

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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20p

ELECTION COUNTDOWN
*Four weeks
to go!*

Fight for Labour Victory

-with socialist policies

By Bob Wade

THE CHANCE that millions of working people have been waiting for has come at last—the chance to get rid of this hated Tory government!

The old, the young, the sick, the unemployed, single parents, those still at school, those at work, trade unionists, housewives, black workers and white—all have suffered at the hands of this, the most brutal government in generations. Now they will have their chance to hit back.

The Tories have opted for a "cut and run" election, because if they wait much longer they will have less chance of winning. But if they did win, it would be a case of "run and cut"—a new Tory administration would cut even deeper into living standards than they have in the last four terrible years.

When she came to power in 1979, Thatcher promised in her manifesto to "rebuild our economy and reunite a divided and disillusioned people." Today that reads like a sick joke.

Far from 'rebuilding' this ailing capitalist economy, the Tories kicked away the props that were keeping its head just above water, unleashing a merciless jobs onslaught which has devastated the private and public sector industries.

In the private sector last year alone 12,000 companies went into liquidation. A fifth of the manufacturing industry has been destroyed in this economic blitz.

The Tories have shown particular venom to the public sector. Thatcher and Co. have installed their henchmen at the head of nationalised industries to cut away at jobs. Since the Tories came to power, whole

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I will not be rushed, I will not be pushed,
I shall take my time and do what is in the
national interest. —Margaret Thatcher



BOLD CAMPAIGN WINS LIVERPOOL FOR LABOUR

"IT WILL eventually lead to the overthrow of free society as we know it..."

This was how Liverpool Liberal leader Sir Trevor Jones hysterically responded to the council election victory of the Liverpool Labour Party, the party which has been named in the past by Tories, Liberals and Labour right wingers alike as 'Militant's capital'.

The Liverpool Labour Party's audacious socialist campaign in the city's council elections on 5 May ensured the ruling Liberal/Tory alliance was booted out of office. Labour held all its seats and gained 11 others at the expense of the Liberals and Tories. The Labour vote increased by 40%!

Ironically, the Liberals based their election material on an unprecedented smear

campaign against *Militant* supporters in the Labour Party (see report page 9). The Liverpool workers showed the Liberals what they thought of their McCarthyite smears!

The Tory press have seemed more concerned with the new Labour administration's decision to abolish the pomposity of the Lord Mayor's position. As Liverpool Labour Party president

Tony Mulhearn told them, "The nonsense of the Rolls Royce, gold chain and coach and horses is not needed in Liverpool...possibly the gold chain will be put in a museum along with the defeated Liberals."

But the Tory press have only highlighted this side-issue to hide the real victories scored in Liverpool by Labour in stopping the privatisation threat and saving Croxteth school from closure.

The election was held against the background of a

By
Roger Shriver

tremendous battle against privatisation of council departments, led by local authority shop stewards, with *Militant* supporters in GMBATU playing a key role, during which over 20,000 local authority workers went on strike for one day.

Over 10,000 lobbied the council, and the workers hired a van to tour all the marginal council seats. Canvassers using loud hailer outside council depots and next to bin lorries were applauded. Labour was seen by the workers to have an immediate solution to end the threat of privatisation hanging over their heads.

At the Croxteth school,

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Pound The Tories Now!

£2,900 given at a *Militant* meeting by delegates to CPSA conference! What a way to start an election campaign!

In the course of the next few weeks, millions of workers will be looking for Labour to provide a convincing alternative to Thatcher and her crew. That means getting *Militant* out on the doorstep, in the factories, on the streets and at the dole queues.

It means printing leaflets, organising meetings, and it means extra material and effort to produce an even better, campaigning *Militant*. But...to do all this AND keep everything else paid up—rent, rates, wages etc—we must have extra cash!

We need £40,000 during the next four weeks! Help fight for a Labour government, and help the fight for real socialist policies—policies capable of sweeping away the Tories and their rotten system for ever!

Time to end the Tory nightmare!

Thatcher has decided to go for a 9 June election for one reason only. To have left it till October would have shattered the myth that this government has solved the problems of the British economy and the British people.

By then, prices will be increasing rapidly and unemployment will go up by at least a quarter of a million. The Tories would then have gone down to certain defeat. However, they can be defeated in this election.

They hope that in a short, four-week campaign and with the assistance of their lying machine, the press, TV, and radio, that Labour will be prevented from revealing the real calamitous situation which Britain is in.

However, by using the enormous resources of the labour movement it is possible to counter the Tory propaganda barrage even though the Tories will have £20 million in their "war chest" while Labour will have at most £2½ million. If every worker was acquainted with the facts and figures which show the devastation wreaked on the British economy and people by this government and the socialist alternative was presented the Tories could be shattered.

Nicholas Ridley, a Tory Treasury minister, stated in January 1981, "The high level of unemployment is evidence of the progress we are making." This should be a fitting epitaph for this government.

Unemployment has risen by 2 million, production of national wealth has fallen by 4%, the output of manufacturing industry has fallen by 19% and investment in manufacturing has fallen by 36%. Industry has become at least 20% less competitive since the Tories came to power.

There are now 3.2 million people officially out of work in the UK, 2 million more than when the Tories came to office. The real unemployment is even worse than the official figures show. If those on special government schemes and those not claiming benefits are counted there are 5 million people unemployed who are seeking work.

Long-term unemployment is absolutely horrific. By October last year, 1.2 million people had been out of work for more than 12 months. For young people under 25, long-term unemployment has risen from 74,000 to 312,000 in the space of just 2 years.

Moreover, the number of people in jobs has fallen dramatically. Manufacturing employment has plummeted by 22% since mid-1979. Jobs in metal manufacture have fallen by 37%; in coal and petroleum products 35%; textiles 33%; vehicles 28%; and mechanical engineering 24%. At the same time it is in the areas of former prosperity such as the West Midlands where unemployment has increased most. It is now three times higher in this area than when Labour left office.

860,000 women are counted as unemployed. More than a million more would like to work but are

too discouraged to register as unemployed. Behind these figures, however, is the incalculable cost in human suffering for working people thrown on the scrap-heap of unemployment.

An American study shows that for every 100,000 people who lose their jobs, deaths increase by 5,000, mental hospital admissions by 6,000 and prison intake by 1,900. A Department of Health research project reached similar conclusions but its report was suppressed.

But a recent report by a senior registrar in community medicine showed that if the 1982 unemployment rate was to continue for the next five years without any further increase then by 1987, more than 800 people will die and over 7,000 will require hospital treatment in the city of Salford alone as a result of unemployment and the recession. It was in Manchester that a couple were recently found to be living in a cardboard box under a railway arch!

With mass unemployment has come the horror and the stigma of the poverty of the inter-war period. And as Michael Meacher, a left Labour MP stated recently, "on almost all fronts class divisions have been sharpened over the past four years to a degree unparalleled in recent British history. The pattern is similar wherever one looks". (*The Times* 4 May)

Chasm between the classes

A total of 7,000,000 are living on supplementary benefit poverty, while the share index has risen by 163% to share holders since April 1979. In the same period there was a 60% increase of those who were subjected to means test supplementary benefits.

At the summits of society, however, things are a lot better. Thus, the director on five times the average earnings (now more than £40,000) is about 26% better off in real terms than in 1979. This is due, in the main, to Thatcher's tax cuts.

She has kept her promise, therefore, to cut taxes—but only for the rich! The overall tax burden on a worker on average earnings has gone up from 44% of income in Labour's last year to 48% today, even after tax cuts in this year's budget.

What about Thatcher's promise to help small businesses? In 1982 there were 12,000 liquidations in England and Wales—more than 2½ times as many as in 1979 and the highest level every recorded. At the same time personal bankruptcies are up by 60% since 1979.

But Howe, the Tory chancellor, promised in his last budget to do something to help the small businessman to get a start.



Housing conditions in Cantril Farm Estate, Liverpool. Tory government offers no prospect for young people

He launched "five pilot schemes under which unemployed people are encouraged, with a £40 a week allowance, to set up their own businesses"! No doubt, his idea of small businessmen is destitute unemployed selling matches or laces on street corners!

The chasm which the Thatcher government has dug between the classes in society is itself a product of the catastrophic economic crisis of British capitalism which has worsened enormously since the government came to power. Every single index of the economy shows the calamity which has befallen Britain over the last four years.

Manufacturing industry is now producing one-fifth less than when the Tories took over—less than in any year since 1967. Fallen output in the last four years is 19%. In the great depression of 1929-31 output fell by just over 12%.

In 1982, for the first time ever, Britain—the former workshop of the world—imported more manufactured goods than was exported. The only thing which

has increased since Thatcher has come to power is the profits of the big monopolies.

However, this is not being ploughed back into re-tooling and refurbishing British industry. It is being used by the short-sighted British capitalists to invest abroad at the colossal figure of more than £10,000 million annually.

British capitalism collapses

And the treasure of North Sea oil has not been used to develop the British economy. On the contrary, since 1979 an enormous £20,000 million in tax revenue—the bounty from North Sea oil—has been used to pay for the unemployment which results from the collapse of British capitalism. This in turn has been aggravated by the measures of the Tory government.

However, it will take more than just criticisms of the policies of the Tories to bring about a Labour vic-

tory. Tory policies are not some quirk of Thatcher and her cronies. They arise from the desperate straits which British capitalism finds itself in.

Thatcher's "monetarist" policies represented a crude return to the so-called "tried and tested" policies of the past of British capitalism. It involved a savage deflation that included cuts in the living standards of the working class, as a means of boosting the profitability of big business.

In so doing, however, Thatcher merely cut the market. This enormously aggravated the problems of British capitalism. The only way that a Labour government would avoid pursuing a watered-down version of Thatcherism is by breaking out of the straight-jacket of capitalism.

This is the lesson of the last Labour government of 1974-79 and the last four horrific years of Thatcher. Only by opening up a new road for the working people and society and inspiring the ranks of the labour movement with this vision is it possible to guarantee a victory for Labour in the election.

This is the lesson of the stunning victory of Labour in Liverpool in the local government elections. Despite a vicious scare campaign of lies and distortions Labour crushed the Liberal/Tory alliance (see pages 8-9).

Socialist plan

The Tories have already threatened a scare campaign in this election. The way to counter them is by enthusing the advanced workers with a clear socialist programme and perspective.

They in turn will draw behind them the more politically inert workers. On the doorstep, argument, facts and figures can cut through the thicket of lies and distortions and win the working people to support Labour.

This will not be done by appealing for a return to the policies of '74-'79 as Denis Healey has done recently. He has promised a new version of the Social Contract, an incomes policy, in the event of Labour coming to power. It

was precisely these measures which led to the explosion of discontent, which in turn paved the way for the return of the Tory government four years ago.

Labour should punch out the party's demands for a 35-hour week with no loss in pay, for a £100 minimum wage, for a massive programme of public spending to begin to solve the problems of housing, social services etc.

But above all, it should be demonstrated, that only by introducing a socialist plan of production can all the tremendous resources of society be used for the benefit of working people.

200 companies are the real government in Britain. They call the tune no matter who is in power. Only if a Labour government takes over these companies, controlled by 196 directors, will it be possible to carry through its programme.

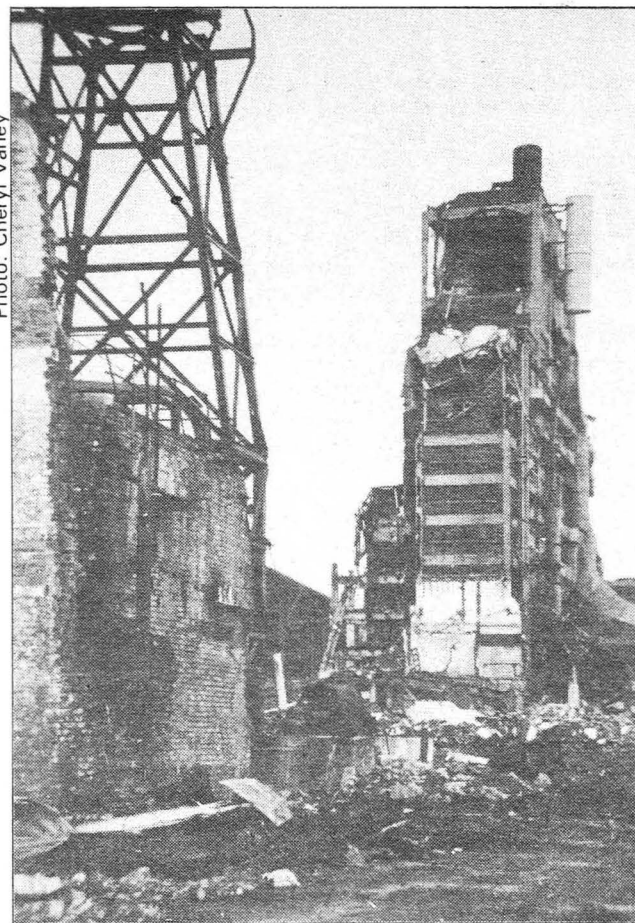
Lessons of France

The fresh lessons of France should convince the labour movement that only such a programme could show a way out of the jungle of capitalism. The French Socialist government did introduce radical reforms in its first period in office. But because the major levers of power remain in the hands of the capitalists, it has been forced to beat a retreat. The capitalists have sabotaged and undermined the measures of the Mitterrand government.

The feeble, but vicious, British ruling class will use every measure to hamper, to sabotage and eventually shipwreck every Labour government that remains within the framework of capitalism. Capitalism can no longer afford lasting reforms.

30% of the economy is now lying idle. If this was used it would generate an extra £70,000 million of wealth. This would give every man, woman and child in Britain an additional £30 per week.

Capitalism is incapable of offering such hope for the future. Only a socialist Britain could. This must be the theme of Labour's election campaign.



Tate and Lyle in Liverpool. Another famous name lies derelict and throws workers on the dole.

Local election reports

Bradford North

DESPITE a "red-scare" campaign by the Liberal/SDP Alliance, Labour won five out of the six wards in Bradford North in the local council elections.

SDP/Liberal Alliance leaflets headed "Militant controls Bradford North Labour Party", announced that "Militants from all over the country were summoned" into the various wards to work for the General Election to "help a candidate who supports Marx and Trotsky." This only resulted in the Labour vote increas-

ing by 3,700 while the SDP vote decreased by over 1,000.

In a general election this would mean that Labour would be returned with over 50% of the vote. The SDP are desperate and having no policies have resorted to smears. The Labour Party are confident that Pat Wall will increase the Labour vote in a general election and the red scares will rebound on the groups that use them.

By Keith Narey

Durham

IN DURHAM, the Labour Party increased its vote in most areas and took control of Durham City Council. The first ever SDP councillor to be elected, as opposed to defecting, lost his seat in Sedgfield.

Teesside was a disaster area for the Liberal/SDP Alliance, who lost most of their seats to the Tories and the Labour Party in a relatively high (40%) poll. The two constituencies that will be contested by sitting SDP MPs Bill Rodgers and Ian Wrigglesworth have no SDP councillors at all; their candidates came bottom of the poll in most cases.

In Middlesbrough itself, the local paper screamed about a "left takeover" a few weeks ago, even blaming the "Militant Tendency" when several older councillors were replaced as candidates in the safer seats by new younger candidates. The elections, however, showed the biggest swing in these areas in Middlesbrough where all four "new" candidates won.

Two of those de-selected stood as 'independents' and managed to lose heavily whereas another two who accepted the selection verdict and stood instead in marginal seats were still elected on the swing to Labour.

By Bill Hopwood

Birmingham

APPARENTLY, Thatcher and her advisers studied the Birmingham local election results to decide the date of the general election.

The Tories took the City Council last May and have since commenced their privatisation, spending cuts and have even reduced the rates. It was the jewel in their municipal crown. Unfortunately, the Tories hung on to control in the elections but only by the skin of their teeth.

With a significantly increased turnout, the Tory vote rose 2.6% but Labour's went up by 7.5%. Across the city the Tories only recorded 500 more votes than

Labour.

The Liberal/SDP Alliance was virtually squeezed out, winning just one-sixth of the votes cast, dropping by 10.5%. Their two councillors up for election this year both lost to Labour, leaving them with just two seats. Had the entire council been up for election, as last year, the Alliance would not now have a single councillor.

Adding up the votes in the wards within the different constituencies, Birmingham's twelve parliamentary seats would now be split evenly between Labour and Tory. Yet 50 years ago the Tories held all twelve. But if Labour is to win in the Midlands it must offer a

clear programme to ordinary voters.

The most common complaints in Labour areas were that Labour and Tory are "no different" and about what Labour did when they were in.

Birmingham Labour leader Clive Wilkinson blamed the left and "the state of the leadership in Westminster". The truth is that local disillusionment and the failure to drive out the town hall Tories is the result of consecutive right-wing Labour councils and a whole number of right-wing Labour MPs in the city.

By Jeremy Birch

North East

THE MAIN results of the local elections in the North East area were the squeezing out of the 'Independents', 'Rent and Ratepayers' and the Liberal/SDP Alliance who were heavily defeated, and a class polarisation throughout the whole of the region.

Most of the Labour candidates increased their majorities and there was definitely an enthusiasm among Labour voters, expressing an anti-Thatcher vote but also an enthusiasm for the idea that a general election would be coming up shortly, with the possibility of getting rid of Thatcher and the Tories.

In Sunderland, for example, one Liberal councillor complained that the local election result hadn't really

been based on "community politics" or local issues, but had been an anti-Thatcher vote, which was an indication of the mood that existed at the time.

In Newcastle and Gateshead there are two parliamentary defectors from the Labour Party, Mike Thomas and John Horam, and in both cases the local election results showed that in their constituencies they would be heavily defeated in a general election.

One of the most interesting factors during the campaigning was the intense hatred of the youth, even of those under 12 and 15, for Thatcher and the Tory government—showing the anger that has built up over the last four years.

By Dave Cotterill

FIGHT FOR LABOUR

Continued from Page one

industries and whole communities have been laid waste. Yet another 1000 redundancies have been announced in the town of Hartlepool, already suffering 25 per cent unemployment.

Now the people of Consett, Corby, Shotton, Hartlepool and dozens of other devastated towns have an opportunity to make their judgement on this government.

The return of mass unemployment has reaped a grim social toll. Suicides, divorces, mental illness have all increased, with the health and social services, shattered by the cutbacks, trying to clear up the mess. The police have been given a whole new arsenal of social control as the inner city areas have become battlefields of despair and frustration.

Youth unemployment is now at record levels, rising to 312,000 long-term unemployed under 25-year-olds in just two years. The people are 'divided' even further—the gap between rich and poor has widened.

While the social services creak and strain under their increasing burdens, so the Tories pump more money into the arms industry and volunteer the country for the frontline of the nuclear arms build-up. They hope to add Cruise and Trident to the already massive stockpile of weapons of mass destruction.

And the Tories have even more in store. Thatcher's 'Victorian virtues' are in danger of becoming reality if the Tories are returned to office. Their latest announcement is to freeze benefit to one-parent families under the incredible claim that they do not want to 'subsidise immorality'. Yet it is their policies that are tearing families apart.

The Tories' convenient claims of 'signs of recovery' are totally false too. Even by their own admission, unemployment will continue to rise, by about a quarter of a million this year. The blood, sweat and tears squeezed out of workers has only resulted in the rich getting richer and



the poor getting poorer.

But the Tories' four-year rule has not been without resistance. The list of workers who have taken them on is endless. Steelworkers, miners, railmen, nurses, local authority workers, car workers, water workers, civil servants: all have struggled to push back the tide of Toryism and claw back their falling living standards and defend jobs.

Now the time of reckoning has come. Now there is an opportunity to push the Tories out.

Unfortunately, there are those on the right wing of the party who seem to think that Labour can win by offering up the same failed policies of previous right-wing Labour governments. But workers today are looking for an alternative, not 'more of the same'.

Labour can win if the ranks of the labour move-

ment are inspired to an energetic election campaign, based around conference policies, such as the 35-hour week, a £100 minimum wage and nuclear disarmament.

Workers must vote Labour on June 9, and to ensure a Labour victory, mobilise support for the election campaign. Contact your local Labour Party to offer your support in the election campaign.

Set up 'Labour Victory' committees at your workplace. Organise groups of workmates or union members to canvass not only for a Labour victory but also for support for the ideas of socialism. Organise workplace meetings in the canteens or at the gates!

Above all, join the Labour Party and join the struggle to ensure that a victorious Labour government carries out its election manifesto and implements its socialist demands.

Busworkers for Labour

BIRMINGHAM busmen are ready to help Labour to victory in the election.

At a joint meeting of the 5/29 and 5/36 TGWU branches which covers the 13 garages of the West Midlands PTE the following resolution was carried: "TGWU 5/29 and 5/36 branches, Birmingham bus garages, support the formation of garage-based 'Trade Unionists for a Labour Victory' committees to organise canvassing teams to go par-

ticularly into marginal constituencies to work for a Labour victory in the general election, the committees to attempt to involve all trade union members within the garages and to secure maximum turnout on election day."

By Simon Heather

(Vice-Chairman, Liverpool Street bus garage, Birmingham TGWU)

NALGO - 'protect jobs'

Betty Bell, a Militant supporter, has been elected to the National Executive of NALGO. Below, she speaks to Militant on the problems facing the union.

"I THINK it's important that NALGO realises that whatever government comes into power in the next three weeks NALGO as a union has got major problems facing its membership. With the cuts that are going to come and the effects of those on our jobs, NALGO has got to start looking to protect jobs and conditions of service. "Alarming" is the only word that can describe the threat to our members' jobs.

I fought my campaign to get on to the executive on the issues of protection of jobs, privatisation and on the disputes like the car allowances, which was a major victory for us. In my Hampshire branch we managed to have an absolutely mammoth response from the membership on this issue.

In Hampshire what's happened is that we have a situation where job vacancies are not being filled, so we're



Betty Bell

Photo: Militant

now working much harder and doing jobs where we could have more members of staff. Some old people's homes are being shut, for example, because the council can't afford to up-date and repair them.

I would say that if NALGO as a union is "putting people first" as they are waging in their publicity campaign, I'm saying to

NALGO members we've got to get out and vote Labour and get out to help the Labour Party to be re-elected.

We need a Labour government as a trade union, and a Labour government that is going to look at things in a proper light. We can't have any more wishy-washy Labour governments."

TARGET—£50,000 BY JULY 9.

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 9 July
Eastern	197		2700
East Midlands	246		2600
Humberside	151		1300
London East	330		3300
London West	282		1650
London South	758		2500
Manchester & Lancs	375		3000
Merseyside	298		3400
Northern	132		3550
Scotland East	63		2100
Scotland West	269		3000
Southern	280		3150
South West	266		2000
Wales East	168		1500
Wales West	92		2100
West Midlands	143		3100
Yorkshire	202		3400
Others	163		5000
Total received	4416		50000

£££££

Pound the Tories

THIS WEEK

£995

WE HAVE had some great donations this week.

Over £162 was collected at National APEX Conference before expenses and over £86 was raised from a May Day Public Meeting in Bristol including a donation from B. Kelly TGWU, who donated a "day's pay". Definitely an example to be followed.

Over £78 was also raised from the Wales TUC Conference including £20 from M. Davies AUEW Engineering delegate, and £18 from Anne Bennett, a NUPE delegate.

Thanks to L. Bharadwa, Birmingham £5, the £5 we received in remembrance of Ian Burge from Hackney supporters, R. McCarthy Liverpool NOLS £5, Nick Hullahan, unemployed supporter from Stepney, £4, Joan Maynard MP who donated £2 at the National Agricultural workers conference, M. Bryan Nottingham NUR £1.80, P. Parson, a British Telecoms worker, Ipswich, £1, Harold Price Blackpool £1, Mr Pryor, an Airport worker from Hayes, who donated £1 for his paper, as did Dilwyn Daines, NUPE NEC, and Stuart Holmes, Leicester

NUPE, and thanks finally to Mr Davey (Ealing) 50p and John Waterman, Guernsey TGWU, 50p.

Thanks to Alan Shadforth, Hull West Labour Party Young Socialists, who did a sponsored bike ride to LPYS National Conference in Bridlington (76 miles) which has so far raised over £10 with more to come.

Thanks also to the Bridlington LPYS £5, Ladywood LPYS Birmingham which donates £1.50 regularly and Stevenage LPYS Herts £1.69.

During the coming election campaign all supporters should send in details of their fund raising activities and what good successes they have had. In fact any good events should be reported in the paper. The other areas will also be interested to know what is happening in other parts of the country so please keep us informed.

Please do not forget to send in the regular donations each week—we still need all the support we can get, to fight the Tories and to return a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

By Kath White

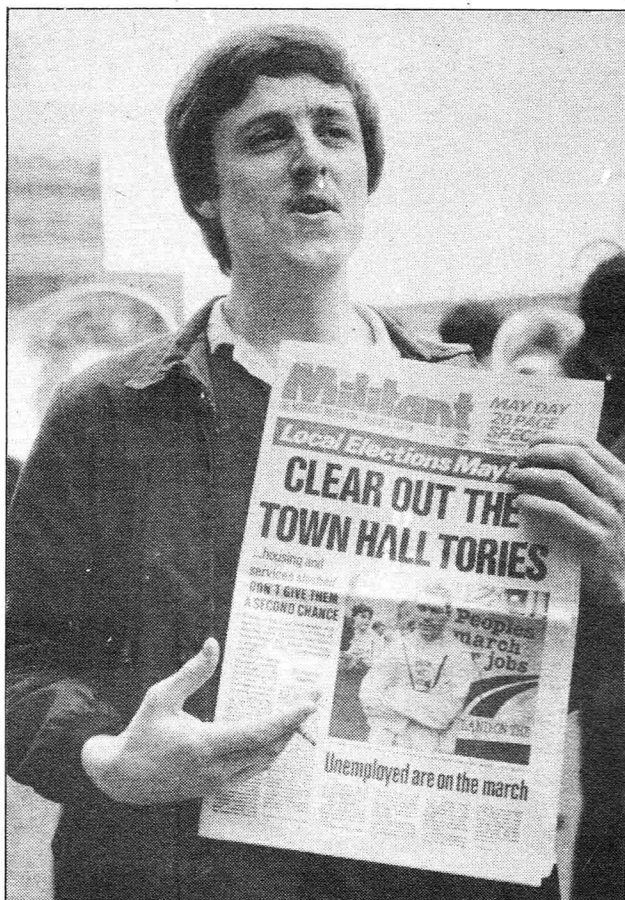


Photo: Mark Pinder

Sell Militant, the best paper in the labour movement.

Battle for socialism with Militant

MANY Labour Parties are in the thick of the campaign against the Tories and what's more many are using Militant to spearhead the campaign for socialism.

In Bradford North, 100 papers were sold on a canvass, many new members were won to the party thus hammering the lie that socialism frightens away voters. How about your party taking out an order and putting the skids under the Tories?

On May Day hundreds of papers were sold especially in the big city rallies and demonstrations, with over 200 being sold in London and 100-plus in Glasgow.

During the build up to the general election there is a golden opportunity to build up estate sales. Every Militant

seller should be looking to set up sales on their estate and with the increasing level of discussion, street and public sales will increase.

There have also been record sales at trade union conferences with over 150 being sold at USDAW and 70 at APEX. Make sure that Militant is on sale at your union branch.

The 'People's March for Jobs' will raise the issue of the scandalous level of unemployment in Britain today. All along the route our sellers are preparing a socialist welcome for the marchers.

Join the most urgent campaign of our time, campaign for socialism, become a Militant seller. Write to 'Militant Circulation', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN, or ring 01-986 3828 or 01-533 1822.

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 MEETINGS

FBU CONFERENCE Meeting at Southcliff Hotel (opposite Spa), Bridlington. Thursday 19 May. Speakers: Mick Eaves (Cheshire FBU, personal capacity) and Keith Dickinson (Militant Editorial Board)

CARLISLE Marxist Discussion Group held fortnightly. Ring Carlisle 21068.

BLACKWOOD Marxist Discussion Group. Telephone Blackwood 220051.

HAYES Readers' Meeting. Speaker: Lynn Walsh. Starts 8.00 pm, Tuesday 17 May, at Adam and Eve pub, Uxbridge Road, Hayes.

HALIFAX Marxist Discussion Group. Phone Phil Crossley, Halifax 822814.

NORTH EAST Marxist Discussion Groups:
 Benton: Details Ged Grebby, 0632 662374.
 Wallsend: Contact Ed Waugh, 0632 341284.
 North Shields and Whitley Bay: Contact Robin Jamieson, 0632 523441.

POPLAR Militant Discussion Group. Ring 01-515 1718 for details. All welcome.

FELTHAM Militant supporters' Rugby Club wishes to take on world. Anyone interested please phone Staines 52270.

CLASSIFIED

ELECTION! ELECTION!

Advertise your election meetings in Militant. See above for rates.

VAUXHALL LPYS Public Meeting. 'The Way Forward for CND'. Thursday 12 May, 7.30 pm at Room 121, Brixton Town Hall, Acre Lane, SW2. Speaker: Lesley Phillips (LPYS National Committee)

WRITE OFF THE TORIES WITH US
 Militant biros with slogan: "Read Militant, Tories out, Labour to power on a socialist programme." Normal price 20p (plus 20p p&p). Bulk orders: 10 at £1.30 (post free).

MILITANT Circulation Department contactable during general election DAILY from 8 am to 8 pm on 01-533 1822.

STICK WITH MILITANT
 Yellow advertising stickers
 1,000 for £11; 500 for £5.60; 200 for £2.30.
 Send cash with order, cheques payable to Militant. From Militant Circulation, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

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

MILITANT Marxist Weekend Schools.
 LONDON 2/3 July Queen Mary College Student Union.
 NORTHERN 9/10 July, Teesside Poly, Middlesbrough. Fuller details future issues.

South Wales
Militant
 Summer Camp

South Wales Militant Summer Camp
 August Bank Holiday
 Friday 26 August-Monday 29 August
 For the eighth time we are organising our highly successful camp in the beautiful surroundings of Horton on the Gower Coast (10 minutes' walk from Port Eynon and Horton beaches).
 It will provide not only an excellent introduction to the ideas of Marxism, but also a superb holiday for the family. Price £10. Write to 181 Hanover Street, Swansea SA1 6BP.

Nava Sama Samaja Party (UK) presents
SPRING DISCO
 at the Haringay Community Trades Hall
 2a Brabant Road, Wood Green, N.22
 (nearest tube station Wood Green)
 on Saturday 14 May 1983, 7.30pm to midnight
 Tickets: £1.50
 Bar: refreshments on sale
 ★ All proceeds in aid of our struggle in Sri Lanka
 ★ Please come and support us:
 ★ For tickets, contact:
 Wesley (882 3423) Paul (650 6451)
 Ranjith (803 1631) Ujitha (594 6120)

Peoples' march

Jobs...

Yorkshire

UNLIKE reports from other areas, the Keighley (West Yorkshire) leg of the People's March for Jobs had a very political send off.

A rally the evening before had Bob Cryer MP and Steve Davison (president of the trades council and a *Militant* supporter) both putting the blame for unemployment fairly and squarely on the Tories and the capitalist system.

Judith Wood, chairperson of Keighley LPYS pointed out how the labour and trade union movement defended wages and conditions against the Tories and the bosses, who would like to lower them to third world standards.

On the day of the march the only banners present were from the local labour movement and the slogan was 'Maggie Out!'

I asked Keighley Labour Party member and People's Marcher, Ian Driver why he

went on the march. "Capitalism is a stupid system—it can find money for nuclear weapons, the Falklands' War and sending men to the moon but when it comes to putting four million back to work it can't do it."

"The march will bring unemployment to the public's attention, the fact that thousands of people are on the scrap heap because the bosses cannot make a profit."

"The march proves there is an alternative and that we won't be pushed around or dictated to by the Tories, and I'm part of it to convince people that a Labour government committed to socialist policies is the only way out of the mess."

"Walking to London shows we are serious, the front line troops of the unemployed fighting for the socialist alternative."

By Steve Wood
(Keighley LPYS)



The May Day rally in Newcastle started off the North East leg of the People's March.

Photo: Mark Pinder

South west

Bryan Beckingham interviewed PHIL BISHOP, who is to join the People's March, South West contingent, from Lands End in Cornwall marching up to Swindon in Wiltshire, for six weeks.

Phil is a member of NUPE unemployed branch in Bath and also a member of Bath Labour Party Young Socialists.

Phil has been unemployed on and off for two years since he left school.

"The People's March could be a fight against the

Tories. It's a chance to get my voice heard and see some real action against unemployment."

"The People's March could begin a campaign to get rid of the Tories and build for a Labour victory in the general election. It must be a political campaign as the Tories have got rid of 1½ million jobs. Thatcher is using the £25 a week Youth Training Scheme as a source of cheap labour and it's the bosses that have got the economy in such a mess."

What hits Phil most about unemployment is that "There's nothing to do. There's no money. And when all your mates go down

for a drink you can't afford to go with them. I feel like I've been left on the scrap heap. I say to all unemployed youth—join our march. Listen to political ideas and join the fight against the Tories."

"My dad—aged 64—remembers the hunger marches in the '30s. Now we are marching again. This time we must get real changes and get rid of the system that's causing unemployment."

Humberside

THE ANNUAL May Day march and rally held in Hull was lead by the Humberside

contingent of the People's March for Jobs.

At the rally LPYS member and unemployed People's Marcher for Jobs, Alan Shadforth, received the support of the whole march when he stated that it was impossible for the People's March to be non-political. He was marching against the Tories and against their SDP/Liberal shadows and all that their anti-working class policies stood for.

The LPYS section on the march was undoubtedly the biggest—and loudest! The march really reflected the growth of the LPYS in the Hull area.

...not bombs!

THE TORY club in Efra Road, Brixton, had a tough time on Saturday.

It was on the route of the Youth CND march to Brockwell Park. As the 20,000 strong march passed by the Tories gloomily looked out of the club's windows to be greeted with a continuous barrage of booing and 'Tories Out'.

While the leadership of the CND may claim the movement is 'non-political', the marchers predominantly youth with many more young workers participating than in previous CND mass mobilisations, were clear who was to blame for the nuclear arms build up.

As one YCND activist from Manchester said, "The Tories are running scared now about the support for nuclear disarmament. That explains their attempts to discredit CND in the press and the numerous pro-nuclear weapons committees they are setting up—its

amusing that all these groups they form have 'Peace' somewhere in the title!

"It's also done the movement a bit of good in the sense that the Tories are making nuclear disarmament into a political issue."

At the park itself about 60,000 crowded in to hear top bands play, and wander around the many stalls that were set up.

The LPYS stall was well received. Throughout the day there was a constant stream of people taking LPYS literature, discussing their policies and programme, and many signed up to join the LPYS. Hundreds of *Socialist Youths* were sold along with 500 *Militants*.

The main interest significantly was the Labour Party's commitment to nuclear disarmament and many youth asked how it could be ensured that a future Labour government implemented this policy, and the role they could play in making this possible.



Photo: Denis Doran

YCND marchers crossing Westminster Bridge.

Hands off our game!

OVER 700 Reading youth took to the streets recently against the proposed merger of Reading and Oxford football clubs imposed on them by two millionaire bosses, Maxwell and Waller.

They demonstrated right up to the ground and chants of "Waller out" rang all over Elm Park.

The merger is not the first blow against the youth of Reading. The ABC cinema closed down in spite of a protest sit-in. Then the main nightclub, Top Rank, was closed down. Even the rock festival traditionally held in Reading is in jeopardy!

The working class youth of Reading have said enough is enough, and have begun the fightback against the bosses' control of entertainment and sport. They won't have millionaires placing profits above the working class youth's interests.

The two millionaire bosses concerned, Maxwell and Waller, have impeccable records against the working class.

Frank Waller's firm Adwest became famous in its 1980 dispute, when workers experienced the first ever use of the then new "Employ-

ment Act" of limiting pickets.

Robert Maxwell, an ex-Labour MP, knows all about planned mergers. In 1982 he merged Odhams Printers and Sun Printers. He didn't consult the unions and as a result over a thousand workers were made redundant.

The shares of the two companies involved nearly doubled, and Maxwell made over £6 million on the sale of the Odhams site. Maxwell stands to make £19 million on the sale of Elm Park Reading's ground.

The 400 LPYS leaflets were readily snatched up on the demo in 15 minutes by angry fans, and LPYS members were given a tremendous reception by the youth on the march.

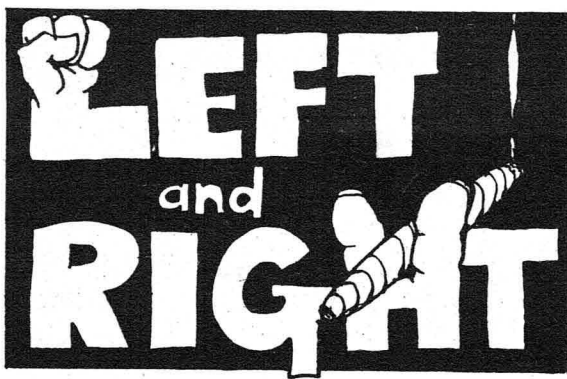
The leaflets called for no merger and a better deal for youth. They also called for football to be taken out of the hands of millionaire bosses and into the control of the supporters and players of the club.

This demand was eagerly accepted by the chanting youth.

By a Reading
LPYS member

**Join the fight for
socialism!**

Join the LPYS!



Double hammer-blow

One industry is genuinely experiencing a boom—industrial auctioneers. One firm, Edward Rushton Son and Kenyon, says that its used equipment business had a 44% increase last year. In fact bankruptcy is getting so rapid that sometimes firms don't have time to erase their previous owner's name before they themselves go bankrupt. When the receivers went into the De Lorean car assembly plant in Belfast they found equipment bearing an auctioneer's label from the closure of the Talbot car plant in Linwood three years before. This month that machinery will be going under the auctioneer's hammer again.

Reds under the royal bed

These bolshies get everywhere! Lady Diana's brother, the Viscount Charles Althorp, heir to the Spencer family fortune, is temporarily working as a messenger at the Stock Exchange en route from Eton to Oxford. He told the *Daily Mirror* (9 May), "I just do not agree with a lot of what goes on there. I don't know why for example, 30 per cent of the people should get 70 percent of the profit. There should be a more equitable distribution."

Moo!

If you thought the government's *Protect and Survive* pamphlet was a cracker, the Tories have now surpassed themselves. Their latest advice is for farmers and comes in a special booklet called *Home Defence and the Farmer*. In the event of a nuclear attack, it tells the bemused farmers they should "herd cows into a deep lane and stretch a tarpaulin over them." If the bomb does drop these government booklets will be of little practical use, but at least we'll all die laughing.

It's a hard life at the top

Those of you who had the misfortune to watch ITV's *First Tuesday* on 3 May would have seen the pampered life-style of Rupert Deen. He inherited a fortune, has only worked for one year of his life and now galavants about shooting, horse-racing and holding parties for similar Hooray Henries. If you managed to refrain from putting your foot through the screen, you would have heard this upper-class berk explain that while he agreed with Mrs Thatcher, he didn't think women should have the vote—nor should the working class for that matter. His general philosophy was that "pheasants are bred for shooting, the working class are bred for working." Running the country should be left in the capable hands of people like himself. What the programme didn't explain, however, was that in 1978, Rupert was such a success that he was served with nine bankruptcy notices in that one year.

Who needs the ruling class?

It was a good weekend for the working class. Tube driver Chris Hughes won the Mastermind championship and the miners of Featherstone Rovers won the Rugby League cup. We've got the brain and the muscle, now for the general election...

Marx upside down

Education at the Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow is based on the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, according to its Rector, Vladimir Stanis. Which makes his comment to a *Guardian* interviewer (15 April) very strange. "This university not only teaches but elevates its students", he said, "It teaches them to be patriotic about their own countries. Western universities fail to promote patriotism because capitalism is cosmopolitan. It has no motherland. It breaks down all frontiers."

Perhaps 'comrade' Stanis should do a bit more basic Marxism. If he read *The Communist Manifesto*, he'd find what Marx and Engels wrote: "The working men have no country. We can not take from them what they have not got."

Violence against women: a class issue

THE THREAT of violence within our society particularly concerns women especially when you consider that 25% of all violent crime is wife assault.

One of the most degenerate forms of violence is rape, where the victim can suffer for years after an attack.

Yet newspapers and radio report rape cases in a way which trivialises or sensationalises the horror. The courts reinforce the general prejudices within society, in some cases actually laying the partial blame on the victim.

Whilst approximately 50% of rape cases are committed by people whom the women know, often in their own home or that of the attackers, the other 50% happen mostly at night outside. It is working class women who live on badly lit estates, or who work shifts and have no car, that are most vulnerable. There can be no working class woman who doesn't firstly feel revulsion, and then sympathy, for another woman who has been attacked, whether the victim is young, old, a Tory, Liberal, black or white.

What is vital though is where will the practical help come from to change the situation? Here as Marxists we understand that the only section of society with the strength and willingness to change the position for women is the organised working class.

Men and women fighting for demands such as adequate street lighting, efficient twenty-four hour public transport so that shift workers have free transport to and from work, would begin to demonstrate to women the concern which the Labour movement holds on this issue.

The education system and media play no small part in undermining women.

Therefore the nationalisation of press facilities under workers' control and management and the demand for a massive increase on expenditure on education are relevant and crucial.

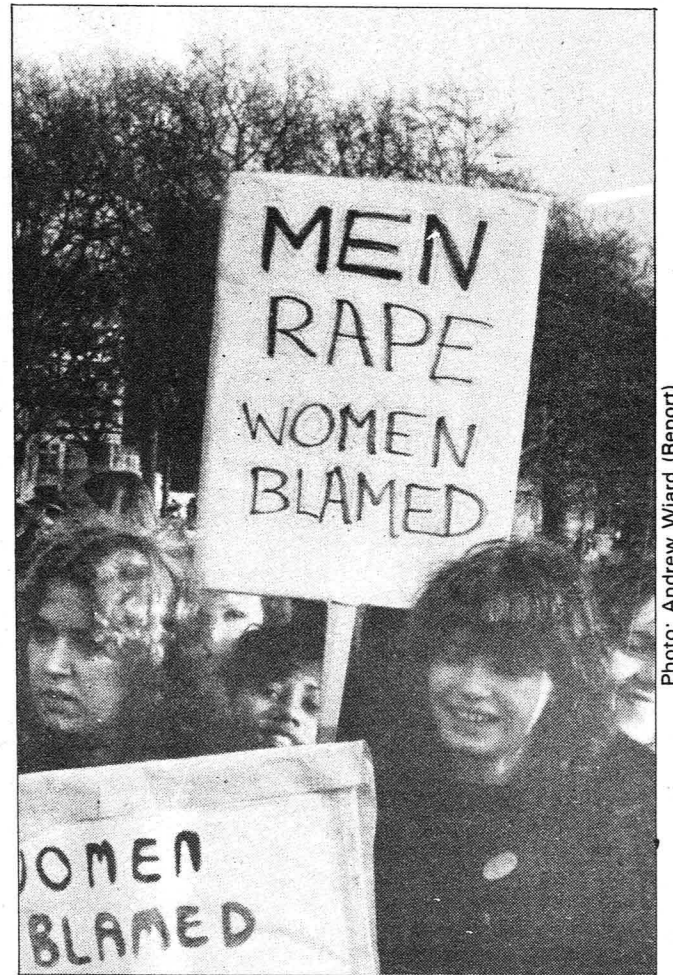
A victim who has been attacked in her home should be guaranteed rehousing. But capitalism prevents this kind of practical help, e.g. that system means half a million building workers on the dole and up to one million families living in housing unfit for humans. Because they support such a system neither the Tories nor the SDP and Liberals have policies which defend women, and would solve such a basic demand.

There is another problem which has to be discussed in the Labour movement. During an interview I had with a volunteer at a rape crisis centre it became apparent that the present system and availability of help to victims is hopelessly inadequate. It is an absolute outrage that the government puts a mere pittance into the care of rape victims.

The responsibility of care is left to a handful of people locally and regionally to raise finance to provide rape crisis centres and then provide volunteers to staff them.

At present, because rape crisis centres are voluntarily run they are mostly not open for twenty-four hours seven days a week, and are mostly staffed by volunteers who can have as little as one week's training. If a centre is run along strong anti-male lines, this can hamper the police-RCC co-ordination, which is so essential given the police record in dealing with the victims of such crimes. The volunteer I spoke to told me of a girl who was held for questioning at the police station for 17 hours with no-one she knew present.

We must also ask is it correct for volunteers to work with rape victims if the volunteer is motivated into



Rape rightly causes revulsion among working class women. Capitalism even prevents immediate help for the victims.

doing the work because of an anti-men attitude? These rape crisis centres are accountable to no-one and so unfortunately can be used by some women to push forward their strong anti-men attitudes on victims when they are at their most vulnerable.

We must make these centres function to provide real help and guidance and prevent them from abuse, and as socialists the only people we are confident can check on the way things are run, are people elected from the community. Proper resources must be made available for these centres.

But prevention is better than cure. Everyone who is fighting to bring an end to such obscene crimes must fight with the only movement powerful enough to change the very society within which these crimes occur.

Some feminists consider it is too crude to state that an end to capitalism and the bringing about of a socialist

society is the only long term solution to the problems facing women. We must make no apologies for their misunderstanding; only when all people within society have free access to good education and social facilities; when all people are free from the pressure such as a distorted media; where people with problems can be confident that help is readily available to guide them away from acts of violence, will the threat of rape decline.

As Trotsky said, "to see what stage society is at, you must look at it through the eyes of a women."

Right now women are looking at the way society is run and what it offers them. Under socialism we will be playing our role in the running of things and making the decisions of what is on offer.

By Anne Beales

Who controls police?

RECENTLY West Midlands County Council Police Committee held a special meeting because of growing public concern over the activities of some sections of the West Midlands Force. The chairman of the Police Committee, Labour councillor, Ed Shore, said at the meeting that the Chief Constable had a right to expect the support of the Police Committee. The members of the public who were present might well have thought they had a right to expect support of the Police Committee.

In the course of the meeting only members of the committee were allowed to ask questions, so providing no chance for those most

concerned to raise their particular grievance. A Tory councillor was reported in the press as saying that he had full knowledge of what had taken place in the incidents under discussion and thought there was no further cause for concern. If he has full knowledge of all these incidents then he's the only one who has.

The meeting was held to discuss the death in custody of a man at a Coventry police station plus five other incidents. One of these incidents concerned Roger Donaldson and his family, of Kidderminster. Mr Donaldson is taking legal action against the West Midlands and West Mercia forces, alleging that officers entered his home without knocking and without a warrant. Mr Donaldson was not

charged for any offence and is claiming damages for assault, false imprisonment, trespass and wrongful interference with goods.

Another of the incidents was that of a 70-year old woman whose home was broken into by the police at mid-night. No charges have been made against the woman and the police came back the next day to repair her door.

The family of James Davey, who died after a scuffle at Little Park Police Station in Coventry, have asked for two independent post-mortems to be carried out. There will be no full inquest until the "internal police enquiry" has been completed. James Davey was on a life-support machine for 11 days after the scuffle and two Coventry Labour MPs, Bill

Wilson and Geoffrey Robinson have called for publication of the findings of the police enquiry.

Davey was being held in connection with the murder of a London businessman. Eight officers were sent from London to collect Davey. He had a long criminal record and was imprisoned in 1978 for battering a policeman.

What is becoming clear is, whatever the facts of the Davey case and others, nobody has effective, operational control of the police.

The labour and trade union movement cannot afford to ignore even these seemingly isolated incidents and must campaign for full democratic control over the police.

By Pete McNally
(Coventry North East CLP)

From the workers' point of view

Now more than ever there is a burning need for a mass daily workers' paper.

From the jingoist *Sun* to the barrage of propaganda and statistics of the *Financial Times* the bosses ensure that their message is heard daily throughout the land. But the workers' view is not heard, although the TUC represents nearly 12 million people.

The *Daily Herald* existed from 1911 to 1964 and, for all its faults, at least provided an alternative voice to the moguls of Fleet St. The lessons from its history are vital for the labour movement in Britain.

The *Daily Herald* was born out of the struggles of the London composers strike in 1911 as weapon to explain their case and fight the bosses press. The first *Herald* sold 13,000 and was immediately seized on as an organ of working class propaganda.

Boycotted by bosses

Quickly its sales reached 230,000. So worried were the TUC leaders that they set up a rival *Daily Citizen* which folded two years later.

The pre-war struggles were enough to sustain the paper but at the outset of the First World War it had to go weekly in the wake of the jingoist tide. The *Herald* received great support from working people and covered every aspect of workers' lives, its industrial pages were headed with the slogan 'The war that really matters'. It played a tremendous role in the pre-war struggles and it was said that the workers would listen to the Labour leaders' advice but would follow what the *Herald* said!

The world war resulted in a great radicalisation of the

masses and it was at the meeting that was called by the *Herald* to support the Russian revolution that the electricians union threatened to pull the plug on Kensington if the meeting did not go ahead; the meeting was attended by 12,000 with 5,000 turned away!

The relaunch of the *Daily Herald* was made possible by raising a £200,000 fighting fund. But it had to face a boycott by paper wholesalers, and attack from government.

After publishing an official secret, Churchill threatened to prosecute, and the War Office instructed army officers to intercept bundles of *Daily Herald* and burn them so that no copies reach the troops. This was during the agitation to prevent intervention in Russia that the *Herald* spearheaded.

The *Daily Herald* was not an official paper but attempted to reflect all trends; it even printed in a special edition the manifesto of the newly formed Communist Party calling for a general strike in the event of war against Soviet Russia. The *Herald* slogan against intervention being "Not a man, not a gun, not a sou".

After the post war strike wave and the defeat of Black Friday in the early 1920s the activity of the movement declined. The *Herald* further suffered as it was boycotted by advertisers and it had to double its price to 2d, twice the price of its competitors. During the post war struggles the *Herald* was also under venomous attack from the establishment but received support from unions and individuals alike and raised £20,000 for the children of starving miners.

The turning point in the political fortunes of the *Herald* was its take-over in

DAILY HERALD

LATE LONDON EDITION
No. 2,488 (No. 1,485—New Series)
LONDON, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, 1924.
ONE PENNY

FIRST BRITISH LABOUR CABINET

MR. MACDONALD NOW PREMIER

Rapid Developments Follow on Mr. Baldwin's Resignation

AUDIENCES WITH THE KING

Three Peers in the Government: Admiralty Provides a Surprise

The announcement of the constitution of a Labour Cabinet, the first in this country, followed closely, yesterday, on Mr. Baldwin's resignation and Mr. MacDonald's undertaking to form a Government.

The list, which includes the names of three peers (Lords Haldane, Pa... and Chelmsford), and three commoners without seats in the House of Commons (Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Sydney Olivier and Mr. ...).

WHY CABINET IS LARGE ONE

Plans for Working on Business-like Lines MEETING TO-DAY

The first meeting of the new Cabinet will be held at 10, Downing-street, at 4 p.m. to-day (writes our Lobby Correspondent). The great, and, I believe, unprecedented promptitude with which the new Cabinet has been announced and created a very favourable impression.

RAIL STRIKE LEADERS PROPOSE PARLEY

But Managers Insist on Acceptance of Wages Board's Award

Correspondence passed yesterday between the railway managers and the Associated Society, whose members are on strike. The managers, while prepared to meet the men's leaders, repeated their insistence on acceptance of the Wages Board's award.

The Executive of the Associated Society replied by reiterating its willingness to meet the managers to discuss the adjustment of an A.S.L.E. and F. official last night. Other statements by union officials, and reports from strike areas, are printed on Page Three.

LENIN DIES SUDDENLY

POIGNANT SCENE IN THE SOVIET

Nicolaï Lenin (Vladimir Ilyich Oulianov) died at 6.50 on Monday evening at Gorky, in the hills near Moscow.

He had seemed to be recovering from his long illness—the aftermath of his attempted assassination in 1918; but suddenly on Monday afternoon he became worse. Paralysis of the respiratory organs set in. At 6.50 consciousness, and died at 6.50.

INDUSTRY SLOWS DOWN

It was an important development in the situation yesterday. Early in the day it was announced that the managers were meeting to discuss the proposal of the Executive of the Associated Society.

ANAGERS' REPLY

Managers, in their reply, do not accept the proposal.

1922 by the TUC due to economic difficulties. From that point on it was no longer a voice of struggling masses but the mouth piece of the Right wing TUC and Labour leadership. So much so that George Lansbury decided to set up Lansbury's Labour Weekly to continue the struggle in the interests of the rank and file.

despite having had a readership of 4 million in the early sixties. Ironically, it was taken over by Cecil King of the rival *Daily Mirror* who having carried losses for 3 years sold it to Rupert Murdoch who later used the presses to print the anti-Labour *Sun*! The TUC had sold its 49% share for £75,000 and therefore left the field open for the Tories.

Capitalist takeover

The TUC leadership showed they had no real interest in building a workers' paper and sold 51 per cent of its share to Odhams as a purely capitalist venture.

The TUC had no real control of its content despite having people on the Board. Yet the *Herald* retained mass support, in 1929 at the launch of its northern edition in Manchester it was welcomed with a carnival which had 3½ miles of marchers and 25 bands. The reason for this Tory takeover was not lack of support but the policies and outlook of the Labour leadership who in reality did not want to lead a struggle against the bosses and therefore did not want a paper that attempted to build that struggle.

The *Herald* continued to make a profit until the early sixties and was therefore allowed to continue as an alternative voice, within limits, as long as it sold papers. It finally closed in 1964, with the agreement of the Labour leadership,

There is again talk of the TUC looking into a daily paper for the labour movement but all types of scarecrows have been created so it is unlikely that the project will get off the ground without a large amount of pressure from below.

If the labour movement is serious about workers winning power in Britain it desperately needs a paper to fight the battle for people's hearts and minds.

The figure of £12m has been floated for the establishment of an alternative daily paper of the left, but it will not only be pounds that will create a paper of this type but a movement that understands the need for a workers' press and is prepared to fight for it. A daily of the labour movement must not be tied to commercial advertising as that would tie its political line. A successful paper could only succeed by having deep roots in every factory, estate and branch of the labour movement.

By Dave Farrar

Above: *The Herald*, even in 1924 able to publish a sympathetic obituary of Lenin. Below: *The Sun*, disgusting anti-working class drivel which supposedly took over from *The Herald*.

WEST MIDLANDS - Industry butchered

APPARENTLY, it is not only riot-torn Merseyside which warrants its own minister in the form of Michael Heseltine.

The Tories recently appointed Junior Industry spokesman John Butcher minister responsible for the Tory-torn West Midlands.

Butcher was detailed to spend 1½ days every week in Birmingham attempting to stem the battering the region has received at the hands of the recession and Tory monetarism. Some 300,000 jobs have been lost in the past 3 years and unemployment has trebled to almost 17%!

Today, the once prosperous West Midlands has the lowest after tax incomes in the country, according to a government report. Only Northern Ireland has lower after tax incomes in the whole of the UK.

Poverty in the West Midlands has become an accepted feature of life, with recent figures showing 1 in 3 people in the area on or near the official poverty line. The number is even higher in areas like Wolverhampton where 40% of the population battle with poverty.

The fact that West Midlands unemployment has shot up virtually overnight and has no traditional

character can be highlighted particularly by the number of people building up mortgage arrears and claiming rate rebates. According to a national Building Society, the number of mortgage arrears in Birmingham increased ten fold between 1979 and 1982.

The number of people claiming rate rebates in the conurbation has increased by 28% over the last year. In reality the figure is probably much higher since it takes well over a year simply to get a rebate claim processed at the present time.

One of the biggest headaches the newly unemployed have is existing debts at the

time of being made redundant. The Citizen's Advice Bureaux in the region have been swamped with people seeking advice on debt problems. Some 14,000 people sought advice on debts last year, with debt arrears totalling £9 million. This figure is estimated to rise to £21 million next year.

Does the special Minister for the West Midlands, mean that the Tories at last realise that their policies are ruining the lives of working people and are looking to make amends? No, you've got it, with next month's General Election in her mind Thatcher was well aware that the next government will

need to win the support of Midlands workers in order to get into power.

The West Midlands, buffering the North and South, has traditionally acted as a barometer to the outcome of a General Election. The Tories are anxious to hang on to marginals like Selly Oak, Yardley, Bromsgrove, Aldridge and Brownhills, Meriden and Coventry South West (John Butcher's constituency), in order that they stand a chance of winning the election.

However, no matter if the Tories had sent twenty ministers, their tinkering could have done little to restore the West Midlands to

its former glory. During Thatcher's Government workers have witnessed the loss of 25% of the areas manufacturing base.

For this reason Midlands workers will need to be convinced that a future Labour Government would have the policies to tackle the crisis in capitalism, and that doesn't mean, treating a critically ill patient with aspirin. On the basis of a campaign and bold socialist policies, West Midlands workers will be convinced that Labour deserves their support.

By Les Kuriata
Ladywood LPYS

Local Elections

LIVERPOOL SHOWS THE WAY

Workers throughout Britain will gain a tremendous boost from the brilliant victory of Labour in Liverpool, which the enemies of the labour movement and their right-wing echoes regard as the capital city of the "Militant Tendency".

Throughout town halls and committee rooms last Thursday night, workers celebrated the trouncing of the Liverpool Liberals and the vote of confidence in socialist policies. Labour workers roared with enthusiasm as the news arrived that Labour had won Liverpool.

The Labour Party gained 11 seats—10 from the Liberals and 1 from the SDP—and didn't lose a single one! The Tory leader, Reg Flude, suffered the fate his national hero, Thatcher, deserves—he lost his own seat to Labour in Warbreck.

But a clear lesson from the result is that it was not due to a collapse of the Liberal vote but a massive boost to Labour's vote—a result of enthusiasm generated by socialist policies and consistent work, particularly under the impetus of *Militant* supporters in the CLPs.

Labour's vote increased by an incredible 40%—22,000 extra votes for policies such as: no privatisation, a £2 rent cut, no spending cuts, a massive housing repairs programme, 6,000 new council houses, 4,000 new council jobs, and no rate rises to compensate for Tory/Liberal cuts.

Up until 1964, Liverpool was controlled by the Tories! In 1973, Labour's right wing lost control of the council after they had implemented vicious Tory rent rises under the Housing Finance Act. Since then the Liberals have been in various alliances with the Tories, cutting 5,000 council jobs in four years, giving Liverpool the highest rents of any city outside London, and closing schools—including Croxteth Comprehensive, which Labour is pledged to now reopen.

Perhaps the final straw for workers was the privatisation plans of the Liberal/Tory alliance.

But it wasn't just local issues that impelled workers to vote—hatred of Thatcherism was clear to see on the doorsteps, and when *Militant* supporters and other left wingers explained that a Labour administration should not just be diluted version of the other parties, workers responded.

By Richard Venton

It was disillusionment with Labour's right wing that led to the Liberal's past victories. Feeling the earth shift underneath them, the Liberals resorted to some of the filthiest smears against *Militant* and socialism since the red-scare Zinoviev letter in 1924!

In Melrose ward, Pauline Dunlop was the object of hysterical smears, as a "communist" etc, with a leaflet produced by the Liberals, giving the appearance of coming from *Militant*, preaching chaos and upheaval—"As followers of Karl Marx, *Militant* believes that out of chaos will come revolution". The result? Labour's vote rose from 1,980 last year to 2,580!

Social Democratic Party vanish

In the same seat, Terry McDonald, "star" of many scurrilous press attacks on *Militant*, and defector to the SDP, proclaiming *Militant* "extremism" was unpopular, received the gesture he deserves—two fingers and 75 votes! The SDP were equally squashed elsewhere, showing the potential for Labour in a general election, and how votes would polarise, if Labour offered clear socialist policies.

The Liberals out-did themselves in gutter politics. In one area, they produced polling-day leaflets with pictures of the Pope, with false claims that Labour would close Catholic schools. Several nuns told comrades they had come out to vote Labour, because the Liberals "dared to insult His Holiness" by using his name for cynical manoeuvres!

In Netherby, Derek Hatton increased his share of the vote from 66% to 77%, by 700 votes, despite 1,000

Labour voters leaving the area because of the Labour Party's success in getting horrific slum-blocks demolished. A campaigning, socialist candidate won increased backing.

Throughout the Broad Green constituency, where Terry Fields is the working class, socialist PPC, Labour scored its most impressive victories. The turnout there was 44%, and Labour's vote increased by about 50%.

In Broad Green ward, Labour gained the seat from the Liberals, winning an extra 1,000 voters, a 60% increase! Jimmy Dillon and the party worked on local issues, whereas the party branch had been a local shell in the past, not canvassing some areas since 1970, until *Militant* supporters organised the party in the last two years.

In Old Swan, another Labour gain, Labour's vote increased by 800. Even where Labour didn't win, *Militant*'s policies made big inroads into the Liberals' vote. In Childwall, the more "affluent" area of Broad Green constituency, Labour's vote went up by 60%! And in Kensington, Alan Fogg only failed to gain the seat of the Liberals by 24 votes. Both the Labour and Liberal vote rose 500, and the area was like a sea of red, with 800 poster requests.

In Dingle, where *Militant* supporters and local authority workers have turned the party outwards into a cam-



Terry Fields, Labour candidate for Broad Green. Labour votes in area went up by 50%.

Why No Catholic Can Vote Labour On Thursday

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT JUST 12 MONTHS AFTER THE HOLY FATHER'S HISTORIC VISIT, THE LABOUR PARTY WOULD WANT TO CLOSE OUR CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS... — BUT THEY DO!



DON'T LET THEM DO IT.



Ronnie Flood, born and bred locally, an old boy of SFX, says he will fight to give his children and your children the right to attend a school of your choice.

THE ARCHBISHOP SAID AT FIRST HE THOUGHT IT WAS A HOAX -

but it's true

That's why no self respecting Christian should ever vote Labour again. Labour's Militants not only want to close our schools, but would ban religion as well. You can by signing below against the closure of church schools, and put it in the box when you come to vote.

Sign here -

Turn the tide on the militants VOTE RONNIE FLOOD

AND SAVE OUR SCHOOLS!

paingnig branch, the Labour vote rocketed from 1,839 to 2,917, gaining the seat.

In Arundel, an important seat to hold, regarded as a key target by the Liberals, Labour's vote rose winning by 59 votes. This underlined how scandalous it was that the "Communist" Party chose to stand in that seat—where they got a derisory 63

votes, and almost cost Labour the seat.

In Clubmoor, Labour gained the seat which neighbours the Croxteth school. Elation filled the school that night, with dancing in the streets!

The Liberals and the kept press of the ruling class are horrified at these results. Sir Trevor Jones, Liverpool leader of the Liberals; "I am disappointed for the city; many members of *Militant* Tendency have been elected".

But Labour's right wing were equally flabbergasted. Roy Hattersley professed to be "Astounded". Jim Mortimer tried to dodge the issue. And no wonder!

Now for victory in the general election!

Labour's ranks have heard the repeated claims from the party leadership that "*Militant* loses elections, that's why we have to expel them". The working class of Liverpool could not have refuted this nonsense in clearer language!

Contrast the results in Liverpool, the strongest area of *Militant* influence of any

city, with the failure of Labour in Birmingham, where the leader of the Labour group, is Clive Wilkinson, who helped set up the Campaign for Social Democracy which preceded the SDP split. Or with Grimsby, where Austin Mitchell is MP, and where he spends considerable time to pour abuse on the heads of Marxists. Or nearby Rochdale, where instead of removing the Lib/Tory alliance, Labour actually lost 2 seats to the Tories and 1 to the SDP!

The election results, based on policies determined by a democratic, annual, municipal policy conference, organised by the District Labour Party, lay the basis for a victory in the general election. In Broad Green, the most marginal seat, Terry Fields could become MP. Workers should now come into the Labour Party and help secure a Labour victory.

Above all, *Militant* supporters throughout the country should hold their heads high. A socialist programme is not only for the most active, conscious layers of the working class. With hard, consistent explanation, ordinary working class people will enthusiastically vote for such policies, and that will pave the road to a Labour victory in a general election, in all the Liverpool seats and throughout Britain.

Photo: Denis Doran (Militant)

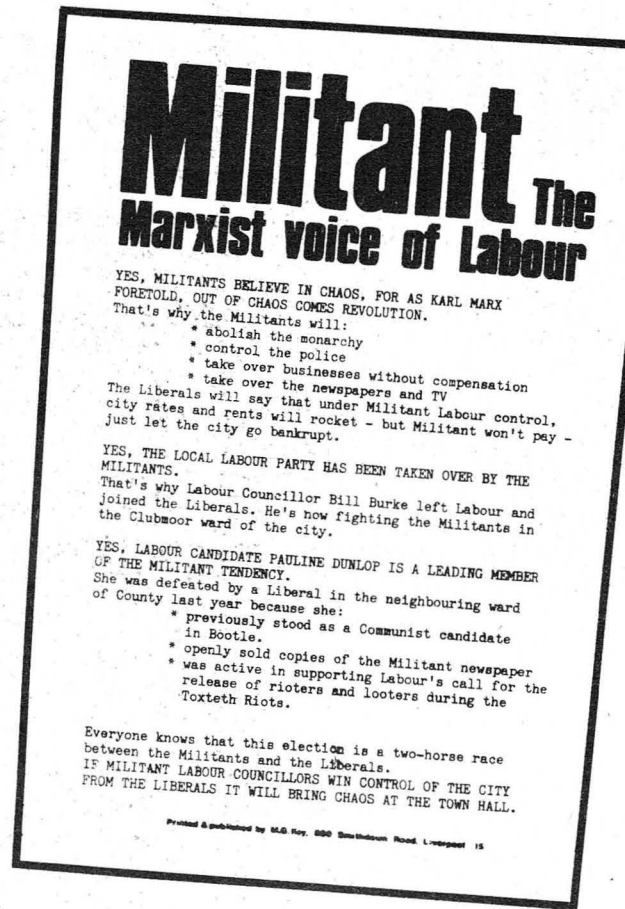
Alliance Smear Campaign

THE LIBERALS in Liverpool tried to cling on to power last week by using the most blatant ever 'anti-reds' campaign directed against *Militant* supporters in the Labour Party.

Their attempts to cynically exploit the religious beliefs of many Liverpoolians, by the most shameful campaign of lies and smears, however, blew right up in their faces.

One of the Liberal leaflets carried a picture of the Pope, under the heading, "Why No Catholic can vote Labour on Thursday". "Who would have thought," the leaflets went on, "that just 12 months after the Holy Father's historic visit, the Labour Party would want to close our Christian schools..." Who indeed? Not the workers of Liverpool who voted the Liberals out of power!

"The archbishop said at first he thought it was a hoax," they added, as if to give their horror story more authority, "but it's true." Voters could have been forgiven for thinking the leaflet itself was a hoax,



because it certainly wasn't taken seriously.

Next to a photograph of the Liberal candidate (naturally, with his children

in his arms) was the imposing message... "That's why no self-respecting Christian should ever vote Labour again. Labour's Militants

want to close our schools, but would ban religion as well."

Apart from this disgraceful attempt to stir up sectarian politics in Liverpool, the Liberals produced many other anti-*Militant* leaflets. One, directed against Labour candidate Pauline Dunlop, even announced to the shocked nation that she "openly sold copies of the *Militant* newspaper."

Liberals insulted voters' intelligence

As in other cases, this leaflet trotted out the worst kind of ludicrous accusations insulting the intelligence of the voters in the area, that "Militants believe in Chaos, for, as Karl Marx foretold, out of Chaos comes Revolution." Throughout the whole campaign, the Liberals conducted the most vicious

smear campaign against the Labour Party, and *Militant* in particular. *Militant* was no side issue for them, it was the main issue, featured prominently in all their propaganda.

The smears, however, made no impact at all on the workers of Liverpool, who were fed up with the Liberals—in reality Tory—policies in the city. Elsewhere in the country, candidates of the Alliance tried the same red-scare tactics, with similar results.

A Bradford Alliance leaflet announced in its heading, "Militant controls Bradford North Labour," but that did not stop the workers in the area voting Labour and taking seats from their opponents.

Even in the small town of Sittingbourne in Kent, the local Liberals couldn't resist a call to "stop the extremists". "The gentleman selling his nasty little paper," it said, referring to *Militant* sellers, "is merely the tip of a very rotten iceberg." Such compliments, of course, will only spur on *Militant* supporters in the town to be even more "gentlemanly"... and sell more papers.

By Militant reporters

ST HELENS: Labour right v Labour left

IN ST HELENS, Merseyside, one Labour councillor, Councillor Pickavance, was deselected by his Labour Party branch in favour of Chris Walsh, a left-wing member of his branch. Pickavance decided therefore to stand as 'Independent Labour' in the same ward, Blackbrook.

But after sending in his nomination papers, he was then short-listed by the Labour Party branch in another ward, Grange Park, where he was selected and duly sent in his nomination papers. When it was brought to the attention of the District Labour Party that he was nominated to stand in two wards, one as a Labour Party candidate and one as Independent Labour, they informed Grange Park ward that Pickavance could not stand as a Labour Party candidate, so at another special selection meeting George Camp was chosen to fight the ward as the official Labour candidate.

Unfortunately, some Labour Party members still supported Pickavance, as did the leader of the Labour group! Nevertheless, the District Labour Party decided that someone who had accepted a nomination as an independent candidate was not fit to fight a seat for Labour and so they decided to go ahead with their own nominee. The election, in Grange Park, therefore, took on all the appearances of two official Labour candidates fighting it out—both using Labour colours, Labour posters, and Labour election literature! The choice was between left Labour and right wing Labour.

The results of the election prove that, given the choice, workers are not easily fooled: G Camp (Official Labour)—1,071; J G Craney (SDP/Lib)—289; E I Jameson (Conservative)—775; N Pickavance (Labour)—589.

By Tony Harvey
(St Helens Labour Party)

WHY WORKERS VOTED LABOUR

The interview below with Mr and Mrs Brownlees shows clearly why workers rejected the smears and voted in a Labour council.

Q: What is your opinion of housing in the area?

Mr B: Our flat is really small, with five children we're overcrowded. We have applied to be moved but there's no chance of that. There's no sink in our bathroom and the kitchen is too small to move in. Even in prisons, the new ones, they have sinks.

We get nothing for the rates we pay. The damp's very bad in the flats at the top. Sometimes if you're lucky they'll camp you in a flat lower down, but there's no chance of moving into a house in the Vauxhall area.

All Trevor Jones and the Liberals want to do is move people out. They're forcing people to leave the area because there's no housing being built, but people don't want to leave the area because it's a good strong working-class community.

The old people are scared to go anywhere else. There's people on our landing, and this is true, for four years they haven't been downstairs because they can't climb the five landings of stairs.

These are people who have been loyal to the Corporation for 40 years, never missed a day's rent, people who are proud and have worked all their lives, and they can't even get down to the shops now.

Q: What do you think should be done about housing in the future?

Mr B: We need a Labour controlled council. They've got a policy of building more houses, they've promised us houses. We believe that if Trevor Jones and the Liberals have their way

there'll be no working-class people left in the area. There'll be no community left, so the only way is to get the Liberals out.

The Liberals don't plan to build houses for us. They're selling the flats to Barratts who do them out as luxury flats which are way out of the price range of anyone round here. So when people get fed up with the damp and the stairs and move out we lose the flat.

I mean, people get fed up. They can't take any more. The council don't even do the repairs. You can wait up to two years for them to repair a broken door, and they're only cheap doors, made out of cardboard and plywood.

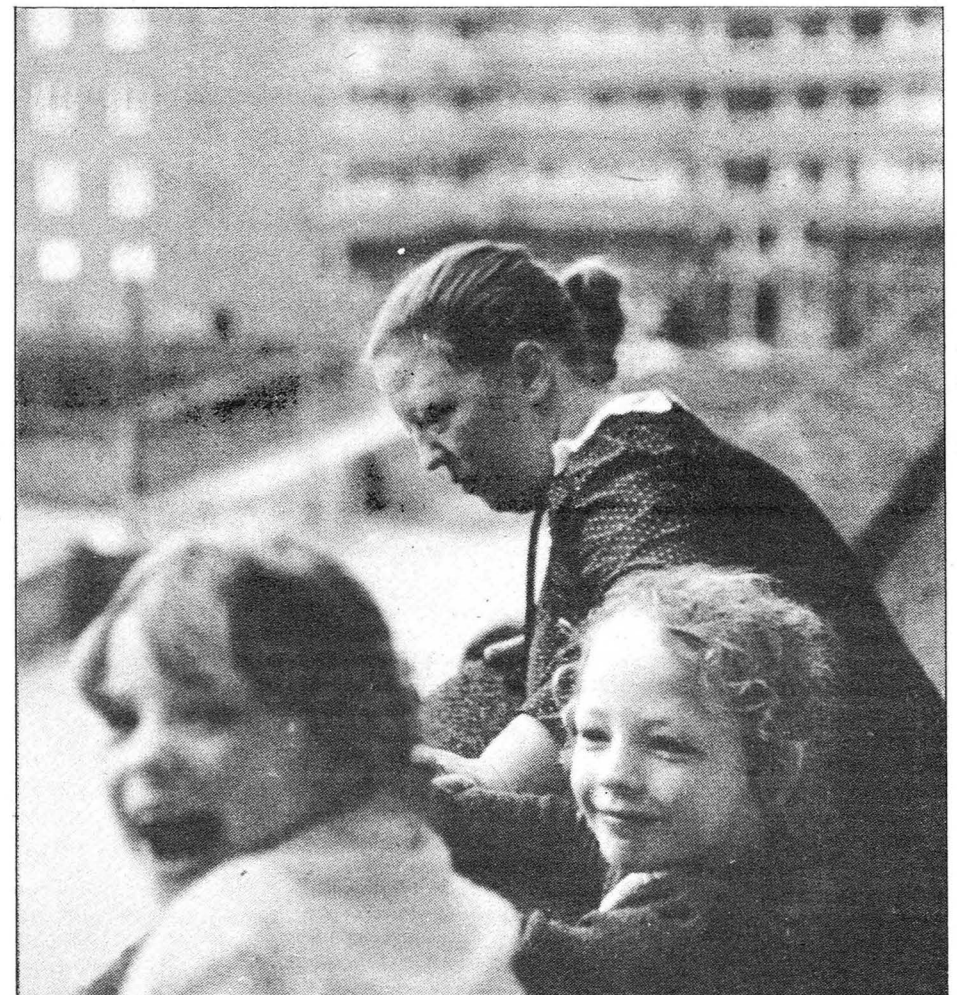
Labour have said they'll knock the flats down and build for us on the land, reclaim the land. They're our only hope.

Q: What are the facilities like in the area?

Mr B: They're very bad, there's nothing in the area. Everything's being taken away and nothing's being put back. But it's only now that people are starting to fight back. They're starting to fight for a Labour government, because people will only take so much.

I've been out of work for three years. The first year's not too bad, but the longer you go the worse it gets. There's no work round here and if you do hear of work it usually means travelling right out of the area, out of Liverpool and the travelling expenses use up what money you make—it's bad.

The shops around here and in town won't let you



Mrs Brownlees and two of her children on their estate in Vauxhall, Liverpool. "Can we have our new house now?" asked Patti, the youngest of the children, when having their photos taken.

have HP because the area has a bad name.

Mrs B: We can't really use the shops round here, because they have a monopoly they're too expensive. So we have to go all the way to town for our shopping and walk back. And we lost the launderette through the ring road.

Everyone round here used that launderette and they demolished it. They promised us another, but it never came.

Q: What do you think of the YOPs schemes?

Mrs B: I think they're disgusting. They say they're

training them but there's no training at all. They're just using them to replace full-timers.

They work all hours for £25 a week. It shouldn't be allowed. It's just cheap labour.

We've got a daughter working in the canteen at Brookside. When she first went there she was promised, if she liked it and did well, it would be made a permanent job. But it's the same old story.

The end comes in two weeks and we asked about a permanent job. They said there's nothing down for her. And she really got in-

terested and worked hard.

Q: Do you think the people will fight against what's happening?

Mr B: We do fight. We are fighting now for these houses. I think the people round here are coming to realise it affects them and their children. So if you want to get anything you've got to fight.

You've got to fight like hell to get anything out of them, because if we don't we'll be in the same position twenty years from now.

Interview by Sheila Boyd
(Riverside LPYS)

ITALY

Historic opportunity for Left

ITALY'S capitalist politicians have failed in their frantic attempts to avoid calling a general election after the Socialists withdrew from the coalition government of Amintore Fanfani. The elections take place in June.

The Socialist Party leaders realised they had little alternative but to withdraw. Big clashes are pending between workers and bosses, and they are anticipating the loud demands which would have come from the workers themselves.

In the last year Italy has seen three governments, each one weaker than the one before. The ruling class can no longer put off the evil day of reckoning with all the problems they have created in Italian society by staggering from one political crisis to another as they have done over the past thirteen years.

For over two years, the right wing Socialist Party leadership has been willing to fill ministerial posts to guarantee what Craxi the PSI leader, calls the "governability" of Italy, but guaranteeing votes in Parliament to keep the main capitalist party, the Christian Democrats in a majority is one thing. Guaranteeing social peace between the classes is different altogether.

Again and again in the last twelve months, workers have disregarded the presence of a few PSI leaders in government, and gone on strike and on to the streets to defend jobs and living standards.

In June 1982, the bosses' organisation, Confindustria gave six months notice of intention to withdraw the 1975 agreement on the sliding scale of wages. As the news came over the radio, workers in the factories came out on strike in spite of their leaders' appeals for "calm and moderation".

Union leaders were forced to call a general strike for the following day, which attracted 200,000 workers on the Milan demonstration and half a million on the national protest in Rome three weeks later.

The idea behind the six months' notice was to give workers time to tire of their struggles and for their anger to burn out. The union leaders' strategy of struggle (a long series of one day strikes and other disjointed protests) looked at one stage as if it might fulfill the bosses hopes.

But at the eleventh hour, just days before the withdrawal of the agreement was to occur, a tremendous strike wave broke out, not called by the national trade union leaders, but under the leadership of the Factory Councils

This movement started in Genoa and Southern Italy where, in a number of towns workers "occupied" local stations to block railway traffic. The daily paper *Repubblica* reported that in



Part of a workers' demonstration in Milan. While the ruling class are divided, the working class have been in constant struggle.

Palermo, Sicily struggles had reached the same level as 1968 but this time workers had less faith in their leaders.

At this point both the bosses and their government, frightened by the workers' strength and militancy decided they would have to sign an agreement as soon as possible. The Christian Democratic Minister of Labour, Scolti, intervened to conduct negotiations and the bosses had to make do with a cut of between 15% and 18% in the sliding scale instead of the 50% they had asked for.

If the workers' leaders had shown just one tenth the combativity of their rank and file, it would not only have been possible to block the attack altogether, but also to go on the offensive, to link up economic and political questions (there were Christian Democratic workers on strike and in demonstrations alongside PCI (Communists) and Socialists and prepare the way for a Communist/Socialist government with a programme of socialist transformation.

It is with this background that the Socialist Party leadership has brought down three governments in nine months. Last August PSI members and voters were perplexed when their leaders brought down one government only to enter another exactly similar weeks later.

Again in October, a government led by Republican Spadolini was brought down, only for the Socialists to enter a government led by Fanfani, a right wing Christian Democrat and ex-fascist who wanted a strong government as a last

attempt to get tough with the trade unions.

Fanfani's plan was all in vain, and his ministry was described by a leading economic magazine *Mondo Economico* as the "roar of the mouse". He had been reduced from lion to rodent by the mobilised workers!



Socialist leader Craxi

Since the January agreement on the sliding scale the government became increasingly suspended in mid air. The Fanfani government had failed to solve the bosses' problems by clobbering the workers' movement and was in no position to persuade workers to accept sacrifices.

The country's economic situation has got worse and worse. In order to make agreement possible on the sliding scale, a large hole was created in the state's finances through concessions to both workers and capitalists. Five or six "limits" to public expenditure have been fixed and as rapidly exceeded. Nobody believes in the 13% limit to inflation the government set for this year.

The government forced through a number of clearly unworkable economic

measures with the Chancellor of the Exchequer admitting that the political conditions for further austerity did not exist.

The pressure was on. The head of the Confindustria came out in favour of a general election while the PSI realised how high a price they would pay if they stayed in coalition with the Christian Democrats as their economic measures got more reactionary.

The Christian Democrats (DC) themselves must be amazed to have stayed in office through 30 years of misrule and corruption. Over the last 14 years of continuous struggle, the DC leaders have discovered that their main asset is the ambiguity and confusion of the workers' leaders' political position.

The DC leader De Mita has been taunting PSI leader Craxi as to his alternative. The only alternative that will have any credibility is left (PSI/PCI) unity on a socialist programme. Otherwise after 2½ years of class collaboration in capitalist government, the bringing down of Fanfani risks being seen as just another opportunist move.

Over the years both PSI and PCI leaders have tried to avoid left unity, as they are afraid of the enormous mass pressure the working class would put on such a government, but with increasingly reactionary policies from the bosses parties and pressure from their ranks, initial moves to improve relations have started.

The conditions for socialist transformation are ripe. The working class have been in enormous struggle, while most of the middle

class do not support the Confindustria. The capitalist class themselves can rarely have been more divided.

Eighteen months ago, the more far sighted representative of the ruling class caused a furore over the P2 scandal, hoping to cut down to size the more reactionary section of the ruling class, and the CDs whose corruption and obstinate hanging on to power at all costs put at risk the entire capitalist class.

The scandal involved high ranking representatives of the state, including judges and generals (would be perpetrators of a military coup). The judges, tending towards the conservative section of the ruling class, are still being investigated by the more "progressive" magistrates, while the judges counter this with allegations of corrupt use of expense accounts by the magistrates!

This almost farcical quarrel mirrors the split between the bosses who favour an authoritarian solution to their problems and those who see dangers in workers' reaction to this and prefer to try involving CPI leaders in the government. They hope this way to persuade workers to accept sacrifices and demoralise the working class before going directly on the offensive.

The Italian bosses have fought shy of inviting the PCI leaders into government, but not because they are afraid of them. PCI leader Berlinguer has come out for **denationalisation** of part of the Italian economy! They are, though, afraid of pressure by workers on such a government and also the political consequences of Berlinguer discrediting

himself within government.

But Communist workers' patience with their leaders is already beginning to wear thin after the years of "National Solidarity" during which Berlinguer proposed economic sacrifice to the workers, and the Historic Compromise (ie. governmental coalition) to the Christian Democracy.

For the first time, at the recent Communist Party conference the vote for the official resolution drawn up by the party leadership was not unanimous.

A united campaign for a left government would gain enormous support. After the struggle for work contracts and over the sliding scale, many workers who have been apolitical have begun to look for political solutions to their problems. In the last phase of the sliding scale fight, PCI members, for the first time in many years, were shouting for nationalisation in the Milan demonstration.

Public opinion polls show a large fall in Christian Democrat votes but a smaller rise in votes for the left, and a big increase in abstentions and non-voters. **A clear socialist policy could win most of these to the left.**

Italian capitalism can offer nothing but hardship, but unless a real alternative is presented then even the enormous capacity for struggle of the Italian workers may for a time exhaust itself. The June elections represent an historic opportunity for the workers parties to fight for a socialist answer to workers' problems.

By a PSI member, Milan

Union activists question leaders

THIS is the second and concluding part of an interview by Militant with JOHN REIMANN a labour activist in the American construction industry.

THERE HAS been a drop in union membership in the US both in total numbers and in percentage.

First of all there has been a deindustrialisation of America, with industries where unions were strong leaving the country. In other cases you get "runaway shops" where companies leave union areas to move to the Sunshine states, (the deep South) or to a non-union area.

But on top of these factors there has been the weakness of the strategy of the union leaders. Workers say, why should I fight to join a union which can't defend the living standards of the members it has already got?

The leaders organise totally around legal steps and procedures within the terms of the national Labor Relations Act. Our union is one of the biggest and most influential in the building trades, it's one of the old craft based unions in existence since 1881.

One of our biggest problems in the construction industry has been the tremendous growth of non-unionism in the last five to ten years. The approach of the leadership has been to make union contracts competitive with non-union so they can underbid. In other words to hold down our wages and conditions.

Our contract was due to expire in June this year but about a year ago they reopened the contact with a proposal to give away our off-Fridays. Every other Friday we don't work, so we're on a nine-day fortnight. That came up for vote of our membership, we campaigned pretty heavily against it and in my own area it was voted down by a five to one majority. Overall it was also lost, though not so heavily. They then came back to us

with another contract with slightly less concessions and that was passed, though we opposed it.

Another area has been unionising non-union contractors. We called for mass picketing and directly contacting the non-union carpenters to show them the union was there for them also and urge them to walk off demanding their contractors sign a standard agreement.

The union will make sure the job stays closed down until the contractor signs up. The approach of the leaders is to try to persuade the contractor he will make more money if he signs a union agreement because he can get a more skilled workforce.

I have been involved in a running battle with the leadership for about ten years and it shows what happens to some people who get prominent in the ranks of the 'dissidents'.

I've been brought up on charge within the union three times and twice more they tried. If you are convicted

Struggles for union democracy, like this one by the steelworkers in 1976, are growing.



**WHO ASKS YOU?
When Decisions Are
Made In The USWA**

you can't run for office for maybe five years.

The last time I was convicted the appeal went to the general office but my local stood behind me and sent a letter to other locals urging support. About thirty different locals in the USA and Canada sent letters to general office saying the charges didn't have any basis and the charges were thrown out.

That was before our convention where we sent four delegates and myself and another guy I work closely with were elected. There's never any opposition to the hand-picked candidates for national office so I stood for general president as a protest vote endorsed by my local and a couple of others.

There was no chance of winning. A few people tried to persuade me not to run then the threats started, telling people it wasn't safe to be around here, that I wouldn't get out of Chicago alive etc. People started to melt away. The police were even called.

The more usual thing is heckling of people who try to speak up against the system. You have to have a lot of drive and a lot of support locally to fight in conventions where 99% of the audience may be hostile.

We also have a certain amount of corruption. There

was a recent case with one guy taking bribes from non-union contractors to keep pickets off a firm, and a leading prosecution witness in the case committed suicide by hanging.

I would stress, however, that not all unions are violent or corrupt. And there

is now widespread dissension. Not all of the 'dissidents' know where they're going exactly, but throughout the movement at local level people are looking for a change and getting in to office. People like me are not alone.

The beggars of Boston

I RECENTLY visited the United States on a student exchange programme lasting three months.

What I witnessed there was quite a shock. I stayed in the Boston area, and one day while in the centre of Boston I stumbled across some kind of dole queue. One man was nearly crying and I heard him talking to himself, he said, "I've got a wife and two kids, God how can I feed them?"

On numerous occasions I was stopped and asked for spare "quarters" by people begging in the streets. I had never seen so many people begging in the streets before.

A Boston socialist explained to me that you can donate blood freely or be paid for it. Many children, she explained, have died because even blood transfusions cost money, and if they have any blood diseases and their parents are not rich enough for a good insurance cover then they die.

A fellow student one day visited a health centre for treatment, and while waiting to be seen by a doctor a tramp was brought in off the street. Obviously with only a few hours left to live a nurse put him on a stretcher, shortly afterwards a doctor forced him off saying that paying customers may need it!

Americans could not believe that Britain has a 'free' health and education service. It is incredible that the richest country on earth cannot give its children free education.

The class division in the United States was clear.



A strike in Boston last year. Unemployment has hit US cities very hard.

There does seem to be a growing awareness amongst American workers.

The number of people that I met that were socialists but didn't realise it was incredible. A Labor Party must be set up by the trade unions. Indications are that such a party could attract as much as 60% of the vote.

As one American said to me, "If we don't act fast and explain the truth about socialism and get our Labor Party, then it is not only the American workers who will suffer but the whole of humanity".

**By Edward Devine
(Bradford West CLP)**

PHILIPPINES Tortured for profit

AN INVESTMENT of £6,400,000 of British money in the Philippines was announced on 5 January 1983 by Neil Marten, then Minister for Overseas Development.

The money will go to finance an oil palm plantation in Mindanao, the second largest island in the Philippines. It will be jointly controlled by the Philippine National Corporation (NDC) and Guthrie's, a Malaysian company, in a new company—NDC-

Guthrie Plantations Incorporated (NGPI).

In order to clear the site for the plantation 3,000 peasants have been evicted without proper compensation. To quell any resistance NGPI have used the Lost Command, a para-military organisation notorious for its brutality.

The Lost Command has been implicated in murders, rape, extortion, bombings and even massacres of Filipino workers and peasants. Assurances have been sought of President Marcos of the Philippines by Human Rights groups,

British Labour MPs that the Lost Command be withdrawn and conditions improved for the workers before the remainder of the loan is paid at the end of June this year.

It appears, however, that the Lost Command is still well entrenched in the area. Indeed, it is possible that the Lost Command have the backing of Marcos himself! Colonel Carlos Lademora, leader of the Lost Command, claims that his orders come from Malacanang (the presidential palace).

The plantation will not benefit the peasants and



President Marcos

workers of this area. Having lost their land they will have to rely on the company for their living and prospects look bleak. There is no trade union and wages are less than £2 per day.

The people of Mindanao have fought bravely for many years against the multi-national take-over of their land, tens of thousands have been killed and countless others uprooted from their homes.

Many Filipino workers, battling heroically for democratic rights, have been imprisoned and tortured. Fellow trade unionists in Bri-

tain can help them in their struggles. Britain is the third largest foreign investor in the Philippines with over 50 companies (e.g. Dunlop, Unilever, Tootal) taking advantage of the cheap labour and repressive labour laws.

Find out if the company you work for invests in the Philippines and get your union to contact The Philippines Support Group, BM Box 758, London WC1N 3XX.

**By Pauline Wardleworth
(Dagenham CLP)**

Letters

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

MILITANT, Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN



TGWU official Buckle and Cowley workers during the dispute.

Photo: Militant

After Cowley...

Gloves off

Dear Comrades

I largely agree with your analysis of the Cowley strike but a couple of points need adding.

Firstly, Cowley was a harbinger of future struggles. It also, however, reflected that future strikes will begin with the gloves off. It reflects a deep crisis which is bound to produce fierce industrial struggles.

Secondly, Cowley brought out the burning need of a leadership. Duffy, and to a lesser extent Evans, were prepared to concede the six

minutes in return for a small amount of money immediately. However, the shop stewards forced them both to retreat in the face of a possible revolt.

The rank and file made attempts to bring its national leadership into line. This is the first step in the transformation of the trade unions, the next step will be the changing of the old leadership.

Cowley shows in practice that the working class will struggle, and will test and transform its organisations.

Yours fraternally
Ray Physick
Sunderland

Unpaid labour

Dear Comrades

Just a footnote to the coverage of the Cowley dispute. Did anyone notice that it was reported that the Cowley workers lost £400 in wages during the dispute and the management claimed to have lost £90m in lost production.

These statistics show that the workers are only paid 3% of production costs in basic wages and the fantastic profits that these workers produce for BL each week. Where do these extra millions go each week?

Yours fraternally
Dave Farrar
Bromley By Bow
Labour Party
Tower Hamlets

A word from our 'leader'

Dear Comrades

The Times said that Terry Duffy at the conclusion of the BL Cowley dispute, "welcomed the decision to go back to work not only for Cowley workers but also for thousands more working in component factories". "There is never any victory from strikes only defeats for management and workers. They lost production and our people lost money." I agree, there will never be any victory for our members as long as people like Duffy "lead" our union.

Yours fraternally
Nigel Thomas
AUEW No 10
(personal capacity)

Working with the unemployed

Dear Comrades,

In November 1982 unemployed members of Bridlington Labour Party began a drive to give a voice to the 2,500 unemployed in the area.

A regular newsletter, *Dole Q*, is distributed amongst the unemployed to help them understand their rights and current plight under the capitalist system.

This has become so successful that we are now accepted as an unofficial authority on all matters concerning employment. For example a special explanatory leaflet was issued on the new

housing benefit scheme which had been causing confusion amongst claimants and counter staff. This leaflet is now being used by the housing benefit officers to explain the situation properly.

This shows how the Young Socialist movement can be actively used to help the unemployed, and how we have become respected by the local community, trades council and local authorities.

We hope that our success can be followed in other areas to ensure that the ideas and fighting spirit of the LPYS reaches the unemployed, who in Bridlington now eagerly await each new issue of *Dole Q*.

Yours fraternally,
Kevan Wilkinson
Bridlington LPYS

What the papers say

Dear Comrades

While canvassing in the local council elections, an old bloke said to me that he'd voted Labour all his life, but he's not going to vote this time.

I asked him why. He said that it was because these young people in the Labour Party were calling on the

Wrong tactic?

Dear Militant

I was somewhat confused by last week's *Militant* (29.4.83).

The front page encouraged socialists to vote Labour yet your inside editorial argued that the re-election of

IRA to shoot 'our' soldiers in N Ireland.

He was so disgusted that he said he probably wouldn't vote Labour again, despite my arguments that this wasn't LPYS or LP policy, and was being used by the Tory press to distort LPYS policies.

Need I say more?

Yours fraternally
Simon Heather
Solihull LP, Birmingham

the Tories would entail "a big increase in the struggles and strikes of organised workers...perhaps posing the question of a general strike." Isn't this what we all really want?

Yours fraternally
Newcastle Poly student

The great escape

Dear Comrades

I am concerned about the legislation, the Police Bill which is going through Parliament. The Bill would practically give total control over the working class.

If the police pick you up you're not allowed to contact anyone for 48 hours. So you just disappear for two days without even a phone call.

Even "ET" had better luck. Thank God he was lucky to escape from this earth because look what he would have come across, the two worst people in politics, Maggie Thatcher and Ronnie Reagan.

All I can say is "Long live socialism".

Yours fraternally
Alice Smith
Hayes & Harlington LPYS

Poverty and Wealth

Dear Sir

I want to inform you that you have my strongest support for your paper.

However, being unemployed my friends and I cannot send you any money as we have none.

In fact some of my friends are literally starving. It makes me sick seeing other people (Tories) living in selfish decadence.

Yours faithfully
Martyn Potts
Salop

Till death us do part

Dear Comrades

I was very interested in the article in this week's *Militant*.

The control which Japanese employers have over their workers is even greater than explained in the article. Not only do companies provide dormitories and tied houses for their workers, but when they force them to leave this accommodation, they will very often give them a mortgage at a low rate of interest, yet another way of tying workers to the company.

The "life-time" employment system and the setting of wage levels by seniority mean that workers with company mortgages dare not leave because if they found another job, they would not earn enough to continue paying the mortgage.

Yours fraternally
Susan Wright
Newcastle Central LPYS

Bosses look to the past

Dear Militant

What could better sum up the vile poison of the capitalist press than the Hitler Diaries story? It's like a dog returning to its own vomit. The rich own and control the press, and that same class nurtured and financed Hitler.

It shows that however "democratic" the bosses may be forced to act, dictatorship exercises an incurable fascination over them, as if they were asking themselves, "How could we improve on the old model?" and, "When might it be necessary to use it again...?"

Comradely
P S Mason
Leicester West LPYS

New motivation

Dear Sirs

I have been a regular reader of *Militant* for several months now and am pleased to find at least one weekly paper which I believe is telling me the truth as to how things are in Thatcher's Britain in 1983.

Unfortunately like many of my class I seem to need a massive jolt before I am either activated or motivated.

I believe this is probably because in the past I have supported the Labour Party and been sadly let down by that party being unable to fulfil its election promises, either because the leadership of the party didn't believe in the socialist principles that the party had originally been founded on, or because, having gained the support of the country didn't have the courage of its own convictions to carry them out.

Yours fraternally
Doug Fearn
T&GWU

Write to 'Militant' about your experiences during the election campaign

Socialism wins

Dear Comrades

The opening remarks of David Dimbleby on Newsnight Local Election Special (5.5.83) clearly shows that areas which campaign for bold socialist policies gain votes.

Speaking on Labour's fortunes at the polls he said we had done best in Liverpool, an area where Marxist ideas have a large body of support and worst in Grimsby, home of arch-witch-hunter Austin Mitchell.

Party members will draw their own conclusions as far as claims by the right that socialist ideas lose votes.

Yours fraternally
Martin D Dean
Leeds

Organising Labour

Dear Comrades,

The Yorkshire Labour Party Regional Organiser recently "visited" the Hull area.

The result of that visit was that the LPYS branch, the two Labour Clubs, the Women's Section and the Women's Council all had their delegations to the new Hull North General Management Committee cut from two delegates per organisation to one.

This decision was seen by many as a bureaucratic attempt to stifle the views of these organisations. Fortunately, this decision was overturned at the inaugural meeting of the new constituency.

What must have further alarmed the right wing was that a candidate who supports *Militant* missed the chairmanship by one vote!

Yours fraternally,
Ray Duffill,
Hull North LPYS.



The British Shipbuilders' management have been using the recession to hit at trade union rights. Now the union plan to fight back.

Shipbuilding bosses put pressure on

THE DECISION of shipbuilding unions to consider occupations if any more compulsory redundancies are announced comes after years of management attacks.

British Shipbuilders have not only sacked workers but put more and more pressure on trade union activists.

Two Health and Safety stewards at Swan Hunters yard on Tyneside spoke to a *Militant* reporter at Easter's Labour Party Young Socialists conference about recent incidents.

"One day, a lad came off a boat, obviously upset, and came into the steward's room. He said he'd been booked for having tea at twenty to three, a few minutes before the tea break. The manager who'd booked him then burst into the room and told the lad to go into his office.

"One of the safety reps advised him not to go to the office on his own but wait until the shop steward arrived. At that the manager tells the safety rep 'You get into the office' 'What, are you kidding' 'OK' says the manager, 'stay where you

are' and next morning they're both called up to personnel office.

"The lad who was booked was sacked on the spot and the safety rep got three written warnings on the trot, first for the audacity of advising a worker not to face management alone, second for being in the stewards room when he was 'only' a safety rep and third he shouldn't have been off his job, it didn't matter what important work he was doing.

"So now he's hanging on a limb, with three bookings under his belt. It's like the

yellow card system at football. Four written warnings and you're out. To my mind that was because he was doing too good a job.

"They're using that a lot more now, not so much with shop stewards who are very hard to sack but with Health and Safety reps who are very important in a shipyard. Management look on it as skiving, but I lose £5 or £6 a time every time I go on union business.

"We've raised the question of giving safety reps the same protection as stewards so you can't be transferred if you're doing a good job and

getting to know the problems and you can't be sacked without notifying district officials and so on.

"Management are useless. We've got problems with staggers at present, as management have dropped a clanger and got rid of too many of them, out of 11 squads, only four are left now. Staging is degenerating. We went down to the engine rooms one week, it was so bad, we called an emergency meeting of the safety committee with shop stewards there.

"It was a danger to life and limb. We had everybody

out of the room for a week while emergency staging was done. They're now asking labourers, do you want to train as staggers, but it's not real retraining which is what we're fighting for, it's just learning on the job.

"Some workers say wages and conditions are so bad here that they'd be better off on the dole but then they think, what else is there to do in an area like Wallsend? There's no jobs left. We can't all run sweet shops and bookies!"

STEEL: No more disunity

THE BSC Craftmen strike in South Yorkshire is over, after stewards' recommendations of a return to work were agreed at a mass meeting. A battle has been won, but the war continues.

The strike concerned the so-called "survival plan", which was about survival of capital and not the workforce. We were told from November, that the plan, involving 1,700 job losses in the area was non-negotiable.

We refused to talk on job losses and de-manning, and at a meeting of craftsmen at City Hall, Sheffield, received a mandate to take action if any compulsory redundancies took place, irrespective of union. We have tried to mobilise steel workers across the division, with a mandate to withdraw labour as we know management would try to pick us off one by one.

The crunch came at Aldwarke and Templeborough where there were not enough volunteers for redundancy. On 4 April, ISTC members and craftsmen came out throughout the Rotherham works, although craftsmen at Tinsley Park and Stocksbridge would not accept the mandate for withdrawal of labour.

The secret talks which ended the ISTC strike did not involve us; we were not made party to that agreement. As in November, we



wanted real guarantees that all issues were negotiable, a basic issue of trade union recognition.

Management were not prepared to negotiate on issues as important as shift patterns and manning levels; if they got away with this they could get away with anything. Our full-time officials had to support our right to negotiate on such matters through normal procedure and vitally, the Sheffield AUEW District Committee made the strike official.

Management refused to talk, saying all negotiations would be within the timetable of the plan i.e. totally under duress—and merely said mutuality "could" take

place rather than "would". This was totally unacceptable.

It was the success of the action, the official picket, and escalation to Shepcote Land and Tinsley Park, which forced management to back down, and eventually agree to meet stewards representatives, together with representatives of the craftsmen, nationally.

They agreed to full negotiations through normal procedure while we would merely "take cognisance" of the plan. We made it plain that we would not allow this to short-circuit negotiations procedure and it was agreed that mutuality was guaranteed.

Although a victory has been won, we know the major issue of hard redundancies has still to come as management are committed to obtaining break-even point in certain plants and then giving them away to private owners.

We must guard against dis-unity between plants which threatened the success in the past few weeks. In future, as in the return-to-work meeting, mass meetings for all three works together will be the norm and not separate meetings which had led to dis-unity.

By Charlie Simmons
(Deputy convenor EETPU
BSC Rotherham works,
personal capacity)

Fight the 'slaves charter'

IN LAST week's Militant a construction shop steward at Drax B Power Station in Yorkshire explained the problems caused by the National Engineering Construction Agreement. This week he looks at the effects on his site employing 1,500 workers with just 20 stewards.

To be a steward now makes you a marked man with little chance of future jobs, which are allocated to a number of big contractors, like Babcocks, Aitons and Parsons, and a number of sub-contractors. Union facilities depend on the "grace and favour" of individual contractors.

In total contrast to the past, we are not allowed officially to have a Joint Shop Stewards Committee or any kind of shop stewards meeting unless an outside union full-time official is present.

We have been trying to get the shift system altered. Main shift starts at 6 am., finishing at 2.30pm while back-shift is from 3pm to 12pm. for 4 shifts, and 2pm to 7pm on Fridays. It is difficult to get a linkup between the shifts and act jointly, particularly as men are worn out by shift working, and the site is in the middle of nowhere.

I live in Rotherham, and every morning, myself or other lads take turns to drive 40 miles to the job after getting up at 4 am. According to the Agreement, getting to work is your own problem. We tried to get flexibility for individual firms to work shifts that better suited the men. This was refused on the grounds of the "precedent" it would set in other sites like Windscale.

Another example is bonuses. We work at a cost factor table that if we double normal production we would receive a glorious addition of 85p an hour for doing this. We tried to cut down and work for a rate estimated to be "normal motivated performance" and got threatened with reprisals for so doing.

A key issue for us is severance pay, as we all work on short-term contracts, some as little as 13 weeks. Control over this was effectively scrubbed even before the Agreement. On a multi-million contract we cannot even negotiate our own severance pay. In practice now, the quicker you get the job done, the less severance pay you get.

The Agreement places the bosses in total command, and even minor issues are taken out of the steward's hands. In our site, which is 18 months old, there are no shower facilities, even for ladders working with fibre-

glass and other dangerous materials. No action can be taken over this if we adhere to the agreement. The union reps could not even obtain permission for a shop steward on the site to attend a trade union course, a basic right that was granted to all stewards by an Act of Parliament.

No wonder the lads are totally disillusioned with the unions that are seen as selling us out. We must make the union break completely with this Agreement and restore rights to the rank and file. The power is there in the big sites if used. In fact Drax B is considered to be the test case for the success of the National Agreement. We can start the ball rolling to get rid of it for good.

The anger of the membership has to be channelled in a concerted fight to restore local negotiations and the power of site stewards, a proper shop stewards committee, and the right to negotiate wages and conditions including severance pay. A linkup between all the big nominated sites, party to the National Agreement, is urgently necessary. We can no longer tolerate a slaves' charter that sets the Unions up against their own membership.

By a Drax B Power Station construction shop steward

Industrial Reports

NUPE CONFERENCE

Four years of Thatcherism

FOUR years on the sharp end of Thatcherism is reflected in this year's NUPE Conference agenda.

No section of the union's membership can have any respite until the Tories are kicked out. Wolverhampton General branch pledges to fight them "as long as grass grows and water flows"!

As well as calling for a Labour victory, a dozen branches call for the Labour leaders to stop the witch-hunt, and pledge support for the reinstatement of expelled members.

That our members are still low paid shows up in the largest section of the agenda on wages and conditions.

The leadership of the TUC Health Service Committee in last year's health service dispute, the tactics of a series of one-day strikes and the Regional Days of Action are all bitterly criticised by branches in their resolutions. But the positive sides of the dispute are recognised as well.

The unity that was achieved between the unions, particularly at a local level in Joint Shop Stewards' Committees and Local Coordinating Committees, must be developed and encouraged by our union and the TUC, says the East Dorset Health Branch.

Indeed these bodies which will bear the brunt of future struggles, must be officially recognised and incorporated within the union's structures. Taking this one step further, Hull Hospitals' Central Branch, along with six others, call for serious negotiations to be started with COHSE and other service unions to achieve amalgamation into one NHS union, a step which would greatly increase our strength.

NUPE members still carry bitter memories of the Winter of Discontent against Healey's 5% wages policy in the last year of Labour government. Bexley General spell out "total opposition to any form of wage restraint or incomes policy under any government" and along with other resolutions call for a

national minimum wage of £100 a week tied to the cost of living index agreed by trade unions, and a 35-hour week for all our members.

Whilst the union has a policy of opposition to all privatisation, and the EC will sanction official action taken against the threat, the Conference must develop a more worked out and coherent strategy to defeat private contractors.

Unions must not enter into tendering for their own members' jobs, or agree to job losses or poorer conditions to remove the threat of contracting out. Our membership must be alerted to the dangers facing us, particularly as industrial action will probably have to be taken to save our jobs.

Such strikes must be given widespread support through inter-union committees, and at Divisional and National level. The successful strike actions in Bury and Liverpool have forced Tory councils to back off privatising the bins. This is an example of what united and solid industrial action can achieve.

The work of the Labour Party Young Socialists in recruiting YOPsters is recognised in a resolution from Edinburgh on Youth Unemployment and MSC Schemes. If this programme is taken up by the conference and campaigned on hundreds of thousands of youth can be recruited. Next year Rules Revision must agree to set up a national youth section, as we already have in Scotland.

This Conference must agree a clear programme on which to fight the Tories, but must recognise as well that only a fundamental change of society can guarantee our members' lasting job security and decent living standards, and save the public services and welfare state from destruction.

By Alistair Tice
(Conference delegate, Hull Hospitals Central Branch)

NUM ELECTIONS

THE ELECTION of Billy Stobbs to the National Union of Mineworkers' Executive from Durham marks a significant shift to the left in the NUM.

For several years the Durham Broad Left has been campaigning for lay representatives for their area on the EC. Stobbs, a lodge secretary, defeated two full-time officials, including the incumbent.

At the South Wales NUM

conference Terry Thomas, a miners' agent from Brynlliw defeated the incumbent, Des Duffield from Lewis Merthyr pit, in new elections for vice president.

Whilst seen as a defeat for those who led the struggle to save Lewis Merthyr, the margin of Thomas' victory—252-247—is very inconclusive. It cannot be regarded as a shift to the right politically within the union.



Photo: J. Falkenstein

Newcastle printers occupy

ON FRIDAY morning thirty NGA members working at the Co-operative Press Ltd, Newcastle, occupied the works in order to fight against four compulsory redundancies, arbitrarily chosen by management.

The workers insist that any redundancies should be on the basis of National Graphical Association policies, of volunteers first,

then last in first out.

They have been on strike since Tuesday 3 May, when four workers were turned away by management after they had received their notice the previous Saturday. The decision to take action was unanimous.

About thirty NGA members have been involved in the occupation. The workers are getting full strike

pay and the dispute is being backed locally and nationally by the NGA. All deliveries have been turned away by the pickets.

Support has come from the fruiterers down the road and in Bournemouth. Up the road is the Scottish and Newcastle brewery, and the workers there are giving liquid support.

The workforce are confi-

dent of winning the dispute but it is important that pressure should be brought to bear on the company by the trade union movement—particularly by those unions who have dealings with the company.

Messages of support should be sent to the Father of Chapel, Fenwick Marley, 1 Henshaw Place, Benham, Newcastle.

AUEW National Conference

No lead, but signs of change

DESPITE the National Committee of the AUEW being reduced in size to fifty-two delegates, as a result of TASS's successful court action, the recent national conference showed a right-wing majority of 33 to 19 on most issues.

The Broad Left demand for a £20 a week across the board wage increase on the national minimum time rate, was defeated in favour of the familiar let-out clause, a 'substantial wage increase.' AUEW members will be well aware how little a 'substantial wage increase' has meant over the past two years.

A common implementation date has been fixed for November 1, with the National Committee being recalled to consider the outcome of negotiations with the Engineering Employers' Federation (EEF). There is a danger, however, that this will be just a rubber-stamping body for the Executive.

AUEW members will welcome the decision of the NC to press ahead with a claim for a 35-hour week. Because an amendment to back this claim with industrial action was defeated, however, what we are left with may prove to be a toothless tiger. Before negotiations start with the EEF our members in Fords

will have the opportunity of 'testing the water' on this issue when they put forward their 1983 claim.

The union leadership's opposition to the radical policies adopted at Labour Party conference is well known, but there was dissension even amongst its most loyal supporters when Terry Duffy argued for Labour to drop its unequivocal support for withdrawal from the EEC.

Our President also made it clear at conference that in the event of a minority Labour government he fully supports a pact with the SDP Alliance traitors. Instead of campaigning around Labour's policies the leadership has spent its time and energy attempting to step up the witch-hunt of socialists within the party.

The conference showed the urgency of injecting the AUEW Broad Left with new life. The election of Jimmie Airlie to Executive Committee from Scotland shows a changing mood in the union.

A renewed, active and campaigning Broad Left based on democratic rank and file support offers the only way forward.

By Alec Thraves
(President, No.6 Branch Swansea AUEW)
personal capacity

Unit superheaters

THE OCCUPATION of the Unit Super Heater and Pipe Company by AUEW members in Swansea is hardening and support for the occupation is growing.

An aggregate meeting last week of all the strikers gave the strike committee overwhelming support and from an initial majority of just three there are now 95% of the men involved in the occupation.

No negotiations are lined up with the management who wanted the men to return to normal working before having any formal talks. The men are determined to stick it out despite threats by management of legal action. "They can issue as many writs as they like but we're not budging until we get these redundancies reversed!"

At first some of the men were wary of occupying the plant but since in here we've had the opportunity to "open the books" and some of the material we've found has given our members a real eye-opener.

A few years ago management had consultants in to test the noise levels and after they'd reported back we were assured by management that the noise levels were safe. However, having discovered this report our members are very angry that in every department tested, the consultants reported the noise levels to be extremely hazardous.

Apart from this outright lying, management have also decided what actions they intend to take against the apprentices once they smashed our union organisation.

In a memo dated 3 March 1983 local management discussed ways of cutting the cost of apprentices. It read: "I think it should be possible to shed some of your apprentices on the grounds of unsatisfactory performance—surely not all your geese are swans? Taking those that are left I assume if you work independent of corporation policy you would keep say half of the remaining number of apprentices."

That is the type of management we are dealing with and that is why we are determined to stick it out until we win.

We have had tremendous support from the local labour and trade union movement and after addressing a May Day rally in Aberdare on Saturday the NUM agreed that we could address their area conference taking place this week. With support such as this our members are confident of victory.

Messages of support and financial donations should go to the Strike Committee, c/o Fred Evans, 8 Bishopston Way, Bishopston, Swansea.

By Peter Thomas
(AUEW Convenor of Unit Super Heaters)

Industrial Reports

Aire Valley Yarns

FIGHTING FOR A UNION

By Jane Ingham
(Leeds West CLP)

LABOUR PARTIES and trade unions have rallied to the support of the twenty-two members of the TGWU who have now been out on strike for over ten weeks at Aire Valley Yarns, Farsley, Leeds.

The massive effort by the strikers is beginning to pay off. Despite threats, intimidation and even bribes this small group of workers has managed to maintain round the clock picket.

The only thing crossing the picket line has been a small group of scabs driven in by the director. No materials are going through the gates and no yarns are entering the mill.

Support for the picket is

growing and remains the key to winning the dispute.

It started over union recognition and victimisation and now clearly covers wages and conditions as management are reported to be paying the scabs as much as 50% more than was paid before the strike.

Many sections of the labour movement see the wider implications of the dispute. Victory here could spark off struggles for union recognition and a fight against low pay.

It is essential that Labour doesn't just ask workers for their votes, but as at Aire Valley Yarns, attempts to give real help and support.

All messages of support and donations to L Ali, 34 Dirkhill Street, Bradford 7.

Firemen's conference

THE FIRE Brigade Union (FBU) Conference in Bridlington will no doubt be dominated by the impending election and a hangover from the recently held conference on pensions. We had known of the government's threat to cut our wages, by increasing pension contributions, since October last year.

The Executive's tactic of employing an actuary and debating with the government, though successful, only succeeded in delaying the implementation of a by now increased pay cut. The Executive failed, however, to launch a decisive campaign to rally the membership for a fight against the government.

This conference provides a good opportunity to draw the lessons of the defeat on pensions, and to prepare for the battles that lie ahead, especially if a Tory government is returned.

That is the most immediate battle we face. The anger of firemen can be channelled into the campaign to defeat the Tories.

Motion 101 from Merseyside calls for the setting up of workplace Labour Party branches and for the

union to finance a campaign amongst the stations. A fringe meeting has been organised around this question by the EC.

The candidature of Terry Fields (FBU EC member) for Labour in Broad Green, Liverpool, gives an excellent opportunity for firemen to work for Labour and a firemen's spokesman in Parliament.

A number of resolutions commit the union to defending the upper quartile pay agreement and also deal with the need to look for ways of modifying it in the light of recent display of bad faith by the employers.

Another important issue at conference will be the decision by the insurance companies to close the Fire Salvage Corps. Undoubtedly there will be calls for blacking work previously done by the FSC and for local authorities to take it over—without compensation. If a clear position of opposition to all redundancies is taken and a joint union campaign mounted this threat can be defeated.

By Mick Eaves
(Vice-chair, Cheshire Brigade Committee, FBU)

Militant meeting

At Southcliff Hotel (opposite Spa), Bridlington. Thursday 19 May. Speakers: Mick Eaves (Cheshire FBU, personal capacity) and Keith Dickinson (Militant Editorial Board)



Photo: Rick Matthews (JFL)

TIMEX STILL TICKING

Shop stewards throughout Dundee voted in January to support Timex workers

TIMEX workers' occupation of the Milton plant against threatened redundancies has seen new developments over the past two weeks.

The management of Timex have issued, through the courts, a petition to force the workforce out of the plant on the grounds that they are trespassing.

Gordon Samson, the convenor of shop stewards at the plant, said, "Things have changed since the Plessey occupation. Tebbit has altered the law on industrial occupations and our case will be the first since the law was

altered.

"The leadership of the fight to save jobs has been taken on by the national officials. Gavin Laird has stated that he is fully committed to the campaign to save jobs. However, the management have continued their intimidation and divide tactics."

The management sent letters to the workforce asking who was part of the occupation. The majority of these were handed back to the shop stewards. Timex have now announced that another 300 jobs are to be lost. This is to push those not taking

part in action into thinking that it is the occupation that is putting jobs at threat. It is clear, however, that Timex had no intention of stopping at the 197 redundancies.

Gordon Samson said, "Management's tactics are merely making us more determined. The management won't beat us. They'll have to starve us out."

Support from the movement is still strong. But as Gordon stressed, the need for financial donations from the movement is urgent.

On the importance of the general election, Gordon said, "The election provides

us with an opportunity to get rid of the Tories. The return of a Labour government is a must for us in order that they will invest in our jobs and retain the industry.

"The Labour Party has pledged support for our campaign. We will be making sure that those not on duty in the occupation will be out canvassing to ensure a Labour victory."

Donations to John Kydd, c/o Timex occupation, Milton and Craigie Road, Dundee.

By Eddie Donaghie

CPSA for Labour

THE GENERAL election announcement on the first day of CPSA conference had an instant effect.

Full-time official John Macreadie summed up the mood when, minutes after the announcement, he called on delegates to vote Labour, to go back to their branches and work for a Labour victory.

Speaker after speaker linked the fight against cuts, privatisation and low pay with the need to elect a Labour government.

The enthusiastic mood was echoed in the evening at a meeting of the 'Trade Unions for a Labour Victory' attended by hundreds of delegates.

The first debate was around an emergency resolution from the Civil Service Executive Committee recommending acceptance of the government's pay offer.

The membership have voted by around 55,000 to 12,000 to accept the offer, on a very low turn-out.

A motion of censure was passed by conference on the General Secretary for issuing a circular to the membership indicating the union would accept the offer—before the Executive had met to decide what action it would take.

Conference decided that the MEGAW Inquiry into civil service pay is not the framework for a stable pay

system.

The union re-committed itself to the fight for a 35 hour week and 6 week's annual leave for all members.

Privatisation has been a major issue. Conference was quite clear that the Tories want the rich pickings of the public sector.

The government's proposal that civil servants take up BUPA's private medical schemes was unanimously rejected. Unanimous backing was also given to CPSA members in Gibraltar who have decided to fight the government's attempt to privatise the naval dockyards.

Hackney strike

"YOSSER wouldn't do our job: victory to the strikers!"

These placards outside Hackney Unemployment Benefit Office sum up the anger and determination of 67 CPSA members who have been locked out for refusing to implement a shortened signing-on cycle without an improvement in their conditions of work.

Chris Ologbosere, former branch secretary, can remember a time when there were 4,500 unemployed in Hackney; today the figure is 16,800.

Strikers have been out for a fortnight now and support has been given by the union's disputes committee

On Saturday night Kevin Roddy, CPSA President spoke to a Broad Left meeting of around 300 members. The *Militant* meeting of 200 on Tuesday collected £2,900 for the fighting fund.

Whatever the outcome of the Presidential and National Committee elections, about which there has been much speculation in the press, it is clear from this conference so far that the right has no long term future in our union.

By Chris Baugh
(CPSA National Executive) personal capacity

Save
BR
workshops!

THE FATE of British Rail Engineering Limited (BREL) will be in serious jeopardy if the Tories are returned to office.

But the fight-back on a national scale is beginning, as the demonstration and rally of BREL workers in London on 11 May, indicated. It is essential that this show of strength is built on.

The NUR workshops grades conference this weekend must be used to plan a campaign to bring together BREL and British Rail workshops in united action.

★ No job losses, compulsory or voluntary

★ 35-hour week now

★ Strike action if necessary. Above all, such a campaign needs to be linked to the task of returning a Labour government.

That government must be committed to a programme of investment in electrification, modern track, rolling stock and locos, so badly needed to provide jobs and a decent transport system.

By Dave Evans
(Liverpool NUR No 5, personal capacity)

STOP SHIPYARD REDUNDANCIES

British Shipbuilders' plan for at least a further 9,000 redundancies has produced ferment in the shipyards.

At a mass meeting last Tuesday (10 May) workers at the Govan shipyard voted unanimously to give full support to the call for national occupations if compulsory redundancies take place.

The yards most immediately under threat are Henry Robb and Govan in Scotland where nearly 2,000 jobs are at risk and Austin Pickersgill on Wearside in the North East.

Further mass meetings are planned at all yards on Clydeside and it seems there is a willingness to follow the

By Hugh Watson
(AUEW, Yarrows Shipyard)

Govan yard's lead.

It is clear to many workers in the yards here that a sit-in or occupation is the only way to take on the British Shipbuilders' proposals to run down the industry.

Delegates representing 63,000 workers at the Tynemouth Conference voted for the national occupation policy with the clear understanding that the future of the industry is at stake.

D-day for a national decision has been postponed,

however, with the discovery by BS Chairman Atkinson that he can't make a final meeting with unions until 25 May.

But BS are clearly worried that a spark could set the ship yards alight, despite qualifications on the Tynemouth decision which could slow down union response if management are adamant on the 25th.

The mood of workers in the industry varies greatly from area to area, even from yard to yard.

A major difference between the struggle of today and the struggle of the U.C.S. is that plenty of orders were on the books then, but today the world recession has severely cut-back the orders.

It is crucial for whole communities that we ensure through every means possible that the British Shipbuilders maintain the capacity to make ships, not only on

the Clyde, but in all other shipbuilding areas.

Not only are jobs at serious risk but the employers and the Tories are determined to drive down living standards in response to this year's pay claim.

At a time when the Tories have called a general election it should be possible to go to every worker and their families and explain why they should vote Labour not only to get rid of the Tories, but to change the Board's policy on yard closures and wages.

It is clear to us that simply striking and going out the door plays into the hands of the employers. Our immediate response can only be to occupy every shipyard.

Preparations for such a confrontation must be begun now. A clear lead must come from the Confed leadership to weld shipyard workers together around the country for a determined fight.



Important notice to all *Militant* sellers and contributors:

Militant normally goes to press on the Wednesday of each week, but in the three weeks leading up to the election, the normal schedules have been telescoped somewhat so that we will be going to press on the following dates instead:

Issue 652, on Tuesday May 24
Issue 653, on Monday May 30
Issue 654, on Sunday June 5

After the elections, the normal publication date will resume. Sellers and contributors are asked to take special note of these dates.

LIVERPOOL ELECTIONS

Continued from page one

occupied 24 hours a day by teachers and parents and run as a community school since it was threatened with closure by the Liberals, the Labour victory was greeted with jubilation. Just the day before, the school had been served with a rate demand for £42,000 which of course they could not afford. As the

Guardian (9 May) put it, the Labour victory was like "the arrival of the US cavalry!"

The Liverpool council election victory—and other Labour gains in the country where *Militant* supporters led the struggle—shows the way forward for Labour in the coming general election to ensure a Tory defeat. It also answers the claims of Labour's right wing that socialist policies frighten workers away.

Now is the time to transpire the successes and victories of the local elections onto the national arena and make sure the Tories are well and truly hammered.

MASS CANVASS DETAILS

LIVERPOOL, BROAD GREEN
Mass canvass, Sunday 15 May.
Meet 10.30 am (until 4 pm)
at NUR Club, Deane Road,
Liverpool 7.

Mass canvass every week thereafter.

For further details, contact:
Broad Green agent Josie Aitman
on 051-220 4602.

BRADFORD NORTH
Sunday 15 May 10.15 Bradford interchange or 10.30 at the Rooley Pub at the end of M606
Any help, any time phone agent Bill Reed, 0274 633374

BRIGHTON KEMP TOWN
Saturday/Sundays. Any help go to Labour Party HQ at 10.30 am, 179 Lewes Road, Brighton

Also: **YOUTH RALLY**, Sunday 15 May, 2pm. Speakers: Brighton Kemp Town PPC Rod Fitch and Willie Griffin, national chairman LPYS. At Preston Rooms, Royal Albion Hotel, Old Steine, Brighton

COVENTRY SOUTH EAST
Saturdays/Sundays. Meet 30 Coundon Road, Coventry, 10.00-10.30 am.



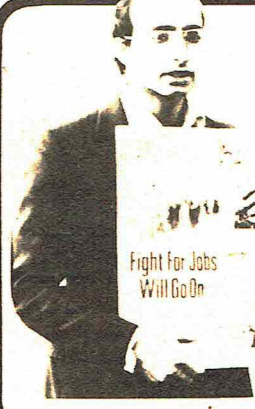
PHOTOS: Top left, Terry Fields, candidate Broad Green. Top right Pat Wall, Bradford North, Bottom left Rod Fitch, Brighton Kemp Town, Bottom right, Dave Nellist, Coventry SE



PHOTOS: MILITANT



STOP PRESS: CPSA conference has agreed to campaign in favour of affiliation to the Labour Party. Conference voted 135,202 to 52,826 in favour of detailed ballot rules to allow the campaign to go ahead. The motion was moved on behalf of the National Executive by *Militant* supporter Frank Bonner.



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