conference, but who

would deny the right of workers to go to the courts if a clique at the head of their union bent the rules and obstructed democratic rights? It is impossible to obtain justice in "John Golding's court", that is why we have been forced to consider taking legal action.

Even Michael Foot in his biography of Aneurin Bevan quotes that when Bevan was faced with expulsion he threatened to go to the "highest court in the land," that is Parliament, because he was being treated unconstitutionally.

This is a political witch-hunt. Our question of what the *Militant* Editorial Board has to do to stay in the Party has not been answered. The right-wing dominated NEC are not interested in this, however. They want to see the closure of *Militant* and the ending of the influence of Marxist ideas in the Labour Party.

Ron Hayward, the previous General Secretary of the Party, had explained that when he first took office he found hundreds of files on left-wing Party members. These he destroyed, hoping to end an era of witch-hunts, bans and proscriptions. But with this decision of the NEC, this era has opened up again. No doubt we will now see such files again on

everyone on the left.

Party officials have already been used as snoopers in the Party to try and establish evidence against the *Militant*, attending our annual rally and hiding behind newspapers (the *Beano* possibly) to try and identify the people attending. The Constituency Labour Parties were not asked to submit any evidence to the enquiry, organisations which would have entirely vindicated the work of local *Militant* supporters in building up the local membership and support for the Party.

**The right wing's 'constituency' is the press and House of Commons. They comfort themselves that they will get over their problems soon. Nothing could be further from the truth.**

The evidence assembled in the "black box" in Walworth Road is based on gossip, lies, hearsay and malice. That is why it cannot

be published because it cannot be substantiated.

But the witch-hunt will not stop here. Frank Allaun is reported as having tried in the morning to move that no more expulsions should take place if the NEC agreed to expel the Editorial Board. This was greeted with howls of derision by the right-wing members of the NEC.

Our warning that the witch-hunt would begin with the *Militant* and then move on to try to purge the left-wing policies has been clearly vindicated by events. We warned Michael Foot that the capitalist press would not be satisfied with deciding on who could be Labour Party members but that they would also want to decide on the party leader. The pressure in the past week shows this to be correct.

Tony Benn's letter (below) was not circulated to the NEC, despite his request to do so, this is an entirely new departure and the first time such a request has been refused since he went on the NEC.

Even the Party chairman, Sam McCluskie, pointed out that the normal trade union procedure when expulsions are carried out is to firstly suspend the decision in order to hear the appeal, otherwise in his words, "it's like hanging"—it's too late.

## The case against expulsions — by Tony Benn

The NEC is soon to be asked to expel five members of the Labour Party.

I attach a series of questions which I put to these five, in order to get a clear response from them to every charge that has been levelled against them.

Their answers, which I can now enclose, completely dispose of the charge that they have breached our constitution. The NEC has no evidence whatever for doubting the truth of their replies.

It is clear that if expulsion is decided on, the NEC itself will be in breach of Conference decisions and of our own constitution. It will also be seen to be denying natural justice.

Many members of the Party believe that what we are witnessing is a witch-hunt of good socialists in pursuance of a long vendetta originally launched by those who left the Party to join the SDP.

But it may well be that

other members of the NEC will vote for expulsion in the false belief that it will make the Party more popular with the electors and the Tory press. In all probability it will do the reverse, and lead to demands for further expulsions.

Meanwhile, it will do great damage to the Party by undermining its reputation for tolerance and fair play and by shaking the confidence of the constituency parties in both the judge-

ment and the courage of the present NEC, which has spent more time on such diversionary attacks than it has in preparing for a Labour victory.

It is time to call off this whole squalid business, and to remember that in our coming campaigns against the Tories that the Editorial Board of *Militant*, and all who support the paper, will be working with the party whether we expel them or not.

We also know that if they are expelled, they will all be readmitted to membership—like Stafford Cripps, Nye Bevan, Michael Foot, Jim Mortimer and many other socialists, who were victims of exactly the same intolerance in the past.

With the Bermondsey bye-election tomorrow, local elections in May and a general election expected imminently, the Labour Party nationally, and the electorate we expect to support us, ex-

pect us to make our prime task now to unite behind our conference policies and to campaign for these throughout the country.

This is the only way we can protect our own people, whose interests are being so savagely attacked, and replace this government.

Tony Benn  
February 14 1983

# Labour right's big business links

THE PRESS campaign to replace Michael Foot as Labour leader aims to push through a right-wing candidate. It has raised the name of none other than Jim Callaghan as a possible successor.

As we explained long ago, the aim of the witch-hunt against *Militant* is to ditch not only Labour's radical policies and constitutional reforms but also Foot himself.

Callaghan, the champion of the party's right, has become the 'witch-hunter general' in the attempted purge of the left. After his defeat in 1979 and his 'retirement', he has now been heralded as the saviour of the party. Cheered on by the Gaitskell wing of the party and the Tory press, he has become the darling of the establishment, a respectable Labour statesman.

The recent CIS report on *The Wealthy* details the links between Callaghan and others with controversial business friends. For instance, Sir Julian Hodge was knighted in 1970, but "...Hodge first hit the headlines in 1961 when his personal fortune shot to £4 million in as many minutes.

"...Jim Callaghan has been a substantial shareholder in Hodge Finance, and when the Bank of Wales was formed Callaghan and seven other Welsh Labour MPs took big stakes in it. (emphasis added)

"But Hodge became most notorious in the early seventies for pyramid selling and second mortgage schemes. These were like a financial chain letter, in which people, many of them West Indian immigrants, borrowed money on the security of their homes. If they failed to sell further shares to cover what they had borrowed (and many of them did fail to sell) the company claimed what it was owed and people lost their homes.

By Rob Sewell

"Pyramid selling was made illegal in 1973. Last year Hodge Finance and Julian S Hodge were refused licences by the Office of Fair Trading."

The life-styles of many Labour MPs are completely divorced from the working people they are supposed to represent. Many Labour

for Stockport South, defected to the SDP traitors in 1981. He only recently became an MP after a long search for a "safe" constituency, helped by right wing Labour Party officials.

He is typical of the middle class carpet-baggers out for a lucrative career for themselves. But until recently he was Jim Callaghan's main political adviser. Again, the political editor of the *Sun* newspaper, Roger Carroll, left the paper in 1978 to become Callaghan's speech writer for the year before the general election!

When that was lost he returned to the gutter press. Now he is leaving again to work full-time for the SDP! Dr Bernard Donoghue was Wilson's and Callaghan's policy adviser between 1974-79. He became assistant editor of the *Times*. Recently he resigned along with Harold Evans, the editor, to become a full-time stock-broker heading the investment policy department at the leading City firm Grieson Grant!

Evans got an estimated £260,000 golden hand-shake. It was not disclosed what Donoghue received. These are the sort of people who were the chief advisers to a Labour government! No wonder the rank and file of the Labour Party are justly demanding that future Labour governments should carry out Labour conference decisions!

In an interview with the *Observer* (3/12/78) Jim Callaghan was asked: "You don't think, in fact, that some people have lost faith in the Labour Party because prominent supporters of the Labour Party, not just politicians, seem to have done very well for themselves and have crossed over to capitalism?"

Jim Callaghan replied, "Everybody's standard has gone up during my lifetime...Some of them (old age pensioners) even get as far as Spain for a holiday. Everybody's standards have gone up. That kind of criticism you refer to leaves me totally unmoved!"

No wonder there is widespread cynicism among working people about the real intentions of Labour politicians.

The only way this image can be broken is if the Labour leaders and representatives put themselves on the same living standards as those they are supposed to represent. Our parliamentary representatives must stop hob-nobbing with the Tories and big business and become real fighters for the interests of working people.

The early pioneers of the labour movement would turn in their graves if they could see the present standards of our leaders. According to Lady Marcia Falkender in the *Observer* recently (30/1/83) Harold Wilson took steps to improve his finances by "an agreement with the *Times* newspaper to write a lengthy and comprehensive history of his years in Downing Street. For this he was to receive a very large sum of money (believed to be £250,000.

"The spoken as well as the written word became a source of income too. On

three annual occasions Harold Wilson spent a fortnight of the summer recess on a lecture tour of the United States. So substantial were the fees for each lecture

that a fortnight's speaking tour per year took care of our Press Secretary Joe Haines' annual salary."

Any income derived from memoirs (Jim Callaghan is

now busy writing his), articles, tours, TV, radio etc should be paid back into the labour movement, not used to build comfortable lives on the back of the movement.



TILL WE REACH OUR GOAL

Party members would be shocked at the undisclosed wide-scale involvement of Labour MPs with the captains of industry who are in direct opposition to the interests of the labour movement.

Apart from a lucrative salary as MP of around £550 per week, many have additional incomes from directorships, consultancies and perks. Not a small number hob-nob with the Tories and representatives from 'high society', strictly out of view from Labour's rank and file.

Such was Callaghan's reputation with big business that Christopher Hitchens in his book *Callaghan: The Road to Number Ten* states that "It is, then, somewhat ironic that the man who thrives on the image of the common people's affections, and who has denounced the existence of private affluence in the House, should in opposition have gained such a harsh reputation among a segment of the non-political and the sarcastic as the owner of a 138-acre farm and the member of Parliament for the Commercial Bank of Wales." (page 133)

Given this type of 'well to do' background it is not surprising that Labour leaders surround themselves with political advisers who have nothing in common with Labour's socialist aspirations.

The cynical careerist Tom McNally, once Labour MP



These headlines leave no doubt where the *Daily Mail* stands. Labour Party, trade unions, they've all come under the hammer. Now they want to 'defend' Labour against *Militant*. Very odd.

## The Mail man called...

FLEET STREET is entirely run and controlled by big business.

Belying their sudden concern over the 'Militant' threat to Labour, Fleet Street's dirty tricks department have been at work in Bermondsey.

By Bob Wade

Their latest ruse is to get a journalist to masquerade as a Labour supporter and help out in canvassing for the candidate, Peter Tatchell, picking up any malicious gossip which is then used to smear the party.

The *Sun* has already used this tactic. This Monday it was the *Daily Mail's* turn. Its front page screamed: "Militant grip on Tatchell."

It seemed the *Mail* was shocked that *Militant* supporters should be enthusiastically canvassing for the candidate Peter Tatchell. Well, the *Mail* has always had the interests of the Labour Party at heart, hasn't it?

Its intrepid reporter was an old pal of mine, Alan Hall. In his sensationalist diatribe he said he went to

canvass for Peter Tatchell "as a Labour supporter". And not as a *Daily Mail* reporter of course.

Funny, when Alan was briefly in the Labour Party, in our old home town of Brentwood in Essex, I don't remember such enthusiasm. In fact I don't think he went to one meeting or canvass at all. Why the sudden interest in Bermondsey? As if I need ask.

According to his report, Alan wanted to know, "Were members of the Militant Tendency...as sinister as the right would have us believe?" It's taken him a long time to find out. He's known me for the five years I have been an active sup-

porter of *Militant*.

But seeing as he was writing for the *Daily Mail*, no prizes offered for the conclusion he came to: "...I have been shocked and not a little frightened at the sheer fanaticism of many of the extremists canvassing on Peter Tatchell's behalf."

Shocked and frightened? He didn't seem "shocked and frightened" when he attended my wedding recently and joined in the celebrations with the many *Militant* supporters present. A *Militant* supporter even gave him a bed for the night—how shocking.

Alan also writes, "In the interests of truth I must report..." etc. In the interests of truth surely he must have told Party members in Bermondsey he was writing an article for the *Daily Mail*. Or did he tell them he was unemployed? It could be argued that Alan Hall didn't go down to Bermondsey "as a Labour supporter", but more to do a hatchet job for one of the most fanatical anti-Labour papers of Fleet Street.

# ads

**NEW RATE**  
 CLASSIFIED: 10p per word, minimum 10 words.  
 SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres.  
 All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY.

## Militant readers meetings

**SHEPHERDS BUSH, W. London.** Speaker: Clare Doyle (Editorial Board, *Militant*), Wednesday, 2 March at 8 pm at Village Hall, Wood Lane—Bulwer Street junction, Shepherds Bush Green, London W12.

(Tube: Metro. and Central lines. Buses: 12, 49, 72, 88, 105, 207, 220, 237, 295).

**SHIPLEY** Marxist discussion group.

Thursday 10 March "Women and the Family".

Thursday 24 March "Socialism and war".

All meetings at Shipley Pride, Shipley at 8 pm.

**BLACKWOOD:** Marxist Discussion Group held regularly. If interested telephone Bagoed 834131.

**LAMBETH** *Militant* Supporters, Marxist Discussion Group.

Sunday 27 February: "The fight against the Tories".

Sunday 6 March: "Militant and the Labour Party".

Further meetings will be arranged. If there is a subject you would like to discuss, let us know.

All meetings are: Sunday 3.00 pm at: Basement Flat, 50 Dulwich Road, Brixton. Bring a friend. Plenty of time for questions and discussion.

**LITTLEHAMPTON:** *Militant* Readers' Meeting, "The witch-hunt", on Monday 7 March, 1983, 7.30 pm. Speaker: Peter Taaffe, at the Friends Meeting House, Church Street.

### CLASSIFIED

**CAMBRIDGESHIRE:** labour and trade union youth day school. Saturday 19 March, 10.30 am, at Gladstone Community Centre, Cromwell Road, Peterborough.

Speakers: Kevin Ramage (LPYS National Chairman), Dave Nellist (Labour PPC Coventry SE), Brian Richman (Peterborough TGWU, Bob Childs (Cambridge ASLEF). (All speakers in a personal capacity). For further information contact Chris Ballard (0223) 211229.

**BRADFORD MASS CANVASS** Undercliffe Ward, 27 February, 11 am. Meet East Ward Labour Club.

Details: ring Bill Reed 633374 or J Bawker 306492

**BRADFORD NORTH LABOUR PARTY**

"Defend Public Services". PUBLIC MEETING ON FRIDAY 25 FEBRUARY, at 7.30 pm at Textile Hall, Westgate, Bradford.

Speakers: Pat Wall (Labour's PPC Bradford North); Terry Fields (FBU Executive and Labour's PPC Kirkdale).

**CLEETHORPES,** Labour Party Public Meeting: "War or Peace?"

Speakers: John Hough (Labour PPC, Louth); Derek Hatton (Labour PPC, Wavertree) on Friday 25 February, at 7.30 pm at Elliston St. School, Cleethorpes.

**NEW MILITANT** leaflet out now! It's an election year special! Advertise your local readers' meeting with this new leaflet. Free, from 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

**EDINBURGH:** Day School on Central America, Saturday 5 March. Speakers: Jenny Pearce, Robin Cook MP & video and workshops. Organised by Edinburgh Latin American Solidarity. All Welcome.

**CARLISLE:** Marxist Discussion Group held fortnightly. For further information contact: Ian Campbell on Carlisle 21068.

**WYTHENSHAWE LPYS:** Public meeting. Hear Lynn Walsh (*Militant* Editorial Board). Wednesday 2 March, 7.30 pm. Wythenshawe Social Centre, 260 Brownly Rd. (Behind the dole office), Wythenshawe.

**HAYES & HARLINGTON LPYS** Disco, 8 pm, Saturday 5 March. £1.00 entrance. Refreshments available. Townfield Community Centre, Townfield Road, Hayes.

**BLACK WORKERS AND THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM** Black and Asian discussion group.

**MOSS SIDE,** Sunday 27 February at 2.30 pm on "South Africa".

**OLDHAM,** Sunday 20 March at 2.30 pm. on "The fight against unemployment and racialism".

For further details phone: 061-226 3189.

**LEEDS:** "Is unemployment here to stay?" on Tuesday 1 March at 7.30 pm at trades club, Saville Mount, Leeds.

# £50,000 needed by April 9

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 9th April
Eastern	732		2700
East Midlands	724		2850
Humberside	196		1500
London East	787		3300
London West	322		1650
London South	602		2500
Manchester & Lancs	596		3000
Merseyside	934		3100
Northern	402		3750
Scotland East	183		1850
Scotland West	304		2800
Southern	639		4000
South West	432		2000
Wales East	235		1500
Wales West	246		2000
West Midlands	572		2800
Yorkshire	592		3700
Others	741		5000
<b>Total received</b>	<b>9248</b>		<b>50000</b>

## SPECIAL APPEAL

# FUND US TO FIGHT BACK

**TOTAL THIS WEEK: £2187**

Nearly half of the quarter gone but we still have not reached half the target. If we are to campaign against the expulsions, against the Tories and campaign to implement our programme then the donations must keep pouring in.

Every week we receive many letters explaining why more and more workers are supporting us. The first excerpt comes from a new member of Pddington LPYS, Guy Stading: "...I am unemployed, but am nevertheless enclosing £1 to the 'Fighting Fund' from my dole cheque...The witch-hunting must stop. The only witch we should be hunting is Thatcher. Forward to victory, the strength of the nation lies in the youth (and most of the youth of the

country can't be wrong."

Another letter received this week from a sympathiser in Bracknell shows opposition to the witch-hunt.

"Please send me five copies of the brilliant new 'NT go home' poster. I don't share all your views but I wish you all well. If only the NEC would give the Tories as hard a time as they're trying to give you."

We are receiving donations from all corners of the labour and trade union movement. Over £71 was raised at the TUC Youth Conference, Tuebrook Ward Labour Party donated £50, John Stavers Basildon CLP donated £15, and over £10 was collected from ap-

peal sheets taken round the Liverpool Corporation Housing Department. Anne Mennell Bristol North East Women's section gave £5, and a member of the Royal Navy stationed in Scotland donated £2, as did Joe Pell, an Old Age Pensioner from Sheffield LP.

From the youth movement this week we received; £20 from Battersea Labour Party Young Socialists, nearly £20 from Stafford LPYS, £10 from Glentworth LPYS, £3 from Cardiff North LPYS and £2 from Blackburn LPYS, and thanks to Harlow YS who donated £15 at last week's Eastern Region YS conference. Further donations

received this week included; £140 raised from supporters in East London, a "wind-fall" of £60 from a supporter in Shipley, Mick Forster (Cleethorpes NALGO) £14, £10 raised on an appeal sheet from Cathcart supporters and £6 from MT (Blackburn).

Thanks to all those who donated a fiver or under; Betws Colliery, Amman Valley £5, R Thomas (school student Llanelli) £5, Jim Kelly (Birmingham) £5, JT Smith (Potters Bar) £5, T Walker (Gedling TGWU) £2, Dave Campbell (Wavertree LPYS) £2 and Andy Viner £2 from "Taxi" service.

Thanks finally to all those who donated £1 or gave £1 for their paper; Mrs N Reeson (Bolsover CLP), Rupert Simon (Somerset), D Bentley (Glasgow NALGO), S Brown (FE Student, Staveley), A Gray (Whitwell NUM), Dave Brooks (Leicester), E Hasman (Leicester NALGO), and to the North Derbyshire supporter who donated the pound he found in the street.

Thanks to everyone who sent donations. Sorry that we could not mention you all, but please keep sending the donations in. We cannot wage a campaign without cash. Above all keep the regular donations coming in, as they make all the difference.

## SALE TIME

Our readers are rallying to fight back against the Tories! We've had new orders from Welshpool (Powys), Crewkerne (Somerset), and Haverhill in Suffolk. *Militant* is now sold in every large town and every county in England and Wales as well as every industrial area of Scotland and Ireland. We've also had new readers write in from as far apart as Plymouth to Argyllshire.

Our article on Cantril Farm was an instant success, 117 papers sold on that estate that weekend. Michael Foot again figures largely in our sales push, 100 papers being sold by our supporters at meetings he spoke at.

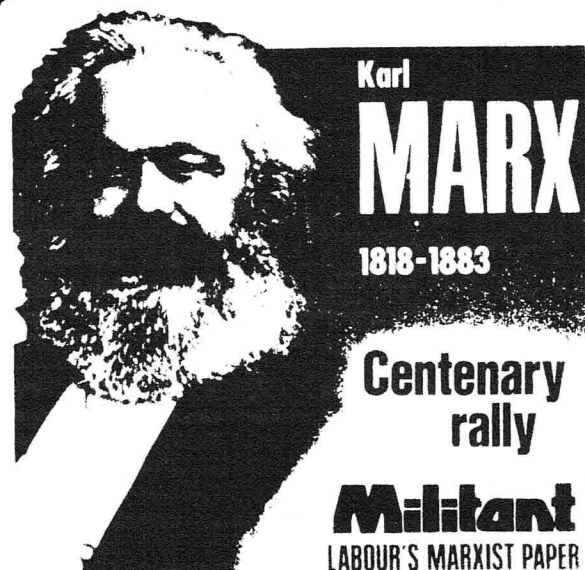
The best answer to the witch-hunters is to help our support grow! Can you sell *Militant* at your union branch or Labour Party? At work, to your neighbours, at

your local CND meeting? Why not give us a try?

Local supporters should approach their local newsagent, bookshop and ask them to sell *Militant*. Get your local Labour Club to sell to its members. There are hundreds of ways of giving our sales a boost.

Last but not least areas that have doubled their sales this week include South East Lancs sellers, following the success of South Wales and Plymouth last week. Fight the Tories with *Militant*. Make sure your area gets a mention in *Militant*. Tell us about your sales successes.

To become a seller please use the tear-off slip on page 15 or contact, *Militant*, Circulation, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN or phone 01-986 3828.



### MARX CENTENARY RALLIES

This year is the centenary of the death of Karl Marx, who died on March 14 1883. Throughout his life, Marx provided the labour movement with an analysis of capitalist society as a preparation for the emancipation of the working class.

*Militant*—Labour's Marxist paper—has organised a series of regional rallies to commemorate the event, and explain the relevance of Marxism today.

**LONDON:** Sunday 20 March. Speakers: L Walsh, P Taaffe, + 'Sam the Man' CAST Theatre Group. Camden Town Hall, Euston Road, NW1.

**BIRMINGHAM:** Saturday 19 March. Speakers: L Walsh, Dave Cotterill. The Assembly Hall, Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham.

**NOTTINGHAM:** Sunday 13 March, 10.30 am-5.00 pm. Speakers: K Dickinson, P Jarvis. Byron Lecture Theatre, Trent Poly, Shakespeare Street.

**SWANSEA:** Monday 14 March, 7.30 pm. Speaker: P Taaffe. Dynevor School, Kingsway, Swansea.

**CARDIFF:** Tuesday 15 March. Speaker: P Taaffe. Royal Hotel, St Mary's Street.

**LIVERPOOL:** Sunday 20 March, 12.00. Speakers: E Grant, K Dickinson. AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant.

**NORTHERN REGION:** Saturday 26 March, 10.30 am. Speaker: C Doyle. The Oval Community Centre, Concorde, Washington, Sunderland.

**LEEDS:** Saturday 12 March. Speaker: T Saunois. The Swarthmore Education Centre, Woodhouse Square, Leeds.

**GLASGOW:** Monday 14 March, 7.30 pm. Speaker: E Grant. The Mitchell Theatre, Granville Street, Glasgow.

**HUMBERSIDE:** Saturday 19 March, 12.00-4.30 pm. Speakers: J Pickard, T Saunois. Trades & Labour Club, Beverley Road, Hull. (Social in evening)

**BRISTOL:** Monday 14 March, 7.30 pm. Speaker: L Walsh. The Swan, Stokescroft, Bristol.

**EDINBURGH:** Saturday 19 March, 10.00 am. Speakers: R Apps, E Grant. Playhouse Theatre, Edinburgh.

**MANCHESTER:** Thursday 17 March. Speaker: R Sewell.

# Union ranks support LPYS

**"In Pilkingtons we used to take on 25 girls every year, who, after a year's training, would go into a typing pool until a job came up somewhere in the factory."**

Now, instead of taking on 25 girls Pilkingtons are having 125 redundancies, including 40 from the typing pool, yet they take on 25 youth trainees."

These words of Mick Slater, ASTMS delegate to last weeks TUC Youth Conference show how the bosses are attempting to use Youth Training to replace established apprenticeships and drive down the wages of young workers.

LPYS members gave a lead at the TUC youth conference calling for the TUC to defend the wages and conditions of young workers and apprentices, and to lead a campaign to unionise youth on YTS.

The growing support for Labour's youth amongst young workers was reflected in the fact that of the total attendance of 90, around 20 delegates were in the Labour Party Young Socialists. Nearly 30 others applied to join the LPYS at the conference.

Reports at last week's LPYS National Committee also confirm that the LPYS is continuing to grow.

In the last few weeks new branches have been established. One area of growth has been amongst school and Further Education students.

An LPYS speaker was even invited to address students at Eton College! When the speaker explained that the LPYS stood for the abolition of the monarchy and the House of Lords he was vociferously attacked—especially by one character who turned out to be the son of a Duke!

Response from working class students in ordinary FE colleges was far more favourable. In Sutton over 70 youth, overwhelmingly school students, turned up to a *Socialist Youth* rally on the campaign for a £25 a week grant.

In Bromsgrove the younger brother of an LPYS member pinned up the *Socialist Youth* poster calling for a £25 a week grant on his school notice board. The head teacher demanded the poster be removed but the school students refused and demanded that a debate be organised between the Young Conservatives, Young Liberals and Young Socialists.

Despite the fact that teachers were encouraging support for the YCs and YLs, the brother of the LPYS member put forward the LPYS view at the debate and won overwhelmingly.

The Labour leaders must ensure that the demand for a £25 a week grant for all 16-18 year olds in education is included in the next manifesto. It is such demands as this that will win enthusiastic support not only from youth but from millions of workers who could see the prospect of their family incomes increas-



Labour Party Young Socialists lead fight against the Tories, Liverpool demo 1982

ing by £25, £50 or more a week.

Preparations are now well under way for the LPYS National Conference, with every region having booked transport and accommodation.

Finance for LPYS branches, especially those with student and unemployed members, is always a problem. LPYS branches should not hesitate to contact trade union branches and organisations and ask them to sponsor visitors. So far this has received a good response.

Unions that have already agreed to sponsor visitors include UCATT, NUPE and the GMBATU in the South West. The EETPU in Port Talbot. In Yorkshire at least six are expected from the NUM and in Manchester the Bakers Union have sponsored four.

In London Waterloo ASLEF, Southwark UCATT and the NUR are sponsoring visitors to conference.

In the Northern Region the shop stewards' committee at Huwoods in Gateshead are sponsoring a visitor and the TGWU have agreed to sponsor anyone who is interested in going.

## Anger at Fords

**Local Ford's union branches have been approached to encourage young Ford's workers to attend this year's LPYS Conference.**

Brian Philips, a convenor at Ford's in Swansea, is to organise a meeting with an LPYS speaker to explain what the LPYS Conference involves, and a visit is being planned to Ford's Bridgend Plant.

Ford's in Swansea have taken on 45 YOP trainees. Dai Llwellyn Davies, a shop steward at Ford's Swansea plant stated:

"Young people are getting a raw deal, they're not getting the experience of working on the shop floor. While apprenticeships are declining Ford's are replacing them with YOP trainees."

"In the Bridgend plant YOP trainees are working alongside production

Photo: Denis Doran (Militant)

# Regional conferences

WITH FOUR MILLION new voters coming onto the electoral register, nearly all of whom are youth, regional conferences of the Labour Party Young Socialists have been meeting up and down the country to discuss and formulate a socialist programme to win youth to the Labour Party and ensure the victory of a socialist Labour government.

### Northern Region

About 150 delegates and visitors attended the conference in Newcastle. The Tories' new 'Youth Training Scheme' was taken up, with many delegates relating their own experiences of work on the YOP schemes.

During the debate on the NHS, delegates from Stockton and Washington LPYS branches gave graphic examples of the Tories' cuts.

Fraternal speakers to conference were Joe Mills (Trades Unions for Labour Victory), Laurence Coates (LPYS NEC representative) and Ron Brown MP. A collection was held for water

workers occupying the Heaton Sewage depot who are facing legal action from the water authority.

Conference also passed a resolution condemning the Labour Party NEC's action over the leaflets printed by the Cambridge Heath Press company for the Bermondsey by-election.

### Eastern Region

Nearly 100 attended the conference in Colchester. After an excellent speech by Pat Lewis, secretary of the Essex water workers' strike committee, £45 was raised for the strike fund. On the Saturday evening of the two-day conference, Ted Grant, political editor of *Militant*, spoke at a readers' meeting, where over £300 was raised for the fighting fund.

### Wales

At the Welsh regional conference in Swansea, nearly £40 was raised for the water workers' strike fund. There were major discussions on all issues facing youth, from nuclear disarmament to YOPs schemes and unemployment.

## 100 Papers sold

### STANDING room only!

That was the order of the day as Mansfield, Ashfield and South Normanton LPYS branches held their first ever *Socialist Youth* rally in Nottinghamshire.

Over 70 young people turned up to hear Leo McDaid (NOLS NC) and John Fahey (LPYS NC elect) spell out why youth need a socialist paper to counter the lies and distortions of the millionaire controlled Tory rags.

About a dozen new people agreed to participate in future YS activities and all in all the general mood of the meeting was one of hatred of the Tories; but also that sincere socialists were needed in Parliament—who were

prepared to accept the average wage of a skilled worker.

A collection for the LPYS Campaign Fund raised an excellent £26, a useful sum considering that the bulk of people attending were either unemployed or school students.

The rally itself was the culmination of activities around the *Socialist Youth* Week of Action. During the week a day of action was organised, where over 100 papers (62 *Militants*, 40 *Socialist Youth*) were sold and factories and pits visited.

By Chris Reveille  
(Mansfield LPYS)

# LPYS

about party young socialists

## APPEAL TO F.E. AND SCHOOL STUDENTS

ONLY A RAVING LUNATIC WOULD WANT A £25 GRANT..

Do you want?

- ★ A minimum grant of at least £25 a week for all 16 to 18 year olds in full time education with the full grant at 18.
- ★ To reverse all the cuts in education!
- ★ The right of all political societies (except fascists) to organise within the colleges and schools!
- ★ Full independence of student unions from the college authorities.
- ★ A mass school students' union to represent the views of all school students.
- ★ A guaranteed job, apprenticeship, or place in full-time education with a living grant at the age of 16.

If so, then join the LPYS in the fight to kick out the Tories, and replace them with a socialist Labour government.

Many FE students are joining the LPYS campaign for a £25 a week grant for 16-18 year olds

# BREL battle continues

Photo: Militant

**ONCE AGAIN the management in British Rail Engineering Ltd. (BREL) have declared war on their workforce. They are proposing to close Loco workshops in Horwich, Shildon and Temple Mills and destroy 3,800 jobs.**

This is in addition to the jobs lost in the redundancy terms agreed in last year's "compromise" after BREL's attempt to close the workshops failed in the face of the united opposition of workers in the industry, and the threat of all-out industrial action by the NUR.

The British Rail Board (BRB) said then they would try to keep the workshop open for export orders. In reality they only postponed their attempts to close the workshops until they felt conditions were more favourable.

As Dennis Green, Horwich works convenor said, "The battleground after the shelving of the closure should have been investments not voluntary redundancies." The management argue they can no longer afford to spread the available work between the different workshops as this is pushing their costs up. This is inevitable when the government have the conscious policy of running down the railway network.

The Serpell Report which proposed the dismantling of

the railways has been officially shelved for the time being, but as Dennis Green points out, "This is a backdoor attempt at implementing Serpell without damaging election prospects for the Tory government." If these plans are carried out then this will pave the way for Serpell's full implementation.

The very week these plans were announced, Thatcher was visiting Lancashire, telling workers to turn their backs on the old industries and "look for new jobs in the industries of the future." In a rational society, the railways would be one of the "industries of the future". A co-ordinated transport policy could provide a cheap, efficient public transport system as a real service to the community.

In their pamphlet, "The great railway carve-up—the workers' response" (see *Militant* 28 January), Horwich workers showed that capital investment in world railways, mostly in USA and Europe exceeded £14.6 billion in 1980—up 22% compared with 1979. Yet the UK was the odd one out—investment went down.

The rundown of British Railways is not an inevitable "Act of God", it results from Tory hatred of any form of public ownership. In the same year as France, West Germany and Italy spent £2½ billion on new track the UK spent virtually nothing. The latest proposals



British Rail engineering workers have faced continued job insecurity. Here Swindon workers march in protest.

have come as no surprise to the Horwich workforce.

Since the partial victory last year, the Joint Action Committee which unites staff on the shop floor, has kept up the battle to expose the management plans. On 9 February the Horwich management issued notice of compulsory redundancies. When this was opposed by the workforce the threat was withdrawn.

At the same time, shop

stewards discovered that work normally done at Horwich was being sub-contracted out to a private firm in Chester. This was to have been taken up by the Action Committee as an example of the management trying to privatise aspects of the work, when the proposed closures were announced.

At a mass meeting on 18 February, the entire workforce at Horwich reaffirmed their determination

to fight the closure and redundancies with industrial action. Dennis Green said, "All rail industry workers must realise they are facing a common battle. The workers in the loco works are merely the first, the others will be battling tomorrow."

The union must take up the fight against closure and redundancies with renewed vigour and use the full strength of the Triple

Alliance to protect the jobs now. They must link this fight to a programme of expanding the rail network—renewing old stock and providing a public transport system to meet the needs of ordinary people not the needs of the asset-strippers and the profiteers who are licking their lips at the BRB's closure plans.

**By Gerry Lerner**



**BACK TO THE GOOD OLD FAMILY VIRTUES!** If the Tory plans meant nice little Derby-day trips like this it might not be so bad. But for the working class their implications are a bit different, not to say horrific.

## Tory think-tank time warp

**VICTORIAN VIRTUES.** That's what the Tories want to return to.

That's if you can call hypocrisy, destitution, and no welfare state, "virtues".

The Tories hypocritically wax lyrical about the joys of motherhood, yet want to take away all financial support and welfare from the very mothers that need it.

The latest leak from the Tory government spells out a grim future for women and children if the Tories are allowed to get back for a second term of office. This government will appear positively generous in comparison!

Dressed up in fine language, the report of the Tory Family Policy Group,

**By Heather Rawling**

which includes Margaret Thatcher, David Howell and Geoffrey Howe, is an attempt to take away from women every single right and reform that the labour movement has fought for over decades.

For example, "the usefulness of the Equal Opportunities Commission is to be examined". The report asks "Do present policies for supporting single parents strike the right balance between insuring adequate child support to prevent poverty

and encouraging responsible and self reliant behaviour of parents". With the track record of the Tories, that probably means making it harder for single parents to claim social security, when it is already extremely difficult.

They also want to "encourage families in the widest sense to reassume responsibilities taken on by the state, for example responsibility for the disabled, the elderly and unemployed 16 year olds."

It's no accident that the Tories are thinking along these lines when they are also vigorously pursuing policies of privatisation of the health service.

They want to reduce public spending by closing down the welfare state completely and pushing all the

burden of responsibility of care for the sick, the elderly and children onto the family, meaning women, in most cases. Into the bargain they would reduce the unemployment figures as they want to "encourage mothers to stay at home".

Women have already borne the brunt of the recession. Unemployment amongst women has increased more rapidly than amongst men and 70% of all users of tranquilisers are women, showing the stress in their lives.

The proposals of the Tories will have a devastating effect on the lives of working people. Labour must show it is prepared to fight to defend the welfare state and the rights of women.

## With friends like these...

**WORK a 14-18 hour day, or you are out of a job!**

That was the choice facing ten workers employed by Glasgow Car Collection Ltd.

"Our contract of employment defines the working day as 8-5, with an hour off for lunch", explained Alan McLachlan, "but in practice we work (delivering new trucks all over the country) between 14-18 hours a day."

Recently the TGWU began wage negotiations. They were offered a 5% increase on the £1.43 an hour they are working for. "We

were told either to accept" said Alan "or the Company would be closed down."

"We decided on an overtime ban; we would work for just 8 hours a day in line with our contract. But we were then told that if we were not prepared to work normally then there would be no work."

The threat was carried out. "We were 'locked out' for 5 days, with no work and no pay."

The following Monday a further meeting of the full work-force was split. It was

finally agreed to return to normal working and get the union official to take it to ACAS. The outcome is awaited.

A fairly typical story of an industrial dispute in a recession, as bosses try to squeeze more work out of their employees for a cut in real wages. Or is it?

What has so scandalised these workers is that "the boss", the firm's managing director, on the other side of the negotiating table is

**TGWU member and Labour MP for Glasgow Pollok, James White!** Workers have even had to drive Mr. White's private car back from Westminster.

And despite the £550 a week Mr White is paid for representing the labour movement in Parliament, his salary as director of the company for the two years 1980 and '81 is reported as being £33,080.



Photos on page 7 and 10 by Denis Doran (Militant)

# Militant Editorial Board replies to Jim Mortimer

16  
February  
1983

Dear Comrade Mortimer,

This is in further reply to your letter of 3 February and also in reply to your subsequent letter of 10 February. We are all five writing jointly, as it seems an empty formality to reply separately to the five identical letters you sent to us.

You say in your letter of 10 February that you are inviting us to comment on the allegation that we are "member(s) of the 'Militant Tendency'," although contrary to what you claim, your letter of 3 February fails to set out any facts in support of this allegation.

We are, as has been publicly stated many times, members of the Militant Editorial Board.

As such we are responsible for the publication, production, distribution and promotion of the weekly newspaper *Militant*, which has a wide readership and strong support among Labour Party members.

However, we cannot accept the assertion contained in your letter of 3 February that each of the five of us "may, therefore, fairly and reasonably be regarded as a member of the Militant Tendency."

We are not, as you allege, "actively involved in the organisation and activity of the Militant Tendency."

We each of us reject the charge, being put forward as the grounds for our expulsion, that we are involved in "an unconstitutional organisation within the Labour Party."

## The NEC has not offered any evidence to back its allegations

We note that the first resolution endorsed by the NEC on 26 January stated that the NEC "shall give written particulars of any such involvement" (ie in the alleged "Militant Tendency") "alleged against any individual member of the Party..." However, in your letter of 10 February you now say that you "do not accept that you are entitled to the evidence which was before Mr Hayward and Mr Hughes..."

In other words, you are saying the NEC is still not prepared to give any particulars to substantiate the allegations being made against us. You are asserting that we are 'members of the Militant Tendency', which we deny, as opposed to members of the Editorial

Board of a weekly newspaper, which is public knowledge, without offering any evidence whatsoever to back it up.

You attempt to justify this continued refusal to give us any details of the evidence by reference to the decision of the high court on our application for an interlocutory injunction on 15 December. However, Mr Justice Nourse in fact accepted that the NEC had not acted in accordance with natural justice because, as he said, the NEC had not given us "sufficiently full particulars of the correspondence and documentation referred to in the (Hayward-Hughes) report to enable them (i.e. us) adequately to know, and so be in a position to answer the allegations against them (i.e. us)." The judge stated categorically: "Without these particulars the (Hayward-Hughes) report was really nothing more than conclusions or allegations." Ironically, however, he ruled that we had lost our right to natural justice because we had gone to the court too late. We were reluctant to take legal action and went to court as a last resort when it became quite clear that the Hayward-Hughes report, adopted by conference as the basis for the register, was being used as the basis for a revival of bans, proscriptions and expulsions. This delay was held against us by the court.

Nevertheless, in spite of the high court's refusal to grant us an interlocutory (i.e. interim) injunction (which we do not regard as a final legal decision on all the issues involved), the fact remains that the NEC has never given any details whatsoever of the evidence it claims to have against us.

At conference you spoke of "a great mass of evidence...available in a huge trunk in Walworth Road." Yet neither in relation to the register, the issue put to conference, nor in relation to the subsequent declaration that the "Militant Tendency is ineligible for affiliation to the Party", nor in relation to the present expulsion proceedings against the five of us, has the NEC been prepared to give us or party members any details of the evidence. If it is so overwhelming and convincing, why the reluctance to reveal any details?

We believe this refusal confirms our earlier comment that most of the so-called "evidence" is, at best, based on false or misleading information, while much of it is malicious gossip or ludicrous fabrication. This was confirmed, in our view, by Shirley Summerskill's resolution accepted by the NEC on 15 December that "selected evidence...should be published ex-

cluding evidence submitted in confidence and/or which could be libellous".

## Mortimer's 'huge trunk' of 'evidence' was suddenly scattered to the four winds

Did you not tell the NEC on 15 December, moreover, that evidence had been taken out of the "great trunk" and dispersed around the building? Why? Was it to avoid possible, embarrassing disclosure of some of this so-called evidence? What could Labour Party members make of the stories from a regional officer who described how he was sent to snoop around Bridlington checking up on Militant supporters attending our annual sellers' rally? What would they make of the claim, to take another example, from another self-appointed snoop that he had been promised a house in another area by his right-wing Labour MP in return for information on the activities of *Militant* supporters? What are the Party members likely to think of the practice of secretly taped recordings of telephone con-

versations, in an effort to produce "incriminating evidence" against other Party members?

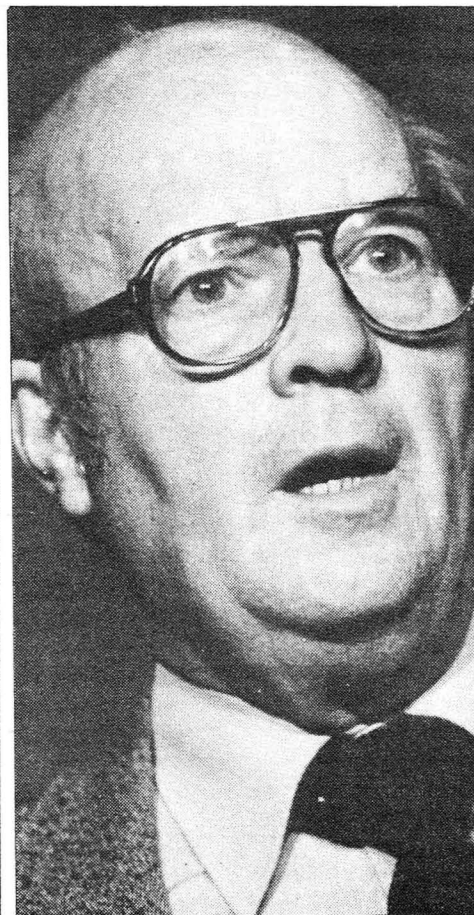
The great majority of Labour Party members are against the register, against any witch-hunt, and against expulsions. But we believe that they would be even more incensed if they knew the real details of some of the so-called "evidence" in the "great trunk".

That, in our opinion, is why the right-wing majority of the NEC is afraid to give details of the evidence. To remove any possible doubt we would ask you again: Does the NEC intend to put to us any evidence of any kind or any detailed substantiation of the allegations against us at the meeting on 23 February? Without any details of that evidence we will clearly not be able to answer or refute the basis of the allegations being made against us.

The NEC's arbitrary, undemocratic procedure clearly bears out the warning given by Alan Sapper at the 1982 conference when he moved Composite 49 opposing all bans, proscriptions, witch-hunts and proscribed lists. The NEC is resorting to precisely what he argued against: "a closed Star Chamber method of expulsion and discipline in order to defeat a policy."

As we indicated in our letter of 8 February we will attend the NEC meeting on 23 February, but we again wish to make it clear that we totally reject the NEC's action against us as unconstitutional, inconsistent with the 1973 conference decision to abolish the proscribed list, ie the system of political bans and proscriptions that operated in the past.

We note that the first resolution adopted by the NEC on 26 January refers to proceedings to decide "whether Individual Members of the Party are, contrary to Rule II(4)(b) of the constitution, members of the Militant Tendency (which pursuant to the Conference decisions, was declared by the National Executive Committee on 15 December 1982 to be ineligible for affiliation to the Party)..." Later in your letter, moreover, you state: "In pursuance of Conference decisions the National Executive Committee decided that Militant Tendency is not eligible for affiliation to the Party and that members of the Militant Tendency cannot, therefore, under the rules of the Party (Clause II (4)) be individual members of the Party."



Jim Mortimer Labour's new General Secretary

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

# Militant

## We call for:

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

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

- A minimum wage of £90 a week, including for the pensioners, the sick and disabled.

- Opposition to the Tory government's anti-union bill and reversal of all attacks on the trade unions.

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

- Nationalisation under workers' control and management of all firms threatening redundancies.

- Opening of the books of the monopolies to inspection by committees of shop stewards, housewives and small shopkeepers.

- Opposition to racism and fascism and all racist immigration laws, particularly the Tory government's racist Nationality Act. We also recognise that only by unifying black and white workers in a struggle for socialist change can racism and fascism be effectively abolished.

- Opposition to discrimination on the basis of sex. We call for equal pay for work of equal value, for a crash programme to build nurseries, schools, etc.

- Total opposition to the dictatorship of the Fleet Street press who pour out their poison daily against the labour movement. We propose that a Labour government should nationalise the newspaper printing plant facilities, radio and TV. Access to these facilities should be given to political parties, in proportion to their votes at elections.

- Abolition of the monarchy and the House of Lords.

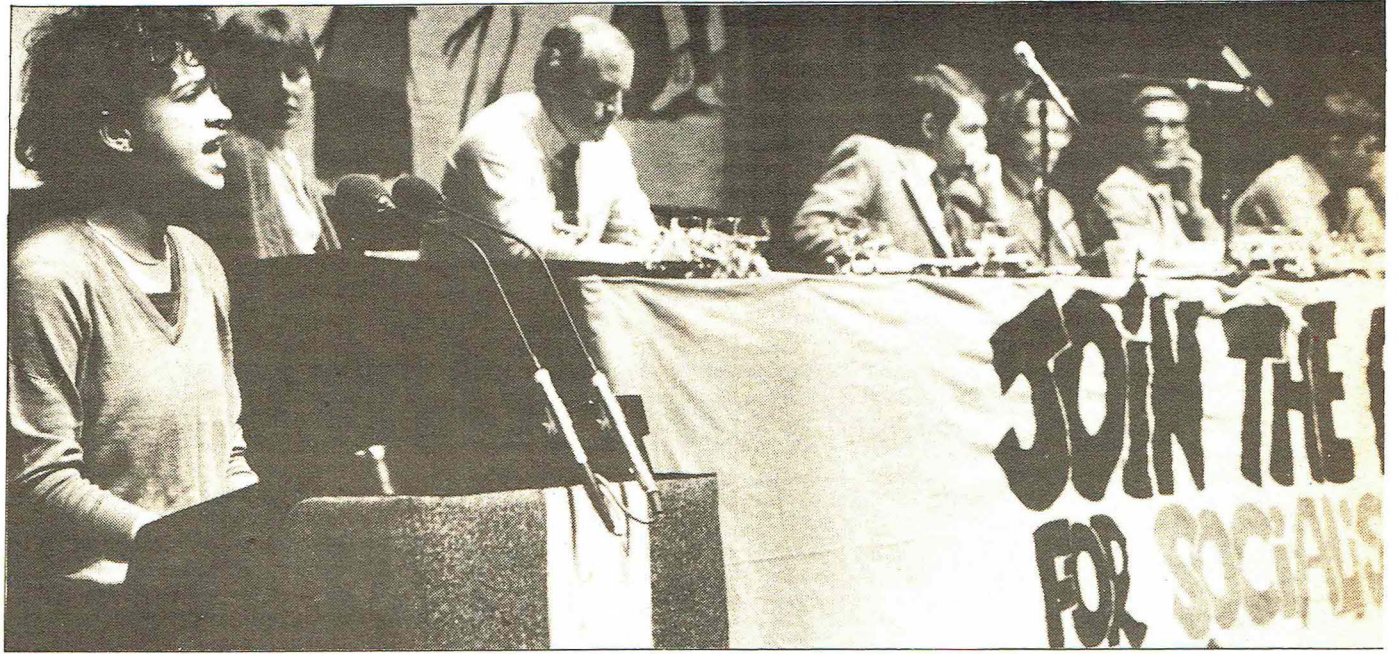
- For a 24-hour general strike to be organised by the TUC against Tory cuts and Tebbit's anti-union Bill. This to be part of a campaign to force a general election and bring a Labour government to power on a socialist programme.

- Massive cuts in arms spending, now running at £15,000 million a year. Support for unilateral nuclear disarmament, but with the recognition that only a socialist change of society in Britain and internationally can eliminate the danger of a nuclear holocaust.

- Nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies including the banks and insurance companies which control the 'commanding heights' of the economy through an Enabling Bill in Parliament with minimum compensation of th basis of proven need. This would then allow a socialist plan of production to be democratically drawn up and implemented by committees involving the trade unions, shop stewards, hosewives and small business men.

- Opposition to the capitalist Common Market. For a Socialist United States of Europe as a step towards a World Socialist Federation.

# WHAT W



## Militant's programme for trade unions

**FACED with a crisis of unparalleled proportions the Tories, headed by the "suburban skinhead" Tebbit, have come forward with the most anti-trade union legislation for over 50 years.**

Under cover of sham arguments about democracy the Tories are trying to shackle the power of the trade unions so as to clear away opposition to job cuts, wage cuts and a general increase in the exploitation of workers.

But if democracy is applied to the rich, to the boardrooms, they immediately respond with outrage. The trade union movement is a thousand times more democratic than the boardrooms of directors, or the stock exchange, or the closed shops of doctors, dentists, lawyers and other professions.

What is democratic about the

boardrooms of Britain who meet in secret and dispense with factories and jobs as though they were just numbers on a balance sheet? Will Tebbit insist that secret ballots are held before every factory closure to see if the workers and their families are in favour of the management's proposals?

It is sheer hypocrisy for the Tories to talk about improving democratic rights in the unions—if they had had their way the trade union movement would never have existed. Only in opposition to the Tories and the bosses, and through tremendous struggle, were unions created.

*Militant's* proposals on the contrary are intended to strengthen democratic rights in order that the trade unions become more (not less) effective in representing the interests of the working class.

The Tories say they want to "strengthen democracy" in the unions, what they really mean is to strengthen their influence in the trade union movement, by having elected "moderate" representatives who will not challenge their system.

Secret postal ballots give the Tories the opportunity of influencing the votes through the virtual monopoly that they have over the

press and media. Workers of course can make up their own minds, but in doing so they will be confronted with incessant propaganda in favour of right-wing candidates. Will Tebbit be in favour of ensuring that left candidates get as much media coverage as the right?

*Militant* is not opposed to secret ballots—but the membership should be involved if democracy is to really function. Meetings should be held in the workplaces, during work time, to discuss the merits of the candidates and then, on the basis of common discussion, a secret ballot could be held.

But there is dissatisfaction with the running of the trade unions. A gulf can sometimes exist between the rank and file and the union leaderships. Many union leaders receive two to two-and-a-half times the wages that their members earn. This makes it very difficult for them to fully appreciate the problems which their membership have, and creates the impression that they are remote and out of touch.

For this reason *Militant* stands for the election of all officials. These officials should only be paid the average wage of the workers that they represent, together with legitimate expenses.





# STAND FOR



The 3,000 strong Wembley Conference on September 11 last year showed the enormous opposition amongst the rank and file of the labour movement to the expulsion of Militant supporters.

Only the Marxist wing of the Labour Party, Chandra Dasgupta, a young health worker, pointed out, have consistently supported black and Asian workers and the health workers' strike.

## A socialist society

**MILITANT** believes the return of a Labour government is absolutely essential.

We supported all previous Labour governments and welcomed the reforms they introduced.

But we also repeatedly warned that, on the basis of capitalism, especially today's diseased system, it is impossible for Labour governments to secure permanent improvements for the working class. Only by fundamental socialist change would that be possible.

In today's context we believe this means fighting for:

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

unemployment.

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

A minimum wage of £90 a week, including pensioners, the sick and disabled.

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

proven need.

A socialist plan of production, democratically drawn up and implemented by committees involving the trade unions, shop stewards, housewives and small businessmen.

A rational plan of production, democratically worked out, could lead to massive increases in living standards. The British working class comprise the vast majority in society, the traditions of democratic accountability are deeply rooted.

New technology would become the means of freeing the working class from monotonous and soul-destroying jobs.

Within a generation it would mean the abolition of classes, with the possibility for the first time of the full flowering and development of the human personality

which is presently stifled and crushed under capitalism.

All political parties would have the right to organise and contest elections. The nationalisation of the press and media would mean that all sections could have access according to their support in elections. Independent trade unions would exist for the protection of workers against any possible abuses.

Marxists would continue to staunchly defend the right to strike, the right to vote and freedom of assembly. A socialist Britain would trigger off similar movements throughout the world, it would be a prelude to a movement to establish a socialist United States of Europe. It would also shatter the grip of the rotting Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe and in Russia.

## Socialism not war!

**IN THE next 3 years the world will spend \$1,000 million million on arms.**

Such an astronomical amount could if used for peaceful purposes, alleviate hunger, illness and solve all the basic problems that humanity currently faces. Of all the world's research scientists 80% are employed in arms research; limitless possibilities would open up if they were used for the benefit of humanity.

Yet on the basis of capitalism we have the Tories proposing the obscenity of increasing arms expenditure to £15,000 million for 1983/84, and at the same time cutting back on health, education, social services and job opportunities. Britain now spends a greater proportion of her Gross National Product on arms than any other capitalist country except for Greece and the United States.

The bellicose statements of Reagan and Thatcher, increases in arms expenditure, the proposed stationing of Cruise missiles are all factors behind the increase of support for the peace movement.

The invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union also assisted in giving a further twist to the general feelings of insecurity. With only twelve days of peace since the end of the Second World War fears that world war is possible abound.

*Militant* is in favour of unilateral nuclear disarmament and has fought for this.

But even if in Britain we were successful in achieving unilateral disarmament, this would not mean we would be immune from nuclear war.

The main conflict on a world scale is between the USA and the USSR.

The capitalist class and the Russian bureaucracy both understand that world war will mean the destruction of mankind, but neither will disarm because of the fundamental antagonism between their economic systems. Thus we have the insane logic of the arms race with each power trying to perfect a new generation of weapons.

There is a crying need for a harmonious world order which could guarantee lasting peace. But this could only be achieved through the socialist transformation of society in the United States and the main capitalist states. It would also require the carrying through of the political revolution in the Stalinist states to put the power into the hands of the working class.

That is why the call for unilateral nuclear disarmament does not, in itself, go far enough. It must be linked to a programme of socialist change.

## Socialist leadership

**MILITANT** fought for regular re-selection of MPs and election of the party leaders as progressive steps forward.

Added to this, however, should now be the acceptance that MPs should live on the average wage of a skilled worker, together with legitimate expenses which could be audited by the labour movement. In this way they will be able to really appreciate the position of millions of working people who suffer daily the ravages of inflation and unemployment. All money over and above this should be donated back to the labour movement.

Financial support from workers would be more likely if they saw the leadership committing their time, energy and money to the socialist cause. A daily paper could be possible.

Initially it was on such traditions that the movement was built. Keir Hardie committed his money and time to the production of the *Labour Leader*. At his death the party had to have a whip round for his widow who was left a cottage and a small insurance policy.



## Workers' control

**THE TORIES** are currently engaged in an orgy of financial speculation.

That is, they provided private "enterprise" with cheap gas, coal, steel and electricity, and a captive market for private sector goods.

But now they want to cut the burden of state expenditure so without any thought of the future they are selling off nationalised industries at bargain basement prices. The effects of this will be to further worsen the already desperate decline of Britain's industrial base.

Directors of the nationalised industries are supposedly appointed to run them in the interests of the "nation". But in reality they run the industries on the lines of the profit system. Nothing illustrates this better than the speculation of appointing MacGregor, the current head of British Steel, to the NCB. Such an ap-

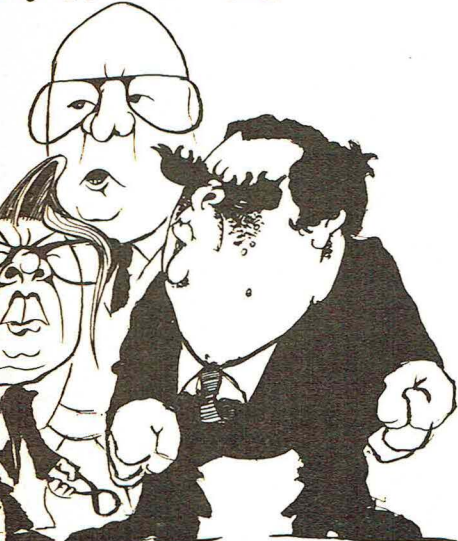
pointment could only mean that the trans-atlantic asset stripper would set about dismembering this nationalised industry, and possibly sell off the lucrative profit making sections.

This directly raises the issue of the democratic control and accountability of the heads of the nationalised industries.

*Militant* stands for democratic workers' control and management of these industries, through the elections of boards of directors, who would be drawn one-third from the unions in the industry, one-third from the TUC and one-third from the government. All appointments should be subject to the right of recall, and no official should receive more than the highest skilled worker in the industry.

But to make these industries fully efficient would mean extending nationalisation to the supply industries—which currently charge extortionate prices and leech off the nationalised sector. By such means an integrated plan of production, democratically drawn up, could be implemented.

IT HIS TEETH  
BY HOLD 'M'



**BUT SAD TO RELATE  
LITTLE JOHNNY GOT ATE**

**... AND NOT MANY  
FOLK EVER  
MOURNED HIM.**



Alan Hardman.

# Militant replies to Jim Mortimer

CONTINUED FROM PAGE SEVEN

This attempt to legitimise the NEC's action against Militant, however, involves considerable sleight of hand with regard to Conference decisions. There was no conference decision to declare Militant "ineligible for affiliation to the Party". There was no reference, moreover, to Clause II (4) of the Constitution, either in the terms of reference of the Hayward-Hughes Report, in the Report itself, or in the resolutions and recommendations accepted by Conference.

## There was no conference decision in support of expulsions; the NEC is attempting an unconstitutional manoeuvre

There was no mention of this Clause because it was the Clause which was always used in the past against individual party members on the basis of the notorious bans and proscriptions which were abolished by Conference in 1973. If a proposal to resurrect the proscribed list had been openly and honestly put to Conference last year, it would certainly have been rejected by Conference. As you know, any number of major affiliated trade unions had passed resolutions at their own conferences opposing a return to witch-hunts or bans and proscriptions and their delegations could not have voted for their revival.

Conference decided, on the basis of the Hayward-Hughes Report, to set up a Register. The Report expressed the opinion (3.B) that the "Militant Tendency as presently constituted would not be eligible to be included on the proposed Register...." However, you invited us in your letter of 1 July (1982 Report, page 142) to apply for the Register. Both the letter to Constituency Labour Parties (1982 Report, page 140) and the Official Notice (1982 Report, page 141) said, "No group need fear exclusion from the Register without discussion and without having the opportunity to bring their arrangements into conformity with the Party's constitution."

Following the endorsement of the Register by Annual Conference, we did apply for Registration on 16 October 1982. We answered all the questions put in relation to the Register, we made it clear that we were prepared to make our annual Sellers' Rally open to the public (the one specific change which has ever been put to us), and we asked to be told of any other changes which the NEC or the General Secretary considered we should make. The NEC, however, has never given the slightest indication that it is prepared to discuss with us or give us "the opportunity to bring (our) arrangements into conformity with the constitution."

You have attempted to justify this refusal to consider our application on the grounds that we did not apply until "after the deadline". The Hayward-Hughes Report recommended that groups should be given three months to put themselves into conformity with the constitution. This surely must mean three months from the time an application was considered. The NEC as we previously pointed out, evidently did intend to try and impose a deadline on Militant which would have

fallen before the annual conference where the Report and Register was to be debated. However, neither in your letter to Militant of 1 July (which merely asked for our application "at an earlier date")...nor the NEC Circular to Parties, nor in the NEC's Official Notice was there any mention of a deadline date by which we had to apply.

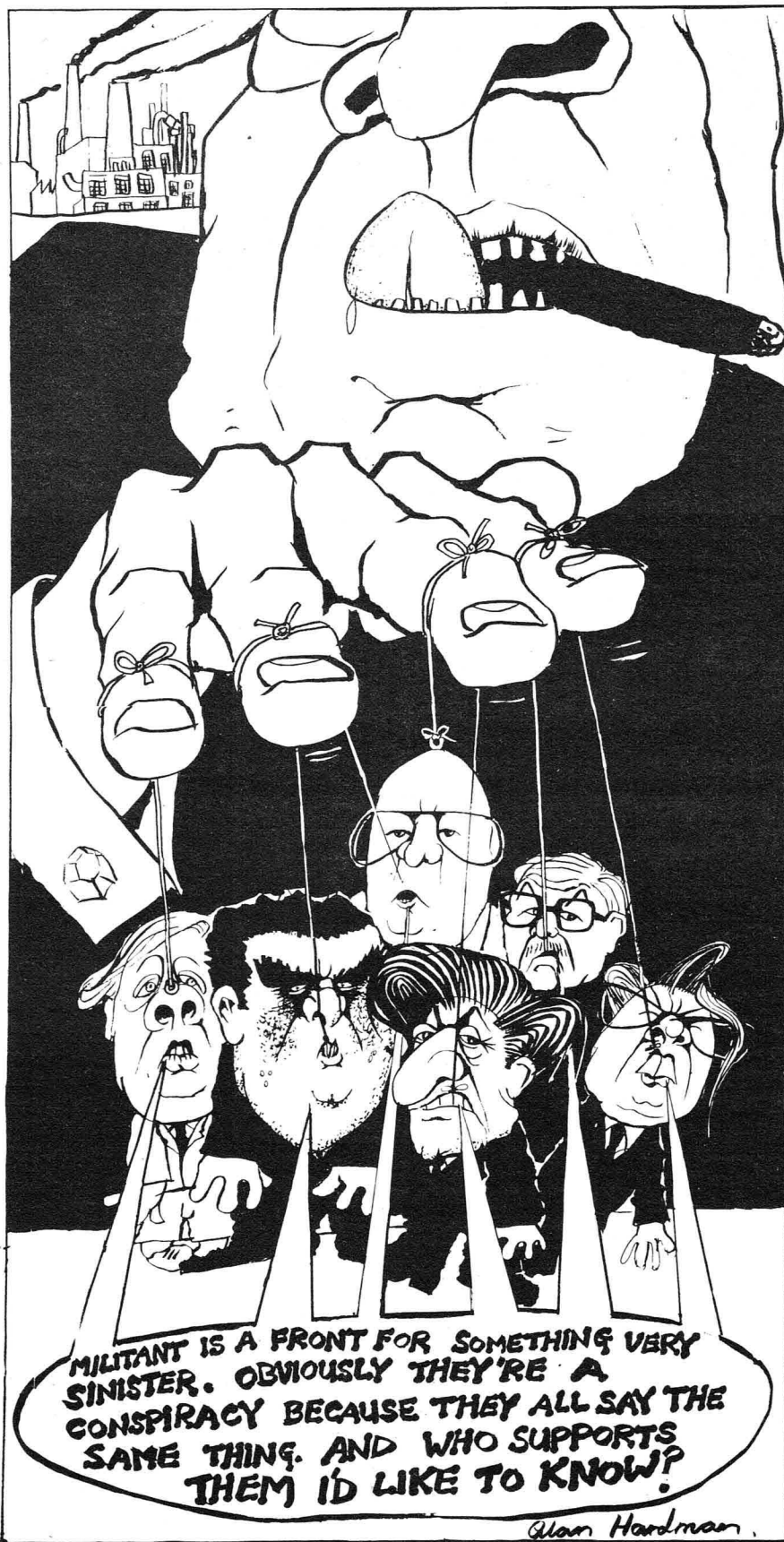
We have explained many times why we did not apply before the issue was debated and decided by Conference. But it was taken for granted at Conference, by both supporters and opponents of the Register, that Militant would be able to apply. In moving Composite 48, which called on the NEC to "enforce the constitution" and to which the NEC have frequently referred, Roy Grantham said: "Our motion supports the NEC and the register. When and if the Militant fails to comply...." (Conference Report, page 42). While evidently pre-judging the issue himself, even Roy Grantham assumed at Conference that Militant's application would be considered ("when and if...").

After the Conference it was recognised (amended paper for NEC, 24 November) that "no guidelines about a possible time limit was raised at the 1982 Annual Conference". The deadline for applications was then extended to the end of July, 1983. Commenting on the fact that Militant applied only after the Conference, the amended NEC paper conceded: "On the other hand it can be argued that Militant should be given every reasonable opportunity to put their views to the National Executive Committee and to have them considered. Very quickly after the debate and decisions of the Annual Conference they submitted a full reply." But Militant's application to the Register was merely noted in the NEC paper and was never considered by the NEC. The General Secretary continued the evidently laborious task of considering applications for the Register, a procedure, however, which soon appeared to be academic and meaningless, as applications were approved or rejected, with rejected groups being informed that no disciplinary action would be taken against them anyway.

## Militant was never informed of a pre-conference deadline Our application after conference was ignored

Meanwhile, the right-wing majority of the NEC has tortuously laboured to work out new constitutional justifications—contrary to the 1982 Conference decision on the register and clearly contradicting the 1973 decision to abolish the proscribed list—for imposing an undemocratic organisational ban on the Militant, beginning with the expulsion of the five members of the Editorial Board.

We were invited to attend the NEC on 15 December when it discussed the motion declaring the "Militant Tendency" to be "ineligible for affiliation to the Party." However, this was a meaningless formality in view of the fact that we were merely asked to comment on the resolution. NEC members were not allowed to put questions to us, the



MILITANT IS A FRONT FOR SOMETHING VERY SINISTER. OBVIOUSLY THEY'RE A CONSPIRACY BECAUSE THEY ALL SAY THE SAME THING. AND WHO SUPPORTS THEM I'D LIKE TO KNOW?

NEC refused to give any indication of what changes they considered Militant should make, and as we were refused even a summary of the evidence on which the allegations were based it was impossible for us to answer them. We agree with the left-wing member of the NEC who denounced the whole proceeding as a "Kangaroo Court".

The reality is that the right-wing majority of the NEC—and we recognise the strong opposition to this from the NEC's left minority—has revived the proscribed list, with Militant as number one, and for the time being the only newspaper on the list. The right claim that they are simply upholding the constitution. But the constitutional banning of one trend of ideas in the Party is what Alan Sapper also warned against at Conference last October: an attempt to "pre-empt democratic decision-making by the institutionalised elimination of those with whom we may disagree." The use of a proscribed list to carry out expulsions is, by its very nature, an attempt to bureaucratically repress ideas—it is a witch-hunt.

After the NEC meeting on 26 July, you said on BBC Newsnight that your "feeling was that the majority on the NEC want to control this operation. There is no incentive to stage a wide witch-hunt in the Party." We believe, on the contrary, that there is every indication that the right wing on the NEC regard our expulsion as the beginning of a much wider offensive on the Party's left wing. By expelling five socialists the right has initiated a witch-hunt and instead of concen-

trating on fighting the Tories and building support for Labour, the NEC will for months, if not years, be preoccupied with investigations, political inquiries, and Star Chamber trials directed against the left.

We are being invited to attend the NEC again on 23 February apparently under conditions which will be as undemocratic as those of the 15 December "hearing", without any real opportunity of replying to the allegations against us, of answering the "evidence" or of discussing any changes which, in the NEC's view, would bring Militant "into conformity with the constitution".

From what you say in your letter, we can only conclude that the disciplinary proceedings on the 23 February, like the proceedings of 15 December, will be a 'show trial' put on in a bureaucratic attempt to legitimise a pre-determined decision to expel five socialists from the Party.

Nevertheless, while rejecting the legitimacy of the NEC's action against us and protesting at the undemocratic character of the hearing being offered to us, we will attend the NEC on 23 February, at 2 pm to express our opposition to the bureaucratic disciplinary measures being taken against us.

Yours fraternally  
Peter Taaffe  
Ted Grant  
Clare Doyle  
Keith Dickinson  
Lynn Walsh

## The report of the official commission of inquiry into the Beirut massacre has greatly re-inforced the opposition to the Begin government in Israel.

From the very first days of the invasion of Lebanon there was an unprecedented degree of opposition within Israel, including even the servicemen active in the war.

An Israeli journalist, Jacob Timerman, described in his book, *The Longest War*, the profound feelings of anger, frustration, confusion and outright opposition that circulated among many sections of society. He comments, for example, on the cynicism shown by the soldiers at the front line even in the first few days.

Asked by an Israeli television interviewer how far they expected to advance, one soldier replied with painful irony, "Well, there's a vandalised synagogue in Ankara, so we will surely get there. Also there are Katysuha rockets in Moscow, so we will have to take them out."

The *Jerusalem Post* described how debates and arguments began to take place around the aims of the war and the contrasts between what they had seen and the official Israeli propaganda:

"Three Israeli military correspondents," their journalist wrote, "were surrounded by officers and men of four top fighting units, who accused them of covering up the truth, of lying to the public, of not reporting the real mood at the front and of being the lackeys of the defence minister. We were accused by the overwhelming majority of the men—including senior officers—of allowing this war to grow out of all proportion to the original goals, by mindlessly repeating official explanations we all knew were false."

Spontaneous anti-war groups with names like "Soldiers against Silence" and "There is a Limit" grew up among the serving soldiers and officers. The questioning and protests of individual soldiers were repeated in the press around the world, the general theme being that the troops had supported the war in so far as it freed northern Israeli towns from the threat of artillery and rocket attack, but the brutal destruction of Tyre and Sidon and the relentless march north to Beirut had changed their views completely.

Protests seemed to mount daily. Almost all the members of the unit which had carried out the celebrated raid on Entebbe signed a letter of protest to Begin as did twenty-two air force pilots. Ninety-two reserve soldiers sent a letter to defence minister, Sharon, declaring their 'total lack of confidence' in him, and demanding his resignation.

On July 4, after a demonstration in Jerusalem, a petition signed by hundreds of soldiers was handed in to Begin. The protests reached a peak when Colonel Geva, Israel's youngest-ever officer of that rank, and considered a hero of the war, resigned his command of an armoured brigade rather than risk taking his men into Beirut, a move to which he was bitterly opposed.

An Israeli reservist, a

By John Pickard

member of the "There is a Limit" group, described to the independent International Commission of Inquiry his own feelings on the opposition to the war:

"...we were surprised to find that instead of getting like 10, 15, 20 people who would be willing to be very outspoken about not wanting to go to serve in the war, suddenly the group managed to get several hundred very quickly, and this with almost no organisational basis. In other words, we feel that if we had more money, more time and more people available, we would have grown to maybe several thousand. For you people, coming from the outside, that may not seem so meaningful, but for us it's really a dramatic change..."

Another soldier, a captain in the paratroopers, described how his mood changed:

"It started in Tyre...we prepared ourselves to fight to conquer this Tyre, and suddenly we see ourselves surrounded with people, with citizens, with women and children, begging for water, and everything was changed...we were 'attacked' by citizens and the only thing they wanted was water..."

### Demonstration and Counter-Demonstration

So great did the opposition seem to become—Timerman described the process as the "Vietnamisation" of Israeli youth—that the government was forced to organise its own campaign. After an anti-war demonstration of 100,000 in Jerusalem, pro-government supporters were bused in, to rally 250,000 a fortnight later.

Right wing groups organised campaigns within the armed forces and among civilians, to counter the anti-



For the first time in the 35 years of Israel's existence, a peaceful Jewish demonstrator—from the Peace Now Movement—was killed by a Jewish Political opponent.

war movement of the soldiers. Sharon was so disturbed by the protest groups that at one point he raged against "soldiers' committees", and "military juntas" in the army.

When the news of the

Beirut massacre broke in Israel, there were new outbursts of spontaneous opposition. Timerman records: "Twenty kilometres north of Tel Aviv, a group of youths from Gaash Kibbutz went out onto the Haifa Highway and paralysed all traffic.



More Jewish youth than ever before are completely alienated from the policies and methods of official Zionism. Begin offers nothing but more wars, more economic sacrifices and greater uncertainty. But the opposition to Begin is blunted by the traditions of its Labour opponents. In office continuously for nearly 30 years, the Labour Party did nothing to overcome the great social and economic disadvantage of Oriental Jews, who as a consequence shifted their support to Begin.

They barricaded the road with burning tyres and stones...they cut the highway to the north which leads to Lebanon...

"...in Jerusalem two or three hundred people took to the streets...along the Lebanon border, at Rosh Hanikra, a group of about one hundred protesters demonstrated..." Timerman himself, in a mood of black pessimism over the war, lamented the weakness of these protests and the apparent strength of the pro-war movements in Israel, yet within a week there was the biggest-ever demonstration in Israel's history—of up to 400,000 (equivalent in Britain of a demonstration of 5 or 6 million)—against the

refused. The report of the inquiry (see last week's *Militant*), although muted in its criticism of ministers and Israeli high-ranking officers, has added to the divisions in Israel.

Indeed, there has never been a time in the history of Israel when there was a more serious or deeper polarization in society than at present. The opposition to the war and the anger over the massacre are only a small indication of the crisis which is at the same time economic, social and political.

More and more workers, especially the youth, have seen that they are in a dead-end. Zionism, far from offering a safe home-land for Jews, has created a state that is a permanently-armed fortress. The youth of Israel are being turned into permanent soldiers.

Moreover, the political instability and the massive arms expenditure will have to be paid for by Israeli workers. Inflation is running at 130 per cent, and the cost-of-living bonuses no longer cover all the price increases. The war in Lebanon, costing \$4 billion, has already forced the government to raise taxes and a compulsory war-loan.

The international debt, estimated at up to \$25 bn. will soon cost \$3 bn. a year to service—about the same as the trade deficit. Not even the massive US loans, which have always kept Israel solvent in the past, will prevent a greater burden of sacrifice falling onto Israeli workers.

Many workers can see that 'Beginism' offers no future, except more wars and more sacrifices. It is simply not possible in the long term, as most Israelis realise, to hold

the two million Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank and southern Lebanon, in permanent subjection: the national rights of Palestinians will in the end have to be acceded to.

The Oriental Jews—those of middle-eastern origin, as opposed to those of European origin—have backed the reactionary Likud coalition of Begin in the last three elections. At present, although they are the worst-paid and most down-trodden sections of Jewish workers, over 70 per cent of them support Likud. But that was not always the case.

It was the corruption and the bankrupt policies of Labour—in office continuously for 29 years—which soured this section of workers, by failing to alleviate their social and economic problems. Yet in the long run the Orientals will suffer most from Begin and they have the most to gain from socialist policies.

### Peres avoids campaign against Begin

Unfortunately, the Labour leadership up to now have offered no real alternative to Begin. They have not broken with the methods and traditions of the past. If Begin were to win another election, as has been suggested he might, it would be the fault of the Labour leaders.

Even at the height of the recent crisis, rather than calling for a mass campaign to bring Begin down the Labour leader, Peres, pref-

ferred to appeal for "calm". "This is a time for national unity", he declared, as he went into private discussions with Begin's coalition partners to try to topple the government from the 'inside'.

It is not surprising that Peres, who tries to arrange secret 'deals' with the National Religious Party and other minor reactionary parties, has an opinion poll rating of just over 3 per cent, while Begin, the public demagogue and campaigner commands, apparently, over 40 per cent ratings.

But if Labour were to break with the methods and policies of the past, if they were to offer a radical and fundamental alternative to Begin, then it would be possible to stop Begin and the Likud in their tracks.

If a bold and decisive socialist lead were given by the Israeli Labour Party, there would be the possibility as never before to win workers away from the dead-end of Beginism and the illusions of Zionism.

A programme and a perspective for socialist change, for a Socialist Federation of Middle East States, would find an echo among Arab and Jewish workers alike. The 'mould' of Israeli politics demands breaking and a socialist policy for the Labour Party would do that.

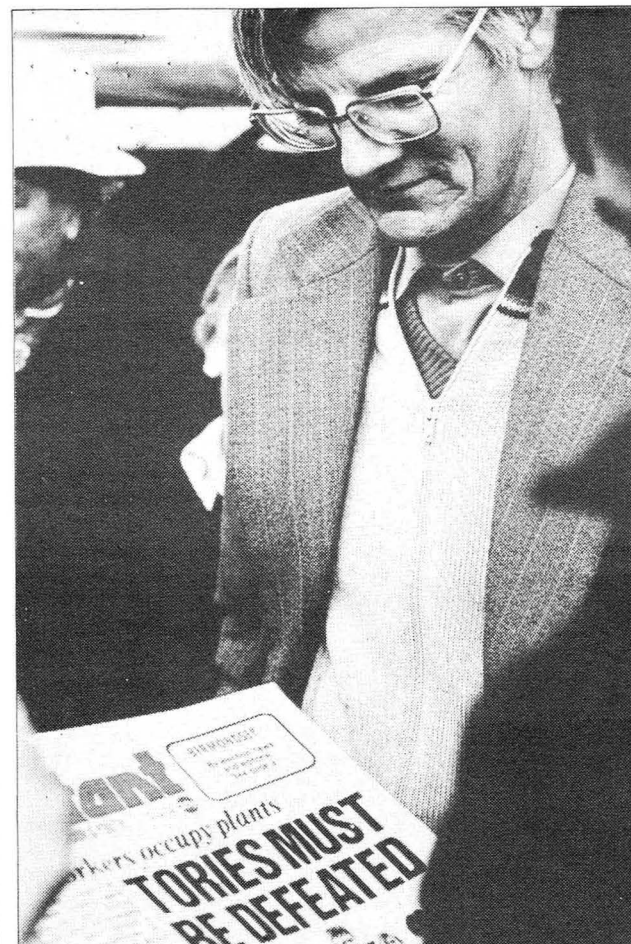
In the last analysis, there is no alternative to this.

The enormous social and national contradictions in Israel and the Middle East defy solution—on the old basis. The labour movement, armed with the policy of socialism and internationalism, could present an entirely different perspective.

# Letters

VIEWERS? COMMENTS? EXPERIENCES?  
CRITICISM? WRITE ABOUT THEM TO

MILITANT, Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN



Militant on waterworkers' picket.

Photo: Viv Seal

## Unrest in the ranks...

### Two for the price of one (1)

Dear Comrades,

Labour Party general secretary Jim Mortimer made an early start last Tuesday.

On BBC's breakfast television he attempted to "defend" the organisation committee's decision to scrap 25,000 Bermondsey election leaflets.

The printers, Cambridge Heath Press, were apparently unsuitable because they were "controlled by the Militant Tendency".

Mortimer did not object to the content of the leaflets, and indeed stated that the reprints would probably be identical, albeit without the imprint of Cambridge Heath Press.

This disgraceful incident is the latest indication of the petty mentality of right wing party witch-hunters. On the eve of a bye-election, with a forthcoming general election, they continue to split and hold back the labour movement.

Mortimer, Golding, Healey, etc. are a disgrace to the movement. If their activities are not stopped they will be responsible for Labour's defeat in the next general election.

Yours fraternally,  
Peter Gillan,  
East Edinburgh LPYS.

### Two for the price of one (2)

Dear Comrades,

I'm sure many of *Militant's* readers will be somewhat bewildered on hearing the news that four hundred pounds worth of leaflets have been withdrawn from the Bermondsey bye-election campaign and replaced by other, probably identical leaflets, simply because they were printed by *Militant*.

Surely this shows the right wing's purely blind hatred of *Militant* and anything to do with it. How on earth can they justify their actions, especially when you consider the Labour Party's financial difficulties?

The Tories and their class must be enjoying the joke; don't the right wing realise this will probably be election year? All they seem to be interested in is expelling true socialists from the party, instead of fighting the real enemy—the bosses and their party.

Yours fraternally,  
Michelle O'Neill,  
Washington LPYS.

### Rochdale CLP—straightening the record

Dear Comrades,

The letter from Barry Haslam, the secretary of Rochdale CLP in *Militant* 635 (28 Jan) correctly pointed out that a resolution had been passed by the GMC expressing "our utmost disapproval of the *Militant* Editorial Board's threat to drag the Labour Party through the capitalist courts."

However, there are a few points that comrade Haslam failed to mention.

Firstly the resolution only got passed on the casting vote of the chairman.

Comrade Haslam did not mention in his letter that at the same GMC a resolution stating "This CLP deplores the undemocratic action of the NEC in declaring the Militant Tendency to be ineligible for affiliation to the party. We believe this is an attempt by the NEC to return to the days of bans and proscriptions which we remind the NEC were abolished by the 1973 party conference," was also passed.

The resolution went on to call on the NEC to stop the witch-hunt, build a campaign against the Tories, and to fight for the return of a Labour government with socialist policies. It was carried with only two votes against.

The feeling of the meeting was that delegates, for or against *Militant*, were sick and tired of the witch-hunt. With 4 million unemployed and a general election looming there are more important items on the agenda.

Fraternally,  
Tom Stott,  
Rochdale CLP,  
(personal capacity)

### Stifling Jim

Dear Comrades,

In a recent circular from Jim Mortimer concerning 'January Labour Party Publications' one document advertised was entitled "Tory Organisation—how it works".

This, the General Secretary explains is "An update of the undemocratic party, this paper shows how the Tory Party machine swerves unhesitatingly in line behind the leadership's new 'right' policies while effectively stifling debate and managing discontent." (!)

Yours fraternally,  
R Murray,  
Liverpool.

### Endangered species

Dear Comrades,

My ward Labour Party forked out £10.00 of its hard-raised cash towards Hayes LPYS getting its members to Regional Conference.

This is the cash response to the NEC's right wing chopping £9,000 off the LPYS national budget. A further £10 came from the PPC, who himself had been subject to the right's manoeuvres.

In the pub afterwards we had a few chuckles at the ex-

pense of those dinosaurs rapidly heading towards extinction. Who else would starve their youth section of campaign funds in a possible election year—the first for millions of young voters?

The rank and file of the party won't let it happen again.

The evening ended with the change from the round of drinks (£1.16) being voted to the *Militant* Fighting Fund on the grounds that "without the *Militant* there would be no LPYS".

Fraternally,  
Martin Craxton,  
Youth Officer,  
Hayes & Harlington CLP.

### Spot the dupe

Dear Comrades,

Last November I was asked to appear on TV in the audience of a 'Question Time' type programme called 'Ways and Means'.

In the chair was Bruce Millan, the well known 'moderate' politician.

He is also my MP but has only appeared at my GMC once since I was made a delegate from the YS in March.

So I got my first chance to ask him "when were the 'moderates' going to stop attacking Militants and the

LPYS?"

"Not insulting" a member of his own constituency he told me that while I was not one of the "inner-core" of nasty, deceitful Militants, Militants duped genuine young people.

I joined the Labour Party when I was 16. At 17, I am perfectly confident that the working-class can achieve a socialist society. I am "insulted". But it won't stop me.

Youth want a future!  
Yours fraternally,  
Denise McClusky,  
Craigton LPYS,  
Glasgow.

### Labour's union base

Dear Comrades,

At the present time the unions are having a drive on encouraging both individuals and branches to take an active part in the affairs of the Labour Party.

Affiliation to the Labour Party had already been raised at my union branch (AUEW Mansfield No 2), when a union circular from the general secretary arrived. This urged branches to affiliate and contained a form to do it.

It was decided that we should affiliate, and I was elected delegate to represent our branch on the GMC of

my Labour Party.

Given the right wing composition of the AUEW leadership, it is ironic that this drive was instrumental in getting a *Militant* supporter onto the GMC.

Everybody should realize the importance of attending their union branch, and trying to get them to play a full part in the labour movement.

I hope that District Committees and Labour Party membership secretaries act on applications swiftly, before people's response and interest are allowed to wane.

Yours fraternally,  
Stephen Hoare,  
AUEW shop steward,  
(personal capacity).

### No age limits

Dear Comrades,

I have supported Labour (even though I'm too young to vote—16½) ever since I can remember. I will vote for Labour all my life when I'm 18.

I believe *Militant* is a great paper. If it wasn't for this paper half the people in Britain wouldn't know what went on. Keep up with the good work.

I also believe in nuclear disarmament. If we all stick

together we will win.

I would like to help more. When I can afford it I'll be joining CND and LPYS.

At the present with my mam unemployed it is impossible to join. She has been out of work for 6 years; but when Labour get in at the next election, she will have a job. Just like all those who are out of work.

Till I can join I will help to get others to join in the campaign.

Keep up the good work both Labour and *Militant*.  
Yours Stephen Butler,  
Leeds 8.

### Water workers

Dear Comrades

"The Tories must be defeated" was the front page headline, *Militant* 11 February. The waterworkers' strike will soon be entering its fourth week, with still only promises of action from other unions.

Promises will not bring about the collapse of the

Tory government. Solidarity will. We also need the full support of the TUC. Where the hell are they?

The working class can achieve very little without that leadership. So let's have no more promises, just the appropriate action; and end the repressive reign of the Tories once and for all!

Yours fraternally  
M Williams  
Water worker, GMBATU  
Bradford on Avon, Wilts

### Vicious circle

Dear Comrades,

Just to let you know how badly off FE students can be even when they get a grant.

At the age of 21 I get the grand total of £14.00 a week. Out of this I spend £5.00 on

travel and I give my mother £7.00 and the remainder is for books etc.

A better alternative would be to be unemployed. Only, I need an education to get a job!

Yours faithfully,  
CJ Mayo,  
Norris Green,  
Liverpool.

### Expulsions—union implications

Dear Comrade,

If the members of the *Militant* Editorial Board are expelled from the Labour Party, what will be the position of some of the leading lights in my union, the TGWU, which has from time to time taken out shares in the *Morning Star*?

This newspaper in every election supports candidates who stand in opposition to duly endorsed Labour candidates in many parts of the country.

How can Alex Kitson, for example, still remain a member of the NEC at Walworth Road, and actively support the expulsion of loyal members of the Party like the "Famous Five"?

Personally, I would not deny any member the right to support whatever newspaper he wishes to support—except for fascists. But in the light of the disgraceful and undemocratic way the *Militant* supporters are being treated, the question I have posed must be faced up to by my union and the National Executive Committee.

Yours fraternally,  
A member of the TGWU who wants fair play.  
(Name and address supplied)

### Denis—the Menace

Dear Comrades,

It is currently being suggested that supporters of *Militant*, other than those who face immediate expulsion, will be required to answer questions on their support for *Militant*.

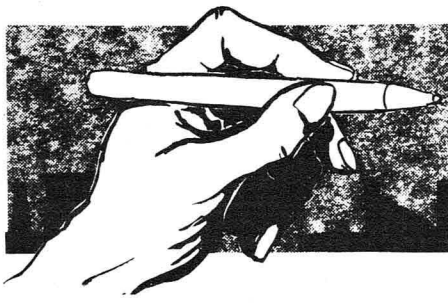
Not so long ago a similar proposal brought the following response from Denis Healey:

"I think to treat people who have been members of the Labour Party for thirty or forty years as if they were witnesses in front of Senator McCarthy's committee in the United States is a scandalous thing to do." (Quoted in the *Times*, 28/1/81).

The only difference was that he was referring to a motion due to be tabled by Tony Benn at the NEC which merely requested that Labour MPs be required to commit themselves to supporting the Labour Party!

Michael Foot would do well to recall the words of the deputy leader, quoted by Foot in his biography of Bevan, when Healey told an American audience in 1954 that Bevan: "was 'impossible' as a colleague and that 'prompt and effective' action must be taken to shut him up." (Vol. 2, P 432).

Yours fraternally,  
Mike Sheaff,  
Plymouth.



workers' viewpoint

# REDUNDANCIES - How can you stop a volunteer?

A number of shop stewards and trade union activists have commented on the article we printed by Heather Rawling on combating redundancies, especially where high payments are involved. Many felt that the article underestimated the problems involved.

This interview is with Tony Carty and Peter Callaghan, chairman and secretary of the shop stewards' committee at Austin and Pickersgill's shipyard in Sunderland. They describe the difficulty of fighting voluntary redundancies.

We hope to carry further articles on this vital question.

**Peter:**

How you fight voluntary redundancies, I don't know. We did try three years ago. We put forward all the arguments in the propaganda, "don't sell your job, it's not your job to sell. Think of your son." But we've given all that up now because we know you can't stop a volunteer.

**Tony:**

That article in *Militant* was wrong. No way. We tried like bloody hell. But you can't stop voluntary redundancies. It doesn't matter what you do.

The article was right in its analysis of redundancy pay. It's been used time and again to butcher any action that we might have taken. Redundancy payments were introduced in 1965 to allow a worker to move to a new job but the intention of the Act has been changed altogether now.

The first reaction in the shipyards when anybody was paid off was to put an immediate overtime ban on and workshare to save the job. I was brought up in that tradition. But as soon as the Redundancy Payment Act came in, you got rumours going around of £3,000 and £4,000. We'd put it to a mass meeting—we've got to have an overtime ban because the lads are going up the bank but we know what we're going to get told. It's the money now.

## Voluntary Redundancy

At first it was the older worker they aimed at. Then when they got shot of him, they increased the money for the thirty and forty age group and then the twenty and thirty age group. That's how they shut the steel works. They say there's £6,000 or £7,000 for you. The young ones say—I want to travel. I intend to travel. I'm single. Whoosh...! You try and stop him.

You try and stop an old fella 62 year old. They might get £12,000 or £13,000 when they've been on £53 a week for the last two years. You try and stop those fellas. You'd get lynched.

I sometimes feel like saying, "Here! All the lads that don't want to work here—go. We'll fight for the jobs for them that wants to work".

The imbalance is the problem. You can't let your labour force get out of balance. We couldn't let, for

example, all the electricians volunteer for redundancy because the plant would just stop. We couldn't let all the caulkers and burners go, again because the plant would just stop, so we've got to keep the balance.

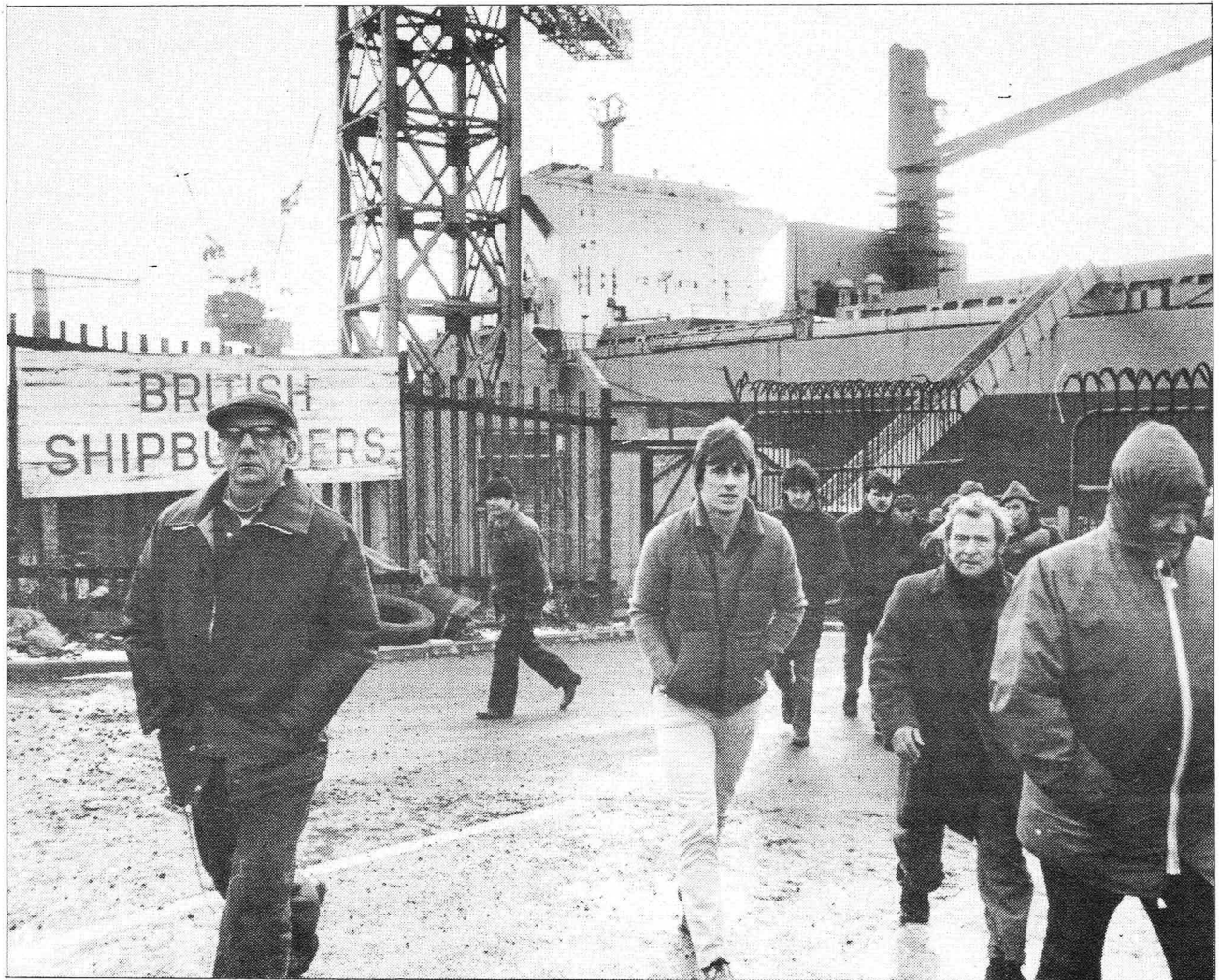
**Peter:**

In 1979 or 1980, Falmouth, they wanted to close a yard down. The workers said, "No way. There's work in that yard for those workers." So they said, "Right we'll not close it down but we'll ask for voluntary redundancy." That seemed fair enough. But only from the boiler-makers section. Then they said we've got to close now. We've got no boiler-makers. And that was it. That place closed.

A year later, it reopened with three of the managers that got their severance pay, reopened it under private enterprise, starting on the men paying them buttons. Health and safety and all the contract of employment etc. just went out the window. That's still thriving now. Back in Dickens' time.

**Tony:**

There's a different situation between closure and



Shipyard workers "signing" off for the day. How can the labour movement make sure that they don't end up "signing on" for life at the dole office?  
Photo: D Doran

rundown. Because in a closure, it might be straight to the point and the worker inside says I'm fighting for the survival of the plant,

even though a lot of people haven't won that battle yet in similar circumstances. There's no way. You might talk about Lee Jeans, but I

don't think that you can draw the analogy with a big industrial plant where there's predominantly one wage earner.

## Rundown and closure

In a rundown, you might say "right we've got no more volunteers... We're all here. They want to run down further and they cannot." So what do they do? The first thing they do is stop all overtime. The lads are back to the bones of their money. And in some cases for the labouring classes, they can get as much on the dole as they can get without overtime.

Then what do they do? Further interchangeability. They move the lads from different areas. They move them all over. Then they say there's no bonus because there's no work and we've got to string out what we've got for to keep the plant open. So there's no overtime, no bonus, new working practices, shift working arrangements perhaps.

Then they start to say, "Well, we want you two this side of the yard." They do it. Two lads lived and worked together all their bloody lives. They're fifty year old. The plants are part of them. To move them—it's like pulling a tooth out and sticking it somewhere else. They say, "blow this for a laugh; giz my money". This clever psychological battle goes on all the time.

## 'VOLUNTARY' REDUNDANCY At Fords

**VOLUNTARY REDUNDANCY within Ford's has always been accepted by most unions as an escape from the grind of working for Henry. There have been many celebrations amongst the workforce when somebody does manage to escape.**

The company can always point to 'beneficiaries' of these schemes making good. Indeed, a colleague of mine took voluntary redundancy and set up in a private hire business and believes he is doing very well, thank you very much. However, before people get the idea Ford's have shut up shop and turn-

ed themselves into a subsidiary of Dr. Barnado's, evidence suggests that "voluntary" can be stretched a bit.

A company document, given to management, *Guide Notes to Voluntary Redundancy Programme* states;

"To some degree the success of the exercise will be dependent upon your handling of the counselling sessions. We are not only trying to reduce numbers. We need to be selective. We need to shed those people who are more dispensable than others. But we also need to retain a motivated workforce for after the exercise, when those remaining may be handling different or more work in a changed environment. It is thus essential that all employees are counselled in a fair and realistic fashion, with due courtesy and con-

sideration. (!)

"There are broadly 3 categories of employees for the purpose of this exercise: (A) Those whom we definitely do not want to lose, since they contribute significantly and have a good future in the company. (B) Those whom we definitely wish to let go—since they make comparatively little contribution and have limited prospects. (C) The "in-betweens" whose application to terminate we shall have to review, and who we may or may not let go, dependent upon the total number of volunteers.

"You (i.e. management) will already have been informed of the names of those personnel falling into categories A & B. You should approach each of these employees and counsel them

as appropriate". The document adds for category B: "You should encourage these people to terminate..."

There is nothing like freedom of choice. The unions must resist now! don't wait—fight back to expose this con.

The changing mood within the workforce was proven to me when I, as the site rep, was phoned by a mysterious personage to arrange a secret interview. It turned out to be the secretary of one of the directors of the Company—worried about her future—so she wanted to join the union!

"I've been in Fords too long to trust them. I've seen what they've done to other people".

By a Ford Worker

# Industrial Reports

## WATERWORKERS

Photo: Militant

### United action forces Tory concessions

**THE WATERWORKERS'** tremendous show of solidarity over the past five weeks has set an example for the entire working class. It has forced even the supposedly unmovable Tory government to concede a far better deal than their original 4% insult.

The official report, which union negotiators have accepted, concentrates on consolidating the first £5 of bonus payments into basic wage rates. The employers' earlier offer—a basic rate increase of 7.3% over sixteen months—will be paid on top of this consolidation.

The offer also includes improvements in other productivity payments and long service supplements, a working week reduced by one hour from next April and extra payments for credit transfer payments and flexible working.

It is obvious that far more has been gained than would have been possible without the strike. No wonder the Tories were demanding that workers should call off their strike action during the inquiry, which was in effect negotiations under the guise of an impartial investigation.

Both employers and union negotiators were worried that the rank and file might reject the package. Comments of water workers outside ACAS headquarters after the deal was announced showed workers were unhappy that they had no chance to ballot members on the offer. At the time of writing, it appears the water workers will return to work. As the dust of the dispute

settles, most workers will see the result as a significant step forward, showing the power of water workers united in a national battle. Certainly other workers, particularly in the electricity supply and gas industries will gain new heart after the ferocious onslaught of the Tories over the past few years.

But waterworkers will also realise that far more could have been achieved given the near unanimous support and the importance of a fresh water supply to industry. Most importantly there has been no advance on comparability. *Militant* warned of the dangers of forced arbitration, stressing there should be no negotiation before the principle of comparability was agreed. One worker outside ACAS on Tuesday commented, "the best chances were frittered away by our union officials in the committee of enquiry and by not getting on with the strike itself."

The power shown during this dispute will make waterworkers even more determined next time to use their full strength and unity to achieve comparability, and to resist any attempts to destroy the national bargaining structure. The call for one claim for all water workers including craft workers, staff and Scottish workers will find widespread backing.

There will also be demands for greater democratisation of the union negotiations to ensure that in future they are in the hands of rank and file representatives. But the waterworkers fight has shown clearly that workers can resist the worst attacks of this Tory government.

### MANCHESTER

"WE WANT the coconut not peanuts," said a NUPE picket at Davyhulme, Manchester reflecting the confidence of the strikers.

£200 had been collected in two days with donations from all the major factories in Trafford Park, Agecroft Colliery and from local hospitals in return for the gave the waterworkers support in one-day actions last year. The craftsmen here came out for two weeks prior to being called out,

without pay.

Workers weren't intimidated by the Tories and the thought of troops. Nine thousand troops couldn't replace 27,000 waterworkers. NUPE members Alan Jennings and Jim Lucas stressed the need to keep national negotiation and looked for support from the power workers. "Once the multinationals start losing money Thatcher will have to back down."

By Sarah Beer  
(Stretford LPYS)



### ...but result falls short of workers' hopes

At the Soar Division mass meeting waterworkers voted to return to work as they felt they had no alternative, claiming they had been sold down the river. The meeting didn't feel they could continue the strike because they had been told that if they voted to stay out, it would be an unofficial strike with no strike pay.

Even so about 30% voted to continue the strike action. Some at the meeting were very bitter and threatened to tear up their union cards in protest against the way the officials had handled the strike.

**HUNDREDS** of water workers lobbied the arbitration service, ACAS, headquarters on 20 February, sitting in at the building for a while, to show union negotiators the strength of feeling behind the strike. Steve Feely an AUEW waterworker from Beckton sewage works describes the mood.

"Everyone was very determined shouting 'no surrender, 15% and no strings'. Sandwiches and tea were supplied by the pickets; and tea was made with water from a standpipe!

"When the union officials

came out of ACAS, they shook hands all round but left before answering any questions about what was happening. When they returned, they just shook hands again then moved in. Ron Keating was the only official who actually spoke to the water workers, but we left him in no doubt that we wanted the union to back the men.

"The rumour started that we were going to storm the place at 2.30 but at 2.15 pm about a hundred water workers just decided we had enough and moved in.

"We surged through the

door, upstairs into the hallway outside where we believed the arbitrators and unions and management were discussing our case.

"The shout went up now that the police were arriving. 'Sit down, they'll have to carry us out'. About 100 people sat down. We then started singing 'we shall not be moved' and the police didn't know how to shift a hundred angry industrial workers.

"We started to shout 'What do we want—15% when do we want it—now,' and 'Maggie out'. After a union official unsuccessful-

ly asked the men to leave, to shouts of "no sell out, back to the membership to decide" a steward from Sheffield said we had made out point and we decided to move out.

"It was freezing cold that day and ACAS didn't allow us any facilities, though the press had their own room. We all felt we could win if our leaders didn't let us down, but we knew that when we got back to work any good relations with management would be just a thing of the past."

### DURHAM TEACHERS STRIKE

**ALL-OUT**, indefinite strike action has now been started at Framwellgate Moor Comprehensive School, Durham, Hummersknott Comprehensive at Darlington, and Bishop Barrington Comprehensive, Bishop Auckland. Three more schools are joining in on the 24th, and more are being prepared to follow.

This major escalation of action has been demanded by Durham teachers who have become more and more angry at the continued failure of negotiations to settle this dispute. No cover sanctions began last April! Since November, more than 191 teachers have had their pay docked as a result.

Durham County Council, shamefully a Labour authority, is the only authority in the country to have done this. It is the only authority to have attempted to cease all supply cover to secondary schools, and this is the central issue of the

dispute.

Lacking any ideas, policies, or determination to stand up against Thatcher's financial cuts, the right-wing leaders of the Durham Labour authority are finding themselves being used to do the Tories dirty work. Several Tory authorities, including Hereford and Worcester, are awaiting the result of this dispute. No wonder Conservative councillor Dick wrote in a letter to NUT General Secretary Fred Jarvis that he was "in full accord with Councillor Terrans (Labour Group leader) on this issue"!

It is essential that full supply cover is restored in Durham. This is an issue of national importance. 100,000 leaflets are being distributed to parents to mobilise support for our case. Durham teachers will not stand by and see the education service dismantled.

Messages and donations of support from Labour Parties and trade union branches should be sent to NUT Regional Office, 3 Sunderland Rd., Durham.

By Ian Hunter  
(President, Chester-le-Street NUT, personal capacity)



### NO PIT CLOSURES!

continued from page one

spreading wave of strikes at other pits.

At Tower Colliery the largest "yes" ever heard greeted the decision to come out. At St John's the mood of the men was terrific, as the men turned out this morning. What has electrified the situation is the threat of MacGregor's butchery. One pit has already circulated a "stop MacGregor" petition. Why should we work under a man over 70, when miners retire at 60? He is ten years too old to even start work in the mines. Compulsory redundancy for MacGregor now before he butchers the coalfields. We're not going to accept more closures.

Emlyn Williams, President of South Wales NUM, pointed out at the conference there are coal reserves galore at Lewis Merthyr. An official government survey 30

years ago found there were thousands of millions of tonnes of mineable coal in South Wales—yet now the board has found there are only 402 million tonnes of sensible reserves. They say it is uneconomic to mine more, because there is no market for it.

That shows the senseless nature of their system. They have butchered the steel industry and now say we have too much coal for a slimmed down British industry. We are not having any more slimming down or amputations. We are going to stand on our feet and are confident that other miners throughout the country will follow us. This is a national battle.

After South Wales comes out then miners will go all over Britain for support. All are confident. Support the miners' fight for jobs.



# Industrial Reports

## SOUTH WALES MINERS...

ON MONDAY, 28 miners, including Des Duffield, South Wales Area NUM vice-president started a sit-down strike at Lewis Merthyr Colliery in their fight to stop the pit closing.

They intend to persuade the rest of the coal-field to take action in support of their fight. This sit-down is another step the miners of South Wales are taking in the campaign for secure investment in the area.

Brychan Davis, Rhondda LPYS spoke to John Walker, chairman of Lewis Merthyr Lodge NUM, and Emlyn Williams, President of the South Wales Area NUM.

At present, the seam being worked at Lewis Merthyr is due to be exhausted by July or August and the fight is on for investment and development of the next base.

The refusal by the NCB, to invest in the reserves at Lewis Merthyr is just another example of their policy of closing pits one by one in the hope that one closure would not push the NUM to all-out action. In the case of Lewis Merthyr

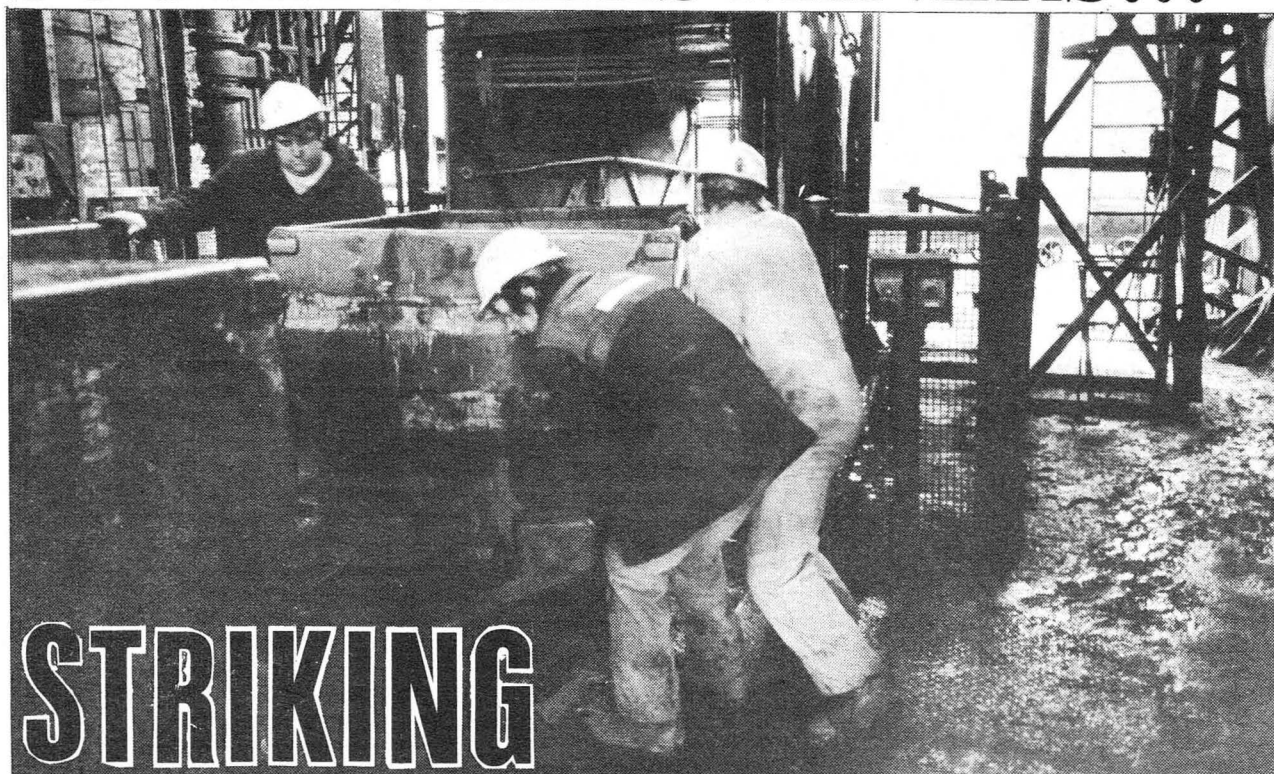


Photo: Militant

# STRIKING FOR SECURE INVESTMENT

this ploy has not worked.

Late last year a number of men abandoned their seam at nearby Ty Mawr colliery, with the promise that there was 15 to 20 years produc-

tion for them at Lewis Merthyr. Yet another empty promise. The men of South Wales have had enough of empty promises from the NCB. The mood at Lewis

Merthyr on the Tuesday morning of the sit-in was, to say the least, enthusiastic. When asked how long they expected to maintain their sit-in the reply was "as long

as it takes."

"Arrangements have been made with a local baker for food to be sent down (with a few copies of 'Militant'), and the battle for the future

of the pit is on".

"A number of collieries including Ty Mawr, Maerdy, Penrhiwceiber, Tower and St. Johns, have promised sympathy action. And their delegate meeting is being held by the South Wales NUM Executive at their H.Q. in Pontypridd." The result of that meeting was for an area delegate conference to be held in Bridgend on Wednesday (23 February).

The recommendation of the Area NUM Executive for the delegate conference was that the Lewis Merthyr men be asked to suspend their action to attend the conference. Delegates were to decide whether to have an area pit ballot for an all-out strike in the coalfields.

The struggle for investment in the South Wales area coalfield has tremendous grass roots support. It is essential that the area as a whole responds to the lead shown by the men at Lewis Merthyr.

A pit-head ballot may now take place on Friday. The South Wales miners in their Annual Conference voted to take all-out strike action if any pit was threatened with closure. The message to the NCB and government is clear. No pit closures—investment now.

# STEEL: 2 1/2 % - NO CHANCE

THIS week's Steel Conference, in Sheffield, should be a launching pad for a well-prepared campaign to win a realistic wage rise.

The present offer of 2 1/2% tied to locally-negotiated productivity deals is an insult to steel workers who have already seen their industry and their living standards battered by the Tory axeman MacGregor.

The union leaders must stand firm by their decision to reject the deal, which would further lower living standards at the cost of more redundancies, and must spell

our a strategy to mobilise steel workers to defeat the British Steel Corporation and Thatcher.

Winning a decent wage cannot be separated from the campaign to save our industry, which in turn is totally bound up with a political campaign against the Tories. Tory policies and capitalist recession have wreaked havoc with British industry. The millions on the dole or supplementary benefit cannot afford cars, fridges, and other goods made with steel, and we all suffer.

Every section of workers in struggle has eventually

had to confront the Tories. To win on wages, to stop the closures and redundancies, to secure our future through increased investment in steel, we must mount a determined struggle to remove the Tories, and get a Labour government elected.

In the depths of a recession, when demand for steel is at its lowest level since even before 1929; when only 60% of capacity is being used, steelworkers have a weak bargaining position—if they fight on their own. But steelworkers are not on their own.

If Ravenscraig closes for

example, the jobs of railwaymen, miners, engineers and other workers will go along with that plant. If steelworkers take a militant stand now they would have the support of other sections of workers. In 1980 there was tremendous support for their struggle, with collections at depots, pits, local factories and shipyards.

If steelworkers give a lead now, there would be tremendous support amongst the rank and file of other Triple-Alliance unions, so that pressure could be brought on the TUC to act and call a 24-hour general strike. The

movement would be saying to the Tories "enough's enough, we want you out and Labour in".

With a Labour government committed to socialist planning, to nationalising the private steel companies along with the major monopolies, and introducing real workers' democracy in the public sector we could begin to produce goods that people need. Labour's plans to raise steel production to 25 million tons a year and beyond would become a reality.

But the time to act is now. A lead must be given. Unfor-

tunately, the incorrect decision of the Port Talbot and Ravenscraig committees to sign up local agreements can only lead to disunity and play into the hands of Thatcher and MacGregor.

The fight to save steel and get a decent wage can only be won by the labour movement. The Scottish TUC decision to ask Tory MPs to help, from the very party which has devastated our industry, is illusory. Scottish Nationalist MPs too can only divide steel worker against steelworker. Teesside, Wales, Sheffield, Scotland, etc must be united.

Militant spoke to Sam Harty, T&GWU convenor, Imperial Works, Coatbridge, who will be at the Sheffield Steel conference.

"THAT OFFER is a disgrace. Over the last three years my members have had to give, while the BSC have taken. In 1981 we got 7% deferred for six months, in 1982 we got nothing except a consolidation of 2 1/2% bonus payment into basic.

"From January we are now working for 1 1/2% less, because our productivity payment has run out. It's a bloody con, we give the management permanent changes in working practices and manning levels for a temporary productivity bonus.

"Last year tubes section make £50m in profit, and now we are told to 'take or leave' the 2 1/2% deal. This productivity deal only means fewer workers producing the same for less money. We've got to reject it."

Militant: What do you think of the Ravenscraig decision?

Sam Harty: Well, it's breaking ranks in front of the bosses, and it's difficult enough to get unity with the way the industry is just now. I hope they'll think again. If the Tories get in again, I believe Thatcher will try to close the 'Craig'. How can workers there then appeal to men in other plants, if they fight back at a future stage, when they went against national officers' recommendations not to sign a deal?

Militant: How do you see the campaigns being taken up?

SH: At the Sheffield conference, the union tops should give a lead. It's not good enough just to reject the offer. We have to work out battle plans that can rouse the members. The men are looking for a strategy that will give them confidence of victory, and any campaign has to involve the support of railworkers, miners and other workers.

That's the way to win and the only way to secure the future of steel production in Britain.

## CRAFT WORKERS' VICTORY

A WEEK LONG dispute which caused the closure of BSC's stainless steel plant at Shepcote Lane, Sheffield was resolved on 21 February.

Management tried to implement a new rota system for the craft workers, which they were forced to refuse, due to bad hours and loss of pay.

This refusal led to certain men being clocked out and sent home. After this happened on two separate occasions, the rest of the craft workers went home in solidarity with their brothers who were clocked out. In the end this forced management to lay off production workers also.

Meetings of craft workers were held at other steel

plants in South Yorkshire which took the decision to back the Stainless workers in an all-out strike, if necessary. The threat of an all-out strike by craft workers in South Yorkshire forced management to agree to a more favourable rota system for the craft workers at Shepcote Lane.

Workers see that only actions like these, united against the management, will be able to counter threatened redundancies. Craft and production workers must see this as a small victory that prepares for the great battle ahead.

By Chris Weldon (ISTC Tinsley Park, personal capacity)

HORWICH—The threat to British Rail Engineering—see page 6

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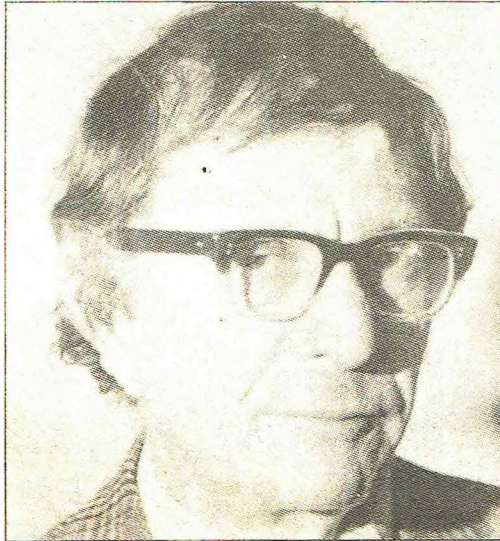
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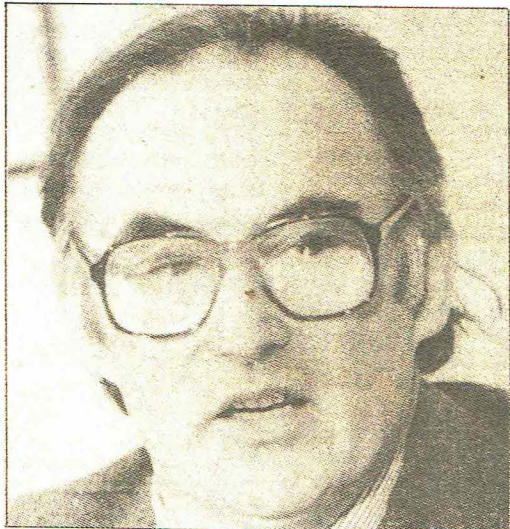
## Editorial Board organises national tour to answer the expulsions . Attend the meeting in your area

Ted Grant

BEDWELLY, Leisure Centre, Pontillan-Fraith, Mon 28 Feb, 7.30 pm.  
HAMMERSMITH, The Village Hall, Wood Lane/Bulwer St junction, Shepherd's Bush Green W.12, Wed 2 March, 8.00 pm.  
COVENTRY, "Hand and Heart" Far Gosford St, Thurs 3 March, 7.30 pm.  
CHESTERFIELD, Main Hall, Market Hall. Fri 4 March, 7.30 pm.  
LITTLEHAMPTON, Friends Meeting House, Church St. Mon 7 March. 7.30 pm.  
DUNDEE, Wellgate Centre, Central Library. Wed 9 March 7.30 pm (plus 'Timex speaker')



Peter Taaffe



BERMONDSEY, Rotherhithe Civic Centre, Albion St., SE16. Mon 28 Feb. 8.00 pm.  
NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME, Thurs 3 March, See local sellers for details.  
BIRMINGHAM, 'Olive Branch' pub, Adderley Road, Saltley. Friday 4 March, 7.30 pm.  
PORTSMOUTH, Yehudi Menuhin Room, Central Library, Guildhall Square. Mon 7 March, 7.30 pm. Enquiries: Gosport 25174.  
PLYMOUTH, Wed 9 March. See local sellers for details.  
MEDWAY, Thurs 17 March.  
BARKING, Galleon Hall, Boundary Rd, off Gascoigne Rd. Wed 2 March, 7.30 pm.

Lynn Walsh



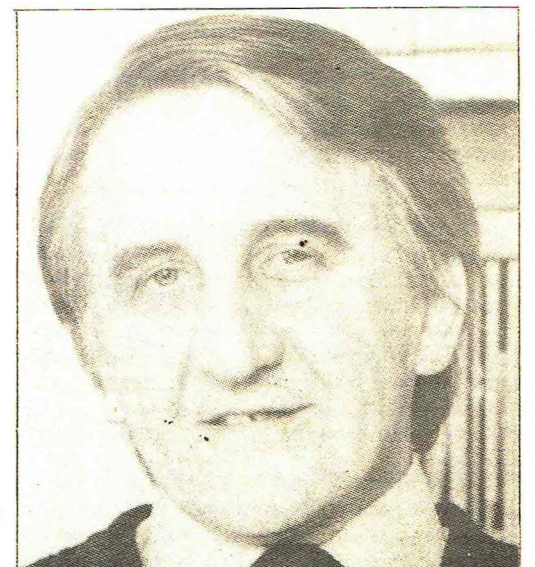
NORTH EAST LONDON, Essex Road Library, Essex Road, N1. Tuesday 1 March, 7.30 pm.  
WYTHENSHAW, Wythenshawe Social Centre, 260 Brownley Rd, (behind dole office) Wed 2 March, 7.30 pm.  
WAKEFIELD, Labour Club, Vicarage St. Sun. 6 March 7.30 pm.  
ROTHERHAM, WEA Room, Corporation St. Thurs 10 March 7.30 pm.  
YORKSHIRE LP Conference, Bridlington, Sat 5 March.  
HULL, Trades & Labour Club, Beverley Road, Fri 4 March, 7.30 pm.

Clare Doyle



LIVERPOOL, AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant, Wed 2 March, 7.30 pm.  
BIRKENHEAD, Labour Club Cleveland St. Thurs 3 March 7.30 pm.  
KIRKBY, Ruffwood School, Roughwood Drive, Kirkby. Fri 4 March 8.00 pm.  
LAMBETH, Room 119 Brixton Town Hall, (nr. Brixton Tube) SW2. Thurs 10 March, 7.30 pm.

Keith Dickinson



NEWCASTLE, Bridge Hotel, Sun 27 Feb, 7.30 pm.  
SUNDERLAND, Mon 28 Feb, Contact Ray Physick 653994  
MIDDLESBROUGH, AUEW House, 190 Borough Road. Tues 1 March 7.30 pm.  
IPSWICH, Room 1 Town Hall. Fri 4 March, 7.30 pm.