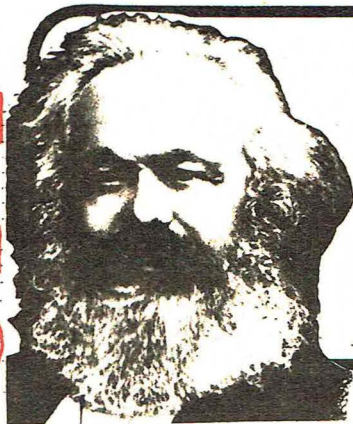


Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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20p



Karl Marx
Centenary
FOUNDATIONS
OF
SCIENTIFIC
SOCIALISM
Centre pages

MINERS: The Tory Axe Stops Here

A vital
battle for
all workers

"Listen love, I'm fighting for my job, my family and my kids. If I don't, what chance have they got of getting a job around here or anywhere else?"

These words of a Welsh miner, occupying the NCB headquarters in Cardiff, to one of the office staff, speak volumes about this strike.

The anger and bitterness at the run-down of the mining industry has exploded.

It started with the Lewis Merthyr sit-in. Then came the South Wales strike decision. Now there is growing support from Yorkshire, Scotland and other areas.

An avalanche of opposition is heading with growing momentum at the NCB and this hated Tory government.

The bosses have started a propaganda war about Lewis Merthyr and other 'uneconomic' pits on their often-denied hit list.

The truth is that the Coal Board is under orders to save money and their only answer is to shut pits. They have starved selected pits of investment and recruitment in a deliberate attempt to justify closing them.

But this is not just about Lewis Merthyr. Every area of the country has pits threatened. Since 1960 the number of pits has been cut from 700 to 197. The workforce from 600,000 to 208,000.

Despite all this, and productivity increases, the NCB

By Ian Isaac
(Secretary, St John's
Lodge NUM, S Wales)

intends further closures. Enough is enough!

Big business has thrown down the gauntlet and is backing the Tories to smash the miners. Heath thought he could do that but he got his and the government fell.

Tyrone O'Sullivan, secretary of Tower Lodge, South Wales, told *Militant*, "I feel confident that if the issues are explained, other miners will back us."

"It's like when I'm wat-

ching Wales at rugby. I'll back Wales against any two teams. It's the same for miners. I'll back the miners of Britain against anyone!"

Miners have already drawn strength from the victory of the water workers. Thatcher's iron image has been dented. Now the miners will give new strength to other workers. The bitterness and set-backs of the last few years can be overcome with their victory.

Precisely because there is so much at stake, not just for the miners and the working class, but also for Tories in election year, this could be a long and bitter struggle.

But the miners can win.

Continued on back page



Alan Hardman
Acknowledgements to Beatrix Potter

Anwar Ditta angry over expulsions



Anwar Ditta, who gained national prominence over two years ago over her heroic fight to bring her children to Britain, has written a letter to *Militant*, expressing her extreme anger at the expulsion of the *Militant* Editorial Board.

For five years Anwar struggled against the Home Office who refused to allow her three children in Pakistan to come to Britain because they claimed they were "not satisfied" that they were Anwar's children.

A defence committee was set up to assist Anwar in

1979 and from then up to early 1981 Anwar spoke at 400 meetings and attended numerous rallies and demonstrations. Only then, when the campaign reached national prominence and was featured on the Granada 'World in Action' programme, did the Home Office at last agree that Anwar's family could be re-united.

"I only hope that this will give courage to the thousands of black people who are suffering because of these unjust laws", she said after the victory, "I will continue to fight and help others in the same situation."

It would not have been lost on Anwar and others involved, however, that for the first three years of her strug-

gle she was up against a 'Labour' Home Secretary, Merlyn Rees, and fighting legislation introduced by a right wing Labour Government.

Anwar has now written to *Militant* opposing the expulsion:

"Dear Comrades," she writes, "I was extremely angered by the NEC's decision to expel five *Militant*-supporters from the Labour Party."

"During my campaign to be re-united with my children the supporters of *Militant* helped me a great deal. For example there were articles in the *Militant* which resulted in money and messages of support being

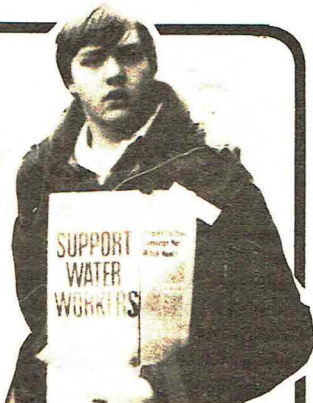
Continued on back page

Become a
Militant
supporter!

Name

Address

Send to Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace,
London E8 3PN



BERMONDSEY : Labour must break with the past

The active left-wing rank and file of the Labour Party have no need to apologise for Bermondsey. It is the right wing who have to answer for the defeat.

Predictably, the right, who were all rooting in private for a Labour defeat, have now joined the Tory papers in demanding that the left be curbed and that Michael Foot be junked in favour of Denis Healey.

The by-election result was indeed a crushing defeat for Labour, but the extent to which the Labour Party can recover from it depends entirely upon the outlook of the Party rank and file and on their determination to grasp socialist ideas and break the grip of the right wing in the leadership.

During the by-election the national and local press conducted a vicious and unrelenting campaign against Labour. There was no limit to the lies, smears, vilifications and distortions they were prepared to use.

To begin with, the media gave their overwhelming blessing to John O'Grady, the "Real Labour" candidate, describing how he was "popular", how he represented the "genuine" Labour tradition, and so on and so forth. It soon became obvious, however, that O'Grady's base of support was small and that he was not likely to beat Peter Tatchell, the Labour Party candidate.

At this point, there was a decisive and orchestrated switch from O'Grady to Hughes, the Liberal. The press now churned out manufactured opinion polls, creating a bandwagon for the Liberals, inviting all the anti-Labour voters to switch to Hughes to keep Tatchell out.

This press campaign undoubtedly had an effect, by hiding the real issues from workers, discrediting the Labour Party, and by using the opinion polls as a propaganda weapon to undermine the confidence and resolve of Labour voters. But in the final analysis, this was not the decisive factor.

The fact is that the Labour leaders were themselves an obstacle to a Labour victory from the very beginning; the handling of the Bermondsey issue by Michael Foot, by the NEC and the right-wing leaders of the party enormously assisted the dirty campaign of the media.

Right wing wanted a Labour defeat

The decision not to endorse Peter Tatchell more than a year ago was taken by Michael Foot to appease Bob Mellish, that "party loyalist" who subsequently stabbed the party in the back in the local elections and then in the by-election. Yet even after a grudging endorsement of Tatchell, the right of the Party did not support him as the official candidate.



The count at Bermondsey.

Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report).

The members of the Shadow Cabinet who turned up in the campaign were, to put it mildly, lukewarm in their support, they gave the distinct impression of "going through the motions" of supporting the Labour candidate. It was no secret in the corridors of Westminster that the majority of Labour MPs wanted a defeat.

The position on the Party National Executive Committee was no better; it had an unmistakable "Alice-in-Wonderland" quality to it. All the real issues facing workers, in Bermondsey and elsewhere, seem to have completely by-passed the right wing in control of the NEC.

Not for them a campaign against unemployment, or press conferences and speeches about rotten housing in inner London or the need for socialist policies. No, they preferred to occupy their attentions expelling long-standing and loyal party members for their Marxist ideas!

Hours upon hours of precious time must have been wasted in the General Secretary's office and other departments in Walworth Road, compiling elaborate resolutions and statements to back up the *show trial* held to expel the five *Militant* Editorial Board members the day before the by-election. The waste of resources was no less evident when in a disgraceful, and to give it its proper description, Stalinist fashion, the leading officers of the Labour Party suppressed several hundred pounds-worth of leaflets merely because they were printed by the same press that prints *Militant*.

The workers in Bermondsey can hardly be blamed for not taking the Labour Party campaign seriously when the NEC and head office did not take it any more seriously themselves.

Despite the obsession with the witch-hunt, this same

NEC found no time during the entire by-election campaign to consider the expulsion from the Party of the Labour traitor O'Grady, standing against the official candidate. Neither was the position helped by the attitude of some of the 'soft lefts' in Bermondsey who refused to expel O'Grady from the Council Labour Group, on the grounds that it would create 'adverse' publicity during the campaign!

If the Bermondsey by-election were analogous to a battle, the picture would have been something like this:

The bulk of the Labour 'army' consisted of honest and determined fighters prepared and willing to do battle. But most Labour 'generals' were in the rear hoping for a defeat (and known to be good pals with the opposing 'General Mellish'). The top Labour officers were busy purging some of the best fighters from the ranks of the army, taking away any weapons manufactured by Cambridge Heath, and casting threats of expulsions around like confetti.

With such a leadership, who could be surprised at a defeat? Who could be surprised if workers, standing on the sidelines, rather than join the fray on the side of Labour, shrugged their shoulders and turned their back?

O'Grady completely discredited

For the Labour Party generally the most important lesson from the whole campaign lies in the derisory vote cast for O'Grady. He was Labour group leader in Southwark for 14 years and a councillor for many more.

He really did represent the 'old' Labour Party—the one which neglected the local working class over many

years, which contemptuously took for granted that they would be returned to the council year after year and which could in the end offer nothing to solve the problems workers face: mass unemployment, poverty, slum housing and the Tories' destruction of welfare and social services.

Workers are seeking a radical solution to these radical problems. As is shown by the comments on this page of a woman in Bermondsey, workers were suspicious of 'answers' that robbed Peter to pay Paul, like maintaining services and bumping up rates; but they were even more hostile to the old and discredited policies of the likes of O'Grady.

Unfortunately, in the eyes of many workers, it is the O'Grady style of politics which is associated with the Labour Party nationally. Seventeen years of post-war Labour government have left their mark in the disillusionment and disorientation of many sections of workers.

Labour voters do not want a return to right-wing Labour governments like 1964-70 or 1974-79, yet these are precisely the policies and methods with which Labour's front bench are associated. Radical policies agreed by recent Labour Party conferences are being rapidly emasculated and have not featured in national Labour Party policy.

1981 was a year of massive Labour Party demonstrations against Thatcher: campaigns which increased the Party membership for the first time in years. But 1982 and 1983 have been the years of the witch-hunt: not a single national Labour demonstration against unemployment or Thatcher's policies. Not surprisingly, Party membership has fallen again.

The conference resolution calling for a manifesto with "an unequivocal, unambiguous commitment to unilateral nuclear disarmament"

is being effectively ditched. Despite clear conference decisions against a return to incomes policies and a "social contract", it now transpires that the leaders of the Labour Party and the TUC have been having secret meetings (the latest two days before the by-election) to find a way of incorporating a form of incomes policy into the manifesto.

Parliamentary Labour Party dominated by 'O'Grady's'

Where workers are demanding a radical break from them, the right-wing leadership of the Party are clinging tooth and nail on to the discredited policies of the past. The workers of Bermondsey, like workers nationally if given the chance, have categorically rejected John O'Grady. Yet they are offered a Parliamentary Labour Party dominated by

Doorstep comments of a woman in Bermondsey after the election

"Some people keep saying it was the press that lost Labour the seat, but there's more to it than that. We are not stupid here you know, we know what's going on. You've got to see what has happened over the past.

"I've been Labour all my life. I'm almost ashamed to admit to you that I voted for the Liberals. I know that they are not socialist, but something had to be done.

"Labour's taken us for granted for too many years. Sixty years they have been in here and look at it! They have let the area run down.

"OK, so I live in a decent new council house. I've lived here for six years, but before that we lived in a slum with damp running down the

O'Grady's.

The Labour Party in Bermondsey is now in a position similar to that of many others in former Labour strongholds where the rotteness and incompetence of the right wing have done great damage.

Long before *Militant* became a national issue, the right-wing control of local and national Labour politics caused the loss of council seats in cities like Liverpool and even in mining villages in Durham, to take only two examples. Liberal opportunists—in reality Tories with a superficial veneer of 'community' radicalism—have filled the gap.

But these strongholds have not been lost forever. In Liverpool, where the constituency Labour Parties are mostly on the left and where the support for the ideas of *Militant* is strong, there has been a fight back and last year, against the national trend, the Labour Party gained two seats from the Liberals in the local elections.

In other words, where the Labour Party fights on socialist policies, it can gain ground, despite the lies and smears of the press—and there has been no shortage of that in Liverpool.

The Bermondsey by-election is not a condemnation of the policies and outlook of *Militant*; it is a vindication of them. The Labour Party would not lose such seats if it campaigned boldly for the socialist transformation of society, for the public ownership of the big monopolies that dominate all workers' lives, and for the introduction of a socialist plan of production.

Socialist ideas, advanced and explained to workers, would get an enormous response, no matter that the Tory press tried to oppose them, because they are the only answer to the growing social problems and uncertainties faced by workers.

It is now up to the membership of the Labour Party, and also to trade unionists and workers who at present stand outside the Party, to fight inside its ranks for a party which is unified around real socialist policies and which is led by representatives and leaders who agree wholeheartedly with such policies.

walls, no bath and an outside toilet. Now we are here it seems as though they are trying to drive us out. The rent and rates are £43 a week.

"The Liberals put out a leaflet telling us that Labour was going to freeze the rents and put up the rates 130% instead. That would have cost me an extra £12 a week. You can't vote for that can you?"

"I know that the Liberal leaflet was a lie, the rise is going to be about 30%, so why didn't Labour deny it? They should have put a leaflet out to every doorstep denying it."

"But then again why are Labour raising the rates at all? It all affects working-class people. You wonder if some people resent us living in decent council housing and are now trying to punish us by making it that we can't afford to stay here—every year it goes up about £9."

Witch-hunters lash out in Blackburn

The expulsion of the five members of *Militant's* Editorial Board was seen by right-wingers in Blackburn as the green light for a local witch-hunt.

The day after the National Executive decided on expulsions, members of Blackburn Labour Party's General Management Committee received through their letter boxes copies of a hitherto 'secret report'. Written apparently by Michael Gregory, a party member who claims he was a "member of the Militant Tendency", the document was clearly intended to serve as the basis for a purge, with the right-wing plotting to expel a number of prominent *Militant* supporters.

Evidently prepared in the middle of January, members of the GMC, including those accused and defamed in the report, were kept in the dark for nearly six weeks. However, the press and other media, both nationally and locally, had been in the know for some time.

The Monday before the expulsions *The Times* referred to the document, and the day after the expulsions it carried another report alleging a "Militant plot to oust Jack Straw", Blackburn's Labour MP. On the evening of the expulsions *BBC Newsnight* featured the report. The local press sensationalised this supposedly "explosive" document.

The headlines can be imagined: "Blackburn Trots accused"; "Militant: we name the leader!" Only on Saturday were *Militant* supporters given the opportunity of replying in the *Lancashire Evening Telegraph*.

Militant supporter Peter Harris, the primary target of the attacks, quickly produced a reply which has been circulated to Labour Party members.

"It is absolutely outrageous," he says, "that at the time when our class has been savaged by the Tories we have to waste time and effort replying to a snoopers report which has about as much bearing to reality as *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The rank and file of the party are absolutely sickened with the debilitating effect of the witch-hunt..."

Peter pointed out that as soon as they had heard rumours of this report they had demanded that it should be circulated to the membership and debated in the party. The replies of the handful of right-wingers who

were clearly involved in the manoeuvre was to deny the existence of the report!

Peter is justified in commenting: "We are accused of conspiracy behind closed doors. But this fabricated report is clearly the conspiracy of a right-wing clique who have cobbled together a series of fantastic stories to try to stop the growth of left-wing ideas."

The majority of party members acknowledge the role of *Militant* supporters in working for party candidates, including right-wing councillors, and for their work in building up the Young Socialists, the Women's section, establishing links with the Black and Asian community, and generally building the party.

The real situation is that a number of right-wingers, particularly a handful of the councillors, are so isolated in the party that they are resorting to undemocratic manoeuvres. Instead of arguing their case, they are resorting to dirty tactics.

Some of Blackburn's right-wingers have undoubtedly boasted to the press that Michael Gregory's report had a decisive effect in the NEC's decision to expel the five Editorial Board members. These parochial witch-hunters have apparently forgotten that the NEC's right-wing claim to have a 'huge trunk' of evidence against the *Militant* in Walworth Road.

Glaring error

The difference is, however, that the right-wing on the NEC has not dared to publish this "evidence". They know, that like Gregory's report, it is full of personal calumnies, factual discrepancies, bogus historical details, and political smears; "evidence" which would not stand up to serious examination by the rank and file of the party.

When Peter Harris called for the report to be circulated, he said: "I knew that we had nothing to fear or hide, and after reading it I can only wonder at the depth that Gregory has stooped to in order to throw such unsubstantiated filth."

Michael Gregory, a public-school educated student, has been in and out of the party, rejoining it early in 1982. He claims to have been a 'Member of Militant' for five months, though he never publicly sold the paper, although he himself claims this is a "condition of membership"! *Militant* supporters did discuss with Gregory. But it is clear that he concealed his real views and misled people in the

course of these discussions.

This is his record. Yet he now claims to be able to give accurate details about *Militant* going back over years and years. Somehow, Gregory has cobbled together a collection of incorrect, in some cases completely ludicrous, facts. Was he given access to the "great trunk" in Walworth road?

Anxious no doubt to substantiate his wild allegation with a wealth of detail, he claims to be able to reveal everything. Yet he doesn't even know the correct names of all those he alleges are members of the so-called 'Militant cell'. Party members, not all of them by any means *Militant* supporters, have already pointed to the inaccuracies, discrepancies and glaring errors in his report.

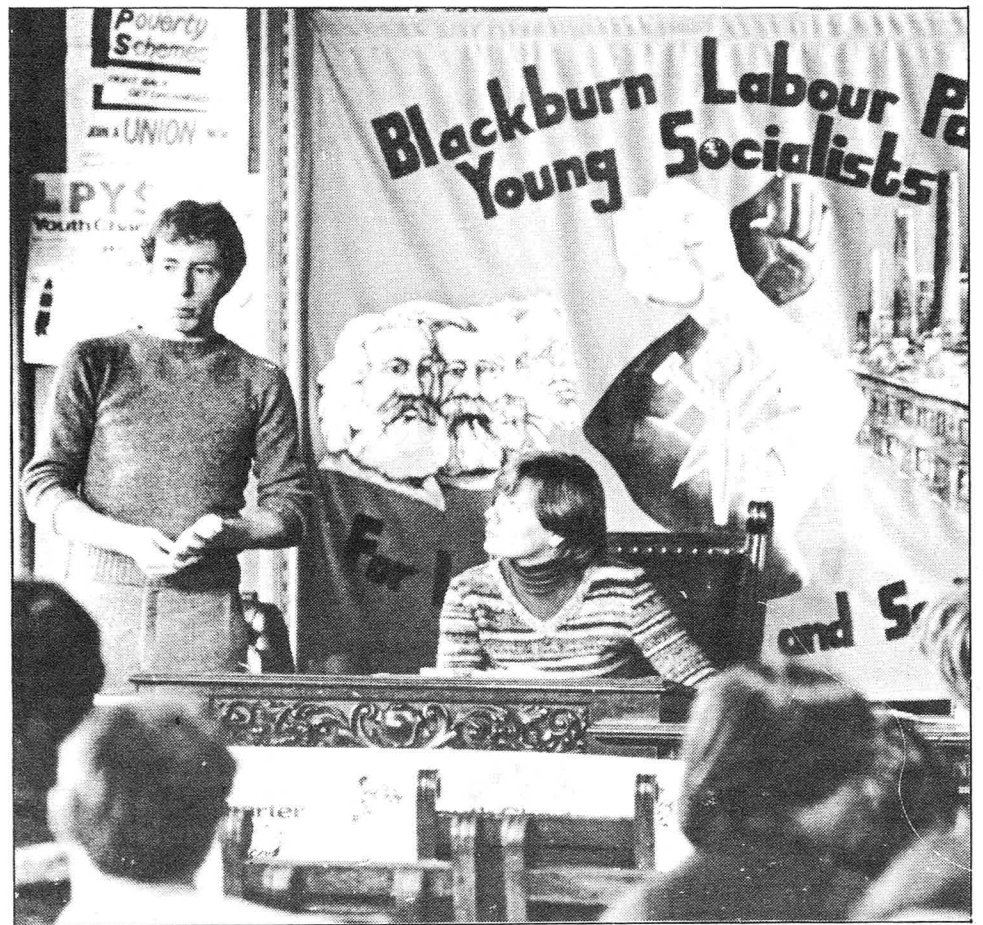
Predictably, the media concentrated on the allegations that *Militant's* activities in Blackburn are all directed towards ousting Jack Straw as MP. Straw himself admitted to the press: "We have gone to great levels to corroborate its (the reports) truth." Since then, however, after the *Militant* meeting on Sunday, Straw told the press that he had nothing to do with drawing up the report.

One thing is clear, however, copies of the report which were circulated to Fleet Street and the television prior to the NEC on 23 February came from Parliament. They were photocopies on House of Commons paper, with Gregory's report appearing on the reverse side of written parliamentary questions and answers.

If Jack Straw had nothing to do with the report, why has he not publicly disassociated himself from this dirty tactic?

The great majority of party members who have discussed with *Militant* supporters in the last few days have expressed their anger and disgust at the local witch-hunting tactics. This includes a number on the right of the party. The reaction has shown the overwhelming opposition to the witch-hunt, and there are some signs now that the right-wing are having second thoughts. Their plans for a special meeting to discuss the report, when they no doubt intended to push expulsions, have now been dropped and the issue is to be discussed at next month's GMC.

Militant supporters are confident that they will repudiate these dirty methods and turn the party towards the main task: recruiting new members, fighting the Tories, and winning support for policies which can achieve socialism.



Militant supporters in Blackburn have been in the front line of fighting the Tories as in the campaign to organise YOPS members last year. Photo: John Smith (IFL)

Readers Meeting answers right-wing

The answer to the local witch-hunters was the most successful *Militant* meeting ever held in Blackburn.

Called only on Thursday evening, Sunday's meeting attracted well over 50 to what proved to be a very lively debate.

Condemning the scandalous, underhand attack on local *Militant* supporters, Peter Harris explained the recent events in the Blackburn Labour Party. Lynn Walsh, one of five expelled Editorial Board members, spoke on the background to the witch-hunt, outlined *Militant's* policies and ideas, and dealt with the attempt to launch a local witch-hunt.

Equally indignant at the attacks, several local Labour activists defended the record of *Militant* supporters, and angrily rejected the right-wing's tactics.

Peter McCloughlin, a Blackburn busmen's shop steward, said he did not agree with all the policies of *Militant*. But "*Militant* had taken a stand, and I admire their courage and convictions". The local Party, he said had "gathered dust and died under Barbara Castle". The activities of *Militant* supporters and the Young Socialists, now under attack,

begun the revival of the party."

As always at a *Militant* readers' meeting, there was plenty of time for discussion. Two opponents, one right-winger and one claiming to be on the left, who had repeatedly heckled the speakers, were given plenty of time to have their say.

The democratic conduct of the meeting, however, was in marked contrast to the attitude of right-wing councillor Mike Madigan, who had told the press that he had "lodged an official complaint about the use of the Labour Club for this meeting". This is how the right-wing defend democracy! Later, he admitted to the *Telegraph* that he had torn down the notice for the meeting and ripped it up.

There were plenty of right-wingers around the Labour Club. But they sat in the bar and didn't have the courage to come in and put their point of view. Afterwards, Councillor Madigan told the *Telegraph* that *Militant* supporters were "just fringe political extremists". But the right wingers can't have failed to see that the meeting was packed, a turn-out far bigger, regrettably, than the average meeting of Blackburn Labour Party's GMC.

In his opening contribu-

tion Lynn Walsh explained the constitutional frauds which the right-wing of the National Executive had used to justify the political repression of *Militant*. They had been defeated in the debate over policy and party democracy, and they were now trying to suppress Marxist ideas, which in recent years had gained enormous support in the labour movement. Locally *Militant* had also increased its support although *Militant* supporters recognised that at the moment they were still a minority trend.

In the *Militant* Fighting Fund appeal well over £50 was collected. During the meeting, the chairman read out a number of letters (including one from Anwar Ditta and another from a party member away in the merchant navy) which attacked the local witch-hunt and expressed support for the policies and work of *Militant* supporters.

The mood of the meeting was confident and combative. The contributions demonstrated that local activists are not in the least intimidated by the manoeuvres of the right wing. Far from being on the "fringe", *Militant* supporters are at the heart of the struggle to reclaim the Labour Party for working people.

"...I am a member of Greenbank Ward and shall man one of the committee rooms at the forthcoming election. Not forgetting...how well the YS work in recruiting others to our party both young and old. May I conclude by saying that in all the long years that I have worked in our party never has anything like this happened before. Mr Gregory's attacks on me and my home are unfounded, immoral and unjust."

Rosina Harris:

"On behalf of Blackburn Labour Women's Council I would like to comment on

the allegations...Mike Gregory's report has been received with disgust...a resolution was passed to remind the constituency of its policy of no witch-hunts or expulsions.

"It was felt that the report was totally alien to the traditions of the labour movement of full and open debate of political ideas and in particular was against the comradeship and working spirit that has developed amongst the Women's Council to develop women's participation in the labour movement and to defeat the Tories."

Party members reply to accusations

Members of Blackburn Labour Party in letters to other party members have answered the smears and nonsensical allegations in the 'secret report'. Below are printed extracts from a few of the letters:

Kay Wright, Blackburn LPYS:

"As a member of the LPYS for almost 3 years...In my opinion the YS conferences are the most

democratic in the labour movement. Every single person who stands for election has to explain their political programme and their record of activity..."

"One of the most disgusting features of the witch-hunt is that it is set against a background of mass unemployment for youth and cheap labour on the YOP schemes. But Mike Gregory seems blissfully

unaware of the problems that surround us. Are we to assume that either he has no political alternative to offer to the policies of the LPYS, or that such questions are insignificant and he prefers to spend his time attacking those who try to find a solution to the problems of youth."

Mrs 'Micky' Thornton:

"Since my husband and I were in the town centre last

year and noted that the YOPs were trying to reach Liverpool for a demonstration... and we gave them a donation to help with the train fare, these courageous Young Socialists have been very kind...May I point out to you most strongly that I have been a supporter and activist in the Party for the best part of 50 years...I canvassed for our present MP Jack Straw.

£50,000 needed by April 9

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 9th April
Eastern	826		2700
East Midlands	791		2850
Humberside	266		1500
London East	844		3300
London West	340		1650
London South	629		2500
Manchester & Lancs	679		3000
Merseyside	1049		3100
Northern	491		3750
Scotland East	211		1850
Scotland West	363		2800
Southern	862		4000
South West	485		2000
Wales East	238		1500
Wales West	261		2000
West Midlands	650		2800
Yorkshire	706		3700
Others	774		5000
Total received	10476		50000

POUNDS AGAINST THE PURGE

THREE PORTERS at Pinderfields' General Hospital, Wakefield have just sent us £5 each from their back-pay. "Sorry we can't donate much" they say, "but then our back pay didn't amount to much either! Keep up the good work."

We would like to appeal to all our readers who've had disputes covered in the *Militant*, to support us with fivers, if they can, or with whatever they can afford. That way we will be able to give more and better coverage in the next round of the battle against the Tories and their policies of mass unemployment.

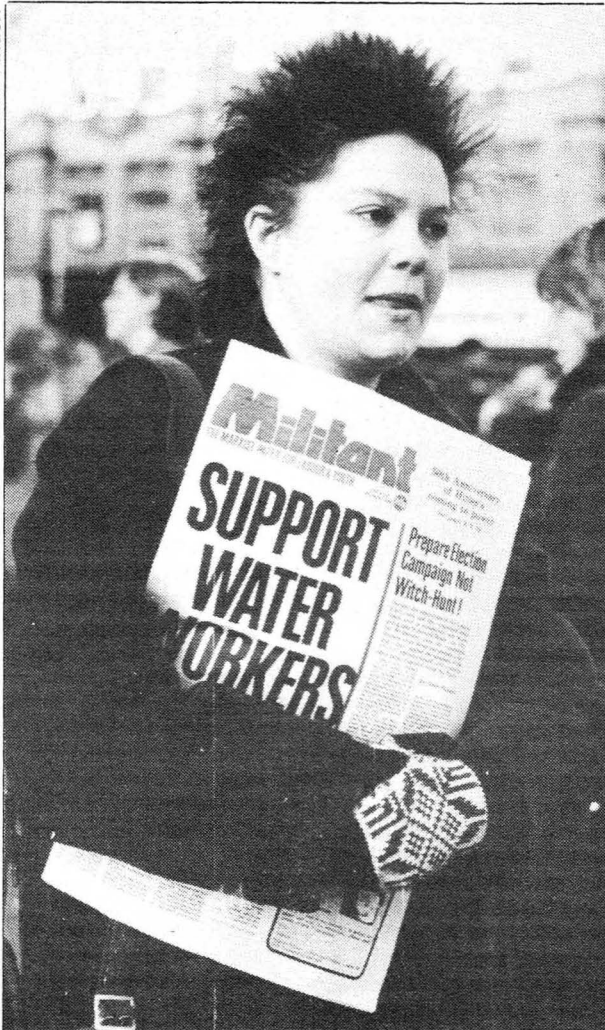
The latest grim remark about taking 14-year olds out of school and introducing them to factory work came from the Manpower Services Committee chairman. He wants us to become the sweatshop of the West, and follow the example of Taiwan, where trade union rights do not exist. "In Taiwan 70% of the population go through some form of vocational training" he proclaims.

This is the sort of threat we need to hammer home at every door-step and works canteen between now and the general election! To do so, *Militant* needs YOUR support to produce an even better and more frequent paper. And we need cash to do it!

Thanks this week to workers at Universal, Stafford (£24 collected), members of Hull 12 AUEW, and the London UCW District Committee. NALGO members from Merseyside assisted us, as did a £10 donation from Motherwell and Wishaw LPYS, and part of the proceeds of a jumble sale from Macclesfield LPYS.

Oswestry LPYS collected over £4 at a meeting for us, and other LPYS branches to help included Lanark,

Photo: Mark Pinder.



Support the paper that supports workers' struggles.

Wallasey and Birkenhead, and all the Northern Region comrades who contributed at their conference. Rattling tins at GMCs can be a good source of funds: thanks for over £7 from Rochdale members, to Southampton

and Isle of Wight LP members and to Liverpool comrades, particularly those in Edgehill, for £10.

Students from Stirling to Stafford, from Portsmouth to Totnes, have helped us in the past week: if you're at

college what do your mates think of *Militant*? How about asking them for a donation?

As usual, there are too many individual contributions to mention each one, but a special thanks to the TGWU shop steward (Humberside) who put in part of his compensation money and to our raffle winner who made a donation from his winnings.

K McNeil, a Surrey student nurse, sent us £13, and T McMahon £6. Fivers came from M Bell (Hull), P Forester (Preston YS), J Marston (Liverpool MAT-SA), P Andrews (Teddington), and two from L Arnell (Marden LP). Thanks also to A Daly (Erdington YS), L Mitchell (Tooting), K Evans (Cardiff), J Forbes (unemployed, Edinburgh), A Wilson (Halifax), T&M King (Bermondsey), supporters in Blantyre, Leeds, Dagenham, Southampton, Cambridge, and many other places.

This week's total of £1227.60 unfortunately only brings our total for the quarter to just under £10,500. If we are to reach our target, we must treble the amount coming in. We appeal to all our readers: don't think that £5 or 50p "isn't much" or worse still "isn't worth sending". We don't expect or get the support of "socialist millionaires"—they're on the other side!

What we want is for each reader to send us their 50ps or £5s, every week if possible. How about it this week?

THIS WEEK: £1,227

Militant hits the streets

LAST WEEK saw a tremendous response from our sellers to the witch-hunt! Practically all areas increased their orders as they campaigned on the streets against the expulsions.

We had several people ring in wishing to sell *Militant* especially in new areas, ranging from St Austell to Orpington. Already we have had reports of record sales: Derby sellers leading the way increased their sales by three times and they have not stopped there, aiming to quintuple (times 5) their sales!

Our feature on the campaign to save shipbuilding was very popular, 80 extra

papers were sold in the yards on the Tyne and Wear side sellers doubled their sales. It's not just the old established areas that can sell papers: in the West Kent area our sellers sold out of their allocation and asked for even more.

The biggest fear of the right wing, Tories, SDP/Liberals is the growing support for Marxist ideas and the easiest way to increase our support is to sell *Militant*. To get an order is even easier—just fill in the tear-off slip in this week's paper or write to: Militant Circulation, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN, or phone 01-986 3828.

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

CAMBRIDGE: "Stop the Purge". Speaker: Bob Edwards, Thursday 3 March, 8.00 pm. Bath House, Gwydir Street, Cambridge.

NW LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

Militant Readers Meeting Speaker: Keith Dickinson (*Militant* Editorial Board) on Saturday 19 March—lunchtime at Opera House, Circle Lounge, Winter Gardens, Blackpool.

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.

YORKSHIRE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

Militant Readers Meeting "Marxism and the Labour Party" Speakers: Lynn Walsh (*Militant* Editorial Board) and Steve Davison (Bradford AUEW delegate, personal capacity) on Saturday 5 March, 7.30 pm at 5 Kings Bar, Southcliffe Hotel, Bridlington, opposite Spa Hotel.

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

MIDDLETON: *Militant* Discussion Group. "The ideas of Marxism—Their relevance today", on Friday 11 March, 8.00 pm. Middleton Labour Club, Long Street, Middleton. Speaker: Phil Frampton.

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.

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

NEW POSTER

Historic 'Murmansk' poster, featuring Bolsheviks' appeal to British troops who invaded Russia after the Revolution. 25p each (+ 15p p&tp) or 20 for £3 (including p&tp) Available from E Phillips, 66 Sprindale Rd, Broadstone, Poole.

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.

CLASSIFIED

ACTON *Militant* Supporters express their greatest sympathy for John Gook on the death of his mother.

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.

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

YORKSHIRE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

Labour Steering Committee Against Witch-hunts "Fight the Tories, not the socialists"

Speakers: Joan Maynard MP, Bob Cryer MP, Pat Wall Bradford North PPC on Saturday 5 March—after morning session at 5 Kings Bar, Southcliffe Hotel, Bridlington, opposite Spa Hotel.

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.

SNOWDONIA: Bed and Breakfast in comfortable cottage. £4.50 nightly, £28 weekly. Telephone: Llanberis 870062.

THE RESPONSE to the NUS 'Day of Protest' on 23 February showed the anger of students at the measures of the Tories.

NUS leaders have estimated that 100,000 students were involved in some form of action ranging from sit-ins to walk-outs, demonstrations to leafletting city centres.

If the present round of cuts in the universities, polytechnics and FE colleges is not resisted, the way will be clear for some of the wilder plans put forward by the Tories to be implemented.

Indeed, if the Tories were re-elected in the forthcoming general election, higher education would face disaster. The leaked 'Think Tank' report, endorsed by Tory Chancellor Geoffrey Howe, proposed the privatisation of colleges and polytechnics and the phasing out of state funding of universities. Student grants would be abolished and replaced by a system of scholarships and loans—but only for half the present number of students. Others would have to pay the full cost of fees, £12,000 for a three year course at university.

The NUS demonstration of 9 March must be the start of a serious campaign, linked with the labour movement, to fight the present cuts and pave the way for the defeat of the Tories at the next election. The demonstration is backed by many trade unions, including NUPE, ASTMS, AUT and NALGO, who will have speakers on the platform.

One enemy one struggle

NUS must grasp the opportunity to draw together these unions, along with other public sector unions, in a joint campaign. As Emyln Williams, South Wales NUM president, argued at the 1981 TUC Conference: "The Prime Minister is for changing, but only as the result of the collective effort of everybody...we want an amalgamation of unions fighting with one voice to defend education."

What better way to build this unity and build on the water workers' blow against the Tories' public sector spending limits, than by a conference of elected representatives from public sector trade union branches and shop stewards' committees, trades councils, Labour councils, local Labour Parties, tenants' organisations and student unions to discuss a common strategy to defend us against all attacks on the public sector, from pit closures to privatisation to education cuts.

Such a conference would also have the task of pooling the resources of the public sector unions, including the NUS, in planning a campaign to ensure a defeat of the Tories and the return of a Labour government. Indeed, according to the Labour Party headquarters, students themselves could hold the balance in 41 key marginal seats. The campaign against the cuts must be the first step in the campaign to defeat the Tories.

By David Jones
(Welsh Labour Students Regional Committee)

STUDENTS Fight the Tory cuts!



Students heckle the SDP's Ian Wigglesworth at a recent demonstration. Students are increasingly looking to the labour movement for a united fight.

Belfast occupation

AS PART of the NUS day of action against Tory education cuts, students occupied the South Eastern Education and Library Board offices in Belfast for 24 hours.

The occupation was ended at 6 pm by the interven-

tion of the Royal Ulster Constabulary whose inspector informed us that we were breaking the law. He told us that although he was "sympathetic" he said the cuts "were necessary and students should be no exception"! During the forcible eviction several students received cuts and bruises.

The lesson drawn from this is that although the RUC

are portrayed in the North as leading the fight against the para-militaries, their real role is that of the strong-arm of the state against the labour movement.

By Peter Knight
(Queens University & Lisburn Road Young Socialists)

Liverpool strike solid

AT THE Central College in Liverpool the response to the NUS call for a day of action was excellent.

Although with only a few days' prior warning the college's student union executive, composed mainly of LPYS members, had produced 1,000 leaflets explaining about the Tory cuts in education and the need to support the one day strike in line with the national NUS call for action.

LPYS members also went to see the reps of two of the main unions on the college, GMBATU and NATFHE. Unfortunately due to lack of time official support could not be organised, but members on an individual basis pledged not to cross the picket.

The response from cleaning staff was absolutely solid with all members agreeing not to cross the picket, so

long as they could pick up their wages which were delivered on the morning of the strike.

Despite the rantings of the principal and vice-principal about the sanctity of the college and how it was 'exempt' from all cuts, the students and staff were clearly not so impressed after four years of savage Tory and local Liberal attacks.

For the past five months the principal has been telling everyone he was a "union man". Yet on the morning he crossed the picket line unlocking the entrance to the college and asking us to clear the passage.

As the morning developed it was clear that the vice-principal was to have a lonely day. After turning away the milkman, baker and postman we waited eagerly to see how many students would appear. Of the 1,500

students only a hundred arrived, many being day release. Of these only 35 crossed the picket line.

Spurred on by this success, some students went down to the nearby Art and Design college which had hardly been told anything about the day of action.

Within 15 minutes the pickets had been to speak in several of the classrooms calling on the students to come out for the rest of the day. Students simply got up and walked out, leaving the vice principal to have a fit.

With similar types of action throughout Merseyside including occupations at the university, polytechnic and other colleges, the mood of most FE students and even many university students is clear—total opposition to the education cuts.

By Dave Read

The event of the year!

"I WENT to last year's LPYS conference and it was very good. The debates related to my experience at work and the ideas were the sort I was looking for. At the time I was threatened with redundancy as I'd finished serving my time.

"I'm going to conference again this year and I expect I'll enjoy it again. If young workers go to LPYS conference they won't regret it. I would urge all young workers to attend the LPYS national conference."

Steve Williams (NUR and Cardiff North LPYS)

This year's LPYS conference will take up all the important issues facing

working class youth; unemployment, housing, the Youth Training Scheme and many more.

But the LPYS recognise that youth cannot live by politics alone.

Social events lined up for this year's LPYS conference include top reggae bands **Misty** and **Roots** who will be playing on the Friday night.

On Sunday night there will be two plays, written and performed by **East Kilbride** and **Bermondsey** LPYSs, followed by the film 'Missing'.

There will be also the traditional **Irish Night** and **Geordie Night** as well as the disco on both Saturday and Sunday.

For further details contact: LPYS, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

Unions fund Sussex LPYS branches

AT THE 1979 general election, the Tories won every seat in Sussex. In fact Brighton Kempton (from 1964-1970) was the only seat in Sussex ever to return a Labour MP.

Yet in this Tory stronghold the policies of the Thatcher government have proved disastrous. For example the unemployment rate in Tory areas like Hastings is 13.8%, Eastbourne-10% and Brighton-12%. Even the 1930s didn't see these sort of levels of unemployment in Sussex.

Contrary to popular belief the ideas of socialism are alive and well in Sussex. The LPYS has never been so strong as at present. There are now LPYS branches in every constituency bar one along the coast of Sussex. Sussex LPYS branches are determined to send a large contingent from the area to LPYS conference at Easter.

We have booked a coach to Bridlington and the indications are that we will have approximately 40-50 people coming to conference.

Of course fund-raising is very important to help pay for people to go. Bognor and Littlehampton LPYS branches raised £80 from a sponsored walk. Brighton YS raised about £50 from a sponsored 'Monopoly' playing session.

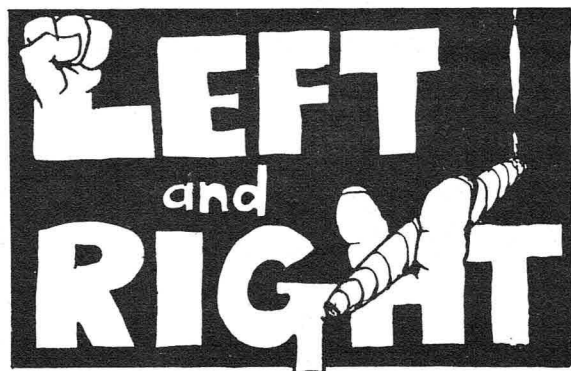
We have also got a good response from appeals to the local labour movement for money. Brighton TGWU 1/1347 branch have agreed to make a donation and write to the Southern Region of the TGWU and ask them to sponsor an unemployed member to go to conference. Brighton GMBATU have donated £10 and Arun Trades Council has donated £10. Moulsecomb, Tennyntry and Queens Park wards of Brighton Kempton Labour Party have all donated money.

Everyone is now really looking forward to Easter to what promises to be an excellent three days of debate and discussion.

By Martin Smith
(LPYS Regional Committee, Sussex)



Last year's LPYS conference. Make sure you get to this year's.



Guess who came to dinner...

The directors of the Wedgewood pottery group held a binge in the exclusive W1 area of London on February 15. Guests included Lord and Lady Cockfield, Lord Davies of Leek, Lord Elwyn Jones, Captain John Rogers and wife, the Marquess of Queensbury, Lord and Lady Westbury, Lord and Lady Reilly, and to add a bit of class, the Earl and Countess of Lichfield. Also there was Tory MP Hugh Fraser, leader of the reactionary Conservative Philosophy Group, and the architect of the latest set of Tory shackles for the trade union movement, Norman Tebbit MP.

And guess who else? John Golding MP, the leading Labour right-winger who moved the expulsion of the 'Militant five'. Mr Golding's constituency, Newcastle-under-Lyme, covers the Potteries. So we can be sure that Mr Golding did not simply indulge in civil pleasantries with this bunch, but castigated the pottery bosses for their appalling record of closures and low wages in that industry. And we can be sure he laid it on the line with Tebbit, too. Can't we?

When thieves fall out

Oh dear, oh dear. The SDP in Islington, North London, are at each others' throats. It seems former Labour MP Michael O'Halloran is making a habit of defecting—he's now left the SDP! O'Halloran's fellow defector (from the Labour Party, that is) is most upset. The SDP MP John Grant said: "Michael O'Halloran left the Labour Party because he knew he would not be reselected on his record and he has left the Social Democrats for exactly the same reason. His main concern over the years has been self preservation...MPs are selected primarily to fight for their constituents' interests in Westminster. Mr O'Halloran's silence over the years is a standing joke."

No, no, John. O'Halloran left the Labour Party because he was forced out by Militant extremists—don't you remember? And it's taken John rather a long time to discover Mr O'Halloran's parliamentary record is, as he put it, a "standing joke".

"The Sun Says" so it must be true

"DO IT NORM!" screams the *Sun* editorial on 18 February. It should be pointed out, given the *Sun's* normal smutty content, that they are referring to Norman Tebbit's proposals to ban public sector strikes. Their reasoning is that: "The water men like the firemen, the ambulance drivers and the nurses enjoy safe jobs and regular rises." Translated from the *Sun's* gobbledegook, for 'safe' read 'dangerous and subject to the worst post war bout of Tory public service cutbacks'. And for 'regular rises' read 'on only a few occasions have these workers been able to barely keep up with the fall in living standards, and only after long and bitter disputes'. The only piece of truth in this scurrilous editorial is that firemen get 'regular rises'—and that's when they climb up ladders!

An everyday sacrifice

Terry Wogan reported on his show recently of the results of a 'Children in Need' appeal. He explained one contribution to this charity was from "two Labrador dogs who had forgone their beauty parlour treatment for a week, and donated £10."

Fifty years ago

The Tory idea of conscripting youth into the Army as a 'solution' to mass youth unemployment is nothing new. The idea was floated in the depression of the thirties. But in 1933 there was a problem in this idea that the Tories hadn't considered. Colonel H. Clay, Chief Recruiting Officer for Central London, reported, "The reason why this demand for men (for the Army) doesn't solve, in part at least, the unemployment problem, is that 95% of the unemployed are not physically up to the Army standard." In those days they weren't looking for SAS-style supermen either. Minimum requirements were a height of 5 foot, 3 inches, and a weight of 8 stone, 3lb.

THE FILM *The Battle for Algiers* is an excellent documentary-style depiction of the Algerian liberation struggle against French colonialism in the 1950s and 1960s.

Made in 1965 and an award-winner, it nevertheless did not—and has still not—gone on general public release.

My opportunity to see the film was when it was screened by the independent Ritzy cinema in Brixton. If anyone gets the chance they should definitely try and see it.

The film superbly illustrates the repression of the French ruling class and the methods of individual terrorism used by the guerillas based in the Casbah quarter of Algiers. The bombings of cafés used by the French-Algerians ("colons") are, in my opinion, in no way glorified and went some way to explain the support for more repressive policies among sections of the French community.

As the situation becomes more and more uncontrollable, the French ruling class deploy a vicious 'anti-terrorist' squad in Algiers. Led by a former resistance fighter, the troops are rapturously welcomed by the frightened European community.

The squad begins a systematic operation of the most vicious counter-terror and it is at this stage the futility of individual terrorist tactics against the state becomes apparent. One by one leaders of the Algerian national liberation movement are picked off by the use of the most brutal methods imaginable including random mass arrests and torture.

In the end after the movement is 'beheaded', an uneasy 'peace' returns for two years. After this however the Arab quarter explodes and massive opposition to military and racist colonial repression emerges.

This revival of opposition is portrayed by the inclusion of the more affluent section of Arab society (identified by their European garb) at the fore of the mass protest demonstrations.

The film is critical of the methods of individual terrorism without being unsym-

'The Battle for Algiers'

Reviewed by Dave Shields (Kingston LPYS)



A still from the film

pathetic to the genuine desire by the Algerian people for self-determination. The leader of the French anti-terrorist squad and the former criminal who becomes a dedicated anti-French urban guerilla are the central characters pitted against one another and peculiarly share similar characteristics.

The hatred of the latter is rooted in his own experiences of racist oppression but he is unable to grasp the need for a socialist transformation of Algerian society due to a lack of any political lead given—a lack

which incidentally isolated French workers in the Algerian capital and pushed them into the hands of right-wing groups like the OAS (Secret Army Organisation) which even planned a coup in metropolitan France.

He never draws the lessons of the use of the magnificent strike which is viciously beaten by the army forcing Arabs to work at the point of a gun.

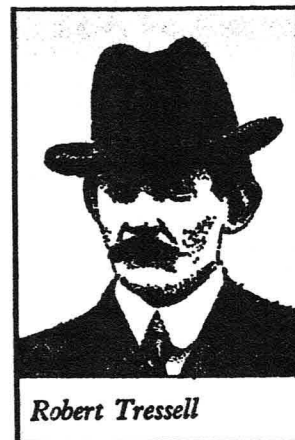
By contrast, the French commander is an experienced and travelled man who having fought the Nazis denied press allegations that he was a fascist. He did not,

however, deny that his methods were brutal and justified them by saying that he was paid to do a job by the politicians, lauded by the bourgeois French press and it was they who should take any blame for the consequences of brutal repression. Fortunately, not all the troops under his command were so clinical and towards the end were repelled by the brutality, and began to crack up.

This film was certainly food for thought and I would recommend it to every comrade.

The Life and Times of Robert Tressell

By Steve Amor
(Stepney and Poplar CLP)



Robert Tressell

converts it is valuable.

Its purpose is clearly stated; to investigate Tressell, his socialism and the period in which he lived.

The author's have carefully tried to balance the pamphlet drawing on social and political fact from actual records, and comparing them with Tressell's fictional interpretations. The short, precise sections of the pamphlet interspersed with original photographs have a slightly clinical feeling to them, but they provide a fascinating background.

Throughout the investigation into fact and fiction, one conclusion of the booklet's authors emerges:

the life of working people in modern Hastings has seen no significant change from Edwardian Mugsborough, and the ruthless exploiters of 'Sweater' and 'Rushton'.

Tressell's political involvement in the SDF is mentioned, but it is the experience he gained as a worker observing

Available from World Socialist Books

'The Robert Tressell Papers'—by the Robert Tressell Workshop.
Price £3

'One of the Damned—the life and times of Robert Tressell'—by FC Ball
Price £4.50

'The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists' by Robert Tressell
Price £2.20
(All prices include post and packaging)

the cruel life around him that really explains his socialism.

The booklet's introduction by Fred Ball serves as a very appetising beginning to the pamphlet. He explains his long quest to find Tressell's true identity and how he, a Hastings house-painter himself, found himself as a social commentator and socialist. All round the pamphlet is readable, useful and a worthy addition to the fight for Tressell's recognition.

Women and children first to suffer Tory cuts

POVERTY — VICTORIAN STYLE

THATCHER says she wants to return to 'Victorian virtues'. But studies of Victorian life show that life was pretty grim for the working classes.

Victorian autobiographies show that for the poor, the constant feeling of hunger as a child is never forgotten, nor the pitiful subterfuges to make monotonous food a little more appetising, such as asking for half a loaf of bread, cut with a hammy knife to give it flavour, or being given the top of an egg (the rest going to father) to eat with the bread.

A century later, things haven't changed much. "We've got a day to day existence. At the beginning of

the week you buy luxuries like biscuits and cake and I'll do a cooked dinner. But at the end of the week we're down to packet soup and bread, egg and chips, beans and chips and getting less.

It's a good thing the kids like porridge because on Saturdays and Sunday, they'll have that. Its filling and hot and they can have it for supper as well. Over the road, the shop sells you as many things as you want, like four tea bags for 5p. It works out dearer in the long run but sometimes its all you can afford. You can even buy just one fish finger."

Sheila Hall, Mother of three, Brighton, 1982.

Photo: Laurie Sparham (IFL) II.



A woman's place in the home? Even in times of boom, capitalism can give many women no more than the dismal wages earned by homeworkers. In times of crisis, they want to shift the whole burden onto working class women.

A mother's right to work

THE FAMILY Policy Group want to encourage mothers to stay at home. But an article that appeared in the *Sunday Graphic*, February 1952 goes rather against the grain of present Tory thinking on the family....

"I hope we shall see more and more women combining marriage AND a career...It IS possible to carry on working, taking short leave of absence when families arrive, and returning later...The idea that the family suffers is, I believe, quite mistaken."

By Margaret Thatcher—then at the beginning of her political career!

Does this change in attitude have anything to do with Thatcher's mania for reducing public spending? Public spending in 1983/84 is set at £119.6 billion, £7.2 billion more than the government hoped for in its white paper of March 1980. Its own policy of throwing millions of workers on the dole is largely responsible for the increase.

The Tories hope the "right kind of family policy could reduce public spending". In other words, public expenditure will be cut, the welfare state "privatised" at the expense of working people and their families.

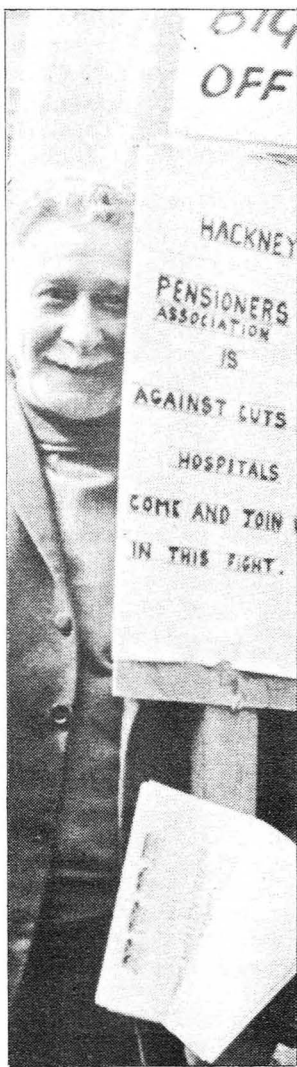
"Encourage Responsible Behaviour" — Kick the Tories out!

THE TORIES ASK:

"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?"

In other words can we cut their income any further? 336,000 single parents with half a million children are completely dependent on supplementary benefit for their income. Sheila Hall, a single parent of three children explains:-

"They take my rent out



The Tories want the sick and the old to be cared for by families, not the 'welfare state'.

direct. I get £30 on a Monday and £15.25 on a Tuesday and that's for everything. My only contact with social services was five years ago when I was carrying Tony and my electricity was cut off for two months. I couldn't use the electric cooker so the social services brought me a two burner calor gas thing. That was the last I heard. As far as they know, I'm still living there with three children and the light cut off.

I joined the Labour Party because of my experiences. With Thatcher, you've just got to come off the fence. There is no middle road. You're with your class or you're not and my class is the working class."

Many parents are already developing "responsible behaviour" and joining the fight for socialism. Without it, they know their kids have got no future.

A COMMITTEE of senior Cabinet ministers has produced a reactionary list of proposals to "restructure" the welfare state.

It has far reaching consequences for family life. For women, it will be nothing short of a counter-revolution if the proposals are implemented.

The Tories' attitude to the role of women in society is dictated by the needs of big business. At times of economic boom or war, sociological theories are advanced to defend the right of women and mothers to go out to work, because there is usually a shortage of labour at these times.

But in a recession, suddenly, all the old reactionary theories like, "a woman's place is in the home", the "maternal instinct" etc. are discovered. The riots of 1981 and the rise of juvenile crime is conveniently blamed on those mothers who 'ir-

responsibly' go out to work and 'neglect' their children. Of course it has nothing to do with the lack of jobs, money and leisure facilities!

The ruling class will always try to impose its morals and culture on the rest of society. The Tories are no different. Their policy unit on the family wants to "change social values so that wealth creation is accepted as a desirable and laudable object in life." In other words they want to make sure people accept that there will always be those that create the wealth, (the workers) and those that own the wealth...the bosses.

The Tories policy on the family is influenced by the economic crisis. Their solution to the crisis is monetarism. That means driving down the living standards of workers by cutting wages (easier if there is high unemployment) and slashing the welfare state. From the bosses point of view there is no point of keeping the unemployed or the elderly healthy. They aren't working and therefore not con-

tributing to the bosses' profits.

The labour movement has fought for over a century to establish a welfare state that cares for the sick, the disabled, the handicapped or the elderly. It has been a vitally important gain for women relieving many of them of the sole responsibility for caring for family members who are unable to look after themselves. Nevertheless, thousands of women still have to give up their jobs every year to care for other members of their family because the state provision is woefully inadequate.

It is clear from the proposals in the Tories' Family Policy Group, that they want to push the clock back a hundred years and put the burden of caring back onto the shoulders of the family, meaning in most cases women.

Women have not become any less caring over the last 100 years but they have become more aware of their rights to work and be economically independent. Caring though they may be,

in many cases they will be no replacement for expert and trained staff that work for the welfare state.

Many of the jobs done in the NHS and social services are done by women. With the cuts in public spending, combined with privatisation, many of these women are in danger of losing their jobs anyway. But they may have to leave 'voluntarily' to care for a relative.

The Tories have always tried to use the family as a means of imposing their values on future generations. Women isolated in the home can be prey to their reactionary ideas, but women can also prove to be among the best fighters for socialism, provided the labour movement is prepared to take up their cause.

They must not be allowed a second term of office. A vigorous campaign for the election of a socialist Labour government could defeat them.

By Heather Rawling

'Community Care' — the Tory version

THE FAMILY Policy Group wants: "To encourage families, in the widest sense to reassume responsibilities taken on by the state, for example, responsibility for the disabled, the elderly, unemployed 16 year olds."

Yet the vast majority of the old are looked after by relatives and friends. Even

among the most senile and bedridden of old people, more than half are in the care of relatives and friends. Only five per cent of the old are in residential institutions—the same proportion as 80 years ago.

Families cannot afford to look after themselves, often having to split up to look for work. Many working class families find it impossible financially and practically to look after dependent members. Are we

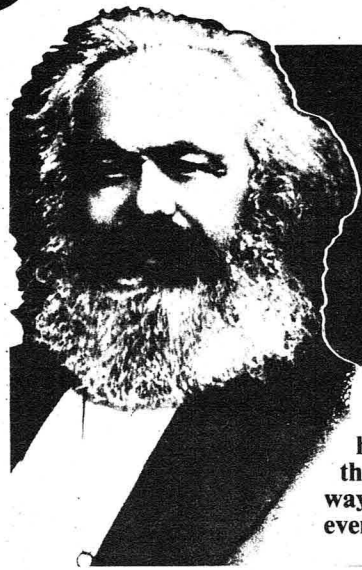
to see a return to the workhouse on a large scale? My health authority is closing down our only two community hospitals—one for geriatrics and one for the terminally ill.

In 1980/81 the cost of health and social welfare were £220 per head of population, but £1005 per head for the over 75s. Hence the Tories enthusiasm for "community care" in this department—90% of which would be family care and

90% of that would be female care.

Fowler has announced his intention to enforce the privatisation of ancillary, laundry and catering services in the NHS. We must fight this, not with sentimental phrases but socialist policies.

By Ruth Herdman
Branch Chairman,
NUPE DJSSC
St Mary's Hospital
Paddington.



Karl
MARX
1818-1883

'The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it.'

FOUNDATION OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM

Marx was born and educated in the Rhine province, the most industrialised and economically advanced part of Prussia.

Sections of the Rhenish capitalist class were involved in the movements for democratic rights and for the unification of Germany, because the division of Germany into small kingdoms and principalities (with the exception being the relatively large Prussian state), with all their separate feudal customs and legal restrictions, was an obstacle to the development of capitalism. The Prussian state-bureaucracy was dominated by the old class of landlords, the 'Junkers', particularly of East Prussia.

When the young Marx went to university to study law, like most of his contemporaries, he came to embrace the philosophy of Hegel whose ideas dominated the German universities.

Both Marx and Engels considered that Hegelian *dialectics*, described by Engels as "the science of the general laws of motion, both of the external world and of human thought," represented an enormous achievement in modern philosophy.

The basic idea of dialectics, as Engels later wrote, was "that the world is not to be comprehended as a complex of ready-made things, but as a complex of processes, in which the things apparently stable no less than their mind images in our heads, the concepts, go through an uninterrupted change of coming into being and passing away..."

Lenin, in his pamphlet on the *Three Sources and Component Parts of Marxism*, described dialectical development as a process "that repeats, as it were, stages that have already been passed, but repeats them in a different way, on a higher basis ("the negation of the negation"), a development, so to speak, that proceeds in spirals, not in a straight line; a development by leaps, catastrophes and revolutions; in continuity; the transformation of quantity into quality; inner impulses towards development, imparted by the contradiction and conflict of the various forces and tendencies acting on a given body, or within a given phenomenon, or within a given society..."

However, Hegel's own view of the world, whilst embracing dialectics, was based on an *idealist* framework, that is to say, it was based on the supremacy of ideas, of

The fourteenth of March is the centenary of the death of Karl Marx, the co-founder, with Engels, of the method of scientific socialism which, in common usage, bears his name.

As a tribute to the life and work of Marx, we begin this week a series of articles of articles on some important aspects of his life and works.

thoughts, of concepts—of mental processes, in other words—over material things. Hegel viewed the historical development of society, of the living world, as being due in the final analysis to the development of the human spirit, the 'Absolute Idea'.

His political ideas were out-and-out reactionary. He sought to justify the strong Prussian state as something approaching the ideal constitutional form. After his death, a furious struggle developed between the 'Old Hegelians' who followed the old man's politics and the 'Young Hegelians' who accepted the basis of his

the human mind", as Hegel believed. He argued, on the contrary, that legal relations originated in the material conditions of life.

During the period of the *Rheinische Zeitung*, unlike many of his Young Hegelian contemporaries, Marx became more involved in the concrete political questions of the day. Through the pages of his paper he furiously attacked the privileges of the Junkers and the restrictions and oppression of the Prussian state bureaucracy.

He commented on the debates in the Rhenish Diet (parliament) where the

conservatives and conservative with regard to the revolutionaries. It did not trust its own slogans, used phrases instead of ideas, it was intimidated by the world storm and exploited it for its own ends; it displayed no energy anywhere..."

The weakness of the Rhenish capitalist class brought about Marx's first enforced exile. Despite the increasing circulation of *Rheinische Zeitung* under Marx's editorship, when the Prussian government finally decided to suppress or behead the paper in March 1843, the 'radical' capitalist shareholders meekly submitted. Rather than stand and fight for the paper, they sacrificed its editor and Marx went into exile in Paris.

The 'League of the Just'

There he became involved in the local revolutionary-democratic movements. He was particularly associated



Marx as a student.

ly, or *Critique of Critical Criticism* was, as the irony in the title implies, a merciless criticism of those Young Hegelians who were trapped in the mire of scholastic 'criticism', divorced from the realities of life.

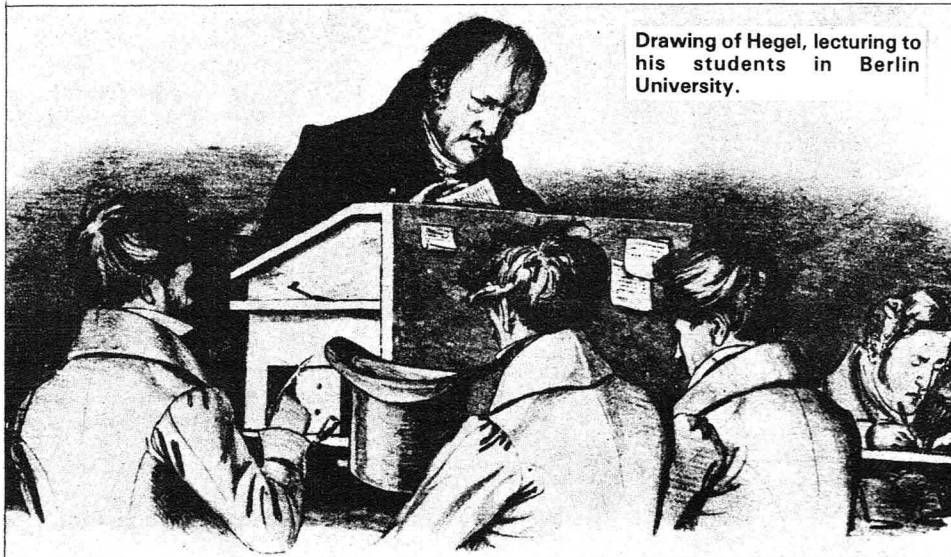
Whereas Marx and Engels had moved on from their former days, some of the Young Hegelians had not. They were radicals in name only; they saw the labouring classes as a more or less inert mass incapable of changing society. They looked instead to their own intellectual labours, their "critical criticism", as the only motive force in history, not unlike all those present-day "Marxist" professors and academics who have long since written-off the working class. Marx and Engels, in contrast, spoke of the workers as the class which "can and must emancipate itself" by the abolition of capitalist exploitation and oppression.

Although in *The Holy*

Family, Marx and Engels give an outline of their materialist conception of history, the most complete and general exposition was contained in a later work by them begun in December 1845, *The German Ideology*. Marx and Engels, it should be noted, had come to the same general conclusions quite independently of each other, and their subsequent collaboration was so close, that it is difficult to discuss the work of one without discussing the other.

Marx and Engels arrived at the same result

In a later reference to *The German Ideology*, in his *Preface to the first part of A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859), Marx wrote: "Frederick Engels...arrived by another road at the same result as I and...we decided to set forth together our conception as



Drawing of Hegel, lecturing to his students in Berlin University.

philosophy—dialectics—but who were radical democrats, opposed to the Prussian state.

Marx joined the Young Hegelians

Marx himself became involved in one of the Young Hegelian clubs and gained an early reputation as one of its most able advocates. It was because of his involvement in these circles that he was given, in 1842, the job of contributor and then editor of the radical-democratic newspaper, *Rheinische Zeitung*, backed financially by Rhenish radicals.

Marx was by this time influenced by another German philosopher, the materialist Feuerbach, and in his *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's philosophy of Law*, Marx already concluded that legal relations could not be understood on the basis of the "general development of

representatives of the capitalist class fought out their battles with the state, and at the other end of the scale, on the struggles of ordinary workers and peasants, even, for example, in relation to their fight for the right to collect firewood in the royal forests.

Marx also saw, as he was many times in his life, the weakness of these capitalist democrats who were often 'radical' in words but who were not prepared to struggle against feudal reaction because they feared the working class more than they feared the Prussian Junkers.

In a later period, after the 1848 revolution was betrayed by them, he wrote bitterly of the capitalists as a class:

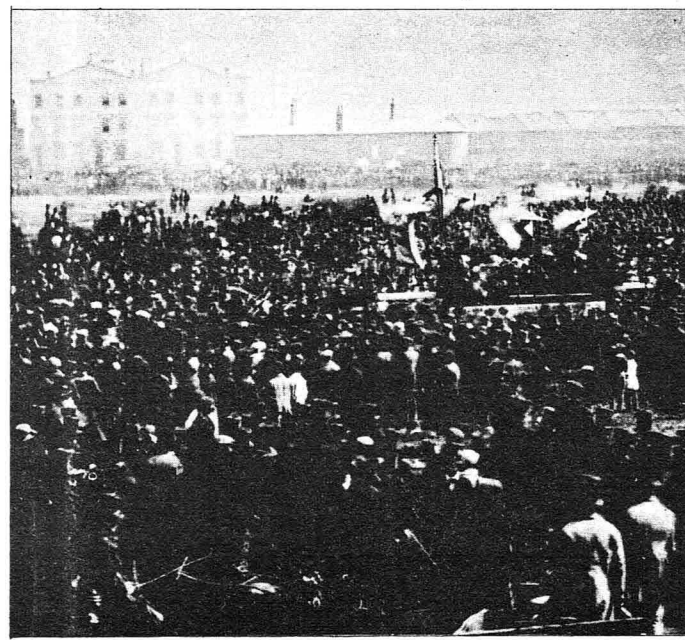
"Without faith in itself, without faith in the people, grumbling at those above, frightened of those below, egotistical towards both and aware of its egoism, revolutionary with regard to the

with an organisation of German workers, known as the 'League of the Just', of whom he wrote, in a letter to Feuerbach, "...the brotherhood of man is no mere phrase with them, but a fact of life, and the nobility of man shines upon us from their work-hardened bodies."

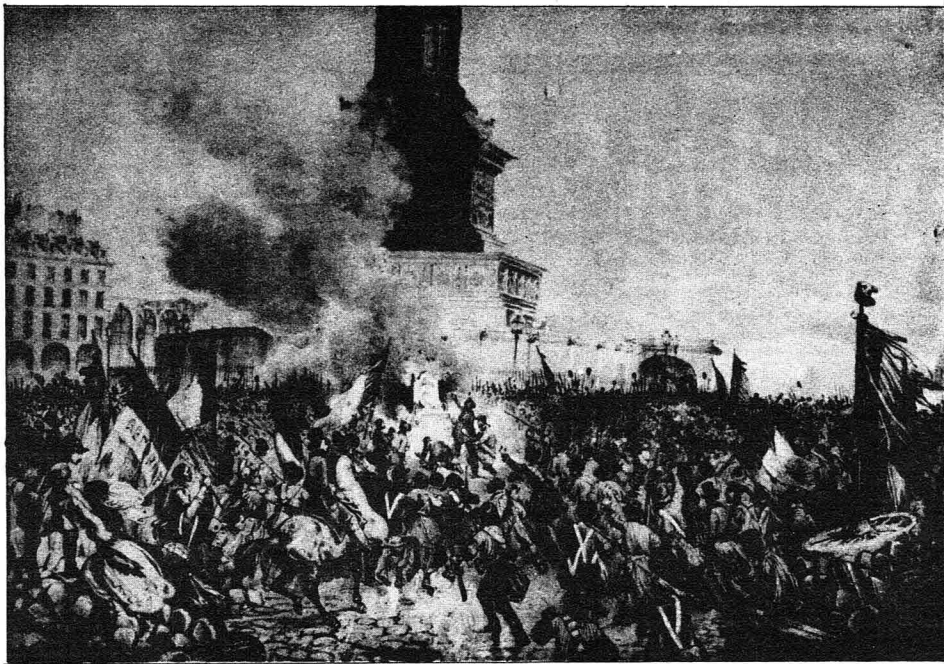
While others of his contemporaries were indifferent to, or underestimated the role of the working class, Marx already saw the enormous potential of their struggles and their political organisation.

At about this time Marx began a collaboration with another former 'Young Hegelian', Frederick Engels, and it proved to be a partnership which lasted a lifetime. Their first joint work was a polemic against the stagnant, sectarian politics of their former associates among the Young Hegelians. *The Holy Family*

A mass demonstration of Chartists at Kennington Common.



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opposed to the ideological conception of German philosophy." Thus together, they set to work on *The German Ideology*, in order, as Marx phrased it, "to settle accounts with our former philosophical consciences."

In this work, Marx and Engels described the *material* basis of all historical development, as opposed to the *idealistic* view held by Hegel and others: "The first premise of all human history is, of course, the existence of living human individuals..."

"Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas etc., that is real active men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these..."

"In direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here it is a matter of ascending from earth to heaven. That is to say, not of setting out from what men say, imagine, conceive, nor from men as narrated, thought of, imagined, conceived, in order to arrive at men in the flesh; but setting out from real active men and on the basis of their real life processes demonstrating the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life process..." In other words: "It is not consciousness that determines life, but life that determines consciousness."

Although both Marx and Engels were influenced by the materialist philosophy of Feuerbach, they could also see the weakness in his ideas. Feuerbach's materialism was *undialectical*; it contained no element of change and development. Whereas Feuerbach saw the world, as Marx and Engels put it, "as a thing given direct for all eternity, remaining ever the

London in 1848.



same...", *The German Ideology* presented a view of a world which was "the product of industry... a historical product, the result of the activity of a whole succession of generations, each standing on the shoulders of the previous one."

"As far as Feuerbach is a materialist", they wrote, "he does not deal with history, and as far as he considers history, he is not a materialist."

The best elements of Hegel and Feuerbach

Marx and Engels, therefore, rejected Hegel's idealism, while embracing the dialectic; they embraced Feuerbach's materialism, while rejecting his "fixed" view of the world. Their view of history was at once dialectical and materialist, a synthesis of the best elements of Hegel and Feuerbach.

Using the materialist conception of history as the basis, it was possible to understand the progress of humanity from one form of society to another.

In a later work, his *Preface to the first part of a Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy*, (1859), Marx summarised the basics of historical materialism:

"The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but their social being that determines their consciousness."

"At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or—this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms—with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters."

"Then begins an era of social revolution. The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure. In studying such transformations it is always necessary to distinguish between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political religious or philosophic—in short, ideological forms—in which men become conscious of



Friedrich Engels in 1845.

this conflict and fight it out."

Marx and Engels thus argued that the laws, morals and ideas generally, which were dominant in capitalism were only those of the ruling class. "The class which is the ruling *material* force of society is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force." The theoreticians of capitalism—economists and philosophers—would attempt, of course, to picture their own system as the most perfect, the product not of their own class interests but of general human development, progressing from less perfect forms of society. The capitalist system, they argue, would endure for ever.

Marx and Engels, on the other hand, put capitalism in its historical context, showing its emergence from feudalism, its flowering and its eventual decay. It was the very development of the means of production which had forced the breakdown of feudalism (and was still doing so in Germany and central Europe), overcoming the old property rights, customs and legal restrictions standing in its way.

Where the legal and juridical values of capitalism were established, as they were in England especially, they provided the framework for the unfettered growth of industrial capitalism.



The Title Page of the Communist Manifesto, published in 1848.

The 1848 Revolutionary Uprising in Paris

But capitalism also carried with it the seeds of its own destruction, in the form of the proletariat, the industrial working class. Marx and Engels saw the working class, a new social class developing alongside the capitalist class, as the standardsbearers of the future.

As the means of production, the material forces of society, developed further, a point would be reached where the property relations i.e. the property laws of capitalism would themselves become a barrier to further social development. "From the forms of development of the productive forces, these relations turn into their fetters."

Thus Marx and Engels anticipated the present day situation where world capitalism is in crisis, unable to develop society, because private property and the nation state, once progressive social features, are now absolute fetters on economic progress.

The authors of *The German Ideology* thus separated themselves by a huge chasm from all those various philanthropists, do-gooders and social reformers who sought to retain capitalism itself, while satisfying their consciences by trying to ameliorate the worst aspects of capitalist exploitation. They also distinguished themselves from the 'utopian' socialists who thought that moral persuasion or the establishment of 'co-operatives' would offer a means of changing society.

Marx and Engels did not run away from the idea of class struggle; they embraced it, and gave it its historical justification. "Revolution", they wrote, "is the driving force of history, also of religion, of philosophy and all other kinds of theory."

The working class, they explained, through its very conditions of existence under capitalism, would inevitably come into conflict with its 'masters', at first partially and spontaneously, and later consciously, as a class. The working class, overthrowing the capitalists, would take hold of the levers of society and prepare the way for a classless society; private property and the nation state would disappear.

Socialism was thus given a solid foundation and a scientific basis for the first time. It was no longer in the realm of 'dreams' and 'nice ideas' but was firmly rooted in the science of material social development.

Socialist ideas rooted in material conditions

Paul Lafargue, the French socialist who later married Marx's daughter, Laura, wrote, on reading the manuscript of *The German Ideology*, "...it was as if scales fell from my eyes. For the first time I could see clearly the logic of world history and could trace the apparently so contradictory phenomena of development of society and ideas to their material origins. I felt dazzled..."

However, despite initial attempts, *The German*

Ideology was never published in full in the lifetime of either author. "We abandoned the manuscript", Marx wrote later, "to the gnawing criticism of the mice all the more willingly since we had achieved our main purpose—self clarification."

In the next few years, Marx was involved with Engels in organising "communist correspondence committees", linking groups of socialists in Brussels where they now lived, to others in London, Paris, Hamburg, Cologne, and other cities. During this period, Marx was forced on many occasions to take up the cudgels against a variety of confused semi-utopian, sectarian and middle-class trends in the socialist movement.

Joseph Proudhon, the French utopian socialist, wrote *The Philosophy of Poverty*, and when Marx published his devastating reply, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, it was the first occasion that the general basis of historical materialism, was published, although in a polemical form.

The most popular exposition of historical materialism, however, and the work which still "dazzles" workers who read it for the first time today, is the *Communist Manifesto*, another joint work with Engels.

Marx and Engels had both been invited in 1847 to join the 'League of the Just' and they very quickly became the theoretical leaders of that organisation. The League changed its name to the "Communist League" under their persuasion because Marx and Engels wanted to distinguish their group from the 'Owenites' in Britain, and other strands of utopians, on the one hand, and the "social quacks" and philanthropists on the other, who all at that time went under the general title of 'socialists'.

The Communist League, at its congress in late 1847, instructed Marx and Engels to draft a manifesto outlining the philosophy and the policy of the League. This they did and the *Communist Manifesto*, published the following February, had an immediate and powerful effect on those workers it reached.

Written in a popular and accessible style, without vulgarising the ideas however, the pamphlet describes the rise and development of capitalism, as neither an historical 'accident' nor as a permanent feature.

They described the role of the working class in production under capitalism and its future role in forging a new society: "not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself, it has called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons—the proletarians."

The *Communist Manifesto*, from the first section that comments: "the history of all hitherto existing society is a history of class struggle", is at the same time a perspective, a programme, a polemic against the utopians and others, and a call to action, ending with the famous lines, "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their

Continued on page 10

FOUNDATIONS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE NINE

chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, unite!"

"A spectre is haunting Europe"

The prophetic words that opened the *Communist Manifesto*—"A spectre is haunting Europe, the spectre of communism,"—were given substance a few days after it was published. On February 22nd, King Louis Philippe of France was overthrown, launching France into a turbulent period of revolution and counter-revolution.

Weeks later, other European nations were caught in the same whirlwind as insurrections broke out in Germany, Austria, Hungary, Central Europe, Italy and Poland. Marx and Engels themselves were to play no small part in the revolutionary movement that developed in Germany, in 1848-1849.

The same "spectre" referred to by Marx and Engels still haunts Europe, and the world, today. The economic and social crisis in the three main areas of the world—the advanced capitalist states, the Stalinist states, and the underdeveloped world—are reaching such a stage that the next historical period promises to be the most turbulent in the whole of human history.

Only the socialist transformation of society, on a world scale, can offer a future for mankind.

The fundamental ideas of Marxism, of scientific socialism, retain their full force and validity today. Marxism is at present a minority view within society, and even in the labour movement, but a glimpse of the enormous potential of these

ideas today can be caught by the frantic attempts of the capitalist class and their spokesmen in the labour movement to expel the *Militant* supporters from the Labour Party. But they will fail to expel the ideas.

In the course of his own lifetime, Marx was forced into exile not once, but four times. His ideas were often ridiculed by 'theoreticians' who unlike Marx, have since sunk into deserved obscurity.

While more 'modern' philosophies have disappeared without trace, leaving no impression on society, the method and outlook of Marxism retains its full force today. Even the spokesmen and representatives of capitalism acknowledge and employ the method of Marx, of *class analysis* (though, of course from their own standpoint) in their more serious journals and publications.

In the last one hundred and forty years all kinds of attempts have been made to suppress Marx's ideas, to distort and misrepresent them, or to simply write them off. But as Marx said, "Life determines consciousness". As much as Marx's ideas have been an enormous inspiration to the struggles of workers in the hundred years since his death—the outstanding example being the October Russian Revolution—the very conditions that workers will experience in the dead-ends of capitalism and Stalinism will ensure that the best period for these ideas lies in the future not in the past.

One hundred years on, Marxism is still the most modern and relevant philosophy and the only one to hold a future for mankind.

West German bosses threaten investment strike

West Germany holds national elections on 6 March, five months after the Social Democratic Party (SPD) government of Helmut Schmidt was brought down when the Free Democrats (Liberals) switched to supporting the conservative Christian Democrats.

The Christian Democrats under Helmut Kohl have received more vociferous support from the capitalist class than for many elections with big business threats of investment strikes if the SPD return to power.

The recession seemed to be passing the German economy by until a year or so ago. Big engineering export orders delayed the inevitable, but no more. The "investment strike" threat is only a worsening of the past year's record when investment has plummeted, industrial output fallen 10% and unemployment zoomed up at a faster rate than anywhere else in Western Europe to about 2.5 million.

The Christian Democrats want a slightly watered down form of Thatcher and Reagan's monetarism, with cuts in the 'welfare state'

and privatisation of parts of industry. They talk of how the "economic miracle" of post war Germany was based on "hard work and sound government". It was in fact based on an international economic upswing and a large growth in world trade, precisely the opposite of today's conditions.

The losers will be the working class. Big rent rises have already arrived closely followed by plans to replace student grants with loans. The capitalist class fear that if the SPD come to power they will be under pressure to resist such plans.

They are shuddering at the possibility that the move to the left in the SPD could lead to government coolness to nuclear power programmes and nuclear weapons, particularly if the ecology party, the Greens, get seats in the election.

The bosses hope the Free Democrats will get enough seats to hold the balance of power if the Christian Democrats don't win. "Consensus politics" are being thrown aside by the German bosses. They want action against the working class.

INDIA: Massacre in Assam

By Dick Peterson
(recently returned from India)

The civil war in the north east Indian state of Assam has claimed thousands more victims during the recently held local elections.

Horrible reports speak of hundreds of mutilated bodies, many of children, lying in open fields amid the debris of charred villages.

The events of the past few weeks in Assam have more in common with the Dark Ages than the modern democratic India the ruling Congress (I) Party claims to be building.

Indeed, communal pogroms and atrocities are commonplace throughout India. They are mainly directed against the most oppressed and downtrodden sections of society and often organised by local ruling cliques of landlords.

The reactionary opposition parties are hypocritically blaming Mrs Gandhi for causing the violence by calling the election of a new 126 member local assembly, to try and end direct rule from Delhi imposed during a previous crisis.

In fact there are no solutions on a capitalist basis to the present hellish conditions which underlie the violence.

This is not to say that the election was not a cynical attempt by Congress (I) to capitalise, in Assam as elsewhere, on the support the party has traditionally received from oppressed groups and religious minorities.

The ruling class desperately wanted to boost the prestige of Mrs Gandhi in the wake of the shattering Congress (I) defeats in South Indian elections in January.

This would have enabled her, they hoped, to clamp down on the insurgent working class who are currently engaged in titanic struggles. In fact the election has been a disaster for the ruling class, making yet another mockery of their authority, with crack army units of 75,000 men helpless to control the situation.

Another worry for the capitalists is that most of India's oil reserves which they must keep control of are in the north east.

Two of the state's three oil refineries have been shut during the present crisis. This could have serious effects for the whole Indian economy.

Feudal conditions

The hollowness of the Congress (I) victory is shown by the fact that in one district in Assam, Bihpuria, only 400 out of 64,000 voters went to the polls.

In the past ten years there has been a large movement of population from Bangladesh to the neighbouring Indian states in the north east. The Bengali peasants, who are mainly Muslim, have been fleeing from poverty and oppression in their own country.

The dominant Hindi rul-



Children have been the victims of the murderous campaign whipped up by the ruling landowning class

ing cliques and tribal leaders in Assam have whipped up a furious and poisonous campaign against the Bengalis, demanding their mass deportation.

The oppression of the poor peasants and landless labourers throughout the region fundamentally has one common cause: the complete failure of capitalism to abolish feudal or semi-feudal conditions in the countryside.

Land reform programmes have been a total failure with the already appalling conditions of the peasants getting steadily worse.

Even a recent report from the International Labour Office confirmed this. They said that one-third of the rural population is landless (the true figure is probably one-half). They exist on 26 Rupees a month (£1.60). This means that hundreds of millions live at this starvation level.

The report goes on to say that efforts at land reform by the central and state governments are ineffective and that: "It is often pointed out that co-operative credit societies in villages are influenced by elites and vested interests and the poor peasants, for whom they are

intended, continue to be exploited by the



Armed vigilantes in the villages

moneylenders."

Assam has one of the highest literacy rates in India and is potentially a rich area with large oil deposits. On the basis of a socialist federation of the Indian sub-continent and a plan of production, poverty could be quickly wiped out and communal and religious pogroms would become a thing of the

past.

The All Assam Students Union, which is leading the agitation, is calling for self-determination for the state, a demand which is a reflection of the cultural oppression and domination by the central government felt by the middle class and some peasants.

The demand for self-determination, which socialists concede, begs the question of who is Assamese.

Mass deportations will not solve the problems of the peasants in Assam. An independent Assam would not be able to tackle the problems of poverty and landlessness any more than the neighbouring 'independent' states of Bhutan or Nepal have been able to.

The agitation in Assam, and in other regions of India, could have revolutionary significance if leadership of these movements was won from the local ruling cliques.

A socialist programme would unite the poor peasants, landless labourers and the working class in the fight to overthrow the capitalists and landlords to establish a socialist federation in the sub-continent.

The general election on 5 March looks set to be a turning point in Australian politics. The very circumstances under which this 'snap' election was called show the country's growing crisis.

Within hours of the resignation of Labour leader, Bill Hayden came the election announcement. Prime Minister Malcolm Frazer, haunted by the power of the trade unions, has staked his re-election chances on the question 'who rules the country?'

Like Heath in Britain in 1974, he may be in for a rude awakening. Although his choice of an election date has disenfranchised 860,000 voters—mostly young people, there is real hope of a Labour victory, ending nearly eight years of reactionary Liberal-National Party rule.

Frazer's government has been racked by splits, with more sackings and resignations than any in Australia's history. Recently it has been shaken by a series of scandals. Week after week, revelations of cabinet incompetence and allegations of outright corruption have made the headlines.

The Costigan Royal Commission, ostensibly investigating criminal activity in the Ship Painters' and Dockers' Union, blew the lid off massive and widespread tax evasion.

'Botton of the Harbour' tax schemes, so named because company records are dumped at sea, have flourished under Frazer, costing the Treasury thousands of millions of dollars. Several prominent Liberal businessmen are now under investigation.

Shortly after Costigan, the Woodward report on the meat industry revealed how thousands of tonnes of kangaroo, buffalo and donkey meat had been substituted for beef—for human consumption. Woodward implicated the Industry Minister, Nixon, who although aware of corruption and bribery amongst meat inspectors, failed to take any action. The day before the election was announced, Nixon tendered his resignation.

These events fuelled yet more divisions within the coalition. In the state of Victoria, the National Party considered fielding candidates against the Liberals. Such is the Prime Minister's standing in his own party, that during the recent local elections in Western Australia, Liberal campaign organisers told him to keep out.

In fact the result just two weeks ago was a runaway victory for Labour, with a swing of 8%. They only need a 1.3% swing nationally to oust Frazer.

For Australia's workers and increasingly the middle class, the Frazer years have been a disaster. Since October, workers have been losing jobs at the rate of one a minute. Unemployment rocketed by 50% in the course of 1982. Now over 10% of the workforce—691,000—are on the stones, a level not seen for forty years.

For months, Frazer has attempted to impose a wage freeze—with inflation at 12%. Now, the central theme of his election cam-

AUSTRALIAN ELECTIONS Running out of 'luck'

By Laurence Coates

The headlines now are all on the election, but those from 1981 shows the real question in the campaign—the power of the labour movement in the "lucky country".

March 5 election called

THE AUSTRALIAN
 TUESDAY DECEMBER 8 1981
 NUMBER 5293
 35 CENTS (POSTAGE EXTRA)
 EDITORIALS, LETTERS: PAGE 10 THE ARTS, TV, CROSSWORDS: PAGE 12 SPORT: PAGES 13, 14 FINANCE: PAGES 15-30 WEATHER: PAGE 30

Metal unions win 38-hour deal and \$39 rise in return for peace
Showdown on shorter week
Fresh victory for collective bargaining



FRASER calls election...

THE AGE
 Thursday, 27 October 1981 21, Spencer St, Melbourne, 63 6421, Distributed 62 0611, 44 Pages, Published 1924, 125th Year, 23c

Shorter week victory
 Reduction likely for 400,000 workers in metal industry
 By PETER STEPHENS



AND Hayden resigns...

The Herald
 MELBOURNE, MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1981
500,000 WIN BIG PAY, HOURS DEAL
 Best
 Gus



HAWKE gets ready...

paigned is union opposition to his 'wages pause'. Echoing Thatcher, Frazer blames the workers' "excessive" pay claims for Australia's economic malaise.

Facts shatter this argument. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, after allowing for increased taxes, the average worker has suffered a decline in living standards since Frazer came to power. While the top 1% of the population now pay 9% less in tax, the lowest income group fork out 19% more than they did in 1975. In addition, government cuts in health, education, housing and welfare means every household has experienced a further A\$6.70 drop in living standards.

The Australian Council of Social Services calculate that 2.38 million people now live in poverty—a staggering 1 in 6 of the population—and this is the 'lucky country'.

Already there has been a bitter response from the working class. Last October, over a thousand jobless steelmen and coalminers from Wollongong, a city with unemployment of 14%, marched on Parliament House, Canberra. After smashing past police, they occupied the King's Hall and refused to move until they were seen by Frazer.

A month later, a 2,000-strong demonstration

for jobs in Melbourne laid siege to the exclusive Melbourne Club, some invading the club smashing windows and furniture. "We want to let them know we are angry," one woman said. "That's the ruling class in there, that's the tax evaders!"

Tremendous upheavals loom ahead. Should Frazer's election gamble pay off, he will be forced by the logic of the system he represents to launch a further relentless attack on workers' wages and conditions.

Economic decline

Last year the economy was stagnant and a decline of 2-3% is forecast for 1983. The world recession has dealt a savage blow to Australia's main exports, with prices plummeting: iron and steel by 29%; aluminium by 31%; and beef by 41%.

Coal, which accounts for over 10% of total export earnings has been severely hit by reduced demand, particularly from Japan. Similarly, iron-ore production (Australia is the third biggest producer in all the world); fell by 11% in 1981, reflecting the crisis in world steel-making. What's more, agriculture is reeling under

the effects of the worst drought for 200 years. The wheat crop has been halved to 7.6 million tonnes.

The bosses' mouthpiece, *The Australian*, sums up... "The unthinkable has happened: the two vital prongs of the nation's export effort, agriculture and minerals, have collapsed at once!"

With corporate profits expected to fall by between 15 and 20% this year, the capitalist class demand the same action their counterparts have demanded internationally. In the words of the *Financial Review*, big business requires "an effective redistribution of incomes from wages to profits."

It is easy enough for the leader writers and boardroom strategists to urge such a programme, but Frazer has discovered to his cost that every attempt to drive down workers' living standards has run up against massive resistance from the trade unions. With well over half the country's six million workers organised, the Australian labour movement ranks as one of the most powerful in the world. 2.3 million are in unions affiliated to ACTU (Australian Congress of Trade Unions) and in recent years one section of trade unionists after another have taken on the employers and their

government—from dockers to ballet dancers!

Pride of place in this industrial battleground goes to the shorter hours campaign. A tidal wave of pressure forced bosses throughout industry to bow to the workers' demands. In 1981 the capitalist press reluctantly announced "the 40-hour week is dead!" In that year alone, a shorter working week was won by 400,000 metal workers, 100,000 building tradesmen, 50,000 car workers, shop workers, state employees, pulp and paper workers...the list goes on.

That same year, metal workers—the single biggest group—won a major pay award of A\$40-a-week (£25), with the express aim of restoring real wages to their 1975 level, ACTU declared this the 'norm' for all workers—and in most cases won it.

Numerous attempts to shackle the unions met with little success. When Queensland's National Party Premier, Bjelke-Peterson, tried to use his anti-trade union legislation last summer, it provoked a state-wide general strike. It is against this back cloth of enormous class battles that the present election is being fought. Even as the campaign unfolds, workers are throwing down a challenge to the

government's pay freeze. This, it must be added, is in face of opposition from the ACTU leadership, who are urging a strike-free election in the mistaken belief that this will boost Labour's chances.

Overriding a direct appeal from new Labour leader, Bob Hawke, train drivers in New South Wales stopped work on 14 February in protest against cutbacks. The following day, the secretary of the Building Labourers' Federation, Norm Gallagher, was jailed for three months on a charge of 'contempt', provoking a spontaneous walk out on Melbourne building sites.

The labour and trade union leadership must declare full support for these struggles and denounce Frazer's wages pause, explaining that workers' wage rises are not responsible for inflation or the plight of the economy.

Unfortunately this view is not shared by Hawke and the Labour leadership. Labour-controlled state governments in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia have actually endorsed the freeze, with the sole difference that there it will last six months and not twelve as Frazer wanted.

Bob Hawke too, in one of his first addresses as Labour leader, pledged support for a six month wage pause, adding that a Labour government will seek 'moderation' in pay demands. In fact the main plank of Labour's platform is their own "social contract", recently agreed with the leadership of ACTU. They argue wages will be maintained through automatic wage indexation, and prices 'controlled' in return for union 'restraint'.

In reality, the proposal to control prices is a utopian dream. Short of taking control of the major firms, how will a Labour government induce them to limit price increases and thereby undermine their profits?

Any incomes policy—Frazer's or Hawke's—is a means to hold down wages and jack up profits. Hawke admitted that Labour may be forced to drop 'temporarily' its commitment to full wage indexation because of 'economic circumstances'. "I'm not to be in a position at any stage where I'm making promises in advance that may not be kept". Yet despite this prevarication on the part of Labour's leadership, such is the opposition to the coalition that a Labour victory seems the most likely result.

Like the recent elections in Western Australia, last year's state elections in Victoria and South Australia saw Labour sweeping to power—in the case of Victoria, ending 27 years of Liberal rule. Increasingly even sections of the middle class are looking to Labour, as indicated by the Australian Teachers' Federation, not a Labour affiliate, deciding to donate A\$154,000 to Labour's election fund.

After three consecutive defeats, a Labour victory will arouse enormous expectation, putting tremendous pressure on such a government to deal with mass unemployment and other problems.

Whether the government can solve these problems depends on the policies it fights for. A future article will deal with this question.

Letters

IEWS? COMMENTS? EXPERIENCES? CRITICISM? WRITE ABOUT THEM TO
MILITANT, Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN



Back to Tory basics

Dear Comrades,
I started reading a book called *The origins of the National Health Service* by Ruth G. Hodgkinson and found the first page devoted to the New Poor Law Act of 1834.
The author explains how the Act was based on a faulty diagnosis in that it felt that poverty "originated in some inherent moral vice of the poor" and this was only compounded according to a contemporary newspaper

report by "misapplied charity".
It was all your own fault in other words if you were poor and out of work or if you were in business and went bankrupt.
Things don't change much so far as the ruling classes are concerned—luckily we do, and will!
Perhaps I ought to warn you that this was page 1 of 714 so no doubt further letters will follow.
Yours fraternally,
Myrna Shaw,
London N16.

Party support

Dear Comrades,
In the past two weeks I have visited 16 Labour Party members, and have had a tremendous response towards the *Militant*.
Of these 16 members, 15 have bought a copy of the paper, and even the person who wouldn't buy a copy of *Militant* bought a copy of *Socialist Youth*!
This exercise has boosted my confidence in the rank and file of the Labour Party, who I'm sure are against a witch-hunt of *Militant* in this crucial election year.
Yours fraternally,
Gerard Grebby,
Benton LPYS.

Be upstanding

Dear Comrade,
I and my 18 year old son some months ago now became *Militant* supporters and I can say right from the start that we have enjoyed every minute of it, the only pity being that for my part that I did not become a *Militant* supporter twenty years ago when I was 18.
I support *Militant* of my own free will, and so does my son. I am a card carrying Labour Party member, and my son is now joining the Labour Party.

So Mr Foot sir, take this new member, and all the other new members into account that *Militant* has helped recruit when you hold your kangaroo court on the 23rd.
I am honest enough to tell them the truth about *Militant*, are the NEC, honest enough to hear the truth and call myself, and my son on that day?
Yours fraternally,
Len Thomas,
Branch Secretary,
Lliw Valley NUPE.

How to keep touch

Dear Comrades
In February's edition of *Public Service* (the monthly newspaper of NALGO) I happened to notice an advertisement for a new General Secretary, due to the retirement of Geoffrey Drain, the present General Secretary, in November.

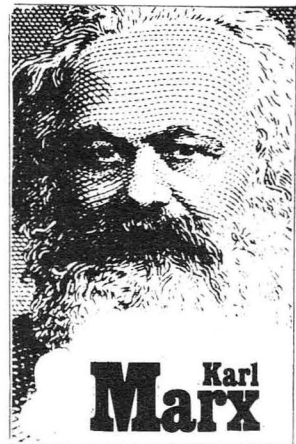
The salary for this job was a staggering £29,421 rising to £31,821 per annum.
When I saw this I was shocked and disgusted, when I voiced my opinion, one of my colleagues said, "Well you want a good man for the job, old Geoffrey was a barrister." I was even more surprised by this.
NALGO has a large number of low-paid workers, mainly women, who now with high unemployment are the sole "breadwinners". What would

a barrister earning between £565-£611 per week know about the struggles of these low-paid workers?
If union leaders got the average wage of the people they represent perhaps they would fight a lot harder for wage rises, and not lose touch with the struggles and reality that many workers face under this vicious Thatcher government.
Yours fraternally,
Debbie Byard
NALGO representative
Basildon

Tories at prayer

Dear Comrade,
The Church of England has been regarded as a Tory prayer book for a long historical period.
Their voting to build nuclear arms but not to use them first in case of war shows their degree of confidence in uniting the human race under this perverted Christian propaganda.
Do they print bibles but not read them!
If they do read them, Christ in his Sermon on the Mount says "Blessed are the peace makers" and he said to the apostles "love your enemies".
Tom Lehrer the American satirist once wrote, "The Lord's my shepherd, so says the psalm. But just in case we gotta have a bomb".
Yours fraternally,
Bob Young,
Bridlington
NUR and CLP.

Dear Comrades,
John M Gardiner, writing about wage labour, shows up his fundamental misunderstanding of Marxism (*Letters, Militant*, 11 February 1983).
On the one hand, in stating the need for an "abundance of social wealth" he sets out the essential material pre-condition for a developed socialist society, in which the laws of capitalism have been completely done away with.
On the other hand, he places this pre-condition after the abolition of wage labour and money (and thus commodity production) and the "dismantling" of the state; none of which can come about as long as production is subject to some of capitalism's laws.
It's like saying that to make a journey you first arrive at the destination. A Labour government, brought to power on a socialist programme, would have to deal with a society containing all the problems arising from capitalism's crisis.
It is true that there would be enormous benefits simply from the common ownership of the main means of production, from democratic workers' control and



...and wage labour

Dear Comrade,
Comrade John Gardiner's letter in *Militant* 637 contains a number of misconceptions.
I would just like to deal with wages in a socialist society (not a workers' state, the regime transitional to socialism, nor communism the higher stage of socialism) and the way in which socialist ideas should be posed.
Under capitalism labour power is a commodity sold for a wage equivalent to its value, which is basically what it costs the worker to subsist.
In a socialist society payments would still be made to workers for their labour power. But because the means of production would now be owned by the workers themselves, labour power would cease to be exploited as a commodity sold by the worker to an owner of capital, and there would be no "surplus value" appropriated by another person.
Wages would cease to be the purchase-price of labour-power. They would represent that portion of the product which is allocated for the use of the worker directly, while the remaining portion of the product is allocated for indirect benefits, eg. social or health services etc.
Since labour-power would not be a commodity in a socialist society, it would not create surplus value—the source of the capitalist's profit.

management at every level, from the introduction of a planned economy and from the full utilisation of the existing capacity. This would give an immediate boost to workers' living standards.
But creation of a society of "abundance" would require investment in the productive forces, international economic integration, time, effort and organisation. Compared to this entirely new economic level, capitalism is a regime of "scarcity" creating only the pre-conditions for the birth of a socialist society, which would not be easy or immediate.
Features of capitalism would remain alongside features of socialism and thus, in what would be a *transitional* society, elements of laws and categories peculiar to the old would exist alongside those peculiar to the new, in a process of modification and development.
Even in developed capitalism there are features of pre-capitalist society, such as the independent artisan.
In a transitional economy, an economy which is changing into something new there is a conflict as old laws 'wither away', appearing in a modified form, as new ones emerge.
To imagine, therefore, that the abolition of wage labour is simply a matter of saying that it is abolished is utopian in the extreme. And so we come on to the day to day struggles of workers.
We stand shoulder to shoulder with workers in struggle, offering a lead, applying our ideas and programme to the concrete situation and, at the same time, explaining the need to transform society if gains are to be maintained.
Yours fraternally,
Angela Anderson,
Westcliff-on-Sea,
Essex.

Paranoia?

Dear Sir,
As we all know, the media strives to be strictly objective in its reporting. But for some time now I have noticed that whenever certain TV newscasters mention the activities of royalty, Mrs Thatcher or somebody's pet poodle, their faces become momentarily contorted by a kind of ghastly sycophantic smirk, similar to a dyspeptic spasm.
Well, that's OK, there is no accounting for tastes, but it seems to be escalating. I noticed this happen recently when the female newscaster reported the successful testing of a US nuclear missile.
What next!
Yours faithfully,
John Charles,
Liverpool.

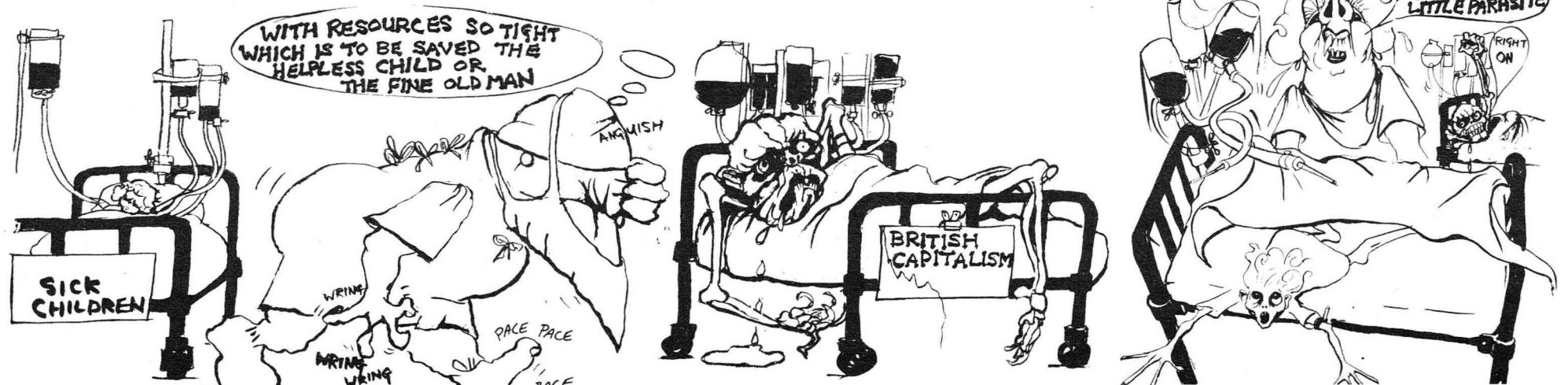
Handicapped and the state

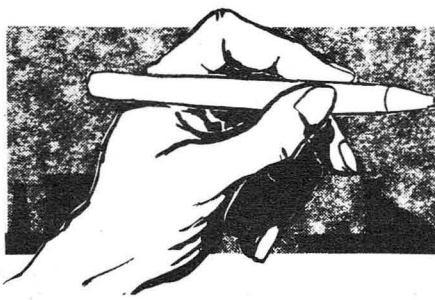
Dear Comrades
Only time would tell, BBC 2, 12.1.82, brought up yet again the controversial view that severely handicapped babies should be allowed to die shortly after birth.
In the programme the mother's opinion was that

fulfilment could only be achieved by continually pouring happiness into her mongol son by constant attention and supervision.
Her daughter's similar views on her brother brought into point the key to the whole issue, that to care for the handicapped is a drain on the resources of the state.
If the resources of the state are limited it is because

the system of profit under which it operates limits the development and maintenance of the welfare state as a whole. The welfare state doesn't just care for handicapped kids it is for the well-being of all in need.
As the parent of a handicapped child I express my opinion not only out of loyalty to my son but from the standpoint of social-

consciousness. To counter the inherent capitalist culture of greed, selfishness and elitism, we must fight more than ever for a socialist state in which resources are not limited by anti-social bigots but can be deployed wherever necessary.
Yours sincerely
T Grewar
Hull





workers' viewpoint

Few workers can be as involved in their industry as miners are.

The long struggle for safe and tolerable working conditions, the close-knit nature of traditional mining communities and the bitter battles fought with ruthless employers have forged the miners' union.

The nationalisation of the industry was pushed to the fore of the miners' demands. But nationalisation came with management appointed from above, with inflated salaries and bureaucratically dictating how the mines should be run to the workers who keep the industry going.

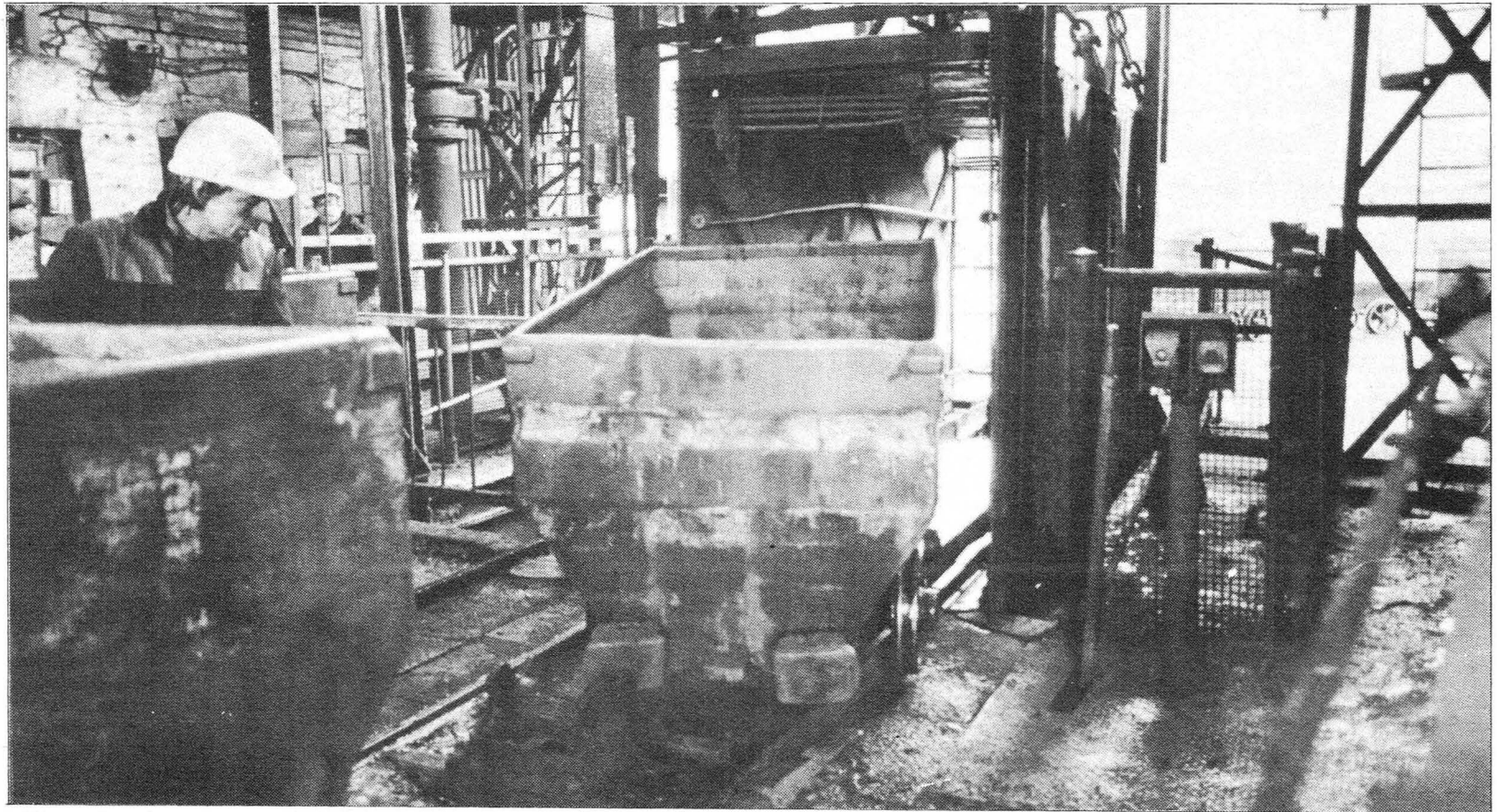
Nowadays, the miners who thought, "at last the pits are ours" in 1946, find the Coal Board almost as bitter an opponent as the old owners. Miners are as contemptuous of "nationalised" managers as they were of those who ran their pits under private ownership.

"In the '60s when pits closed down, the blue-eyed 'uns would get transferred to new jobs with glorified titles. One bloke was supposed to measure the size of the lumps that came off the face. Now all the thick undermanagers who've botched something up and lost them a lot of money, get jobs doing nowt but signing managers' reports."

'That'll never work'

Many miners acquire tremendous technical knowledge of their work. So they are keenly aware of how management waste money and resources. They know of countless mistakes which could be avoided if the job was controlled by the workers.

At one Derbyshire pit, a machine was installed that threw the coal back onto the



Mineworkers have enormous knowledge of their industry, but decisions are made by unrepresentative bureaucrats. Photo: Militant

Who elected the NCB?

face it had come from, instead of the "crawler" which should take it to the surface.

"At our pit, one face has been worked above and below, and when they first opened the face up, they would get roof-falls making cavities up to seventy foot high.

They put in a new machine with new chocks (powered roof-supports). The chocks would work without the machine, and the machine would work without the chocks, so the face never got going...so they brought old Anderson (the head of the mining supply firm) down himself. He's eighty, and it took him about four hours to get to

it...He couldn't work out why it wouldn't work, so they've stopped it altogether while they have a think about it. They can't get it out of the pit, the sub-frame on it is that long. It was paid for by the EEC; if the pit'd had to pay for that, it would have shut."

The bureaucrats' "financial year" dictates whether even the smallest parts are available. "From February till the end of the financial year the stores are virtually closed down—they put up notices saying 'a chock-nut costs 70p—save me!'"

Outside contractors and mining suppliers leach off the NCB, as can be seen from their huge profits. At

an LPYS meeting in Nottinghamshire, a young miner told how a part broke that would have cost £100 to buy. It wasn't available from the suppliers, so they make it from scrap-metal for nothing at all!

'Retreat mining'

Lack of capital investment and long-term planning can cost the life of a face or even a pit. The "retreat mining" method would be more productive in the long term but is unpopular with management because the first phase doesn't produce coal immediately. When the NCB argues that pits are "uneconomic", they are

often made so by being starved of funds, as South Wales miners have argued. "Miners will be the first to suffer if a pit's kept open that's dangerous or unworkable, but they know better than NCB bureaucrats if there's life left in a pit."

The boards of management of all nationalised industries should be elected: One third from those who work in the industry to represent their knowledge and interest in the industry, one third from the TUC to represent the interests of all workers and one third from the government to allow planning of the overall economy. The salaries of those elected should reflect

the average skilled wage for that industry. All elected should be subject to the right of recall.

The miners have a fight ahead of them for the future of their industry. An essential part of that fight is for democratic workers' control at pit level and workers' management by elected representatives of all the working class in the whole industry.

North Derbyshire NUM members Ian Whyles, John Proffitt, Anthony Gray, John Dunn and Alan Alberry spoke to Tony Cross.

Against the clock

The publication by Pluto Press of a book written by a worker exposing Work Study and incentive schemes will find a valuable place in a trade unionist's library.

There have been pitifully few books written about a subject of which so many workers have first hand experience. Bonus schemes have pretty wide-scale coverage in most industries. Their introduction, whilst meeting some workers' objectives for greater pay, has been at some considerable cost.

Not only have jobs been abandoned as Bonus schemes have come in, but employers have used the introduction of schemes to achieve greater control over their workforce and in an attempt to weaken the position of the trade unions.

In work place after work

place, my own experience is of workers on bonus schemes who want nothing more than a decent basic rate. Yet the very introduction of bonus schemes can cause friction between individuals, groups or whole departments. The most disliked person remains the man with the stopwatch, whose appearance on the job usually signals a further reduction in bonus earnings, as job values are altered.

As cuts in public expenditure lead to job losses in the public services, so they have also led to a tightening up of bonus schemes. We invariably now hear that job values are rather "loose"—in other words, the workers are able to earn a reasonable bonus on that job. Down comes the work study man to put that right and contribute to spending cuts out of the wage packets of the workforce.

The book written by Alan Grant, a former NATSOPA

FOC for thirteen years puts work study in its place. It is "an employer's tool to be used by management for management objectives". Alan clearly puts his cards on the table when he points out that most workers want nothing more than a job, security, and decent working conditions. However, "the knowledge and experience that work study undermines each of these fundamental objectives is enough to sustain my own personal opposition". This is a point of view being increasingly shared by active trade unionists, who have seen work study techniques used by management to undermine elements of workers' control obtained in years of struggle.

The book demystifies the techniques used by "work study engineers" and to prove that their so-called scientific basis is founded on subjective judgements made in the interests of profits and

containing costs. Alan's book is, however, more than an exposé of work study, but shows how trade unionists can—even within the confines of bonus schemes—attempt to gain control over their work and challenge management. It gives valuable advice on shop floor organisation and lays particular emphasis on steward organisation and the need to report back and keep the membership fully informed. All of us active in industries where work study is used, are aware of the traps that can entice good active stewards into a work study office as "worker representatives" who never appear back on the shop floor again.

In his concluding remarks, Alan points to the need for the trade union movement "to break through from the Employer/Employee straight jacket, broaden its base and drop any pretensions of being non-

Review by Nick Bradley
(NUPE Area Officer, personal capacity)

political". the task of active trade unionists, is of linking our day-to-day struggles at the workplace, to the need to transform society. The continuing attack on the wages and conditions of public service workers is demonstrating to many within my union, that our trade union activity is political, with our first objective being that of getting Thatcher out of office and returning a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

My major criticism of the book is that Pluto Press, in publishing a workers' handbook, should price it at £4.95. Can't it be printed more cheaply to enable a wider circulation?

AGAINST THE CLOCK
by Alan Grant
Pluto Press Workers
Handbook: £4.95

Piece work divides

"We don't negotiate a rise. If you're a piece worker, the firm takes your average for the previous year's bonus and puts that on the basic. No bonus—no rise. This year I got 12p an hour.

"We should negotiate together not get separate increases. The pricing is all wrong. Some girls on short time can earn more than some on a full week. The union should definitely have a say in the pricing.

"I did a shoe, with the same amount of machining as another, but I got a lower price. The boss just brings out a clock to time you. He gives you a price to ensure you don't earn too much. I left—they said stay and we'll make you a forewoman. When I went back he gave me a rise and said, 'don't tell anyone'."

Gary Freeman, Leicester West CLP spoke to a shoe worker.

Industrial Reports

FBU FIGHT THE CUTS

STRATHCLYDE FBU have won a very important victory for the Trade Unions. Recently our management have gone on a 'Tebbit Crusade' and threatened to tear up agreements established over many years of trade union activism.

A recent industrial dispute ended with management rejecting a previous request for an independent inquiry into management and trade union relations in the FBU within Strathclyde. The FBU recognised the possibility of widespread attacks on trade union rights. The door was being opened for cuts in jobs and the destruction of our working conditions.

This time however, we learnt from the past, there was no quick decision taken by the elected officials without proper consultation with the members. Every fire station in Strathclyde was visited by the Brigade Officials to explain the case and call for a strike mandate. The firemen voted overwhelmingly in support when the issues were explained to them.

We wrote to all Labour Councillors in Strathclyde advising them of the political implications of them allowing their managers to implement Tebbits Law. The result has been concessions. We have won our inquiry in the original terms that we asked for.

By R.G Chalmers
(Brigade Vice Chairman, Strathclyde Fire Brigade)

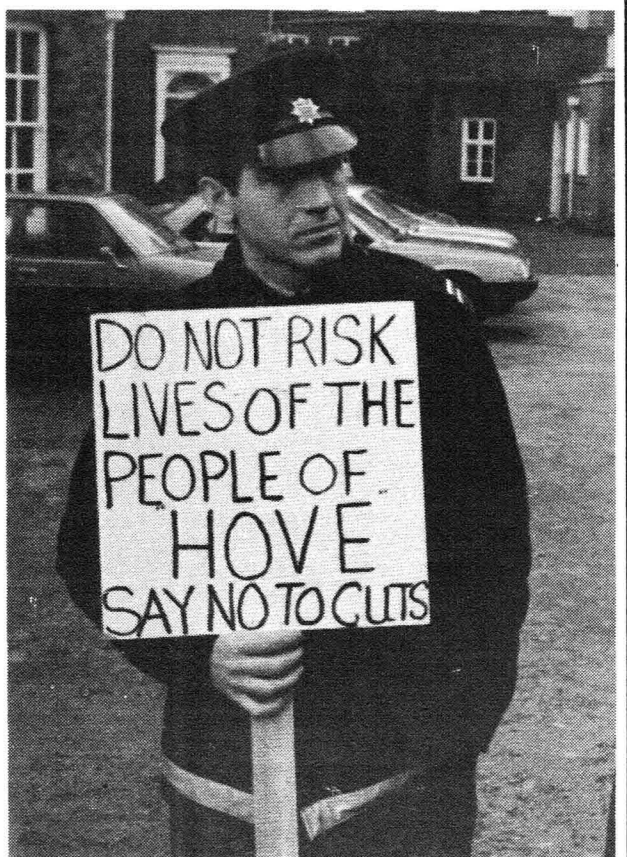
Halewood and Ackroyd

THE DISPUTE at Halewood and Ackroyd has been given official backing by the AUEW Executive Council after 6 weeks. The stewards felt pressure to modify their claim to gain official backing.

The claim is for parity with the sister firm of Clayton Dewandre in Lincoln, whose wage rates are nearly £50 more than Halewoods. Apprentices, even in their last year, have been prepared to give it all up, with the offer of a van driving job, which paid as much as the skilled man could hope to earn at Halewoods.

Under such conditions the claim for 40%, giving the workers parity, is entirely justified.

The AUEW Executive Council must recognise that parity of wages is the only



Fighting the cutbacks in Hove

Hove Fire Station

WHILST THE FBU oppose any cuts in the Fire Service (or any other essential service for that matter) the threat to 8 jobs at Hove Fire station and resultant reduction in fire cover really angered our members.

At present there are enough firemen at Hove to provide a separate crew for 2 pumping appliances (the ordinary "fire engine") and a hydraulic platform 24 hours a day.

By "alternate manning", the Fire Authority are cutting the crew that would man the hydraulic platform. They say that if it is needed then the crew from one of the pumps would have to take it out. That effectively means that one pump then becomes unavailable.

The level of fire cover in the Brighton and Hove area would be reduced by one-third of the level that was considered adequate in 1958.

To fight these proposals we organised a very successful lobby of the Public Protection Committee (PPC) in December. Our members had quite an education in just how ignorant many of our employers are about the fire brigade. One councillor suggested that these cuts would somehow be alleviated by the purchase of a micro computer!!

Following the lobby 20,000 leaflets were distributed in Brighton and Hove and a petition was started in many parts of the town. People were queuing up to sign.

If these cuts do get the 'go ahead' then we will be organising a public meeting to try and co-ordinate and motivate further opposition from interested groups and challenge these Tory councillors to come and try to defend their decision.

By Jon Allen
(FBU Secretary, Brighton)

recipe for unity in the combine and therefore the only method of fighting any possible job losses in the future.

The management's new offer only lifted what was on the table by ½% to 8½% on basic rates. After nearly 6 weeks of strike action the workforce are determined to reach their full claim.

Peter Johnson spoke to Peter Smith, AUEW shop steward and Sam Mitchell, deputy convenor.

Save Shildon

"IF THE Tories at British Rail think they can take our jobs away from us at Shildon they are very much mistaken."

These defiant words from

a security guard sum up the mood of workers' anger at the new threat of closure of the Shildon Wagon Works.

The closure would create a Jarrow of the 1980's with unemployment up to 64% in the town. Shildon depends on the works for its livelihood.

But as well as anger, John Priestly, AUEW convenor, is optimistic, "We have beaten BR over closure before and we can do it again, we are not a push over."

Already the campaign committee has been restarted from the last time British Rail tried to kill Shildon. The lessons learnt then will not be wasted.

By Andy Fenwick
(Stockton CLP)

VICTORY FOR DURHAM NUT

BARELY one week of selective strike action has brought this long running dispute to an end.

Durham County Council has acceded to union demands for a full restoration of supply cover teaching.

As at Barking last year, it has been proved that teachers can and will act effectively to defend the education service, and that a bold approach will mobilise public support. These lessons must not be lost upon NUT annual conference at Easter.

Durham meantime is still not a land of milk and honey. It lies 93rd out of the 104 education authorities nationally for provision of secondary books and equipment. It will now, however, have to think again before considering any future cuts.

It is essential that teachers who have been active in the dispute now take up the struggle inside the Labour Party in Durham for a decent service and genuine socialist policies.

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

Historic Broad Left

"A HISTORIC beginning." That was how one delegate greeted the first public conference organised by the inter Broad Left's Organising Committee (BLOC).

Nineteen unions were represented, mainly from Broad Left groups. The theme of the conference was "Democratisation of the block vote" in the unions. The leading speaker was Tony Benn.

A document detailing a programme of change within unions to make voting at TUC and Labour Party conference fully democratic, was introduced by BLOC secretary Phil Holt (from POEU).

A motion questioning the whole principle of the block vote and arguing for proportional representation was given a fair hearing but found very little support from the delegates.

What they wanted to discuss was how we can improve the block vote. Many speakers related events and experiences in their own unions and pledged to concentrate on this issue in the coming year.

The conference also briefly heard speakers on trade union finance and setting up Labour Party workplace branches. All in all the meeting was a solid success and from it we hope that fresh impetus will come for the drive to make unions more democratic.

Details of further activities of BLOC can be obtained by writing to Phil Holt, 108 Princes Boulevard, Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside, L63 7PE.

By Pat Byrne
(BLOC Treasurer)

Sacked for union activity

ON WEDNESDAY 24 February the sub-convenor of the Transport and General Workers Union within the Flexible Ducting Ltd, Andy Martin, was sacked for alleged disobedience.

The management claim Brother Martin was guilty of gross disobedience. However, the statements they used as evidence, quite clearly contradict each other.

At no time during the hearing was Brother Martin allowed to introduce witnesses for his defence. At the hearing it was admitted that a full report of Brother Martin's statement had not been produced to senior management. The shop stewards committee and the full-time official are in no doubt that the sub-convenor was dismissed for carrying out his duties as a shop steward.

At a mass meeting on Thursday 24 February, the workers unanimously voted for strike action until reinstatement has been won.

The dismissal is the latest incident in a long line of management intimidation and attempts to break the union. The workers are determined to win this dispute. The branch secretary commented, "This dispute must be seen as a fight to protect trade union rights in the factory."

Messages of support and donations to the strike fund—Brian Christie, 61 Drumnori, Glasgow 15.

By Brian Christie
(Branch Secretary) and **Andy Martin**
(Sub-convenor T&GWU)



Rouquinet-Deroy strike

MORALE is really high amongst the pickets, after five weeks on strike against attempts to introduce a continental shift system, "It's either him (the managing director) or us," said a young man, an 18-year-old, who was taking home £35 a week.

With his strike pay and money from the strike fund totalling around £20 a week he isn't that much worse off than when he's working. This strike has very important implications for textile workers in the whole of the East Midlands, many of whom face similar Victorian

bosses and Victorian wages and conditions. It must be won. All donations to NUHKW, Union House, Church Street, Beresford, Nottingham.

By Jean Thorpe
(North Nottingham CLP)



Industrial Reports

MINERS: Fight now or be butchered later



This strike will take as long as it takes the government and Coal Board to see sense.

Miners are fed up with insecurity and the prospect of going on the dole.

We are not frightened by the Board's boasting about large stockpiles of coal. We will get the support of other unions and stop all movement of coal in S. Wales.

The 55% vote in favour of strike action showed the determination of miners to stop closures. The vote would have been much higher, perhaps as high as 65%, if it wasn't for the fact that a number of miners were already on strike and did not go to the pit-head to fill in a ballot paper.

They had already voted with their feet. In my pit 150 men, who had come out on strike, did not come in and vote. You only need a 50% vote to stage an area strike and we have gone well beyond that.

If the Coal Board thinks there is only limited support for strike action they are mistaken—we only got 57% in 1972 and look what happened then.

It is not just Tymawr Lewis Merthyr we are fighting to save. It's really a battle for the whole area. Sixteen other pits are threatened with closure over the next few years. This is a real make or break situation.

We are having to confront the lies and duplicity of the Coal Board. Before our January conference (which at that time called off a proposed strike) we were promised new investment and recruitment.

Now we are told recruitment will depend on the market and will be assessed

week by week, pit by pit. Now they are proposing voluntary redundancy be available for underground workers once they have reached 55, and surface workers once they are 60.

A government forty years ago found there were 8,500 million tons of coal reserves, but now the board are claiming there are only 802 million tons (not 402m as stated in last week's *Militant*).

The government are refusing to give the money to invest in the industry. Although £4 million has already been spent on the new Margam pit, the government has stopped it being opened, because of the collapse of the steel industry.

It is the Tories who are responsible for the crisis in the mining industry. Productivity is up 5%, and absenteeism is now at its lowest for decades. We will produce the coal. But the Tories will not let us.

They have butchered the steel industry. They are not going to get away with it down the mines. We either fight now or we will be butchered. If we let the government and Coal Board wear us down then all MacGregor would have to do is come in and mop up.

We now want copper-bottomed guarantees from the government that the S. Wales coalfield will get sufficient manpower and resources to continue and expand.

By Ian Isaac

(Secretary, St John's Lodge, S. Wales NUM)



Tower Colliery. South Wales miners are fighting to win

Photo: Militant

SOLIDARITY

“I recall the 1972 miners' strike when I was working as a freight guard on the railways.

Miners delegates came to us and asked that no coal be moved: show your class—this is what unity is all about, they said. We agreed.

Later that day the supervisor came in asked to move some coal wagons. We told him: “No disrespect Merlyn, but we're not moving coal, and we don't have to explain why”.

As an ex-loco driver himself, there was a nice little gleam in his eye, as he left saying, “Boys, I understand”.

He hated the Tories as much as anyone else.

By David Llewelyn Davies

(now shop-steward, Ford's Swansea)

Militant miners fight 'expulsion' **By Roy Davies**

AT 5.30 am I picked up a few *Militant* supporters and we set off to Aberdare to be on the picket line with the miners from Aberdare Valley.

By the time we arrived, roughly 7pm there were about 25 pickets at a local coal merchants yard. As we approach we know the faces having sold at the pits around the area for a number of years.

We see a few lorries come in and no pickets challenging them. We enquire why, “there's no need, they have agreed not to deliver coal, so have all the other merchants. Most of them we take on trust, they know the score.”

With that one of the strike committee came over and informed the pickets that there was a mass picket at Llanishen NCB area offices and if they could send two car loads over.

Immediately we decide we've got to go. “That's OK boys, just follow my car”. We arrived at the NCB at Llanishen. There are hundreds of pickets outside.

The picket asked a driver “Which union are you in brother?”. Before he has a chance to answer a voice from the crowd replies “CBI by the look of the car”. The whole picket line, police included burst into laughter.

Up drives one of higher management as he turns the corner he stops, what union are you in brother. He replies unfavourably—one of the pickets notices he has a bald front tyre. Immediately he tries to go forward ‘book him’ cries the police officer. A very red in the face car owner pulls off.

When it becomes known that the area offices are occupied the cameras are in, the officers are out in the cold and the miners are drinking coffee beckoning

for other pickets to come and join them in the offices.

One of the office workers, mainly out of frustration, makes a remark to a picket in the office; the reply speaks volumes “listen love, I'm fighting for my job, my family and my kids, what chance have they got of getting employment.”

A picket glances at the headlines, “They are expelling you from the Labour Party, they are expelling us from the pits.” I reply that they're trying but they'll not succeed. “Same here” he retorts.

In short, of all the South Wales coalfield 33 pits are tight. All the miners are now waiting for the response of the rest of the coalfield.

The awareness of the need for support was summed up best by a young miner from Maerdy “Just one area, Yorkshire or Scotland need to come out and the whole field will stop.”

Kent—a lead to follow

IN KENT canteen meetings were called from Wednesday morning to discuss the Area executive's recommendation to strike from Sunday night.

The South Wales action offers Kent miners a chance to fight back against pit closures. The decimation of Snowdown, following the closure of Chislett under the last Labour government would have a devastating effect on the area.

The vote in favour of accepting a halving of the workforce at Snowdown came out of insecurity and uncertainty. Most of the men just wanted to know what the future held for them. It had gone on for years and they were fed up with the

whole affair.

The deal the union eventually agreed to was worse than what they were first offered.

At first there was going to be retirement for everyone at the pit at 55, which is the agreed national union policy.

The deal they finally got means underground workers at 57 years and surface workers at 61 can now take early retirement. On the other demands, about juvenile recruitment and training there will be no concrete concessions at all and now the national coal board have got everything they really need to give any.

The hardness of the National Coal Board's attitude is illustrated by one surface worker who will be 61 in April, just one month too late for early retirement. He has been told he won't be able to take redundancy money even though he has been working for 47 years at the pit.

The message to the miners of South Wales is fight to save your jobs. Set an example as the water workers did.

By Peter Jaconelli

(Snowdown NUM)

Notts area

The Welsh miners were really pleased with the support from Nottinghamshire.

There will be a ballot next Tuesday and a call for strike action if necessary. Votes will be counted on Wednesday.

Ninety of the Welsh miners will be addressing Branch meetings on Sunday and they are confident of support.

By Gill Buchanan

Rock solid in Blaenau

By Tudor Parsons
(Blaenau NUM)

Crynant Welfare Hall, 28 February. It was a packed general meeting of Blaenau NUM attended by about 200 miners.

The atmosphere at this meeting was charged with determination. Although many miners had voted against strike action in the secret ballot, after this meeting and a day out on the picket lines, the mood amongst the miners in the meeting was rock-solid behind the strike.

At the beginning of the strike there was an air of scepticism about whether South Wales would get support from other coal fields in Britain.

After only one day of strike action we have already seen the Yorkshire miners

pledging strike action in support from next Sunday onwards and already we have heard on the radio that five hundred miners in Derbyshire have already come out plus a number of letters from Scottish pits indicating their preparedness to come out at a moment's instance.

The mood of the men on the picket lines is “we're all out to win this one”. At the meeting the men voted narrowly to provide safety cover at the pits.

It was pointed out by the chairman, Cyril Owen, that if safety was not provided the Coal Board would see it as a golden opportunity to allow the pits to be flooded, thereby giving them valid reason to close Blaenau.



“We're the last pit in the two valleys. We've lost Glyncoerrwg North Rhondda, Coegnant and Dyffryn. Men who used to work in those pits now serve this one.

At Christmas we did a service bonus, and some people had seven different pits on it, all in the area. I think the record was nine. So that's how the closures affect us.

The Coal Board should now be under no illusions that we're prepared to sit back for one minute, if we find that pits are going to close or be picked off one by one.

An interview with Charlie White (Chairman, St John's Lodge, S Wales NUM)

Militant

REPLIES TO THE EXPULSIONS

Ted Grant

CHESTERFIELD, Main Hall, Market Hall. Friday 4 March, 7.30 pm.
 LITTLEHAMPTON, Friends Meeting House, Church Street, Monday 7 March, 7.30 pm.
 DUNDEE, Wellgate Centre, Central Library, Wednesday 9 March, 7.30 pm (plus 'Timex' speaker)
 SCOTTISH LP Conference, Waverly Hotel, Perth. 6.30 pm, Friday 11 March.

Peter Taaffe

BIRMINGHAM, 'Olive Branch' pub, Adderley Road, Salfley. Friday 4 March, 7.30 pm.
 PORTSMOUTH, Yehudi Menuhin Room, Central Library, Guildhall Square. Monday 7 March, 7.30 pm. Enquiries: Gosport 25174.
 PLYMOUTH, Wednesday 9 March. See local sellers for details.
 MEDWAY, Thursday 17 March. See local sellers for details.

Lynn Walsh

WAKEFIELD, Labour Club, Vicarage Street. Sunday 6 March 7.30 pm.
 ROTHERHAM, WEA Room, Corporation Street. Thursday 10 March 7.30 pm.
 YORKSHIRE LP Conference, Bridlington. Saturday 5 March (See page 4).
 HULL, Trades and Labour Club, Beverley Road. Friday 4 March, 7.30 pm.

Clare Doyle

KIRKBY, Ruffwood School, Roughwood Drive, Kirkby. Friday 4 March, 8.00 pm.
 LAMBETH, Room 119 Brixton Town Hall, (nr. Brixton Tube) SW2. Thursday 10 March, 7.30 pm.
 SOUTHERN LP Conference, Eastbourne. Saturday 12 March.
 BRIGHTON, Friday 18 March. See local sellers for details.

Keith Dickinson

IPSWICH, Room 1, Town Hall. Friday 4 March, 7.30 pm.

SEE ALSO MARX CENTENARY RALLIES, page 4

Kick out Tories - not socialists!



Peter Taaffe



Part of the audience at the Bermondsey Militant Readers' Meeting

Photo: MILITANT

Less than a week has passed since the expulsion of five members of the Militant's Editorial Board from the Labour Party.

Yet it is already clear that the ranks of the labour movement will not accept this witch-hunt. At meetings addressed by the 'Militant Five', in statements by local Labour Party representatives, in resolutions passed by CLPs, opposition has been expressed to the action of the right-wing controlled National Executive of the Labour Party. In fact within just two days of the 'Reinstate the Militant Five' campaign being launched, 600 people attended meetings and over £700 has been donated by workers to *Militant* to fight these expulsions. At a packed, 170-strong meeting in Bermondsey on Monday night, in the wake of Labour's defeat, Peter Taaffe was applauded when he equated the Stalinist purges against the Russian

By Bob Wade

army chiefs of staff on the eve of the invasion of the USSR by Nazi Germany with the actions of the right wing NEC expelling five socialists—in true show trial fashion—on the eve of the Bermondsey by-election. This was understood by trade unionists and Labour Party members right at the other end of the country in the North East. At the 120 strong Newcastle meeting Keith Dickinson from the platform and other speakers from the floor blamed the Bermondsey defeat on the right wing, not only because of the expulsions, but their actions over Peter Tatchell. This message was repeated at the Sunderland meeting, attended by 50 miners, shipyard workers and Young Socialists. In Bedwellty, the Welsh constituency of Neil Kinnock—who supported the expulsions—Ted Grant

addressed an audience of 70, explaining how he and other members of the Editorial Board had even called on the NEC to at least put the expulsions off until after the by-election. Other large meetings have been held in Hammersmith, Coventry, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Barking, the East End, Wythenshawe, Liverpool, Birkenhead, and Middlesbrough. Many of the 'Reinstate the Militant Five' meetings are yet to be held (see list on left). Already the Constituency Labour Parties are moving into action. Bebington and Ellesmere Port CLP has **unanimously** passed a resolution opposing the expulsions and again unanimously expressed its disgust at the destruction of the 'Bermondsey leaflets' by the National Executive. The secretary of Islington Central CLP has written to party general secretary Jim Mortimer saying, "We do not recognise the expulsion of Peter Taaffe and Ted Grant from the Labour Party." It is reported that 40

CLPs have added their names to an advert in *Tribune* also warning they would not not recognise the expulsions. This move will be applauded and no doubt repeated by CLPs throughout the country. There will be no let up in our fight against the Tories and the SDP/Liberal Alliance. Militant supporters and Young Socialists played an active part in organising a joint Labour Party and LPYS public meeting in Woolwich, South London, with Tony Benn as the guest speaker on February 14. A magnificent 700 people attended that meeting, with 25 young workers signing up to the LPYS there and then! It is not *Militant* that is "wrecking the Labour Party", but those on the right wing—to the applause of the Tory press—who are scandalously diverting the labour movement from its real battle against the Tories and the bosses in an election year, by tainting the democratic traditions of the Labour Party with the alien practices of Stalinism and McCarthyism.

MINERS

Continued from page one

The government may boast about stockpiles of coal in reserve but that was also the case in 1972. With massive support from the rest of the labour movement, reaching its height in the great victory at Salfley Gates, all coal movements were stopped. The provocation of steel axe-man MacGregor's proposed move to coal has helped spark this strike. His record in devastating the steel industry and the talk of BL's Michael Edwards going to British Rail must be a warning to the entire labour movement. Already steel works in Wales are being picketed. Railworkers in South Wales have voted for solidarity action. The Triple Alliance

must be activated. At a national and local level the rail, steel and mining unions must jointly organise full support for this strike. It is a decisive battle for the future of British workers. Every area was boosted in 1972 and '74 by the victories of the miners. That can be repeated. Every area of the labour movement has to be involved. Once the strike becomes national the miners will turn their attention to bottling in the coal stocks. Local meetings need to be organised by trades councils and labour movement organisations to build solidarity. The Labour Party leaders and MPs should come out with full and active support. The TUC must meet to draw up plans for the fullest solidarity action. The miners can win. The miners must win.

ANWAR DITTA

Continued from page one

sent to the campaign. "In the local area *Militant* supporters came on all the demonstrations and street meetings we held. Supporters of *Militant* were actively involved in the campaign from start to finish, regularly attending the defence committee meetings. "I attended Labour Party conference where I spoke to the *Tribune* rally, and also I have attended many Labour Party meetings to put my case forward. Rather than expelling people from the party, Labour should be recruiting more people to take up campaigns and struggles such as my own. "Because of the help of *Militant* supporters and other members of the

Labour Party I joined the party myself. Fraternally, Anwar Sultana Ditta" The enormous energy and determination shown by Anwar Ditta in her struggle to re-unite her family is an inspiration to all workers. It speaks volumes for the present debate in the Labour Party that it is people like Merlyn Rees who are supporting the witch-hunt of *Militant* and people like Anwar Ditta who are opposing expulsions. One letter received states simply, "Please accept this small donation of £6, 'Fighting Fund', from the officers of a small British cargo ship who read the *Militant* and support its programme. The NEC may expel *Militant* supporters, but the *Militant* ideas, never. Yours Fraternally, Four Ardent Socialists."

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