

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH ISSUE 669 30 September 1983 20p

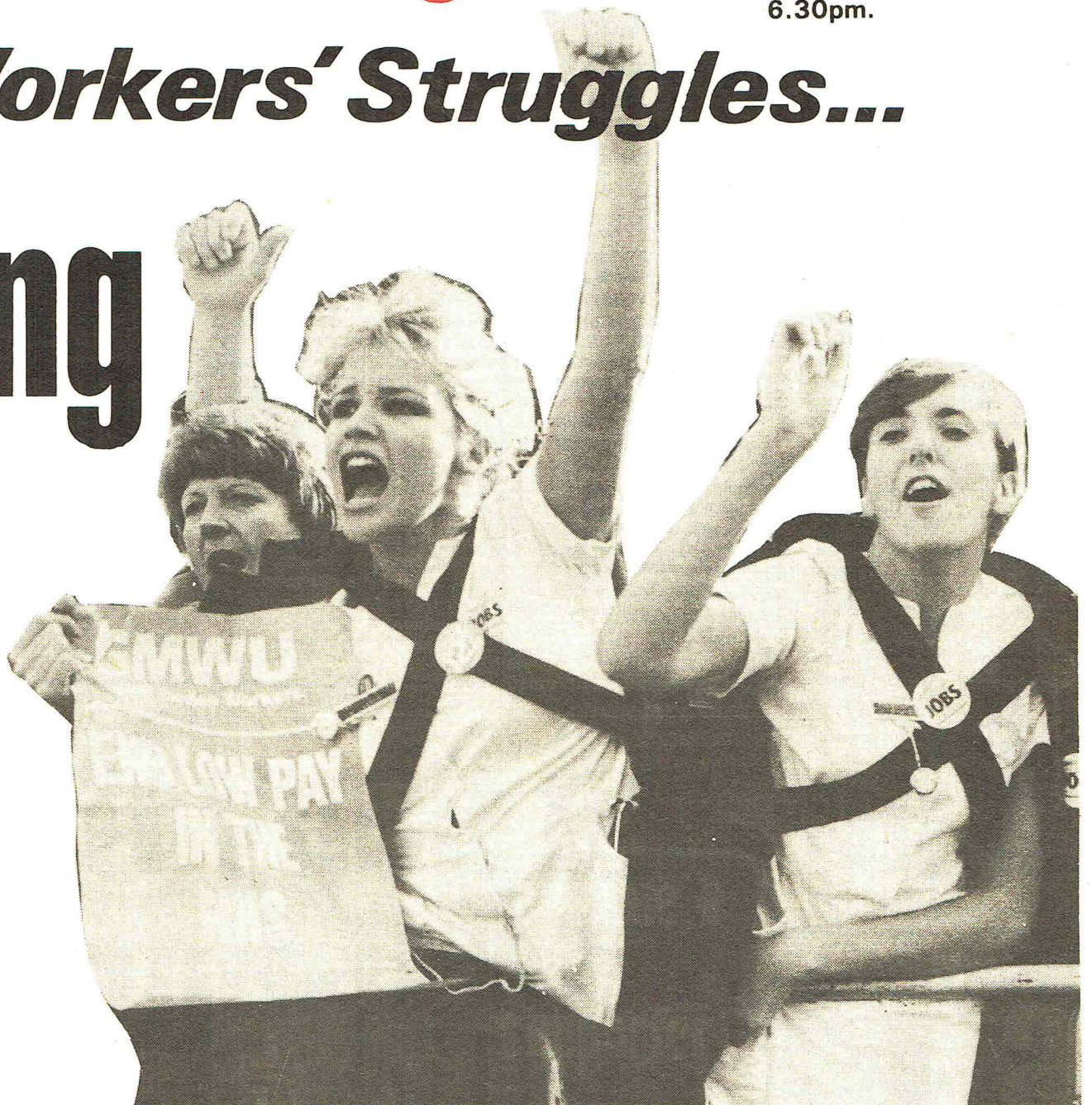
Militant Conference Meeting

SPEAKERS:
Ted Grant,
Peter Taaffe
Terry Fields
MP.

Tuesday 4 October.
Metropole Hotel, Kings Road, Brighton.
6.30pm.

Support Workers' Struggles...

A Fighting Future For Labour!



NHS workers protest at low pay. Now a struggle is starting over health cuts. Labour must give unequivocal support to workers

Labour's Conference comes at a crucial time. The attention of millions will be focused on Brighton. The chance must be seized to show that Labour has a fighting future.

Tory election pledges are exposed as fraud. "The NHS is safe in our hands" said Thatcher, before the election. Tell that to workers losing their jobs under the latest health cuts!

The Tories have no mandate for the policies they are now unveiling—no mandate for assaults on the sick and elderly.

A back-lash is being provoked. Tory health minister Fowler narrowly escaped Sheffield health workers' fury last week.

Jim Warner (NUPE con-

venor Royal Free Hospital, Camden and Hackney Labour Councillor) told us last week: "This Tory government should be put on trial for murder." From north to south, miners to social workers, clashes are beginning to take place, as workers defend their jobs and conditions.

Labour's future lies with the struggles of workers like these to defeat this government.

After years of government-imposed wage

restraint, low paid public employees will not readily accept a paltry 3% rise while inflation reaches 7 or 8%.

Essential public services from kidney machines to meals-on-wheels are being savaged. Staff and users alike are taking to the streets in protest. But workers are saying, "Enough is Enough". The destruction of jobs in public and private sectors is provoking

CONTINUED ON
BACK PAGE

Socialist Policies Needed

NO WITCH-HUNT - SAY IT WITH CASH

This week sees the five Militant Editorial Board members appealing to Labour's Conference against their expulsion from the Party.

It is a scandal that these comrades, with 119 years membership between them, should have to argue for the right to remain as members.

Their expulsion is part of an attack on the left policies adopted by recent Conferences and in particular on the Marxist wing of the Party which is growing in support with every day. The recent decision of the NEC to ban the sale of *Militant* is also part of this attempt to stifle democratic discussion within the party and must be reversed.

We appeal to all Conference delegates and visitors to assist us in the fight against the witch-hunt. Your help is vital. Show your sup-

port not only by opposing the bans and expulsions but also by making a special donation to *Militant's* Fighting Fund.

We need cash to enable us to put our case. Your tenners and fivers will go a long way in beating off the right-wing attacks. What better way of showing the weakness of the right than by helping the *Militant* to become a daily?

If you watch Conference on television you will be disappointed to miss the appeals of the Editorial Board; scandalously they are being taken in closed session after a decision bulldozed through the NEC. The right-wing are clearly scared of the echo that our ideas would receive if broadcast.

At home or at Labour's Conference, give your verdict on *Militant's* case by sending us your money! Every pound and every penny is ammunition in the war of ideas. Support the ideas of *Militant*!

LEFT Labour conference 83

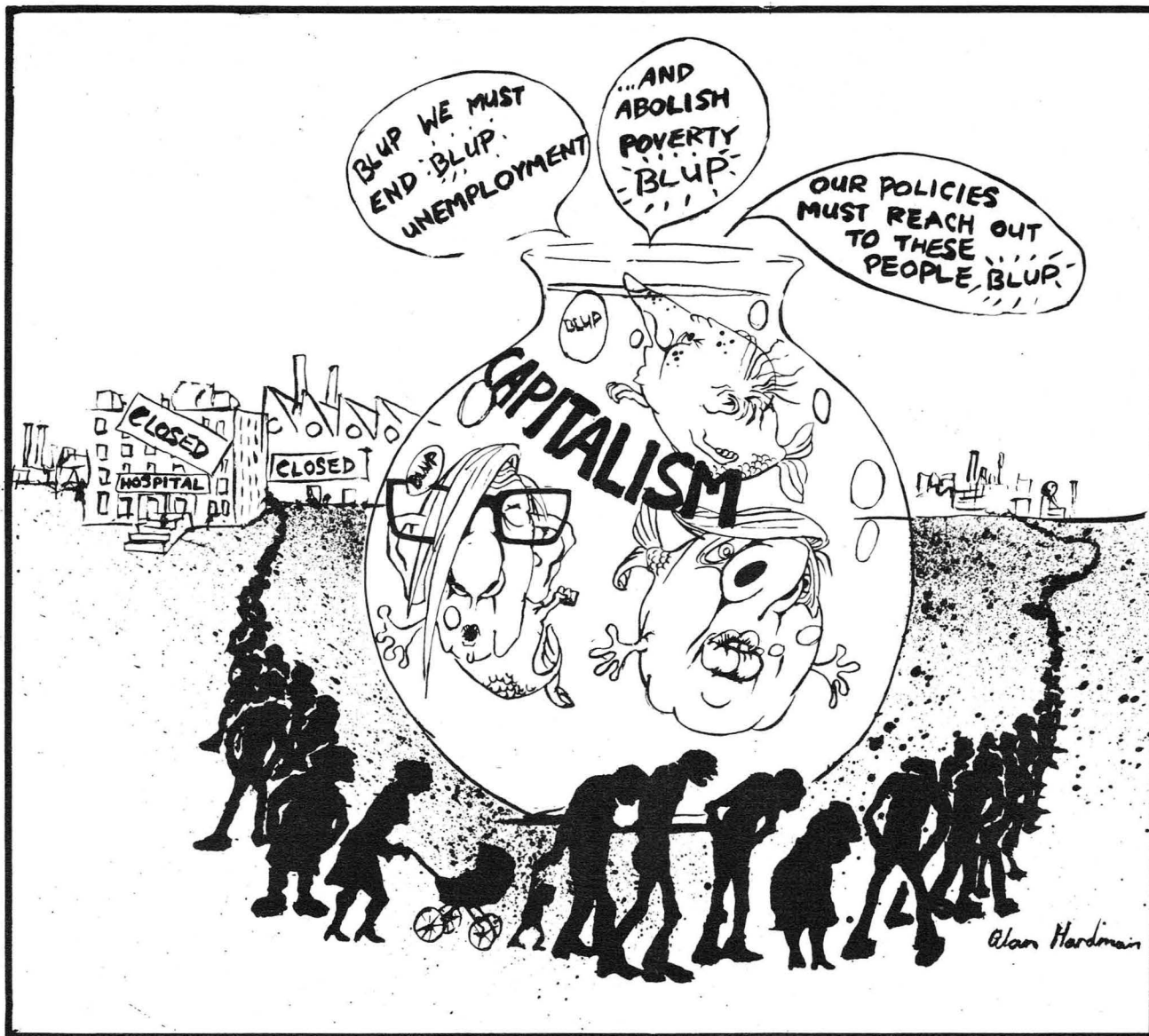
Foot's CLP supports reinstatement of the five

PETER SHORE's constituency has already declared its opposition to witch-hunts in the Labour Party. Denis Healey's Leeds East CLP two weeks ago voted to oppose the NEC circular attempting to ban the sale of *Militant*. Now Party leader Michael Foot's CLP has voted to oppose the witch-hunt.

At its recent meeting (September 23), the GMC of Blaenau Gwent, formerly Ebbw Vale, voted to mandate its delegate to annual conference. Someone present moved a motion to the effect that they support

those conference resolutions calling for the re-instatement of the five members of the editorial board of *Militant*, expelled by the NEC, and opposing all further witch-hunts.

This motion was passed by 39 votes to 31. Blaenau MP, Michael Foot, was not in attendance, but the meeting is another indication that the witch-hunters at the top of the Labour Party, including those in Walworth Road, are completely out of touch with the sentiments of the Party grass roots.



Who can deny it's a witch-hunt?

Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM Yardley Labour Party GMC voted at its meeting on Monday 26 September by 21 votes to 19, with five abstentions, to suspend any member who sells *Militant* "before, during or after" EC, GMC, ward and LPYS meetings.

This disgraceful decision, which effectively proscribes the paper, was sheepishly taken by the GMC which usually has a two to one right wing bias, on a proposal from the EC who interpreted the NEC letter in this particular form.

The right wing GMC chairman tried to get the decision through without a debate, as part of the EC report, but angry trade union delegates insisted on a discussion.

About ten people wanted to speak against, yet only three were allowed and these were delegates from two of the Transport and General Workers' Union branches — 5/909 Rover and 5/908 Longbridge. As was pointed out by them, this McCarthyite witch-hunt was totally against union policy and if it could be implemented (which it can't) it would be telling these British Leyland industrial branches that their delegates were not acceptable.

Both TGWU branches have donated large sums to Yardley's past election campaigns. Even members of the EC who had originally voted for the resolution realised the catastrophic mistake they had made and abstained, but in this situation an abstention was effectively voting for the motion.

We will now be campaigning through our union branch and other affiliated unions to reverse this decision. Despite the resolution, 14 papers were sold before and after the GMC and £7 was raised for the fighting fund.

By John Burke & Ian Schofield
TGWU delegates)

Militant

FROM the time that the enquiry into *Militant* was first launched the right wing in the Party, and even some of the so-called "soft-lefts", denied that any witch-hunt was in progress.

When the NEC steam-rolled the 'Register' through the last conference, the denials were louder than ever. Even when the farcical NEC 'hearings' were held for the five members of the *Militant* editorial board and they were subsequently expelled, these same Party leaders still pretended that there was no witch-hunt.

But now that the NEC is trying to instruct Labour Parties to ban the sales of the paper, there can be no longer even the slightest doubt that the right-wing, and the senior party officers in Walworth Road, are conducting a campaign against ideas, a witch-hunt in the accepted meaning of the term.

Although the witch-hunt has been rejected by the overwhelming majority of the Party rank and file, there are still certain areas where the climate created by the NEC has had an effect.

The reports printed here, one from Southend LPYS, and the other from TGWU delegates to Birmingham Yardley CLP, show that the right wing will try, if they can get away with it, to ban the paper *Militant*, and the ideas associated with the paper.

If the right wing were to succeed with *Militant*, they would be just as ruthless, at a later stage, in banning other left wing ideas and papers. Their divisive witch-hunts and hounding of Marxists in the Labour Party must be decisively rejected.

Southend

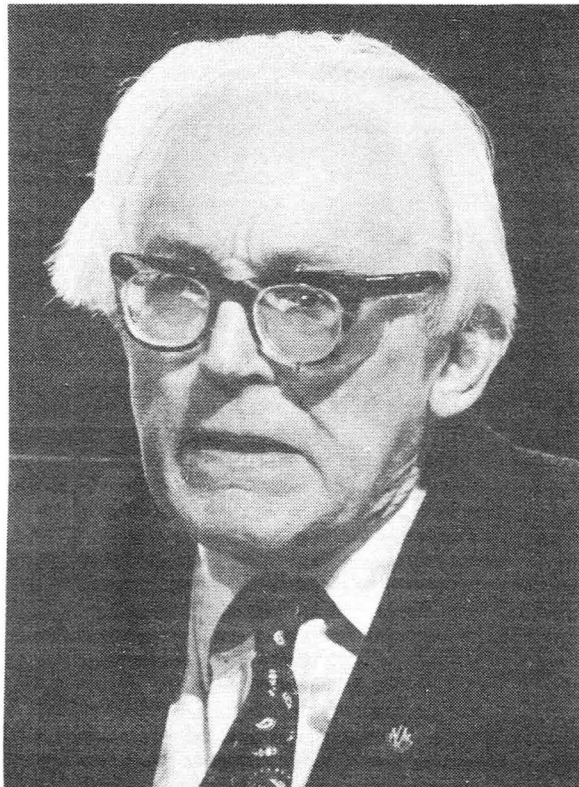
ALTHOUGH there has always been antagonism between Southend Borough Labour Party and the Young Socialists branch, matters seem to have come to a head. The Borough party have resorted to organisational measures to suppress political ideas.

Using as an excuse the recent National Executive Committee recommendation to "give no facilities to *Militant*", the borough Labour Party have made efforts to bring Southend LPYS under the control of local party leaders.

The LPYS had planned, following a recruitment campaign, a public meeting, with an LPYS activist, Mike Waddington, as speaker. However, the chairman and other officers of Southend Labour Party, at an LPYS meeting on 14 September, made a blatant organisational attack on the LPYS.

As Mike Waddington is a *Militant* supporter, he has been barred from speaking at the public meeting, and the Southend LPYS has also been barred from having any speakers from outside Southend Labour Party who are *Militant* supporters, including John Mackay, who is the Eastern Region's representative on the LPYS National Committee.

This unconstitutional censorship of the LPYS is undemocratic, in that the LPYS is unable to choose its



Michael Foot was one of those who argued that the enquiry into *Militant* and the 'Register' would not lead to a witch-hunt. Now that *Militant* supporters are being hounded and harassed by the NEC and the five editorial board members have been expelled, party members including those in his own CLP (see story above left) are voicing their protests at what has, in reality, become a witch-hunt.

own speakers, and goes against the traditions of the labour movement.

Southend LPYS was asked to give an assurance on the question of speakers, under extreme pressure. If the LPYS refused to give the assurances requested, it was said by a party officer, all subsidies, including the weekly use of a room at the Labour Hall, would be stopped, and the LPYS delegates to the General Committee of the borough party and the

Executive Committee would not be recognised.

The only mandate that the officer concerned had was a verbal resolution from the General Committee meeting in September, and he has no right within the constitution to threaten to close down an LPYS branch.

However, Southend LPYS have decided not to be beaten by organisational measures. The borough party has resorted to these tactics because they have no

political answer to LPYS policies.

The right-wing within the party are frightened that they will lose their positions if a large influx of radical youth are brought into the labour movement. Southend LPYS have agreed to:

1. Go ahead with the Public Meeting on 29 September at the Labour Hall.
2. Have Willie Griffin, National Chairman of the LPYS and a *Militant* supporter, to speak at that meeting.
3. Mount a massive campaign throughout the labour movement to defend the LPYS against these attacks.
4. Set ourselves the task of building a mass LPYS to champion the rights of your parties, and a campaign fund has been set up in order to help prevent this.

When the real fight for the LPYS is against the Tories, with their Youth Training Swindles, unemployment policies and welfare and education cutbacks, we find ourselves subjected to attacks from within the labour movement.

Only when these attacks have been defeated will the LPYS be able to get down to the task of bringing in a Labour government.

PUBLIC MEETING:
"Youth Against Tories"
on Thursday, 29 September
at the Labour Hall,
40-42 Cambridge Road,
Southend.

TGWU must support Meacher

THE DECISION of the recent T&GWU General Executive Committee to recommend to the union delegation to Labour Party Conference, to vote for Meacher, should be welcomed as a step to achieving a Labour leadership that will fight for policies the same as the T&GWU.

But unfortunately, many union activists will be dismayed by some statements and actions of general secretary Moss Evans and some Executive officers, which have directly contradicted the GEC's decision. From the reports in the press, it would seem that attempts have been made to cast doubts over the authority of the GEC, the sovereign body of the union between their bi-ennial delegate conferences.

Disaster ticket

It is clearly an issue for the left, that the T&GWU GEC should be supported. On most occasions in the past, Roy Hattersley has come into conflict with the policies passed by successive bi-ennial delegate conferences and GECs of the union. Most notably, the issues of defence, incomes policy and Labour's programme, have found that Meacher has been more in line with T&GWU policy than Hattersley.

The so-called "dream ticket" of Kinnock/Hattersley will only be a recipe for disaster, with the possibility of more conflict within the Party. Hattersley, a known supporter of witch

hunts, would attempt to use the position of deputy leader to continue divisive policies of proscriptions, bannings and expulsions.

Activists within the T&GWU have a proud tradition of fighting witch hunts, even in their own union, and must lead the way against the

Tradition

expellers and the right wing. It is therefore crucial that the union delegation, including its executive officers, should follow in that tradition and ensure that the full vote of the T&GWU goes behind Meacher, the only candidate to have given a commitment to stop the witch hunt.

Many members of the union will be confused also, about the manner in which some leading lefts have been acting during this whole debate. Questions must be asked, if a report in the *Sunday Times*, (25.9.83) is correct.

In that newspaper it was reported that support was coming from strange quarters for Hattersley, and that Hugh Wyper, the

regional secretary in Scotland and a leading Communist, was "whipping up support" for him. *Militant* supporters would hope that this is not a true actual account of the policy of one of Scotland's leading left wing trade union officials.

However, the whole issue clearly shows the need for further genuine discussion to take place within the left of the union. The disorganised state of the Broad Left indicates the vital necessity for its re-building through democratic discussion.

Support the GEC

Immediately, the first step is for the left of the delegation to insist that the view of the GEC be supported, as the constitution demands, on the deputy leadership vote. The union must also continue its opposition to all bans and proscriptions and to call for the re-instatement of the five expelled members of the *Militant* Editorial Board.

By John McClelland

NEC: Vote Wall and Fields

They explain why they are standing:

For our party, and for working people as a whole, this year's Labour Party conference and the executive it elects will play a crucial role.

As in the days of Labour's early pioneers, we believe that the urgent task facing us today is to turn our movement outwards. A campaign, the like of which the party has never seen before, must be launched immediately, to defend the interests of working people and to explain our socialist policies.

A 35-hour week with no loss of pay; a national minimum wage; a massive scheme of house-building and other useful public works; unilateral nuclear disarmament—these must be the demands of such a campaign.

Above all, we must campaign for the implementation of our party's socialist clause; 'clause four'. If the next Labour government is not to be bullied and black-mailed by bankers and industrialists into abandoning its programme—as has happened in the past—then the power and influence of these parasites must be ended.

The next Labour government must translate 'clause four' into reality. The nationalisation of the economy's "commanding heights" must be the cornerstone of our economic policy.

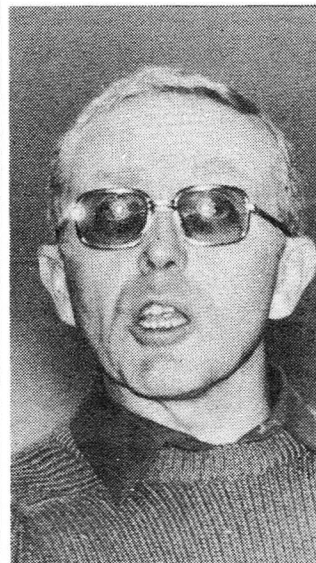
Those who have argued for socialism to be put firmly back on the agenda, have now become the target of a witch-hunt in the party.

The bitter experiences of Labour's election defeat has shattered completely the lie that expulsions would win the party "millions of votes". In fact, the opposite has proved to be true. The attack on the supporters of *Militant* served only to divide our movement at precisely the time when a united struggle was most needed.

We are confident, however, that the message at this year's conference will be that the constituency and trade union rank and file want more socialism, not less. Let's insure that along with decisions for radical socialist policies, this year's conference elects an NEC which truly reflects the wishes and aspirations of the party.



Pat Wall.



Terry Fields.



Louis Freedman, (centre), chairman of District Health Authority is jostled by demonstrators objecting to the proposed closure of four hospitals in Hackney. Freedman had earlier refused to cast his chairman's vote after the health authority meeting had tied on the proposed cuts.

Photo: Andrew Wiar (Report)

PLP thanks Ben Ford

IN THE NEC report presented to the Labour Party conference this year, there is the usual list of changes in the Parliamentary Party. Under "defeated members", the report expresses regret at losing the valuable services "of those colleagues who were defeated at the general election" . . . but then in the next section . . . "and the following members who failed to be selected for their former constituency or for a new seat."

Incredibly, in this second list, appears the name of Ben Ford, former MP for Bradford North. It may have skipped the notice of the officers of the Parliamentary Party, over whose names this section of the report appears, but Ben Ford was directly responsible for the election of a Tory MP in Bradford, by standing as an "independent" against the official Labour candidate, Pat Wall, taking over 4,000 votes away from Labour.

It is just this kind of glossing over or ignoring the backstabbing of the right wing—at a time when socialist newspapers in the party are being hounded—that will only anger the rank and file and increase their resolve to democratise the Parliamentary Party.

Tale of two cities

TWO CONTRASTING mass 'lobbies' on Monday, just three miles apart, showed how the Tories have widened the gulf within our society.

The first was outside Hackney Town Hall, where the District Health Authority were meeting to discuss the closure of four local hospitals. One hundred and fifty people crammed into the public galleries to hear the debate and up to a thousand gathered outside for a rally.

There wasn't enough room for all the banners on

the balcony of the town hall. "St Leonard stays" was draped over "Hackney Fights for Health", which in turn hid the borough's 20% unemployment figures. Over 100 local GPs sent in a petition calling for the cancellation of the cuts.

Rodney Bickerstaffe, General Secretary of the health workers' union, NUPE told the rally: "If staff looked after their patients like the Tories look after the NHS, they'd be down the road tomorrow." Other speakers included Tony Benn, who spoke of

the long and determined political struggle by socialists to establish the NHS, free at the point of use. The same all-out fight was needed now to save it.

Businessmen

A petition against the cuts with over 10,000 names on it was handed in to the District Health Authority. But the anger of local people failed to sway the Tories' appointees to the authority.

The vote whether or not to implement the cuts tied at

eight each. Then the chairman of the authority, Louis Freedman, City property developer and member of the elite Jockey Club (who of course does not even live in the borough), refused to cast his vote. So the decision was postponed for a week.

A short distance away, other City businessmen were having a more profitable day. They were queuing and scrambling about on the Stock Exchange, trying to get hold of BP shares.

Merchant banks, and big companies were all vying for the latest pickings in the

Tories' sale of the nation's assets. Within a minute £40 million was added to the share price, all without anyone producing anything more.

The irony is that the Stock Exchange is in the same Health District as Hackney. But as far as life-style is concerned, it might as well be a different planet.

For people who speculate on the Stock Exchange are unlikely to be using the NHS—they will go private. And whilst they count their millions, gained in Thatcher's 'freedom offensive', back in Hackney, the Mayor this week launched a new charity; it was for £3,500 to purchase a kidney machine.

By Jim Chrystie
(Hackney North CLP)

Double our money

ads

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

OUR FIGHTING Fund quarter ends on 9 October immediately after this year's Labour Party Conference.

During that week we have to make every effort to raise the £25,000 we need to achieve the full target! It is still possible if every reader who wants to see Labour's Conference call off the witch-hunt against *Militant*, answers our appeal for finance with fivers, tenners, and even more!

Can anyone or any group match the excellent sum sent in by a group of EETPU members in Edinburgh? Our thanks to Jim, Jimmy, Kevin and Ronnie who sent in a marvellous £100. We need a good few more sums like this by the end of the quarter.

Every day brings further attacks on working class living standards. From the new round of proposed health cuts to miserly pay offers. Workers need the *Militant* not only in the Labour Party but at work and in their trade union to put their case and to point out the way forward. We do not have the millionaire backing of Fleet Street, only the sums sent in by those who support our ideas and are prepared to make a sacrifice to see them put into practice.

Already this quarter we have raised £25,478.

Among those who have contributed to this week's total of £2,250 are: Steve Jones (Northfield CLP) £15, Ian Etherington (Chingford CLP) £12 and C&B Butterworth (Chingford CLP) £11. Tenners came from Dave Etheridge (Ipswich) and San-

| Area | Received | % of target achieved | Target 8 October |
|-----------------------|--------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Eastern | 1613 | | 2400 |
| East Midlands | 1057 | | 2650 |
| Humberside | 605 | | 1450 |
| London East | 1603 | | 3100 |
| London West | 840 | | 1950 |
| London South | 1366 | | 2700 |
| Manchester & Lancs | 1708 | | 3000 |
| Merseyside | 1541 | | 3300 |
| Northern | 1404 | | 3500 |
| Scotland East | 1143 | | 2000 |
| Scotland West | 805 | | 2700 |
| Southern | 2070 | | 3700 |
| South West | 652 | | 2000 |
| Wales East | 475 | | 2000 |
| Wales West | 1510 | | 2300 |
| West Midlands | 1205 | | 3150 |
| Yorkshire | 1460 | | 3300 |
| Others | 4421 | | 4800 |
| Total received | 25478 | | 50000 |

dy McKaig (Hackney).

We really need a flood of tenners coming in this week. Can you afford not to send one! If we are to establish a daily workers' paper then we must have the cash to pay for it. The bosses' press churns out lies every day; we need an alternative voice on a more regular basis.

Put a tenner or a fiver in the post to us today and think how you are helping the struggle for socialism. 2,500 readers sending £10 or 5,000 sending £5 would get the amount outstanding.

Those who gave £5 last week include Graham Jay (Ipswich), Swshila (A Sri Lankan supporter in Coventry), Jim Bell (Nottingham NUT), and Pete Millingswine, an unemployed member of Salford LPYS.

Donations from groups of workers again feature. In Merseyside the council workers obviously recognise the importance of our ideas in the battle against the Tory cuts. £6 came from AUEW members and GMBATU members gave £11. Knowsley NALGO members

THIS WEEK: £2,250

collected £14.70. Sparks at Rosyth Dockyard sent £3.50 and the workers at Torness raised £15.60 in their regular collection.

Every workplace where *Militant* is sold should see a special effort to raise cash in the last few days of this quarter.

Just as welcome are the donations of: E Hefford (Peterborough), £3.50, A Gray (Whitwell NUM), £3, M McManaman (West Derby LPYS), £2.35 and C Neilson (Reading LPYS), £2.20. £2 was sent in by B Cater (Birmingham), Dave Mitchell (Ipswich), H Wobey (Hackney), G Tana (Dagenham CLP), Tim Beasley (Acton LPYS), Steve Pepper (Nottingham), Steve Lawton (Walsall and many

others.

We do not have enough space to mention everybody who has donated but those sending smaller amounts include: Steve Biro (Rutherglen CPSA) £1, Caran Desmond, (Birmingham) 50p, and G Grace Scott, a pensioner in Washington, who regularly pays £1 for the paper. Ian Heap and Robert Owen from Garston LPYS both gave £1 as did S Walker (Leith), John Groves (Rugby CLP) and E Davis (Worthing).

Every branch of Labour's Youth should be asked for a special end of quarter donation to back *Militant*.

There is still time to organise a party for the *Militant*. Ask your friends to make a donation. We desperately require the finances if we are to get the ideas of Marxism across to new workers looking for a way to beat the Tories.

Don't delay. Rush your money off. Push the black lines across the page towards a daily *Militant*.

By Nick Wrack



The answer to the right wing on where *Militant* gets its money from. Collecting at a meeting in St Pancras Town Hall.

Photo: Militant

MILITANT MEETINGS

HULL (Eve of party conference meeting). "Where is Labour going?" Speaker: Keith Narey (Bradford North CLP) on Thursday 29 September 7.30 pm at Trades and Labour Club, Beverley Road.

ABERYSTWYTH: Thursday 6 October at 7.30 pm at Red Cross Hall, Vulcan Street, Aberystwyth. Speaker: Brian Lewis on "What *Militant* Stands For".

AFTER THE PARTY CONFERENCE

GLASGOW MILITANT PUBLIC MEETING:

"Which way now for Labour?"

Speakers:

Terry Fields MP, Jackie Galbraith (Scottish LPYS)

on Tuesday 11 October

at

PARTICK BURGH HALLS (off Dumbarton Rd.)

MILITANT S. WALES SUMMER CAMP

Good quality tapes available (90 minutes) on following:

Ted Grant: War and Peace

Bryan Beckingham: Colonial Revolution

Rob Sewell: US Labour Movement

Cost £2.25 per tape inc P&P from J. Harris, 15 Sterle Avenue, Poole. Tel: (0202) 685305

CLASSIFIED

LABOUR CONFERENCE MEETINGS

N IRELAND

Organised by

Labour and Trade Union Group

Speakers:

Bill Webster (Derry Trades Council)

Terry Fields MP

MONDAY 3 OCTOBER, 7.30pm.

At 'Madeira', Marine Parade (near Palace Pier)

LPYS

THURSDAY 6 NOVEMBER, 7.30pm

Speakers:

D. Nellist MP

Laurence Coates

(current LPYS representative on NEC)

Steve Morgan (new LPYS rep on NEC)

AT WAGNER HALL, REGENCY ROAD

LPYS/TRADE UNION DAY SCHOOL

SUNDAY 16 OCTOBER

POOLE, DORSET

Morning: "Fighting Privatisation" -

Speakers: Colin O'Callaghan (editor, Spark & POEU Overseas Telegraph branch);

Dave Booker GMBATU (Bridport branch)

Afternoon: "Tebbit's Law" -

Speaker: Nick Bradley (NUPE District Officer, Kent)

Film: "Look Back At Grunwicks"

Venue: Parkstone Trades and Labour Club, Woodlands Hall, Ashley Road, Parkstone, Poole. All welcome.

ACTON LPYS Chartbuster Disco. Saturday 8 October 8-11.30, Ruskin hall, 16 Church Road, Acton, W3. Tickets £1. Ring 01-845 9660. On door £1.50.

MILITANT Tee-Shirts "Defend Militant - fight the Tories." As seen at the Wembley Rally. £2.50 each, or the following discounts for bulk orders.

| | |
|-------------|-----|
| 2-10 | 10% |
| 11-20 | 20% |
| 21 and over | 25% |

All enquiries to: 206 Honeysuckle Road Southampton, SS1420.

PRINTED SWEATSHIRTS and Tee-shirts: "Turn Left: Militant for Workers' Unity and Socialism".

T-shirts - white, black, yellow £3.25 each.

Sweatshirts - sky, grey, dark green, navy and black £6.50 each.

Costs include postage and packing. All proceeds to the Fighting Fund. Send size and colour preference with cheques and postal orders to: R Harris, 2 Dukes Brow, Blackburn Lancashire, BB2 5RN.

£50,000 pledged to Building Fund

THE LATEST donations to a special building fund being set up by *Militant* supporters are already reaching the £50,000 mark. That is just after two weeks of asking!

Since the Wembley Rally, Bristol have trebled the amount promised. The total pledged from this area is now £2,335.

From Tyneside alone, on top of the £2,000 already promised, pledges of more than £1,000 reached us this week, including £500 from Kath Cotterill, £200 from Gavin Dudley and Lynn Marsh, and £100 from M

Reavey. These follow the excellent examples shown at *Militant's* Wembley Rally, by Christopher Worsley who promised £1,000, Colin Adams who promised £600, John Hoare who promised £500 and by the hundreds of others who promised £200s, £100s, £50s, etc. All to be redeemed before the end of the year.

In the next week or so, the figure is expected to double as the pledge sheets reach wider and wider layers of workers and activists in the labour movement.

The urgent need for a Marxist daily paper becomes

ever more apparent as strikes and political upheavals develop within hours in Britain and internationally. The Tories gain backing from Fleet Street for every new blow struck against workers and their organisations. The right wing in the labour movement itself gained similar backing for their attacks on the Marxists and the left for their policies of reconciliation with the enemy.

A socialist, Marxist daily of the labour movement must be worked for. The first step is the building and that requires big money and

big sacrifices of the kind it took to build the workers' movement itself.

Think today, of what you can save up and do without between now and 1984 and then let us know. Go to your fellow workers, your Labour Party, trade union, LPYS branch or shop stewards' committee and ask them for £50.

Use the form on this page or the special pledge sheet available from *Militant* sellers and from our offices. See what you can do this week to build for the daily paper building fund!

SEND YOUR PLEDGE NOW

I/WE PLEDGE A DONATION OF £ TO THE BUILDING FUND FOR A MARXIST DAILY.

I/We wish to see as soon as possible the appearance of a daily labour movement newspaper based on Marxism to combat the lies and distortions of the bosses' press and to end, once and for all, their vicious system.

Name

Organisation

Address

Return to: Building Fund, c/o *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

YOUTH DEFEND NEWHAM 8

OVER 1,500 Asian youth and members of labour movement bodies marched through East London on Saturday in defence of the Newham 8.

Chants of 'Self defence is no offence' and 'Whose conspiracy? Police conspiracy!' were angrily shouted out, denouncing the police who last year arrested the eight youth as they defended Asian schoolchildren from attacks by racist gangs.

Asian youth massed at the front of the march around the Newham 8 banner booing the heavy police presence and jeering as they passed Forest Gate police station.

Besides the local Asian youth, the largest contingent on the march were 200 members of the LPYS, including Young Socialists who came with Asian youth from Bradford and Sheffield, an indication of the seriousness with which the LPYS takes this struggle.

As the march wound its way through the East Ham and West Ham areas, many Militants were sold.

A rally followed at Stratford School in Forest Gate, where the police, the Tories, and the fascists were angrily attacked. One of the

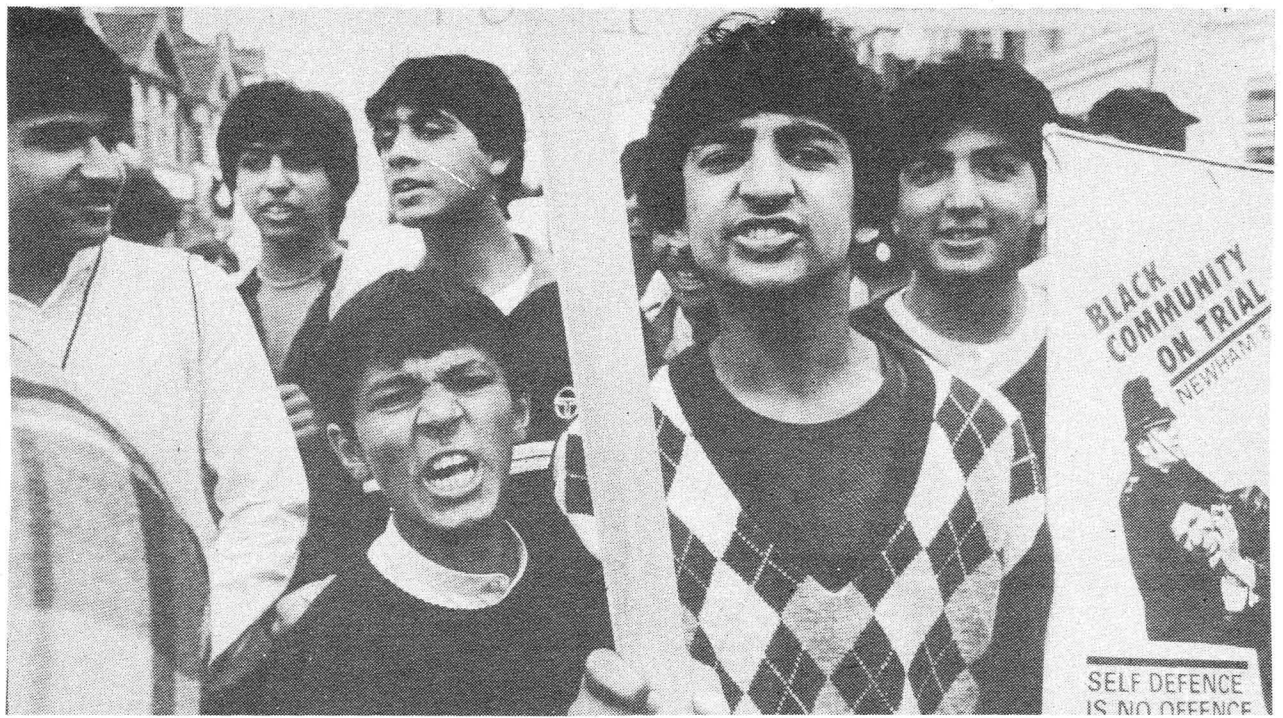
Newham 8 was wildly applauded, as was an Asian youth from Sheffield who described the battle they were fighting against fascist attacks in the Dewsbury area.

Dave Nellist the new MP for Coventry South East spoke of the assaults faced by Asians and blacks in his home town, and condemned the Tories' racist laws. However, he was heckled mainly by an assortment of 'anarchists' and ultra lefts, who attempted to blame him for the appalling record of Labour's right wing on immigration and race. As these elements spend all their time in that 'Alice in Wonderland' world on the outer fringes of the labour movement, they simply wouldn't know how Marxists like Dave and the LPYS have not only physically fought racism and fascism on the streets, but have also consistently fought *inside* the labour movement against the record and actions of the right wing.

Even so, for every jeer Dave received, there were also many cheers, as there were for the other main speakers, Tony Banks MP and former Black Panther Stokely Carmichael.

The LPYS are continuing their campaign of support for the Newham 8, the next event being a public meeting called for **October 11 at 342 Hoe Street, London E 17 at 7.30pm**, with speakers Harry Coheu, MP for Leyton, and Mark Avis of Newham LPYS.

Photo: Denis Doran/Militant



Angry Asian youth led the demonstration through Newham on Saturday. There was generally a good response from local people, especially Asian shopkeepers.

Discrimination Must be Fought

TURN THE spotlight on Lambeth, the London Borough that covers Brixton, and you will see that the conditions that caused the 1981 riots have not been solved—in fact they have worsened.

Fifty-one unemployed people chase every job vacancy; 24% of workers are unemployed.

Two thousand places are available on YTS for Lambeth school-leavers. Yet these short term, poverty-wage schemes are no solution and offer no future prospects.

The 'Training Officer' of Freeman's Mail Order (a firm taking on trainees) admitted in a local newspaper, "Let's face it, the reality is that most of them will be unemployed at the end of the year."

There are now 20,000 people registered on the housing waiting list. Despite Scarman's recommendations in 1981 for more resources for the inner-cities, the government has reduced the proportion it pays of the Council Budget.

Race discrimination continues. A survey amongst youth who had 'O' level qualification or better, showed that 77% of whites were employed. 66% of Asians, and

**LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS
1-DAY RALLY ON
BLACK
YOUTH
IN BRITAIN
1983**

**SATURDAY
22ND
OCTOBER
1983
COUNTY HALL
LONDON
SE1.
STARTS 10am.**



★ **FIGHT BACK AGAINST THE TORIES!**
★ **WORKERS UNITY AND SOCIALISM!**

Above leaflets available from A Bevan, Labour Party Youth Officer, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

only 50% of West Indians/Africans.

In 1982 the Commission for Racial Equality carried out spot-checks on 300 London-based firms and found that 50% discriminated against black applicants at the point of recruitment. The CRE also found "discrimination in

promotion and redundancies".

The Race Relations Act, and its enforcement agency, the CRE, have not been capable of ending this racism. Of the 200 employment cases taken up by the CRE in 1982, only 30 were successful at the Industrial Tribunals.

While the loop-holes in the Act which allow discrimination to get through should be closed, the Race Relations Act and the machinery around it cannot alone solve the problems of the black population.

So long as private employers (and the managers in the public sector) control employment, hiring, and training, then it will be possible for discrimination to continue. Only if the trade union movement controls hiring and firing, promotion etc, can it be ended.

The labour and trade union movement should launch mass campaigns to recruit black workers, including the unemployed, into their ranks—to allow the mass participation of blacks in the movement.

This should be linked to campaigning against racism; only by uniting in common struggle can black and white workers win decent conditions and justice. So long as the present system continues, the centuries-old divide and rule tactics of racism will be used.

The burning issues facing black workers and youth will be discussed at the coming Black Youth Rally on October 22, organised by the LPYS. All black workers and black organisations are welcome to attend. Labour movement bodies should be urged to send representatives.



Organise for huge demo

THOUSANDS OF youth are expected to demonstrate their anger at Tory plans to spend millions on a new generation of nuclear weapons, at the national CND demonstration on October 22.

At the same time as the government announce huge cuts in the NHS, spending on 'defence' continues to grow to new record levels.

This year they will spend £16,000m on arms. Real military spending has increased by 23% in the last 4 years. Over the same period spending on housing has fallen by 55% and education 6%.

This nuclear lunacy of the Tories is repeated internationally one hundred fold. The capitalist governments in the west and the Stalinist dictatorships in the east will this year squander over \$600,000,000,000 on arms—that's more than \$1m a minute. Just 1% of this mountain of money could provide safe drinking water throughout the world; yet as it is, 10 million people are expected to die this year from water carried diseases.

Next month workers and youth throughout the globe will demonstrate their opposition to the obscenity of nuclear arms

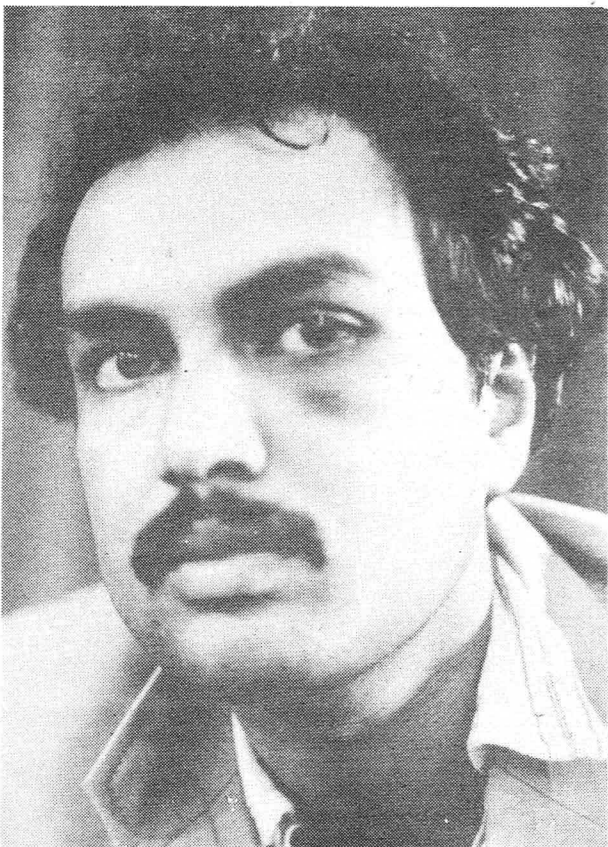
spending. There will be demonstrations in Berlin, Amsterdam, New York, Rome, Washington, Bonn, Brussels, Paris, Lisbon, Toronto, Montreal, Tokyo and London.

Labour Party Young Socialist branches must become the most ardent campaigners amongst youth building support for the National CND demonstration on October 22.

Nationally the LPYS National Committee are circulating all branches with details of the demonstration, a new LPYS banner is being commissioned for the demo and badges and stickers will be available on the day.

LPYS branches locally should build for the demonstration by:

- ★ Organising a public meeting—with a film or video on nuclear weapons.
- ★ Contact your local CND branch to get details of local transport arrangements.
- ★ Produce a local leaflet advertising your meeting and local details of transport to the national demonstration, to distribute at schools, FE colleges and factories.
- ★ Write to the local press and contact the local radio about both your plans.



SALIM A ROKIRD, who joined the march, says he was beaten up at Forest Gate police station after being arrested for an alleged breach of the peace on September 18. He was left with a black eye and badly bruised face, and injuries to his side and leg. He told Militant, "I was kept for 12 hours in a cell, I was not allowed to make a phone call or allowed to go to the toilet."

Photo: Militant

Merseyside Labour Movement

Liverpool City fights Tory cuts

LIVERPOOL'S Labour council has faced unrelenting attacks since it was elected in May. The new council is grappling with appalling housing squalor and deteriorating social services, left behind by ten years of Liberal-Tory rule. Valley Ward councillor PAUL ASTBURY outlines Labour's plan of action.

WE HAVE launched an imaginative programme of new council house building and improvement of the environment, which will cost some £300m; £25m above the limits imposed by the Tories.

Our plans will lead to thousands of permanent new jobs, and mean that apprentices can be taken on for the first time in three years. Liberal-Tory rule in Liverpool meant that not one new council house had been started in the past three years, and before May not one single apprentice was due to be replaced.

Vitriolic attacks from Liberals

The media have ignored Labour's plans. But they have devoted acres of print to vitriolic attacks from Liberal councillors. If Labour councillors had cursed, sworn and hurled abuse as the Liberals have done, it would have been banner headlines.

But all the press report is Liberal distortion, without putting Labour's case. Labour was accused of riding roughshod over the wishes of working class people in housing co-ops who wished to live in their own homes. What was not given coverage was Labour's decision to fund those co-ops which were in an advanced stage, and to offer to build to the co-ops' specifications those whose plans were not so advanced.

When they heard the explanation by Labour councillor Ken Stewart, many working class people in the co-ops were happy to opt for council housing. If Labour had agreed to all of the co-ops who had applied for funds, £6m would have had to have been taken from Labour's commitment to build 6,000 council houses.

It also emerged that some members of housing co-ops already lived in their own homes, which they planned to sell when they moved into a co-op house. This was unacceptable to Labour. But

such facts were not published in the media; they are only interested in sniping at Labour.

We have been accused of attacking the handicapped. Operating in a budget which we inherited from the Liberal-Tory alliance we have been forced to scrutinise all applications from voluntary organisations.

Naturally because of Tory cuts in the health service, some of these deal with the handicapped. So the *Liverpool Echo* have claimed that we are "attacking the handicapped."

They have gone on to accuse us of deciding to close down a hostel for the homeless, which had been opened by Mother Teresa famous for her social work amongst the poor in Calcutta. They were trying to use the religious issue against Labour.

In reality Labour had not decided to close down the hostel. We had merely indicated that the standard of provision in the hostel did not meet our criteria; on that basis we decided not to refer any more homeless to them. If they wished to continue the hostel, they had every right to do so.

Derek Hatton, deputy leader of the council, addressing the meeting last Friday: "We intend to carry out our policies." The meeting was also addressed by finance committee chairman, Tony Burn. "We won 23 out of 33 seats up for election," he said, "we are determined not to rat on our promises."

Labour is determined that the media smokescreen will not stop us implementing our programme. Council rents will be reduced by £2 a week in October. There will be no redundancies of council workers. Our housing and environment programme will be realised.

It is clear that the Tories will not stand idly by and allow a socialist local authority to defend jobs and services. We are preparing



NUT representative, Felicity Dowling (above), addressing the mass meeting of Liverpool City workers last Friday.

Over 500 shop-floor, office and school representatives came together to back the Labour council in their fight

against the Tory government over the City's financing.

One worker, Bernie Hogan, chairman of the cleansing department shop stewards said at the meeting, "It's time to get out and fight for our jobs." "Faced with the loss of

4,000 jobs, if the cuts go through," another worker commented, "we must back our councillors...we can't leave them on their own."

The meeting, which was addressed by the council leader, John Hamilton, deputy leader

Derek Hatton, as well as Liverpool MP Terry Fields, unanimously opposed the Tories' plans for cuts and reaffirmed the workers' opposition to any privatisation.

now for the coming attack.

A Liaison Committee between the council, the Labour Party, and local authority trade unions has been established. Last Friday, 23 September, there was a mass meeting of council shop stewards, addressed by John Hamilton (council leader), and Derek Hatton (deputy leader).

Two weeks ago, on 15 September, a meeting of trade unions, Labour MPs, councillors and district Labour Party, was held to prepare a major demonstration on unemployment to be held in Liverpool on 19 November. District Labour party president, Tony Mulhearn, declared that the purpose of the demo was to start the fightback against the wave of factory closures on Merseyside and the coming attacks upon the local



Photo: Denis Doran/Militant

authority.

A resolution was adopted calling upon the Tories to return to Liverpool £25m out of the £125m taken in rate support grant.

The fight to defend jobs and services will continue in Liverpool. But the struggle must be national. It is vital that the NEC of the Labour Party ensure that the struggle of all Labour councils is co-ordinated in a national campaign to stop the Tories.

Workplace branches set up

By Richard Venton

IN LAUNCHING their witch-hunt against *Militant* supporters, the right wing of the Labour Party are attacking those party members who are among the best builders of the party membership.

Supporters of *Militant* have always been in the very front of all the campaigns to recruit members locally and persuade the membership of unions like NALGO and CPSA to affiliate nationally.

One way of building the Labour Party's influence among trade union members is to create work-place branches. Yet the decision by Labour Party conference to allow for the establishment of work-place Labour Party branches has not been taken very seriously by the Party as a whole—and the right wing have always opposed the idea.

But in Merseyside, big strides have been taken to establish such branches, once again, largely under the influence and pressure of *Militant* supporters.

The first such branch in the area was the one based on the Housing Department in Dingle. This workplace branch, being the pioneer, has been able to offer advice and assistance to others.

Redundancies

A very successful branch has also been established among Post Office workers in the Copperas Hill sorting office: regular attendances of between 20 and 40 members have been held, including many young workers. The branch has produced a

regular newsletter for members and Labour Party sympathisers in the office, and during the general election they canvassed as a team in certain areas.

At Cammell Lairds shipyard the Labour Party branch there have had meetings of up to 20, and its members have played a role in arguing through the Confed shop stewards' committee for the best way to fight redundancies.

Other branches have been set up in Merseyside in Dista, Fords Halewood, Liverpool Docks, GMO, TGWU (Transport House, Liverpool), Carlett Park FE College staff, and yet others are planned at Vauxhall, A C Delco, the National GIRO Office and at an office of the DHSS.

Unfortunately, workers have not always found the regional office of the Labour Party exactly falling over themselves to help establish workplace branches.

Merseyside FBU members, for example, have held two meetings, each attended by between 20 and 25 firemen.

But they have been told that to set up a Labour Party branch, they must all be from the same workplace i.e. Fire station—all being members of the Merseyside

All that is needed to set up a workplace Labour Party branch is a minimum of ten members. When there are ten members (all of whom must still join the Labour Party through a ward branch) in any one constituency, then the workplace branch can send a delegate to that CLP management committee.

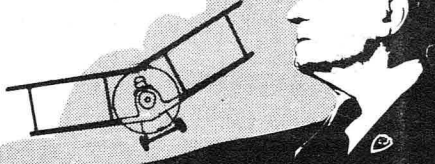
Fire Brigade is not enough! As one fireman asked, how likely is it that they could get 10 firemen from one single station, when its total strength might be less than 30?

Conference

In order to promote the establishment of more branches, however, the Copperas Hill sorting office branch is calling a conference on October 29 for the whole of Merseyside on "Building Workplace Labour Party branches." This branch will be using its own and others' experiences to try to encourage groups of workers to set up branches of their own.

The example being set in Merseyside should be followed by Labour Party members and supporters everywhere. The Right may try to pour cold water on them but workplace branches can be a vital cog in the machinery of the Labour Party, increasing its influence and membership where it counts... on the shop floor.

Anton Nilson



Memoirs of a Revolutionary

IN 1908 ANTON NILSON was given a life sentence for his part in an attack upon strikebreakers. This second part of his political life story deals with the struggle to get his release.

I WAS in prison for nine and a half years until I was released in 1917. For 3 years and 8 months of that time I was in solitary confinement. In all those years I never had a single visit from my family.

There was a tremendous movement among revolutionary syndicalists about our imprisonment and there was even a plan that Russian and Polish syndicalists living in Denmark would smuggle their way into the country and release us. To stop that sort of thing happening we were transported away to another prison.

I was brought to Stockholm station with chains on my hands and feet. Railway workers had heard that I was coming and had warned the Young Socialists and other workers; so when I came out of the wagon there was a mass of people on the hill. I scrambled towards them and shouted, holding up my chains, "Long live the revolution!", and they shouted back "Long live Anton Nilson!"

We only stayed in Stockholm a few years because there were sentiments among the workers and Young Socialists for our release. I was transferred to a northern town in exactly the same way, with 15 kilos of iron.

There was a great movement for our release among

How I became a pilot

WHEN I was in prison in Stockholm about 1910, I saw through a small window an air display by the flying baron, the Red Baron.

As in prisons in all countries the windows are set very high. Perhaps it was the influence of the church. They think that the prisoners should only be able to see heaven.

That air display made me want to be a pilot. But I said nothing about it because I would have been declared insane. I would never have been released. I was set free in

September 1917 but the pilots' course did not start until March 1918, so I had to wait until then. I got a pilot's certificate in mid-summer 1918, and left for Russia shortly afterwards.

I was not really allowed to go, because I was given a passport which specifically excluded Russia, and I had not done my military service. But I went to see the War Minister, Nielsen, in the new government. He said to me: "You have done service enough, you can go." Next Week: The Russian Revolution.

10,000 THREATEN TO STORM PRISON

May Day demonstration, Sweden, 1917.



syndicalists in Europe, and America. Round about 1916-'17 the French syndicalist movement, which was then that country's largest trade union organisation, sent a telegram to King Gustav and threatened to

organise a boycott of Swedish goods if we were not released.

I think there was a big solidarity among English workers but I don't know about details of that. Tom Mann spoke in Gothenburg

in 1913 and sent a telegram of support to us.

On Mayday 1917 there was an uprising by workers in the area where the prison was and an ultimatum given to the government. Either I was to be released by four o'clock that afternoon or the prison would be stormed.

10,000 workers surrounded the prison. Some had walked 70 kilometres to get there; others had come 40 kilometres with bands playing, to participate in the demonstration. The government issued a secret order to the authorities that if the workers stormed the prison I was to be shot. I smuggled out a message to the workers at that time telling them they should not storm the prison.

So they blockaded the prison: no-one could come in, no-one could come out. The prison guards were in prison. Later they managed to smuggle me out to Stockholm. But there was a big revolutionary spirit among the working class in Sweden then. The right-wing government resigned and the Liberal/Social Democratic coalition government came in. At the first meeting of that new government they ordered our release.

Terror on the Isle of Man

RECENTLY I attended my first trade union conference at the Isle of Man. Our plane from London was full of trade unionists talking about past experiences, policies and conference etc.

As we got off the plane, past the "Welcome to the Isle of Man" sign, I noticed that as I walked towards the customs, I was being looked at by three to four security men.

Suddenly, one of them appeared to go out of his way and said: "Could we have a few words with you?" I said: "Yes, but I have a coach waiting outside, will it take long? He said: "The coach will wait."

We went into a room where he produced a card and asked me to fill it in—giving details such as name, address, purpose of visit to the Isle of Man, duration of visit, hotel etc.

I asked him why he wanted the information. He said it was a routine

check—the Prevention of Terrorism Act—"just doing our job."

When he saw the nature of the visit—a trade union card (as if he didn't know), he said, "are you putting people first?"

"In theory we are."
"What does NALGO stand for?"

(I was going to say "Not A Lot Going On")—"I can tell you after conference."

Others then joined in the questioning: "Are you a Labour man?"

"Yes, I am a Labour man—how about yourself?"

"Oh, we are non political here—we've got our own government here, the Manx."

"Would you say you're a left-winger?"

"What do you mean by being a left?"

"Do you mind if I look in your bag?"

"Can't really stop you, can I?"

"That's right, you can't."

He then pulled out conference agenda, resolutions, Trotsky book, Militants...

"Are you a member of the Militant Tendency?"

"I didn't know there was a membership, how do you join?"

"Have you read any Marx?"

"Some."

"I read a bit of Marx—he had some good ideas but they don't really work."

He listed every publication I had and put them on a card. A bloke came out of the room and said "N.T." I'd heard of ET but I asked him: "What does N.T. stand for." He said it was a secret (Non-Terrorist?)

He said, "Some people are trying to abolish the PTA."

"I'm not surprised when they use it against trade unionists. Preventing terrorism is one thing, harrasing trade unionists is another."

"Ah, but we've got a job to do."

"By the way how many terrorists have you caught?"

"Oh, none, we don't get many terrorists on the Isle of Man."

"But you get plenty of trade unionists."

"Right, that's all, you can go now."

"Excuse me, what's happening to all that information?"

"We keep it or throw it away, we don't know yet."

"Can I have your name please?"

"Oh, why?"

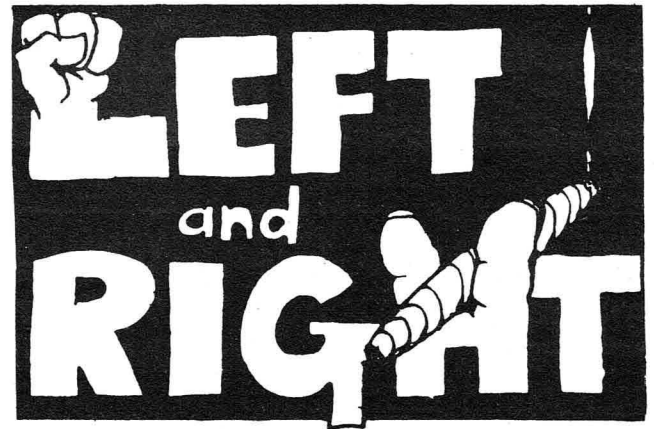
"You know everything about me, I just want to know who interviewed me."

"You can call me 123: we are not allowed to give names."

After saying "friendly" goodbyes I then got my baggage and found my coach had gone. Luckily a delegate remembered I had been pulled in and the coach came back.

Out of that experience I realise how the PTA can be used to harrass trade unionists on the pretext of stopping terrorists.

By John Considine
(Chairman London LPYS)



Cancer victim mum—selective coverage

All workers were saddened by the story of Hazel Lester, the mother who refused treatment for cancer to protect her unborn child and soon died. The concern of the Tory press for Hazel was not so deep—despite their massive coverage of the story. Not once did they mention that Hazel, as the *New Statesman* pointed out, was a socialist. Hazel's last instructions to her sister was that any money raised by a memorial concert was to be divided between CND and the women at Greenham Common, and that in her memory her family should plant a "white bush for peace and a red bush for socialism". These facts did not even get so much as a sentence in the Tory rags.

55 million jobless?

Western economies will have to grow at about twice the current rate if unemployment is not to increase. That is the conclusion of the OECD, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, which includes all the major capitalist countries. In a report last week they said that twenty million new jobs would have to be created in the industrialised world over the next five years just to stop unemployment rising.

No prospect is held out for a cut in the dole queue. At present there are 35 million put of work in the 'developed' world. To stop the twenty million who will come onto the labour market by 1989 going straight onto the dole, 20,000 jobs will have to be created every day; that is the double the numbers achieved since the mid-1970s.

The wonderful world of sackings

When Thatcher came to power in 1979 the ruling class pundits appeared on our television screens telling us all this was a "victory for common sense", "good for the country" etc. Their real attitude was better summed up by the late Lady Hartwell. According to the *Sunday Time* (18 September) she said of Thatcher's victory, "At last we're going to live in a world where we can sack people again."

Killed by the Tory health cuts

"Two kidney patients turned away from Guy's Hospital because of a cash crisis have died". That was how the *South London Press* began its front page story, 23 September.

It went on: "The deaths come two months after doctors warned patients would die unless the kidney unit was given a cash boost. Consultants had to turn away five kidney patients in August—including a young boy—because of lack of nurses to run the life-saving dialysis machines. Doctors claim the department needs another £200,000 from regional health chiefs on top of its current £2 m budget."

There is not chance of that. Not content with the result of their previous cuts, the Tories announced, on the same day that the *South London Press* appeared, that 1,081 jobs will go, including doctors and nurses, from the health facilities for people in South-East London.

Conservatives against the witch-hunt?

"Maidstone Young Conservatives want a witch or warlock to lead a discussion about so-called 'white' magic"—Advert in *Kent Evening Post*, 14 September.

Women and the struggle for socialism

Build mass women's sections

THE SUBSTANTIAL number of resolutions on the Labour Women's Organisation and on Positive Discrimination reflect a growing desire for a campaigning Women's organisation, and for the Labour Party to take up far more effectively the problems facing women.

Women, especially working-class women, have looked to the labour movement for a lead.

There has been a rapid increase in Women's Sections and Councils up and down the country. Unfortunately a fighting lead has been lacking from the National Women's Organisation and the right-wing leaders of the Labour Party.

The way forward must be to campaign on issues such as a fight for jobs, a minimum wage to end low pay, the extension of pay and employment rights to part-timers and home workers, adequate child care facilities, and better education and training facilities for women. We must link women's struggles to the rest of the class fighting against Tory attacks.

Bridge to link issues

The Labour Women's Organisation should act as bridge between these struggles, linking so-called 'women's issues' to a struggle for a socialist programme. A plan of production could provide the means for a minimum wage, shorter hours, nursery, laundry and restaurant facilities. Women must be freed from low pay and drudgery in the home, their double burden.

But if we are to build a democratic campaigning women's organisation and increase women's activity in the labour movement, we must remove the difficulties which stop women attending meetings. We must organise: creches, baby sitting rotas, transport etc., and hold meetings in places convenient for women. To encourage women's self-confidence there must be special schools and courses.

To ensure the active participation of women in unions, workplace meetings in works time are needed, with proper time and facilities for stewards and officers. Workplace LP branches would allow women to be active in the union, the LP and cope with strain of work and running a home.

These demands go hand-in-hand with a campaign to

By Lesley Holt

make our organisations democratic and accountable, with the election of all officials and representatives by the members who can judge candidates on their record of activity.

However, some people believe that the absence of women in leading positions in the party can be overcome by just organisational measures or by measures of 'positive discrimination'. Supporters of positive discrimination believe that 'creating targets for 5 resolutions to conference, 5 places on the NEC direct from the Labour Women's Conference, mandatory shortlisting of at least one woman for Parliamentary or local government selection, and reservation of certain places for women on committees, will overcome women's lack of participation and male prejudice.

These demands in fact would not overcome the problem as much as avoid it. Delegates would only take seriously the proposal for 5 resolutions from the National Labour Women's Conference if they are politically convinced of the issues.

Yet the debate at ward and constituency level would be cut off. And discussion at this level is essential if we are to build a Labour Party that campaigns on issues affecting women.

Many male LP and trade union members, as yet, do not see the importance of these issues, but they can be convinced, given the right approach. Through discussion, and campaigning work by the local women's sections, male prejudice at rank and file level can be overcome, just as the LPYS overcame many prejudices about youth by their approach and campaigns.

Turn Outwards and Recruit

Turning the women's organisation outward to recruit for the LP, in recruiting drives on the estates, factories, school gates etc, will convince LP men of the benefits of an active women's section, and develop their understanding of issues which affect women and working class communities.

The mass involvement of women in trade unions and the LP around such campaigns is crucial to correct the lack of women councillors, MPs and other



Class issues are the key to building mass, working-class Women's Sections. (Above) last year's NHS dispute. Photo: Militant

representatives. Only 5% of Labour MPs are women.

A compulsory woman on a shortlist will not convince a CLP to select a woman candidate; it would just result in tokenism. The rank and file of the LP should judge their candidate on all aspects of policy.

The political composition of the NEC will not change without a campaign from below, to elect representatives who will reflect and fight for the interests of all party members, male and female. Unless the Labour Women's Conference and National Committee is democratised, 5 representatives on the NEC could actually be used by the right-wing as a tactic to tip the balance against the left.

The first steps to a democratic Women's Organisation, as an integral part of the labour movement, was achieved when the Women's Conference adopted a structure along the lines of the LPYS with National Committee members elected by their regions, at regional conferences. This has still to be fully implemented.

Local women's sections and councils are the best judges of NC members' campaigning work, or lack of it. Election at regional conferences will involve far more of the membership and make the NC members more accountable than election at National Conference.

What we want is the im-

plementation of our existing conference decisions! Blocking by the Women's National Committee or regions can only be overcome by campaigning in the women's sections and local parties to insist that decisions are acted upon.

Without increased democ-

racy and accountability, with representatives elected according to political ideas, more women councillors, MP and NEC members will not automatically guarantee that the interests of women will be better represented. What we need are women prepared to fight for socialist policies.

Drunk or sober same Tory contempt

IT HAS not taken long for the new Tory MPs and Ministers to show their attitude to women.

Take for example, the new Tory MP for Littleborough and Saddleworth, one of the sponsors of the hanging bill.

In his 'Parliamentary Report', he spent most of his time describing social events he had attended including the Royal Garden Party. This year, Norma (his wife) "found a very nice peach-coloured creation with black trim, together with a saucy black hat with some nice trim and veil. She looked a picture."

And the problems of his constituents? "If we had searched the whole United Kingdom it is doubtful if we would have found a more

beautiful constituency with such friendly people. We often take different routes across the constituency and when viewing the moors and peaks from different sides they take quite different shapes."

He presumably goes by car as there is no bus route linking one side of the constituency with the other.

When Alan Clark, a new Tory Employment Minister had to introduce EEC regulations on equal pay just before the summer recess, he could hardly disguise his contempt. One Labour MP at first thought he was drunk. But *Sunday Times* Political Editor, Hugo Young, a liberal Tory, said that the real problem was that Clark was sober:

MILITANT WEEKEND SCHOOLS

OVER 150 people attended the two *Militant* schools on "Women and the struggle for socialism". One was held in Bradford, and the other last weekend in London.

Discussions were held on the family, the effect of Tory policies, and the extra burdens placed upon women. One comrade explained last weekend, that in Kent it has been proposed to have 'Granny-annexes', ie porta-cabins in the back garden for grandma and elderly relatives, with the local authority providing funds.

The discussion on women in the Third World, explained some of the horrific conditions of women in the colonial world. About 20 illegal abortions are carried out in Soweto every day. In Peru, 14% of women in jail are there because they have had an abortion.

After a video on sexual harassment was shown, the discussion centred on the 'Lady at Lord John' dispute, the successful backing of the labour and trade union movement in Liverpool, and the lessons learnt.

There were also discussions on low pay, and the women's activity in the trade unions. All who attended the school, felt that it was a tremendous success, and the children were not left out, as they enjoyed the excellently run crèches.

By Theresa Wrack
(Dulwich Labour Party)

"First reading his speech with theatrical slowness, then pointedly gabbling through passages he did not pretend to understand, he mocked the whole (Parliamentary) machine... So ridiculous did he make them (the new regulations) sound and so divorced from anything a rational person could hope to understand that inebriation might well have appeared the only 'explanation.'"

The open contempt for working women demonstrated by the Tories in this debate was certainly an insult but would it have changed anything if Alan Clark had read his speech "with good sense and good manners" which Hugo Young claims is important to "good government"?

The Tories are defending their system which relies on cheap female labour in the factories and offices and free labour in the home.

By Margaret Creear

LITTLEBOROUGH & SADDLEWORTH LPYS send greetings. Forward to the socialist transformation of the Labour Party.

We can't wait five years. Organise to bring down the Tories now! Greetings, **WITHINGTON LPYS**

Fraternal greetings to all comrades from **MANCHESTER CENTRAL Militant supporters.** Forward to socialism!

WORSLEY LPYS sends greetings to the socialists in the Labour Party fighting for true socialism.

MIDDLETON LPYS demands an NEC committed to fighting for the implementation of Clause IV (part IV) by the next Labour Government. Reinstatement the *Militant* Editorial Board!

MILLBROOK WARD Labour Party, Southampton sends fraternal greetings to all delegates. Oppose witch-hunts, fight capitalism

ROCHDALE DISTRICT Labour Party sends fraternal greetings to Conference.

Greetings from **ROCHDALE DISTRICT CO-OPERATIVE PARTY, 1843-1983** "The home of the pioneers"

Socialist Greetings from **ROCHDALE CLP** Tories out Forward to Socialism

Labour conference 83

GREETINGS

WYTHENSHAW LPYS 1983
Message to the NEC
The Marxists will not accept the suspension of our CLP!
Witch-hunters, your days are numbered.
The Marxists will triumph in Wythenshawe!

No to token changes! Vote for a mass, campaigning, socialist Women's Organisation!
ROCHDALE WOMENS COUNCIL

Greetings from **BLACKBURN LPYS.** Reinstatement the five members of *Militant* Editorial Board and defeat the witch-hunt. Forward to fight the Tories with socialist policies.

Conference greetings from
OSWALDTWISTLE LABOUR PARTY

The members of **Oswaldtwistle Labour Party** give full support for the programme and aims of *Militant*, and are totally opposed to the expulsion of the five members of the *Militant* Editorial Board.

HALESOWEN 2 BRANCH AUEW send Greetings to all delegates. Forward to peace and a socialist Britain.

BLACKPOOL SOUTH CLP sends warm socialist greetings to all delegates—Peace, jobs and freedom

Socialist greetings from **Inqaba ya Basebenzi** Journal of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the African National Congress of South Africa.
WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!



BAKERS, FOOD AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION

- ★ Oppose Anti-Union Legislation
- ★ Defend the welfare state
- ★ Forward on a socialist programme
- ★ No to expulsions

T. O'Neill
National President

J. Marino
General Secretary

For a united socialist party!
Re-instate the *Militant* Editorial Board!

Coun. J. Browne, Chmn Preston CLP
P. Forrester Sec. Preston LPYS
D. Beale Preston NATFHE
C. Wootton Preston CLP
P. Shenton Ribblesdale AUEW
G. Lerner Preston CLP
T. Wilkinson Sec. Preston No.1 NUR
Cty Coun. I. Short Preston CLP
S. Crookes Preston Trades Council
L. Hindle Preston CLP
K. Wootton Ashton Ward LP.
Coun. P. Rankin Ribblesdale Valley CLP
D. Emson Preston LPYS
A. West Preston N. AUEW/TASS
Coun. R. Atkins Preston CLP
T. Hindle Sec. 6/53 TGWU
M. McDonnell Preston LPYS
B. McDermott Preston No.1 NUR.
Coun. G. Worrell Preston CLP.
J. Nuttall Ribblesdale Valley CLP.
S. Williams V.Chmn Preston LPYS
All in a personal capacity.



ASTMS NE London Medical Branch Labour Party Supporters say: "Stop Maggie Fowling up the NHS—no more privatisation."

"Greetings from **T&GWU Branch 5/909 Rover Solihull** to delegates, labour movement observers and visitors."

USDAW BLACKPOOL WOOLWORTH BRANCH send fraternal greetings to all socialists. Expel the Tories not the socialists.

Fraternal greetings to all of our comrades, brothers and sisters in the labour movement. In unity, let us strive together to build a socialist society in which freedom of expression and freedom of association will have some real meaning.
1/1347 Branch TGWU

BINLEY AND WILLENHALL LABOUR PARTY
To all delegates, reinstate the five unite round socialist policies

Fraternal greetings from **BROADSTONE LABOUR PARTY** No witch-hunt. Re-instate the five

Implement 1983 South West Labour Party Regional Conference policy no witch-hunt—re-instate the five

Paul Moorhouse
Roger Thomas
Marcel Pike
Julie Harris

PENN HILL/ CANFORD CLIFFS Branch, Poole CLP, rebuild for a Labour Victory on Socialist Policies!

BOURNEMOUTH WEST LPYS
Re-instate the five! Marxism in our time—We've waited long enough!

Elect a socialist leadership to fight the Tories and end the witch-hunt
—**POOLE LPYS**

"CHEYLESMORE Labour Party calls on Conference to support socialist policies and an end to witch-hunting"

COVENTRY SOUTH-EAST LPYS. Send greetings For Workers' MPs on Workers' wages.

SEVENOAKS LPYS Fraternal greetings to conference delegates. Defend the LPYS. Youth for Labour—Labour for youth

SIDCUP LPYS say "Hi Vic" and hope he supports the socialist struggle within the party

ANGELL BRANCH of Norwood CLP says "Yes" to socialist policies, and "No" to witch-hunts

Labour conference 83

GREETINGS



OXFORD Militant Supporters say: Defend socialist policies. End the witch-hunt. Re-instate the *Militant* Five.

NORWOOD LPYS recognises Clare Doyle and Lynn Walsh as members of Norwood Labour Party

BRENT EAST LPYS says, show the Tories the door, implement Clause 4, no more expulsions, re-instate the 5, socialist policies for Labour!

GLOUCESTER LPYS send fraternal greetings to all comrades in the fight for democratic socialist policies

ROMSEY AND WATERSIDE LPYS calls on conference to reinstate the *Militant* Editorial Board immediately!

HACKNEY NORTH LPYS. Now under workers' control and management. No witch-hunting of socialists! Hunt the witch in No 10!

Support resolution 347 from Reading East CLP. Guaranteed job for every youth.
—**READING EAST LPYS**

Fraternal greetings from Swindon LPYS Re-instate the five!

VAUXHALL LPYS Workers' unity to defeat the Tories! For a socialist society based on need, not greed!

Fraternal greetings to Labour Party conference from **RAYLEIGH BRANCH LABOUR PARTY** No to a witch-hunt of socialist ideas—socialist not Tory policies

STEVENAGE LPYS sends fraternal greetings to Labour conference. Carry out Clause 4, part IV. Don't just discuss it. Expel Tories, not socialists. Re-instate the five

STEVENAGE MILITANT SUPPORTERS May the right-wing NEC fall. That's what socialists call for to stop the witch-hunts we need some Militants
VOTE FOR TERRY FIELDS AND PAT WALL

Message to Conference from **EAST BERKSHIRE CLP**
Stop the witch-hunt
Fight the Tories

BETHNAL GREEN & STEPNEY LPYS say Marxists aren't gate crashers. We belong in the party

WATFORD LPYS extends fraternal greetings. Oppose the witch-hunt. Unite and fight for Clause IV!

WESSEX CO-OPERATIVE PARTY send fraternal greetings to all delegates to 1983 LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE



Dave Nellist

Fraternal greetings to Conference from **Dave Nellist, Labour MP, Coventry South-East**
"Socialism in our Time"

ISLE OF WIGHT LP GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
+
Ryde, Newport & Sandown/Shanklin District Branches of the Labour Party



Send socialist greetings to all conference delegates—Support the resolutions on MP's pay—Get 'Militant' with the Tories

WHEN THE Tories first came to power, the Labour Party began to regain its popularity. Thatcher became one of the most hated Prime Ministers in British history. Yet this year at the polls Labour was badly beaten. *Militant* looks at the reasons why.

LEFT Labour conference 83

By Tony Saunois

(former NEC member for LPYS)

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

THIS YEAR'S Labour Party conference assembles after one of the worst election results since 1918. Labour's vote fell to nearly 8.5 million, only 27.6% of the popular vote. As a result, the most reactionary Tory administration for fifty years was returned to power.

Overshadowing all the debates therefore, will be the question "why this defeat?". In addition, the entire labour movement faces the questions of what prospects there are for the Tory government and the struggles of working people.

Labour's right sweepingly denounce "the extremism" of the party programme as being responsible for the defeat. However, their arguments ignore one decisive fact. Two of Labour's candidates, supporting Marxist ideas, were returned to parliament with large majorities in Coventry South-East and Liverpool, Broadgreen.

In Broadgreen a notional Tory majority of 600 was turned into a Labour majority of 3,800. Throughout Liverpool, despite a vicious "red scare" campaign conducted by the Liberals especially, Labour's share of the vote rose from 42.7% in 1979 to 47.3%. Broadgreen experienced the third largest swing to Labour in the country.

Radical socialism enthused thousands and produced victory in Liverpool

The only explanation for this can be the radical socialist policies which enthused thousands and produced victory. If repeated nationally it would have resulted in a Labour landslide.

These stark facts have produced a deafening silence from the media and Labour's right wing. Flying in the face of reality, they have desperately tried to off load the responsibility for Labour's defeat from their shoulders and therefore failed to understand the reasons for it.

The essential element which objectively favoured the Tories was the Falklands War. It afforded them, and especially Thatcher, the opportunity to bask in the image of a strong leadership and "national glory".

Prior to this accident of history, Thatcher's government was the most hated for decades. Riots swept the country in 1981. Labour had made substantial gains in local elections.

Even the leader of the employers' organisation, the Confederation of British Industry, had called for a "bare knuckle" fight against Thatcher's monetarism. The Falklands' War and Thatcher's victory changed everything.

Emerging from the war victorious, the Tory leadership was able to contrast the vacillation and

irresolution of Labour's leadership with the "iron maiden's" apparent strength and determination. To workers and sections of the middle class, to those who had lost hope of employment and had experienced a slashing of living standards, the hope of a return to past glories, strength and prosperity was held out.

Without the Falklands War, it is extremely doubtful the Tories would have won the election. Its consequences, however, were tragically reinforced by the lack of a credible alternative being presented by the Labour leadership.

Moreover the actions of previous right wing Labour governments had allowed the seeds of cynicism and mistrust to be sown among Labour voters. Labour, promising a programme of radical reform, had after all been returned five times to office since 1945 but there had been no decisive break with capitalism. For large sections of workers the net result was judged, by the end of 1979, to be the return of mass unemployment, higher

taxes, cuts in living standards and a general programme of counter-reforms.

Labour's 1983 programme promised the introduction of a massive scheme of public works, the increase of state expenditure on housing, education and the health service. A shorter working week and the possibility of the introduction of a minimum wage were offered.

Brutal and draconian measures of Thatcherism

Following the brutal and draconian measures of the Thatcher administration, this programme was not considered extreme. It was not the programme of radical reform which workers opposed.

Those currently attacking Labour's programme for its "extremism" should remember the landslide victories achieved by the workers' parties in France and Greece, where for the first time

they succeeded in gaining over 50% of the votes. Their radical programme included extensive nationalisation, a 35-hour week and a pledge to transform society.

But the question posed time and again in the British election was "how will it be paid for"? "Deficit financing" was the answer given by the Labour leadership. Borrow more money, in other words, or as Peter Shore recently called it, a return to "Keynesian methods".

Keynesianism was the main economic theory of the post-war boom years of capitalism from 1945 to 1974, during which time the budget deficits built up an enormous inflationary pressure. Now, 1983 is not 1945-74. The fundamental contradictions of capitalism have resurfaced again and Keynesian methods of financing cannot overcome them. Reflation, or deficit financing now would lead to massive inflation.

To increase its expenditure the state would have to acquire the extra 'wherewithal', and this could only be obtained from three

sources. The profits of the major companies could be taxed; thereby provoking a reaction from the capitalist class—to close industries or at the very least to cut down even further on investment. Or the wages of the workers could be taxed more, thereby depressing still further their ability to buy back goods, further deepening the recession.

Lastly, as was done by previous governments, they could simply print or borrow more money. Yet to increase the money supply without being backed up with an increase in real wealth from industry, only serves to fuel the fires of inflation.

This programme, the essence of Labour's economic policy, was rejected by workers and their families, especially after the experience of 1974-79.

Workers did not believe it possible to simply "spend our way out of the crisis". Failing to convince, Labour's programme led many to look elsewhere for an alternative to Thatcher.

(Continued on next page)



Massive support for Labour at the demonstration called in Glasgow in February 1981.

Photo: Militant

Labour conference 83

The road to recovery

(CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE)

elsewhere for an alternative to Thatcher.

The SDP/Liberal Alliance took many votes from both workers and sections of the middle class, who would otherwise have been won to Labour. It was an indication of the tremendous volatility in society that the SDP, despite their denunciation of 'Labour's extremism', won much of its support by adopting the posture of a "new radical force", "breaking the mould" of politics, etc.

Far from being 'new' or 'radical' their ideas really represent a return to the past—to the same policies which they themselves had implemented under the mask of Labour ministers. Between 1974–79, under the impact of the capitalist crisis, these 'reformers' were compelled to carry through a programme of counter-reforms.

At their recent conference the real nature of the SDP's Tory policies were clearly outlined. Referring to David Owen's speech, *The Times* editorial (13 September '83) explained, "between the lines, Doctor Owen was accepting much that Mrs Thatcher is now doing as providing a basis on which the SDP must try to build its own policies."

The SDP, in reality, is another part of big business. Its financial backing and encouragement from the ruling class has receded recently, but the underlying reason for this is that it has fulfilled its immediate role.

Created by big business, built around those whose careers were threatened by the radicalisation of the labour movement, the SDP was to be used to try and split the Labour Party. It also acted as a "safety net" to catch those many disillusioned Tories, especially among the middle class, who could drift towards supporting Labour. The SDP manifestly failed in its objective of splitting the Labour Party, but they did partly succeed in splitting the Labour vote and thus prevent the return of a Labour government.

The election was a victory for the ruling class, but one which could have been checked with an audacious socialist campaign, by Labour. For such a campaign, a serious attack upon the Social Democratic Party and its policies was necessary. It is significant that this was lacking—especially from the right wing.

The reason lies in the fact that Labour's right wing has no significant policy differences with the SDP. To have attacked them would also have necessitated an attack on their own record in government, especially between 1974–79.

It is, however, necessary for the labour movement to look forward, learning from the lessons of the past. The Tories' victory is a pyrrhic one, fraught with dangers and crisis for the ruling class. Thatcher may yet lament, as the Duke of Wellington did, "next to a battle lost, the greatest misery is a battle gained."

None of the underlying problems of British capitalism will be resolved. Throughout the election, the Tory propaganda machine poured out daily forecasts of the impending economic revival. It was the justification for all the "sacrifices" of the preceding years.

It is true by the end of 1983 the economy will expand by 2.5%. Yet only those who are completely

blind to the underlying economic developments would herald this as a return to the years of stability and growth of the post-war period.

This recovery is expected to peter out by 1984. Forecasters now expect only a 1–1.5% growth throughout 1984. Unemployment is likely to continue to rise and remain at the "official" level of 3.2 million by the end of 1984.

Most importantly, the catastrophic decline of manufacturing industry has not been checked. British industry is now wholly unable to compete and is still falling further and further behind its main rivals.

Investment in manufacturing industry plummeted by 33% between 1979–82. In the first quarter of this year, it was lower than at any time since 1959. A further fall of 4% by the end of 1983 is now expected. This will leave investment

setting on even small numbers of workers, announcements of increased profits, all have the effect of revitalising the trade union movement.

As the *Financial Times* (1 September) explained:

"Workers at Vauxhall Motors, buoyed up by the success of the company's *Cavalier* saloon 17-week walked out on strike immediately on learning of a pay offer put at 4%... negotiators on both sides of British industry are bracing themselves for the possibility of a tough winter of wage bargaining because of the new factor in the pay equation—the prospect of economic recovery".

The recovery in confidence and willingness to struggle is further underpinned by the recent upsurge in small, localised disputes, often unofficial, some of which have

a minority is possible.

There can be little doubt that there are candidates for a split in the "bunker" of Labour's right—the Parliamentary Labour Party. This is the only reason why the SDP has not immediately merged with the Liberals. Owen and other SDP leaders hope to attract other traitors from the Labour Party.

It will, however, be the industrial and social explosions which will determine the path Labour is to take. The decline of capitalism and the ruthless attacks it will unleash will compel increasing numbers of workers to look for a political solution.

Lessons learnt by previous generations of workers will be learnt. Younger labour movement activists will be thrown to the fore, demanding leaders more responsive to their needs.

Many thousands will inevitably

Part 4 of the party constitution.

The middle class must be won to the banner of Labour, but not by abandoning the commitment to socialism. They will be won, not by abandoning the low paid, the unemployed, and all sections of the industrial working class, but by an audacious campaign explaining the necessity for a root and branch transformation of society, also taking up problems like interest repayments, high mortgage rate, and so on.

This period of intensified struggle will also reveal weakness within the ruling class itself. Confronted with crisis, decline and decay, inevitably splits will develop.

This is already manifest in the warnings of Pym and other "wets" against the "excesses" and "unnecessary harshness" of some of Thatcher's measures. Recoiling from the harsh reality of capitalist crisis, and the intense class struggle that threatens to flow from it, this wing of the British ruling class desperately yearns to return to the old Conservative philosophy of "on nation".

On the other hand, the right wing of the Tory party demand that harsher measures be taken to try to overcome the economic crisis. But neither will the "pragmatic" ideas of Pym nor the ruthless measures of the right solve any of the underlying economic problems.

In the approaching social crisis and struggle lie the ingredients of a future split in the Tory party. The paradox of the recent election results was that, despite producing the largest Tory parliamentary majority for decades, it heralded the beginning of the end of the Conservative Party as it is currently known.

British society lies at an impasse. The labour movement has before it a tremendous opportunity.

A recovery and development of the Labour Party is assured in the coming period but it will be all the stronger if the fundamental lessons are learnt.

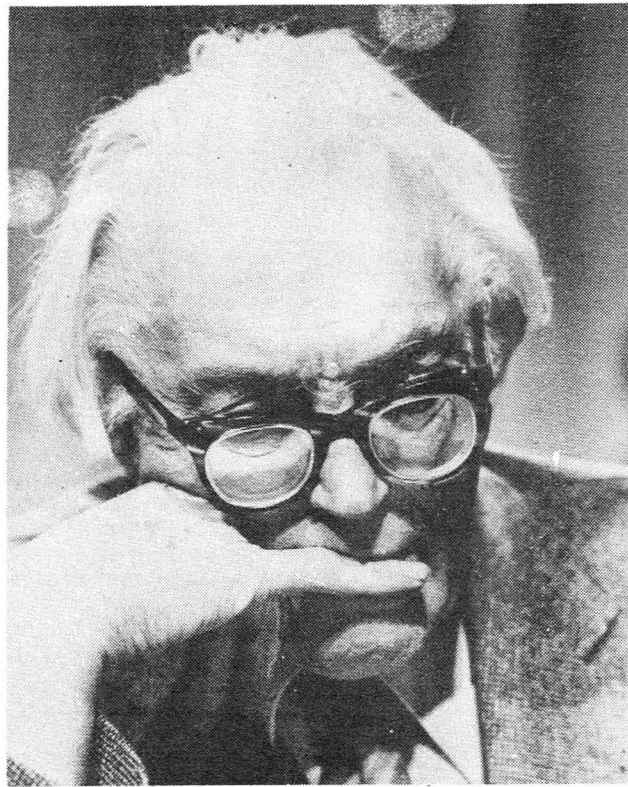
Confronted with an epoch of capitalist crisis, decline and decay, there is no way out for the working class within the system. Labour's radical programme of a 35-hour week, a minimum wage, a massive scheme of useful public works and other radical reforms must be maintained. They must be vigorously fought for, and the party must now turn itself outwards into a mass campaigning party rooted in industry.

But the essential ingredient of recent experiences must be grasped. Any future Labour administration coming to power on a radical programme of reform must be prepared to break from the straightjacket of the capitalist economy.

Failure to do so will result in the abandonment of the programme under pressure from big business. The central task, therefore, is to face up to the necessity for a fundamental socialist transformation of society.

This can only mean a socialist plan of production based upon the implementation of Clause 4, Part IV of the party constitution, in today's terms, the nationalisation of the 200 monopolies, banks and insurance companies, run democratically by the working class. Only with such a democratic plan of production would it be possible to implement and maintain the radical reform programme on which the Labour Party currently stands.

The coming period will provide tremendous possibilities for the labour movement. The adoption of Marxist ideas and a leadership determined to struggle for the transformation of society offers the only lasting way forward for Labour and working people.



Photos: Militant

in manufacturing industry accounting for a mere 14% of spending on fixed investment.

The rise of 4% in investment expected next year hardly measures against the estimated 40% needed to restore competitiveness with Japan, America and West Germany. With the complete collapse of manufacturing industry, Britain has now lost its capacity to compete.

In the two years to July 1983 manufactured exports fell by 5% while imports rose 16%. For the first time since the industrial revolution, imports of manufactured goods exceeded exports! This economic nightmare will compel the Tory government, the political representatives of big business, to carry through even further measures to cut living standards.

Tories' policies— recipe for social explosions

Thatcher imagines she has "tamed" the labour movement. But her policies are a recipe for social explosion on a scale not witnessed since the 1920s.

During the first period of mass unemployment, with the onslaught of redundancies and factory after factory closing, the confidence of workers to struggle was undoubtedly temporarily sapped. Seeing no alternative or immediate prospect of victory, the main battalions of the labour movement retreated from battle.

But now, with the small upturn in the economy, the confidence and determination of many workers is rising. The filling of order books,

been successful. The strike of thousands of Yorkshire miners—coming it seems, like a bolt from the blue—also shows the real underlying mood of workers, bitter at Tory policies over the past four years.

A period of industrial conflict and militancy on a scale unknown since the general strike of 1926, will open up over the next period. It is therefore essential to fully grasp developments in the labour movement.

The TUC leadership has swung to the right, but this in no way reflects the outlook and mood which is developing amongst workers especially the activists. On the contrary, as the leadership is swinging to the right, large sections of the working class are now preparing for new struggles, and are moving to the left.

The attempt by the TUC to collaborate and talk with Thatcher will resolve nothing, and will not succeed in preventing gigantic industrial battles against the Tories. A period of social upheavals, shocks and crises lie ahead under capitalism. Trade union leaders and workplace representatives more responsive to the aspirations of their members will be elected, as fresh young workers are drawn increasingly into the struggle.

These developments will also have their effects inside the Labour Party. The ideas of Labour's right wing correspond to the period of capitalist boom, when there seemed some basis to their economic and political theories. They represent the past.

Labour's ranks, however, must be alert: with a further leftward swing on the National Executive Committee and the possibility of a victory for the left in the deputy leadership election a further split by

Thatcher and Foot. The Fleet Street press used the Falklands war to portray the Tories as strong, and the internal wranglings to show Labour as weak.

draw the conclusions from their own experience that industrial action in and of itself is inadequate. The next logical step will be to join the Labour Party where a new influx of working class members will strengthen the left, leaving the right isolated.

Even white collar unions will be drawn into political activity

Workers will join the Labour Party, not just to participate in academic discussions, but with the specific object of transforming the society. Those Labour leaders seeking merely to manage capitalism, or to tinker with its administration will be thrust aside.

Even white collar unions such as CPSA, NALGO, SCPS, NUT, ostensibly "apolitical", will be drawn into these battles. The experiences of the rank and file of these unions will be such that they will inevitably raise, at some stage, the question of affiliation to the Labour Party.

Against this backdrop, the idea of the right wing and the so-called "soft left", that to win back the potential support for Labour from the middle class, it must move to the right, is entirely misplaced. Such ideas are not new. In the light of the 1959 election defeat, similar calls were made, and the then leader, Gaitskell, even proposed, unsuccessfully, to abolish Clause 4



The 2,000-strong LPYS conference this Easter and (below) the demonstration in Liverpool last year attended by 8,000 Young Socialists.

Photos: Militant

Youth in the firing line



LABOUR PARTY members, and especially conference delegates, have to face up to the pressing need to build the Labour Party Young Socialists, and direct its programme to youth.

More than ever before, young people need the labour movement.

Youth unemployment has reached record levels. 1.3 million under 25's are on the dole; over 360,000 youth have been unemployed for more than 12 months. On top of these horrific figures a further 460,000 school leavers will take part in the Youth Training Scheme.

The Tory government are cynically using YTS to cover up the real unemployment figures, but even the most optimistic forecasters predict the levels of youth unemployment will get worse.

Already the youth have given their verdict on YTS by voting with their feet. The Manpower Services Commission in Essex have complained that youth have been unwilling to take part in their £25 a week cheap labour schemes—with only 1,000 out of 4,000 YTS places being filled in the area.

By Willie Griffin
(LPYS National Committee Chairman)

Youth are facing the brunt of Tory attacks as apprenticeships and education spending are slashed, and young workers' wages face cuts with the Tories proposing the "exclusion of young employees from wages councils provision."

Plight of youth

Against this background Labour's conference must fully endorse the sentiments in resolution 346 from Arundel CLP which: "calls upon the Labour Party to make the plight of young people one of its most urgent priorities."

Arundel CLP also issue a warning the Party must take note of: "that for the first time ever, it is estimated that Labour came third in votes cast by 18-25 year olds and that it is claimed that 45% of

IN THE conference agenda there are resolutions on Youth Training and youth but there is *not a single resolution* which is uncritical of YTS. Conference should call YTS by its proper name—the Youth Training Swindle.

Conference should endorse resolution 348 from Dagenham which calls for:

- "(a) proper education and training opportunities with trade union rates of pay in place of cheap labour schemes.
- (b) all training schemes to have approval from a local trade union safety representative and trainees to have the right to elect their own workplace representative who shall have

- trade union training.
- (c) Full pay at 18.
- (d) A £25 per week grant for all over sixteens in full time education.
- (e) A programme of useful public works meaning real jobs for all young people with trade union rights and rates of pay."

Conference should also support the sentiments in resolution 338 from East Kilbride which: "Fully supports the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign, who will be campaigning for a massive recruitment by the trade union movement of the 400,000 young people who will be on Youth Training Schemes."

unemployed youth abstained from voting in the recent general election."

In a post election survey carried out in the *Guardian* it was pointed out that one in three of those youth eligible to vote abstained. The *Guardian* also explained that Labour's narrow victories in 1964 and 1974 were largely due to the fact that the majority of young people voted Labour.

In 1974 MORI estimated youth voted 42% Labour 27% Liberal and a miserable 24% Tory. In 1983 41% voted Tory, 30% SDP/Liberal Alliance and only 29% Labour. The party ignores these facts at its peril.

Labour must recognise that it is essential to win the support of youth if they are to win a majority at the next election.

Miserable future

Youth in Britain are a timebomb. They are angry at the miserable future capitalism has to offer them but they are disillusioned because they can see no clear alternative to Tory misery.

Labour must recognise that to win the youth they must offer a real alternative and be seen to be fighting on behalf of youth.

The Labour Party Young Socialists fully endorse the words of Neil Kinnock when he recently said the Labour Party "must take to the streets." (*Labour Weekly* 15/9/83).

The Labour Party must adopt the methods of its founding fathers, of street meetings, mass campaigning and mass demonstrations. Without this approach Labour will never win the youth.

The LPYS have an indispensable role to play in winning young people to support the Labour Party. The LPYS have a campaigning record second to none in the labour movement.

In the past 12 months,

Labour's youth have organised their biggest ever demonstration, in Liverpool, as well as their largest conference and summer camp ever.

In the general election campaign they were the most energetic and outgoing section of the Party, whose efforts have since been praised by all sections of the party.

At present the LPYS are organising a National Black Youth Rally in October and a National Young Workers Assembly in December.

The LPYS have proven to be the most successful section of the party in "taking to the streets," but they are severely limited to what they can do by a crippling lack of resources.

It is to its everlasting shame that last year, in the run up to a general election, the NEC slashed the LPYS budget from £28,000 to £15,000. The new NEC must reverse this position and increase the LPYS budget to a minimum of £50,000.

There is an old Scottish saying that "talk comes cheap but it takes money to buy drink." Appeals to the movement to "take to the streets" will remain empty words unless they are backed up by hard cash.

Of course the Party faces a serious financial crisis but increasing the party membership through campaigning is the key to overcoming this problem.

The Annual Conference Report cites that last year the party spent £150,000 on two confidential opinion polls seen by only a handful of party leaders. At the same time, £900 was budgeted for LPYS campaigns! Delegates can make up their minds as to which was the best value for money.

The LPYS have proven their campaigning ability. Given the resources, they could win hundreds and thousands of youth to the Labour Party and the struggle for socialism

Leadership: Vote Heffer and Meacher

IN A re-run of the 1981 deputy leadership election, the gaffer's press has suffered apoplexy at the thought of the votes of the Transport and General Workers' Union being cast for the left candidate, Michael Meacher MP, in the deputy leadership elections at the 1983 Labour Party conference.

That outcry alone exposes the crocodile tears shed at Labour's election defeat, and at the hollow predictions that "Labour is finished as a political force". If that were true, what would it matter to the press who was the leader or deputy leader of the party?

On the contrary, the Tory press recognises that the elections for the NEC, leader and deputy leader at this year's conference are of crucial importance for workers throughout the country. Leading capitalist economists predict that Britain will have the slowest growth rate of any country in the world last year. On that basis there will be no fall in unemployment, no new jobs for the ½ million school leavers and no relent in the decline of health, education or social service provision.

The Tory government, acting to preserve the profits of the industrialists and financiers they represent, will be forced into new and more vicious attacks on workers' living standards and trades union organisation.

Resistance to those attacks will fall onto the shoulders of the army of labour. It is vital, therefore, that in entering those battles, we have a leadership in which we can be confident, a leadership which will not bend or turn in arguing for use of the full muscle of the labour and trade union movement, and for a strategy to defeat the Tories.

There are only two candidates who stand out prepared to wage such a socialist struggle to build a mass Labour Party. They are Eric Heffer for Leader, and Michael Meacher for Deputy Leader.

The speed at which all other candidates have distanced themselves from conference policies, to condone purges and expulsions, and to prove themselves "tame" for the capitalist Tory mill.

Eric Heffer's election statement, whilst not

perhaps containing all that *Militant* supporters would wish for is light-years ahead of those from Hattersley, Kinnock or Shore:

"An all-out attack to be developed inside and outside Parliament against the Thatcher Conservative government... To accept and fight for the basic ideas of the constitution, particularly Clause IV, ie the extension of public ownership of the means of production and exchange under democratic control... to work for a socialist Europe, at the same time as we withdraw from the Rome Treaty."

And on witch-hunts

"...to unify the party around its basic socialist objectives... I am against expelling people of the left or the right. Labour must remain a broad tolerant party"

It is probably because of, in particular, Michael Meacher's work on low pay (promoting a bill in the House of Commons early this year, for example, to attempt to enforce a national minimum wage of £100 a week) that has led to strong

support for his candidacy in some unions.

Delegates at this year's conference have the opportunity to assess the depth of the crisis and to discuss the programme and leadership necessary for an all-out fight to defeat the Tories.

The mid-1980s promises to be the most stormy period of British history this century. Labour Party members and the ranks of the trades unions will test out all leaderships and strategies, and will be drawn to the conclusion that capitalism in crisis requires more socialism not less!

Victories for either Eric Heffer or Michael Meacher would be a great step forward for the Labour party, confirming the movement's commitment to democratisation of the party, an end to witch-hunts, and a warning to the Tories that the struggle to build a mass, democratic, socialist Labour Party will, in the next decade or so, sound the death-knell for them and the crisis-ridden system they represent.

By Dave Nellist MP
(Coventry, South-East)

Re-instate the five!!

THE OPINION of the labour movement is overwhelmingly opposed to the witch-hunt of *Militant* and to our expulsion.

Over eighty percent of the CLPs voted against the Register which has been used as the pretext for expulsions. Our own CLPs have not accepted the NEC's action against us.

In trade unions, whose members were not consulted over the Register, the majority of active members are totally opposed to this attempt to use bureaucratic disciplinary measures to defeat our Marxist ideas. In reality, the right-wing majority on the NEC has relied on the support of a handful of right-wing trade-union general secretaries, who have undemocratically mis-used their voting power at Labour Party Conference, to trample on the rights of rank-and-file members of the party.

We believe, therefore, that Conference must now reject the measures against *Militant*, which are not justified by last year's decision on the Register and which are contrary to Conference's 1973 decision to abolish bans and proscriptions. Conference should reject our expulsions and restore us to full membership of the Party.

Political attack based on distortions

Those responsible for the witch-hunt have tried to uphold the fiction that it has nothing to do with politics.

Introducing the Register last year, Jim Mortimer said it had nothing to do with ideology. Yet a large part of his speech was a political attack on *Militant*—based on a profound misrepresentation of our ideas.

Scandalously trying to lump us together with the enemies of the working class, he ludicrously claimed that *Militant* supporters were "the ideological allies of the right wing of the Conservative Party". Within the labour movement there is no sympathy for such undemocratic methods of argument, and the majority of Labour Party members have completely rejected this attempt to distort our ideas.

Summing up last year's debate, Michael Foot claimed that: "Nobody under these proposals will be expelled for being Socialists, they will only be expelled for breaking the constitution...a Register is not a witch-hunt."

We would ask Michael Foot how, a year later, he can justify this assertion.

Five of us have been expelled on the basis of completely unsubstantiated allegations. But what action has been taken against Ben Ford who stood against Pat Wall in Bradford North, and cost Labour the seat? What action has been taken against Frank Chapple who publicly supported an SDP candidate in the General Election?

Have they not broken the Constitution?

Michael agreed that "one cannot witch-hunt ideas". Yet at its July meeting, the NEC passed a

Statement by the five expelled members of the *Militant* Editorial Board

motion ordering Labour Parties to ban the sale of the *Militant* at their meetings. What is this, if not an attempt to revive the notorious bans and proscriptions of the past! Contrary to what Jim and Michael claimed, this is an attempt to defeat ideas and policies through bureaucratic methods of repression.

Fortunately, this will not be tolerated by the majority of Labour Parties, many of which have already rejected the ban. One of the best traditions of the labour movement is tolerance of opponents' ideas and insistence on democratic debate.

Ideas cannot be witch-hunted! On the contrary, the campaign against the witch-hunt has enormously strengthened support for *Militant* within the Labour Party and the Trade Unions. One indication of this was *Militant*'s Wembley Rally on 10 September, attended by over 2,800 Labour activists.

The Right-wing argued that expulsions were necessary because *Militant* was an "electoral liability". Delegates will no doubt remember John Spellar's vitriolic tirade against "parasites". "*Militant* is killing us with the electorate...the electorate will not trust us unless we rid ourselves of this alien body."

However, by insisting on carrying out our expulsion on the eve of the Bermondsey by-election—despite our appeal to postpone the hearing—the right-wing NEC ensured the worst by-election result in living memory.

In fact, the turmoil in the Party provoked by the Right's witch-hunting activity, loudly applauded by the capitalist press and media, has done incalculable damage to the Party over the last year.

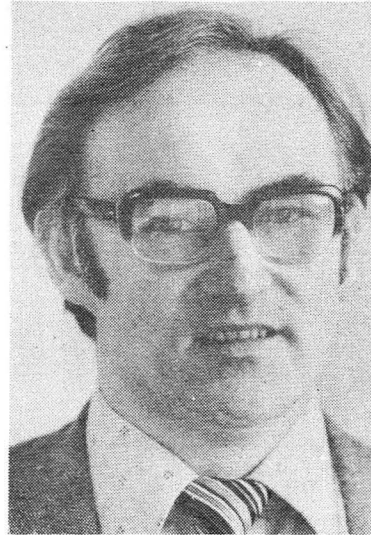
Right wingers bend the constitution and rules

Right wingers on the NEC have indignantly reproached us for taking legal action. But they have not hesitated to bend the Constitution and Rules in their attempt to purge Marxists from the party. Their bureaucratic methods made it clear that we stood more chance of getting a hearing in the capitalist courts than in the court of the NEC's right wing majority.

If we had not warned that we were considering legal action, we would have been unceremoniously expelled, without any hearing whatsoever, immediately after last year's conference. Jim Mortimer originally recommended to the November 1982 NEC that the five should be "expelled forthwith". This was withdrawn when the NEC's own lawyers advised that it would probably not stand up in court.



Ted Grant



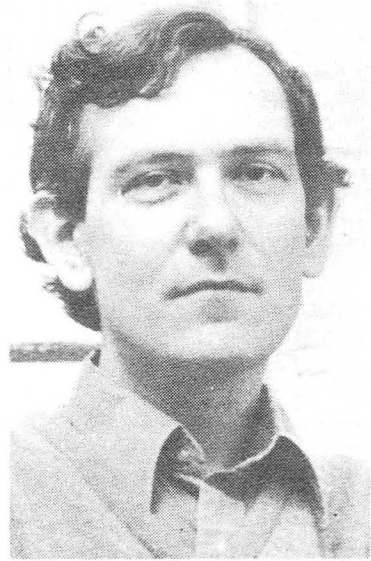
Peter Taaffe



Clare Doyle



Keith Dickinson



Lynn Walsh

The ranks of the labour movement understand our reasons for taking legal action as part of our campaign against the witch-hunt.

It is ironic, moreover, that Jim Mortimer (1983 Report, page 24) now justifies the NEC's refusal to publish the alleged evidence against us—the "great mass" of material which Jim boasted had been accumulated in a "huge trunk" in Walworth Road—on grounds of "legal advice"!

Why? One of the main purposes of our legal action was to be allowed to see the so-called "evidence" which includes reports from right-wing Labour Party officials who acted as amateur spies, and ludicrous allegations and malicious gossip from other self-appointed informers and snoopers. We can only assume that the NEC has been advised that publication of such evidence could expose the NEC to a whole series of libel actions.

The fact remains that we have been expelled on the basis of a

completely one-sided, rigged "enquiry" which has acted on allegations and "evidence" which we have never been allowed to see, let alone answer.

In trying to justify our expulsions at regional conferences, NEC representatives have avoided the real issues and stuck to the argument that they were simply "implementing conference decisions". This is a fraudulent argument.

Conference did accept the Register of non-affiliated groups, which Jim Mortimer and Michael Foot denied was a witch-hunting measure, claiming that everybody would be able to apply and would be given time to meet the requirements of the register. However, we warned that the register was intended to prepare the way for expulsions.

Immediately after the conference decision, *Militant* applied to the register, answering all the questions fully and offering to discuss with the NEC any changes *Militant* should make to "bring itself into conformity with the constitution".

Far from giving us time or sympathetically discussing our position, the NEC never even considered our application.

Subsequently, Jim Mortimer continually complained that we had not responded to his invitation to apply until after the 'deadline'—that is, within three months of the NEC first proposing the register—a deadline which expired prior to the debate and decision by conference!

The new NEC—strongly opposed by the left minority on the NEC—then moved towards our expulsions. However, when they were warned by the NEC's lawyers that the register would not constitutionally legitimise expulsions, the NEC, as we had previously warned, reverted to the old system of bans and proscriptions. *Militant* was declared "ineligible for affiliation to the party" and placed at the head of a new proscribed list.

Such action was not approved by last year's conference, and goes directly against the 1973 annual conference decision to abolish the infamous proscribed list and the notorious system of political inquisitions that went with it.

The right may try to claim that the five of us were given a "fair hearing" at the NEC. In reality, the undemocratic procedure at the NEC meetings to which we were summonsed fully confirmed Alan Sapper's warning last year that the register would lead

to "Star Chamber methods of expulsions and discipline in order to defeat a policy".

At the December 1982 NEC meeting we were simply read the resolution declaring *Militant* "ineligible". No reason was given for the NEC's refusal to consider our application for the register. We were given no details whatsoever of the evidence which supposedly justified the sweeping allegations made against us. NEC members were not allowed to ask questions or make comments. The five of us were simply allowed to make statements, and then the right wing used its majority to pass the resolution they intended to carry all along.

At the February 1983 NEC which we attended we were told that the only issue for the NEC was whether we were in fact members of the Editorial Board of *Militant*—which, of course, we have never denied!

We were again able to make statements, and this time NEC members put questions, which we answered. But the only way, as far as the right wing majority were concerned that we could have avoided our expulsion was by recanting our Marxist ideas and repudiating our association with the *Militant*.

This unconstitutional, undemocratic, and politically dishonest procedure was rightly denounced by one NEC member as a "kangaroo court".

The five expulsions are not just a blow against *Militant* but a threat to the democratic gains of the last period. To allow these witch-hunting measures to go through would leave the way open for the right wing, should they obtain a majority on the NEC in the future, to launch attacks on others on the left.

Rejection by conference of the expulsions would be a victory for party democracy and for all Labour's ranks.

However, we warn the right: even if our expulsion is upheld, we will not go away. Marxism has deep roots in the Labour Party and will not be expunged by bureaucratic repression. Support for *Militant* will not wither away just because the five members of the Editorial Board are temporarily excluded from the party. On the contrary, support for *Militant* will continue to grow.

And the question of our expulsions will continue to be raised in the Labour Parties, in the trade unions, at regional conferences, and at annual conference—until we are re-instated.

**Blackhall & Hartlepool
Militant supporters
send
fraternal greetings to
Labour Party conference
Oppose all witch-hunts
Expel the Tories**

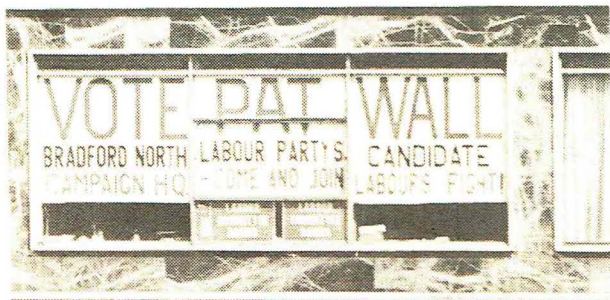
**P.G.S.
COMPREHENSIVE
Militant Supporters:**
Reinstate the
Militant '5'.
Marxist policies for
Labour.
Forward with
socialism

Militant supporters
and friends in
Sheffield Attercliffe
CLP say: No witch-
hunt—Reinstate the
five!

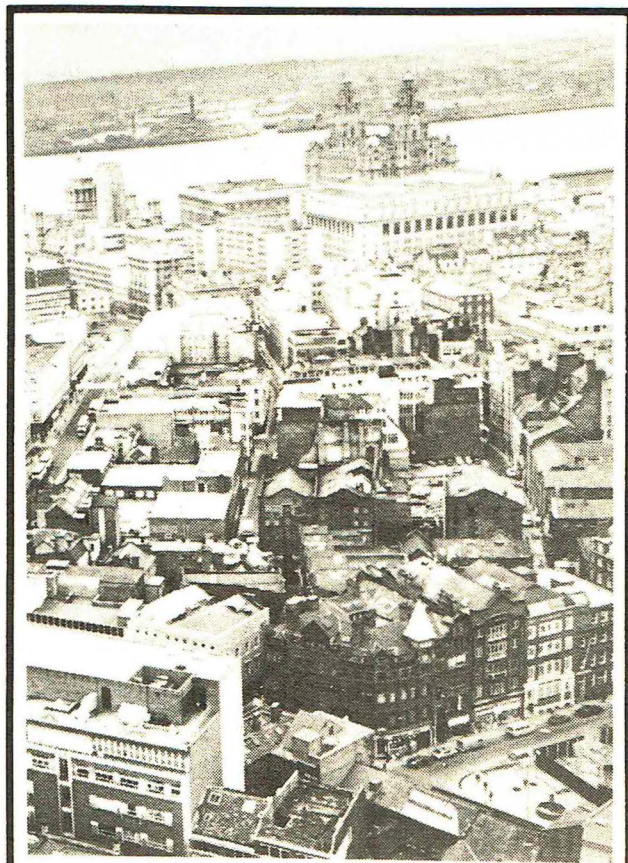
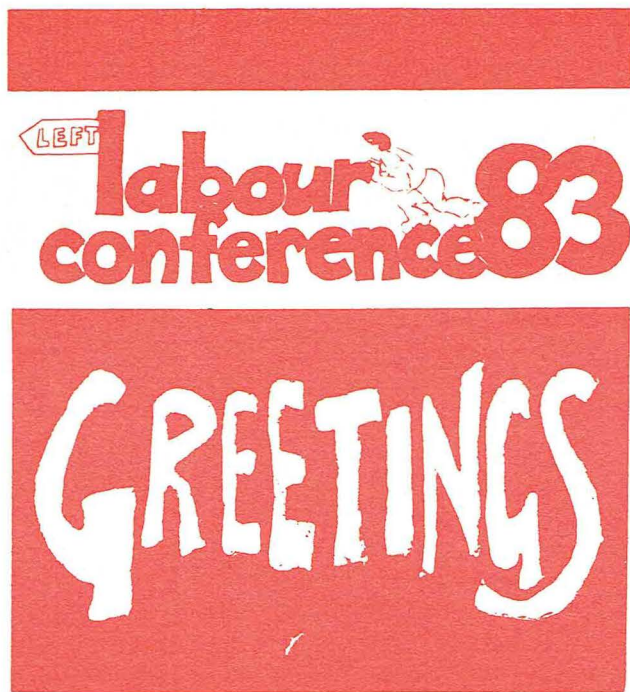
BRADFORD TRADES COUNCIL
Sends greetings to Labour Party Conference,
"Fight Tebbit not socialists".



**BRADFORD NORTH LABOUR
PARTY**
Socialism is the only answer.
Kick out the Tories, not
working class fighters.



**WAKEFIELD LABOUR
PARTY YOUNG
SOCIALISTS**
send fraternal greetings to
Paul Holmes and other
Militant supporters at
Labour Party conference
★ No reversal of party
policy!
★ Forward to a socialist
programme!



**ASTMS LIVERPOOL
SHIPPING & FREIGHT
BRANCH 618**

Re-instate the five.
No to witch-hunts.
Socialist policies for
Labour.

Bradford College
Labour Club.
Educate, agitate,
organise to end
Tory government.

Karl Marx died 1883
but Marxism still
relevant in 1983.
End Tory rule!
ECCLESHILL AND IDLE
LPYS

Tories fight for
their class—
We must fight for
ours—
BRADFORD MOOR
LPYS

**CLUBMOOR Ward
(Liverpool, West Derby)
L.P. sends fraternal
greetings to all
socialist movements
and trade unionists
fighting this repressive
Tory Government.**

Valley Ward Labour
Party sends fraternal
greetings to Labour
Party Conference.
Reinstate the *Militant*
Five

**GILMOSS LABOUR
PARTY** calls for
socialist policies from
conference. Stop the
witch-hunt! Reinstate
the five!

**LIVERPOOL/CROXTETH
WARD LABOUR
PARTY.** Liverpool
shows the way—
socialist policies do
win votes!

"If Tha ivver does owt
for nowt do it for
socialism"
—BARNSELY LPYS

Women against the
Tories—for a fighting
democratic women's
organisation. No to
witch-hunts.
**LIVERPOOL WOMENS
COUNCIL**

Needed urgently:
Bold leadership for
1984 towards
fighting the Tories,
not socialists!
Reinstate the five!
LEEDS NW LPYS

**NORTH EAST
LEEDS LPYS**
sends comradely
greetings to all
socialists at the
Labour Party
conference

MACCLESFIELD LPYS
send conference
greetings to *Militant*.
Expel the Tories.
Reinstate the socialists

Fight the Tories, not
the socialists!
Labour to power on
a socialist
programme.
GLENROTHES LPYS

LADYWOOD LPYS
Forward to
socialism! Busby
bids farewell to
Golding as Telecom
workers disconnect
him

CARLISLE Militant
Supporters send
fraternal greetings to
all delegates. Fight
the Tories! Fight the
witch-hunt! Fight for
socialism!



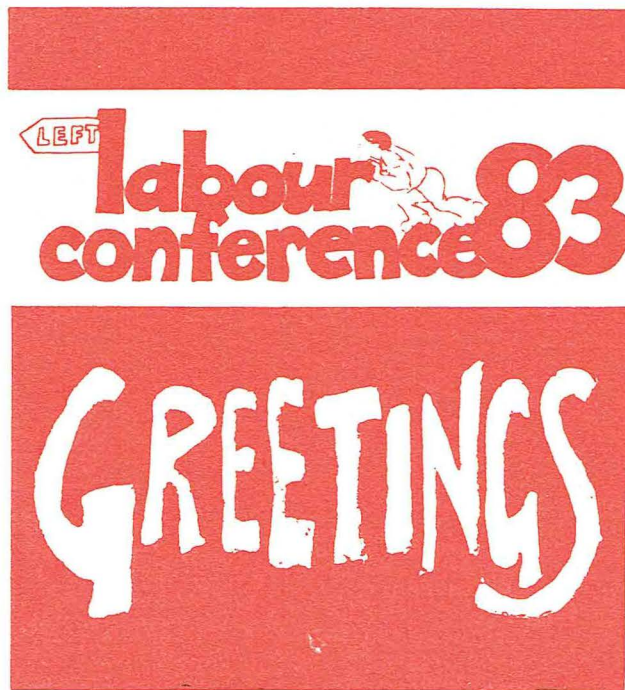
**MUSSELBURGH
LPYS**
greet conference
delegates. Fight
bans and expulsions
of socialists!! Fight
for socialist
policies!!

Militant supporters in
**NEWCASTLE EAST
CLP** send comradely
greetings—fight the
Tories, not the
socialists



FORWARD TO SOCIALISM
Fraternal greetings from
Terry Fields,
Labour MP Liverpool Broadgreen

Greetings to conference
from **CARDIFF**
CENTRAL
CONSTITUENCY
LABOUR PARTY
No witch-hunts
No expulsions
Labour to power on a
socialist programme



YMLADDWCH Y TORIAU,
NID Y SOCIALAIDD
Labour Party Conference Greetings
CYFARCHIAD CYNHADLEDD
PLAID LLAFUR

Fraternal greetings from
Gabalfa Branch LP
(Cardiff). Oppose the
divisive witch-hunt and
unite around socialist
policies.

Fight for a future—fight
for socialism! Fraternal
greetings from
ABERYSTWYTH Labour
Party Young Socialists

●
BATH LABOUR
PARTY YOUNG
SOCIALISTS send
fraternal greetings
to all conference
delegates.
"Socialism:—the
hope and future of
youth"

●
Fraternal greetings
from **SWANSEA**
BRANCH POEU
MILITANT
SUPPORTERS
No to the
witch-hunt!
Fight the Tory
pirates not the
socialists!

●
Fraternal greetings
of solidarity to all
supporters of the
labour and trade
union movement.
Alan Short
A/Secretary UCW
Bridgend (Personal
Capacity)

Militant supporters from the following South Wales
Constituency Labour Parties;

Cardiff South and
Penarth
Cardiff West
Cardiff Central
Cardiff North
Islwyn
Blaenau Gwent
Swansea East
Swansea West
Newport East
Newport West
Torfaen

Ogwr
Pontypridd
Rhondda
Caerphilly
Aberavon
Llanelli
Gower
Vale of Glamorgan
Monmouth
Carmarthen
Bridgend

Send fraternal greetings to all delegates and visitors
to Labour Party Conference.

- ★ No more witch-hunts
- ★ Re-instate the Editorial Board
- ★ No retreat on party policy.
- ★ Callaghan (1976-1980), Foot (1980-83)
Move the leadership out of South Wales
—vote for Eric Heffer.

●
No to witch-hunts.
Re-instate the 5
expelled. Forward
to socialism.
Bristol East &
Kingswood LPYS

●
Fraternal greetings
in the struggle for a
Marxist daily
North Avon LPYS

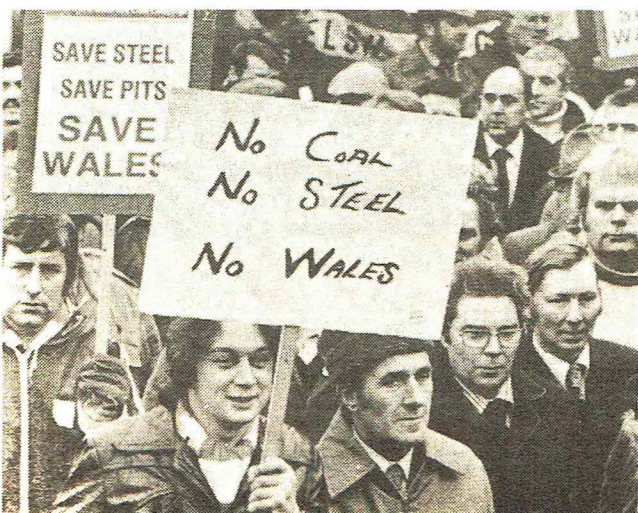
●
"Nellist and Fields
have shown the
way—now all
MP's on workers'
pay!"
Bristol (Hartcliffe
& district) LPYS.

●
1982: Sid Weighell
1983: John Golding
1984: ???
Forward to
Democratic
Accountability.
From Kingswood
LPYS

●
Conference
Greetings from
Stoke Gifford
Labour Party
Bristol North West.

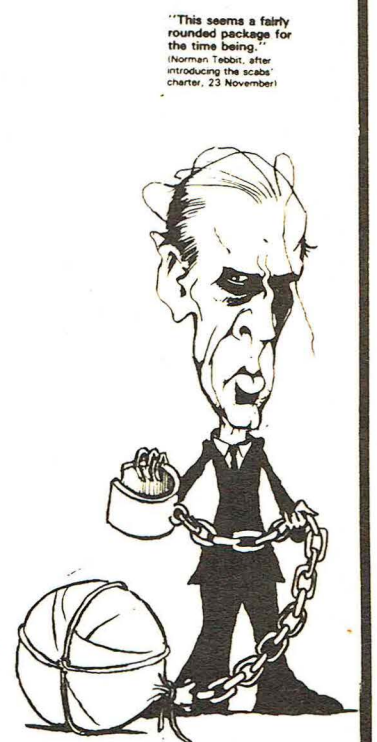
Swansea's Young Socialists send fraternal greetings to
Conference delegates—an end to witch-hunts. Socialist
policies for Labour.

Labour Councils should fight cuts and privatisation,
no rent or rate rises, follow Liverpool's lead, chop the
Lord Mayor. Put public services first!



●
CPSA Cardiff
and District
DHSS Branch
Committee
sends
conference
greetings and
supports
affiliation to the
Labour Party

Len Thomas sends
fraternal greetings to
conference delegates
and NEC. We lost the
last election. Work
towards winning the
next. Unite, stop
witch-hunting. Tebbit
does not talk to me,
TUC how dull can you
be, I support **Militant**
proudly.



SOUTH AFRICA

PORTUGAL

Ciskei thugs can't break workers' will

THIS WEEK Militant received the following interview with a member of the South African Allied Workers' Union (SAAWU) in East London, from a correspondent in South Africa.

It deals with a bus boycott and the subsequent vicious repression by the South African puppet regime in the Ciskei.

Q. When did the killings start?

A. The Azikhwelwa (bus boycott) was on for nearly two weeks when Sebe and Kaiser (director of the Ciskei Transport Corporation) saw that the people were serious and would not ride. On Wednesday August 3rd we were singing freedom songs, coming home from the trains.

Sebe called a state of emergency. The next morning when we were walking up the hill before Egerton station they started firing into the crowd. It was terrible; people were running everywhere in the dark.

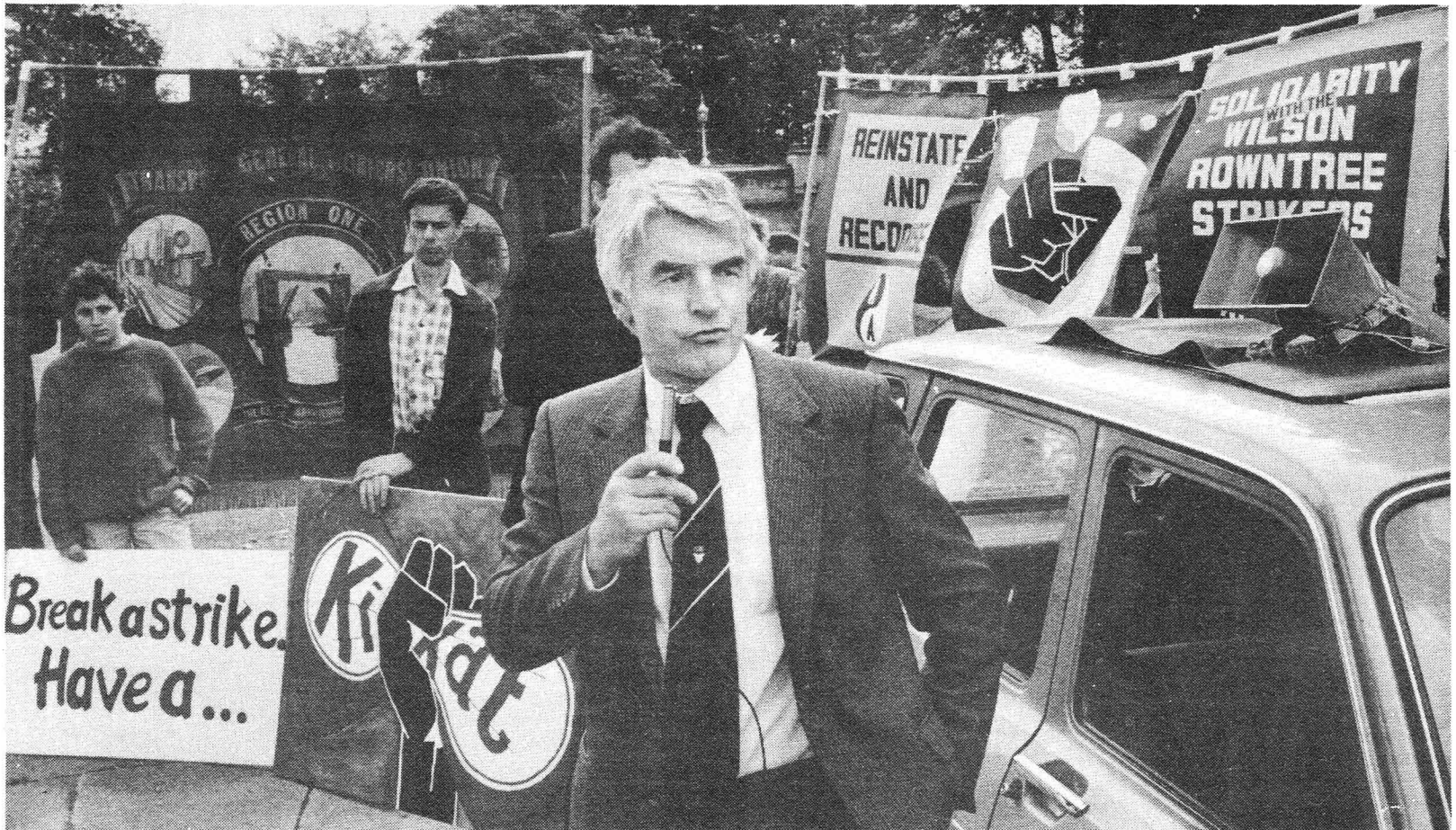
The official death toll is five on Thursday at Egerton and Mount Ruth, but this is another lie. They fired on people at Egerton, Mount Ruth, Mtsoto, Mdantsane and Fort Jackson. Only the South African Railway Police stopped them coming onto the railway line (which is South African Railways property), otherwise they would have killed hundreds.

The white train drivers stopped along the track to pick people up, who were able to reach the railway line safely. They say five were killed on Thursday and two on Friday, with 32 injured, but nobody in Mdantsane believes that. Many talk of sixty to eighty dead.

Nobody was allowed to visit the injured at the Makiwane Hospital. If you are attacked and report it, they will not act. They have banned all attorneys from going into Mdantsane and those who live there are detained. They have stopped all reporters.

Q. How is the curfew enforced?

A. First it was 10 pm to 4.30 am. The CNIP sell-outs (Sebe's party) were called to Zwelithsha and told to beat people into the buses. This did not work, as young people went to their houses, broke windows and burnt some houses.



Part of a British TGWU solidarity action with Rowntree workers in South Africa. Trade unionists in Britain should press for direct links with the SAAWU at all levels, national and local, to aid the workers' struggle in the most difficult circumstances.

Q. The papers report a child was burnt to death and that a petrol fire on a bus killed three.

A. Nobody wanted that. The petrol tin on the bus was an accident; most people agreed on that. There is a reign of terror here by Sebe, and these Mdantsane vigilantes were stopped.

Then he brought in backward people from the rural areas where there is no work and they are now terrorising us with sjamboks and knobkerries. Even at eight o'clock they will beat you, and if you try to defend yourself there is behind them the Ciskei army with machine guns.

These people are thugs. When they fired on the people, the bullets went down into houses in Unit 9, hitting people in their houses.

Q. I hear that Sebe got R50 (about £30) from each shopkeeper to pay the vigilantes, saying otherwise they would lose their trading licences, and also money from the bus company to break the boycott. Is the boycott still solid?

A. Yes. This morning (September 5) they were stopping us again. If you don't have the Ciskei pass, they won't let you out. They arrested many for failure to produce it. Now they have banned SAAWU.

Q. Sebe says that SAAWU are instigating the boycott and intimidating people.

A. That's nonsense. The people can think for themselves. There is a lot of support for SAAWU because SAAWU is working for the people and is organising the workers.

But look at the issues. The bus company put up fares by 12½ per cent. This makes the weekly fare go up from R2.60 to R3.00 for the Mdantsane-East London journey. Many people have to travel to Gonubie—they are domestic workers getting R40—R50 per month.

Their fare goes up to R7.00. Then they are working for the bus company! The fare to West End industrial area is R4.60 and the bosses are paying us little. The boycott is supported because the people cannot afford the fares. We have no money.

Q. What is the mood in Mdantsane now?

A. We will win. Sebe has halved the increase and they are saying a new bus company will come from Jo'burg. We want all detainees released, and Kaiser the manager out. Then we can all go back together.

There is a determined mood, but people are also worried that the vigilantes will provoke slaughter. On Sunday, there was to be a prayer day for peace. Sebe had Rev. Baartman arrested and he is still inside. It went ahead anyway at the Catholic centre.

For regular coverage of developments in Southern Africa read *Inqaba ya Basebenzi*, journal of the Marxist Workers Tendency of the African National Congress. Price 50p. plus 20p post & package. Subscription £3.20 per annum. From BM Box 1719, London WC1N 3XX

Q. Why are they so tough on SAAWU?

A. They would like to destroy it because they don't want workers to have any rights. My friend works in the tyre retreading factory in East London. Some workers there for twenty years are on R40-R50 per week. The day shift is 7.30 am to 6pm.

He lives at the end of the location. Most of the time is travelling to work or to home and long working hours for slave wages. There are three white supervisors who do nothing and get more than R800 per month. SAAWU is organising us to help us change our lives.

Trade unions, shop stewards committees, CLPs and YS branches can send messages of support to SAAWU PO Box 7002 East London, South Africa.

SAAWU should be asked to indicate what concrete support they need from workers in Britain and invited to establish direct links with the labour movement at all levels here.

'Political suicide'

Workers are moving into action against the Portuguese government.

The CGTP (General Confederation of Portuguese Workers—Intersindical) announced last week that it is to organise a major campaign against the measures taken by the Socialist Party-led coalition government during its first 100 days in office.

In a statement issued to the weekly paper *O Journal* the CGTP said, "from a simple analysis of the measures taken by this government one can immediately conclude that they will only aggravate the crisis faced by the country and worsen the already difficult conditions of life of the majority of Portuguese people".

The price increases and cuts in public expenditure the government has announced has even angered the UGT (General Union of Workers) which has previously aligned itself with the Socialist Party. Secretary of the UGT national executive, Jose Monteiro Veludo, when asked about the new measures especially those



Mario Soares

giving the employers the right to suspend labour contracts and lay-off workers, said that the government was committing "political suicide" and that social confrontation is sure to intensify.

The CGTP is organising demonstrations against the government throughout October and meetings of its member unions to plan future action against what it calls the "brutal offensive" of the government against working people.

By Bob Mannings

BELGIUM

NO WORKER realised how long the strike would last when at 10 am on Friday 9 September, Belgian railway workers belonging to the Catholic trade union federation (the CSC) walked out.

They had heard of Government plans to depress the various premiums which make up as much as 25% of the men's wages.

In a matter of a few hours, a rash of railway strikes had broken out in Liege, Brussels and Namur in Wallonia and in parts of Flanders. Over the weekend mass meetings were held all over Belgium. On Monday, all transport in Wallonia had ground to a halt. The strike was 100%.

"We'll fight the government"

The same was true of Flanders the following day. By Wednesday not only transport, but the entire public sector was out, paralysing the national economy. And the strike was spreading on the private sector.

"The first day virtually all the workers walked off the job. I was surprised. I thought there would be more working the next day, but on the contrary, the number of strikers was even greater. We have no need of picket lines here; literally nobody wants to go in," said Gui Marique, a young railway worker at Liege.

The meeting of the strikers in the station at Liege on Tuesday 20 September showed them to be in a confident mood. The secretary of the railway workers' section of the FGTB, (the Socialist trade union federation) denounced "the government of the bourgeoisie and the bankers."

The meeting cheered wildly when he called for the spreading of the strike to the private sector. "If this government does not give in, we will launch a general strike of all workers. We'll fight this government to the end."

Already a number of factories in the area had joined the strike. Everybody expected the beginning of a general strike in the next day or so. One worker said, "They speak of sacrifices because of the crisis, but they want 10,000 million francs out of the pockets of people who can't pay, and yet they let the rich go free."

"Make the bankers pay"

"Everyone knows Belgium is renowned for tax fraud, yet the government has told the capitalists to bring their money from Swiss banks back to Belgium and they will not have to pay any tax on it!"

The next morning, the strikers were growing impatient. "Why don't the leaders call out the private sector?" Again a demonstration, with red and green flags of the two federations flying together.

A woman with a deformed leg made the march walking backwards all the way. One railway worker, a bit of a character, went along the pavement throwing bangers into the doorways of banks on the way. "Make the bankers pay. Down with Martens." were the slogans of the marchers. "This is only the start, continue the fight."

On 23 September, Belgium's biggest workers' movement for 23 years ended (see back page). Our correspondent in Liege sent us this description of the determined combative mood of the workers, and the role of some trade union leaders.

By our Belgian correspondent
(22 September)

The strike that paralysed Belgium



This was not the first confrontation between workers and the state. Steelworkers were involved in battles in 1982 over closures.

The columns, singing the *Internationale*, arrived at St Pauls Square to meet the local government workers. They too joined the strike. The movement was on the rise. Sixty ships were stranded in the waters outside Antwerp. Caterpillar workers went to their factory but did not work in solidarity.

Teachers, bus drivers, workers in armaments, medical supplies, military arsenals, even children in some schools were joining the strike. Police took solidarity action in sympathy with the unions. The rest of the working class was only waiting for the word.

The workers were in a strong position. In economic terms, the partial strike had had the effect of a total strike.

Feeling their power, for many workers the original demands seemed to be pushed into the background. "What government will replace this one?" they asked, "a socialist government would inherit all the economic problems. What's been happening in France?"

Some started to see the withdrawal of the government austerity measures as a danger which would defuse the situation, preventing the strike from achiev-

ing a more fundamental aim. Still others considered that a surrender by the government would raise the workers' confidence and act as a spur to the movement.

In the meetings and demonstrations, the youth predominated. It was they who adopted the most radical positions. More experienced trade unionists who have striven for years to arouse the workers were visibly astonished to see the determination with which the workers wanted to struggle to the end.

Crumbs from the table

Still older militants remembered great struggles of the past. "Better than 1960" (a previous general strike—Eds) they shouted.

On Wednesday 21 the leaders of the FGTB and SCS were in negotiation with the government hoping for last minute concessions. Up to that time the government, though thrown into disarray by the sweeping movement had offered no concessions at all.

After 30 hours of talks, the media made a shock announcement. Incredibly a few paltry con-



cessions offered by the government had been accepted by the Catholic federation leaders who had then undertaken to defend this so-called pre-agreement within the union itself, and call for an end to the strike.

Their union is strong in Flanders and this could break the strike. On radio and TV, jubilant Christian Democrats and Liberals, chiefs of industry who had nothing to say just a few hours before were now queuing up to say their piece.

On Thursday 22, the morning papers had already buried the strike—but the workers had yet to have their say. At Liege the crowd was four times bigger than before. Too big for the railway station, it gathered outside. The workers' wives and children were there too.

The local leader of the Catholic union took up the loudspeaker. He had been radical enough yesterday. Nervously he started to stutter out the treacherous arguments of the national leadership.

"As you know... there were discussions today and there are new government proposals. We are setting up an information committee to analyse all the documentation." The crowd received this speech with hostility. "Get off the stand, Joseph" they shouted, "the analysis is already done." "No! Get down! A general strike!"

The speeches are interrupted occasionally as news is given of factories newly joining the strike. Not a voice from amongst the workers speaks of ending the action.

The same was the case in Charleroi in the afternoon. Here,

a massive demonstration went though the town. The Catholic workers denounced their leaders. "The strike goes on whether they like it or not."

The Socialist union had rejected the "pre-agreement" and was standing firm in favour of spreading the strike but despite resistance of the workers in Wallonia, the capitulation of the CSC had dealt a serious blow to the movement. By 22 September, trams had started up in Antwerp and Catholic teachers and Catholic union members in the ministries and schools were going back to work. Railway workers in Flanders are vacillating and the Wallonian workers are furious at their indecision.

The situation was still confused. In some areas, particularly in Wallonia, new factories were joining the strike while elsewhere under pressure from the Catholic union bureaucracy, strikers were going back, especially in Flanders where the SGTB and the CSC are less militant. Socialist union leaders were then saying that the about-turn of the Catholic unions made it futile to continue the strike.

Government suspended in mid air

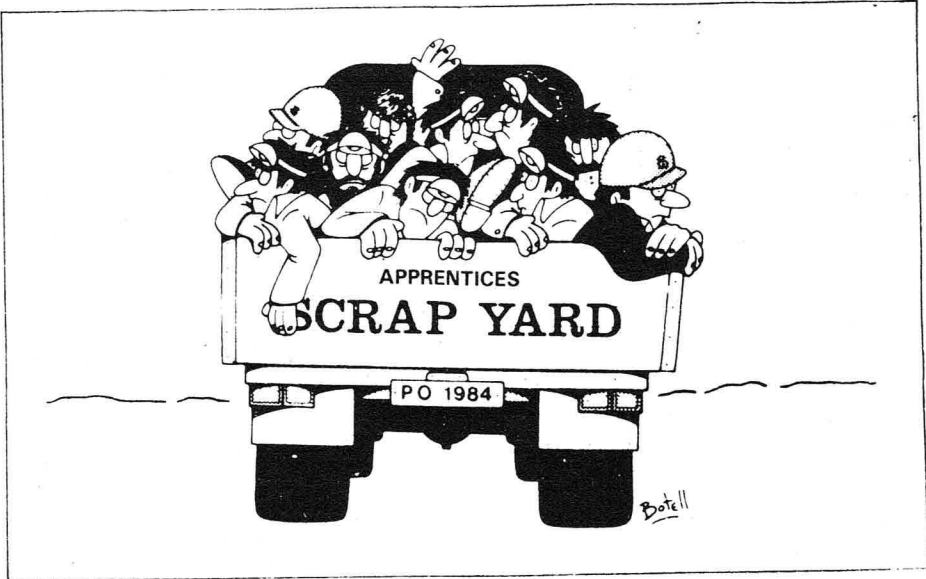
Even with the collapse of the strike, the fundamental lesson of this great conflict will not be lost on organised labour, nor upon the youth. The present masters of Belgian society are no match for organised labour in action.

The strike paralysed the whole economy. The capitalists were impotent; the government was suspended in mid-air. At the peak of the movement when the newspapers spoke openly of the danger to the very existence of capitalism, the prime minister could only complain to television workers that his case was not being put over strongly enough!

This strike, even though it was only partial, by arresting almost all economic life, posed the crucial question of power before a wide section of the working class. But it has also bluntly exposed the deficiencies of the workers' own political and trade union organisations.

But given the magnificent fighting spirit of Belgian labour, once the weakness at the top has been repaired, the eventual victory of the Belgian workers is assured.

The LPYS NATIONAL COMMITTEE sends Fraternal Greetings to all comrades in the labour movement.



- ★ End cheap labour
- ★ Jobs for youth now.
- ★ Get organised! Come to the Young Workers Assembly. Manchester, December 10th.

BERMONDSEY LPYS sends fraternal greetings. Support Marxist candidates for NEC: Pat Wall and Terry Fields

Fraternal Greetings to Conference from ELLESMERE PORT & NESTON CLP for tolerance & unity in our party. No ban on Militant.

Fraternal Greetings from Grove/Whitby branch Labour Party (Ellesmere Port) No Witch-Hunt! No ban on Militant!

Fraternal Support from SPROWSTOWE BRANCH Labour Party (Norwich) in your struggle against the witch-hunt

WEST LEWISHAM LPYS & DEPTFORD LPYS Fight the Blues—with socialism

HACKNEY SOUTH & SHOREDITCH LPYS. Reinstate the five. Build the YS Youth—the future is socialism

BAILLIESTON AND GARROWHILL Labour Party.

Extends fraternal greetings to all conference delegates. Forward in unity to peace and socialism

SECRETARY
ALEX
JOHNSTONE

CHAIRMAN
CHARLES
McDONACH

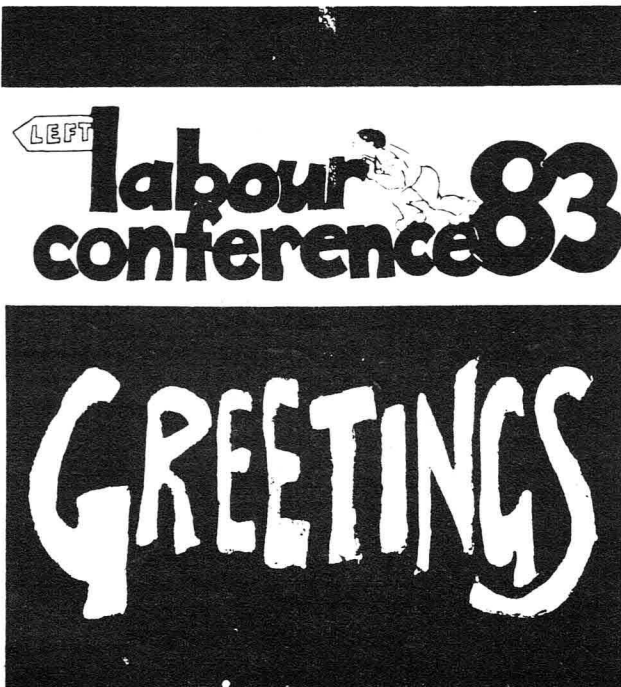
Militant supporters on Southern Regional Council of the Labour Party send greetings to conference delegates.

A Allenby
G Jones
S Natrass
C Walder

B Bell
C Kelly
T Pearce
C Wilson

SHEFFIELD HEELEY LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS Reverse the witch-hunt. Drive out Thatcher not socialists For a socialist NEC and the Militant daily

No witch-hunt Reinstate the Five ELLESMERE PORT LPYS

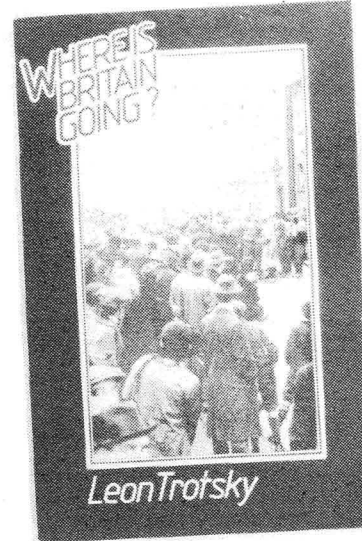


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THE BOOK service for the labour movement. The theory of Marxism is essential for any activist in the Labour Party and the trade unions—not as an historical curiosity—but as a guide to understanding and to action.

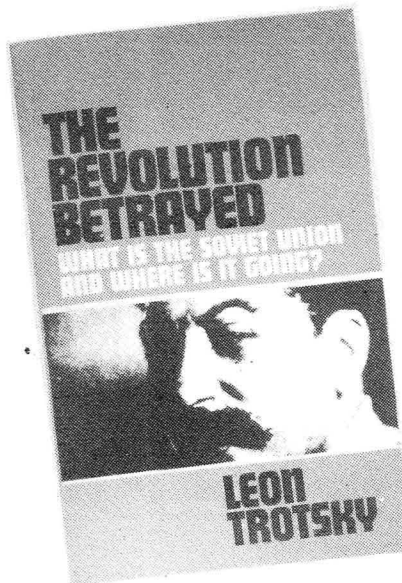
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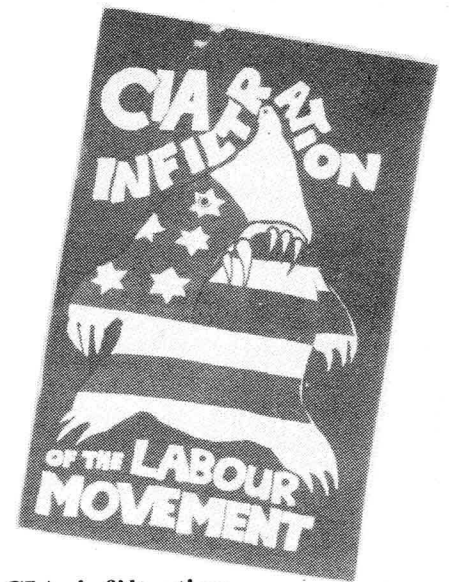
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Written in 1925, but still relevant to today's struggles. Price £1 plus 25p postage.



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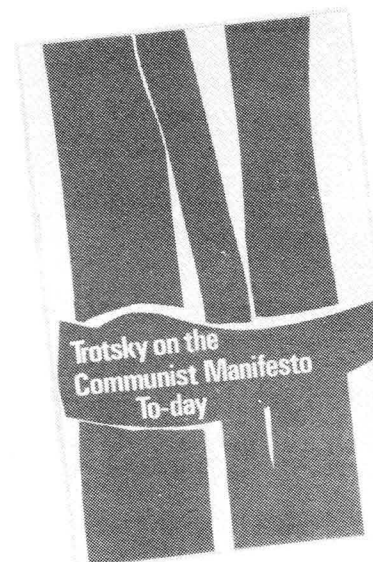
First published in 1937 at the height of Stalin's purges, this classic analyses how the Russian Revolution had been usurped by a small caste of bureaucrats. Price: £4.95 including postage.



“CIA infiltration of the labour movement”. Price 80p plus 20p p&p.



“Lessons of Spain” by Leon Trotsky. Price 40p including postage.



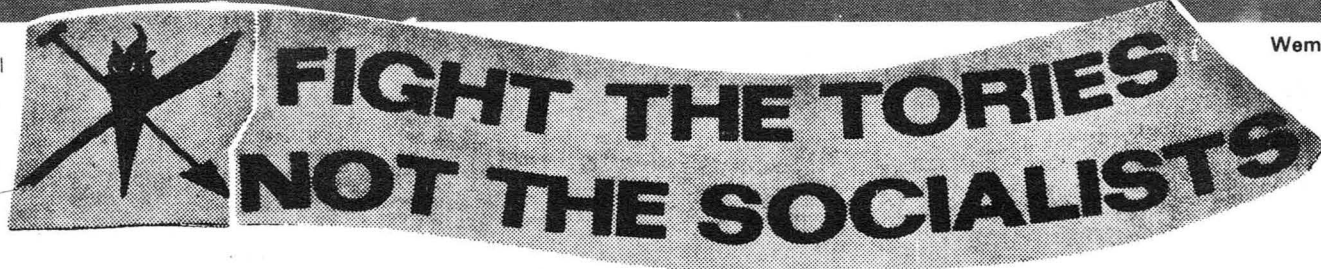
“Trotsky on the Communist Manifesto Today”. Price 25p including postage.

Other Trotsky titles include: “Marxism in our time.”. Price £1 including postage. “Class, party and leadership”. Price 30p including postage.



Photo: Vivien Seal

Wembley rally.



SOUTHERN REGION LPYS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Andy Allenby
(National Committee)

Clive Walder

Ian Whittle

John Planken

Martin Smith
(Chairman)

John Ennis

Clare Melia

John Mills



Greet Labour Party Conference —Labour will sweep the South in 198?

LITTLEHAMPTON BRANCH ARUNDEL CLP

We completely reject any attempt from whatever source, to introduce "thought police", and support our GMC rejection of the NEC attempt to regulate what we read—fight Tories not socialists.

Greetings to all delegates and visitors from *Militant* supporters in Sussex.

MOULESCOOMB BRANCH KEMPTOWN CLP

Sends greetings to all delegates, "Let us unite around socialist policies."

LITTLEHAMPTON BRANCH TGWU 1/874

This Branch thanks *Militant* for its support in our recent dispute, and reciprocates by urging all trade unionists to support *Militant*.

Read it—Sell it

•
BRIGHTON LPYS
welcomes delegates
to Labour Party
Conference.
Vote for socialist
policies, stop the
witch-hunt.

•
**LITTLEHAMPTON
LPYS**
send fraternal
greetings to all
conference
delegates.
Forward to a daily
Militant!

•
**TENANTRY
BRANCH
of BRIGHTON
LABOUR PARTY**
welcomes delegates
to the 1983
conference. For a
socialist programme!
Let's fight the
Tories, not each
other!

We the undermentioned members of BRIGHTON BRANCH POEU welcome the Labour Party to Brighton and call for the labour movement to campaign with the POEU against the privatisation of all public services including the NHS.

**Ian Nicholls—Chairman
Ernie King—Assistant Secretary
John Scrace—Committee
Chris Halls—Committee**

**Move forward to socialism not
backwards with Witch-hunts!!**

Who wants to be a *Militant* seller?



YOU do!

WHO WANTS to be a millionaire? That was last week's *Daily Express* using their latest advertising gimmick to prey on the minds of people desperate to find work, or pay the bills, or afford that coat before the winter comes.

The obvious answer to the *Express* is that they want to become rich at our expense and are willing to spend £3 million to achieve it. The question we are asking is, can we afford this society that chops down the health service, attempts to shackle the unions, and allows poverty to grow daily?

Fortunately, you have a much better chance to change society than become a millionaire, but it will take a great effort on behalf of all our readers if we are to beat the bosses' plans. During Labour Party conference week our sellers are planning extra sales to reach every corner of the labour movement with this special 24-page edition.

We are also calling on all our readers to make special efforts this week to boost our circulation by finding us extra readers or even becoming sellers of our paper.

This winter looks to be one of urgent struggles to give Thatcher a bloody nose; already the POEU and the miners are fighting to defend their conditions. In addition bitter anger has been aroused over the job losses in the National Health Service. As was shown by our centre pages last week we are showing the way by giving a Marxist analysis of how to beat the Tories.

Make sure that *Militant* is sold in *your* workplace and at *your* union branch. Use the special form on the back of this week's paper. If you would like to become a seller or take extra copies, contact: 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN or phone: 01-986 3828.

By Dave Farrar

Letters

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

MILITANT, Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN



Ascot '83—not all young couples struggle to make ends meet.

World of difference

Dear Comrades,

The other day I overheard a conversation between two students at my college. One of them was complaining about a rich friend who had come back two weeks early from her honeymoon:

"She came back saying she was bored, that the hotel was empty and that they were going to the South of France for the rest of their honeymoon."

"Why does she want to go to the South of France anyway, Mombassa is such a beautiful place."

"He's such a nice man too, he gave her six thousand pounds, and bought her a new BMW, and a house costing £150,000, which isn't quite good enough for her."

"The marriage won't last longer than a year if he's lucky, she says the novelty is already beginning to wear off, and she wishes she'd had her twenty first birthday instead."

This shows that while most people have to struggle to get the money together to get married in the first place, her and her class can afford to make decisions between Mombassa and the South of France.

Yours fraternally,
Richard Finnigan
Deptford LPYS

Monetarism and the public sector

Dear Comrades,

There are a variety of responses to a capitalist crisis.

One is the Tory monetarist approach—a stance also adopted, albeit less enthusiastically and with less venom, by previous Labour governments (which were, I dare say, much influenced by the likes of Jenkins, Owen, Rodgers and Williams, all of whom endorsed restrictionist measures).

The monetarist approach means massive cut backs in the public sector which the Tories tolerated only in so far as it constituted a bulwark against social strife.

Yet the thing about monetarism is its illogicality. Certainly in practice it is both repressive and reactionary. But that is to be expected! What radical economists cannot grasp, however, is the Tories blinkered, untenable faith in cuts which harm a sector of industry which fulfills a prerequisite for capitalism's profit making.

The public sector is to all

extents and purposes a form of state capitalism. Granted the state provides the necessary finance. Yet in all other respects the public sector is expected to operate in the same way as its private counterpart.

This in effect neuters entirely the original intentions of those who sought public reform. Instead what we have are state industries impervious to the true needs of working people and run, for the most part, by capitalists enticed from the private sector by lucrative contracts, fringe benefits and expense accounts provided at the whim of boards whose ultimate consideration is personal gain not public service.

What we as socialists must strive for is a Marxist response to the crisis based upon production according to social need; investment in public works and, most importantly, the extension, and re-organisation under workers control, of the public sector.

Fraternally
Alan Stewart

Fairshares

Dear Editor,
So Britain will receive another 60 billion from North Sea oil.

I dare say the National Health Service, education authorities, the underfed and the unemployed will be jumping for joy.

As for the BP shares up for sale, the stockbrokers must use waste bins for distribution in our town, for I often see people in rags collecting their shares. It's just amazing how fair people can be.

Yours Comradely
Mike King
Southampton

Greetings blocked

Dear Comrades,

Our meeting in July agreed to put Labour Party Conference greetings in *Militant*

Our secretary sent off the request for the cheque to the EC because when the branch wants to use its political fund, it has to be authorised by them. We received a reply from the EC to say we can't put greetings in the paper.

They say this is because there's no specific resolution passed at the Union Conference to say that *Militant* should be supported. A resolution carried on the media called on union members to give support to "existing socialist papers, in particular the *Morning Star*, *Labour Weekly* and *Tribune*." This does not mean that other socialist papers should not be supported.

The EC also refused to let *Militant* be sold at this year's annual conference for the same reason. Yet they let anti-trade union rags like the *Sun*, *Star*, *Express* be sold. There's no specific resolution on these.

The branch has now agreed that the secretary writes back to the EC objecting to these undemocratic measures.

Yours fraternally
Helen Jeffrey
AUEW (TASS) Bracknell branch.

Proud citizen

Dear Comrades,

I have been unemployed for three years and have recently moved into a council bachelor flat because my parents have moved into a smaller accomodation.

Because of my financial situation I could not afford any furniture or cooking facilities so I applied for a grant off my local DHSS. They turned me down flat. So I appealed against this and went in front of an independent tribunal, and found they were very sympathetic. Unfortunately they turned me down too.

I have been living in my flat since July '83 and my worldly goods are a bed, some saucepans and a wardrobe. I spend about £20 a week eating in cafés and that leaves me with about £5 to pay my gas/electricity/clothing club bills.

Can anyone tell me what I have to do to live like a proud citizen. Maybe I should apply for a rowing boat and row down to the Falklands.

Yours fraternally
Mike John
Newport LPYS
Gwent

Constructive castration . . .

Dear Militant,

I find myself musing over the decision of the right-wing of the TUC to hold reasoned, constructive talks with Mr Tebbit, Secretary of State for Employment. A decision widely applauded by Fleet Street as a civilised one.

This decision is about as relevant to the industrial scene today as advising a victim of Jack the Ripper to hold a reasoned and constructive argument with him on the merits or otherwise of murder, while he held a knife at her throat.

It is the government's intention, if not to murder then at least to cripple the trades unions, or, as Tebbit pithily put it—to neuter them. I sincerely hope, therefore that when the TUC walk into the Ministry of

Employment to be castrated, Tebbit will be civilised and merciful, and give them an anaesthetic before he wields the knife.

Yours fraternally
Cyril Whitelock
Hornchurch

. . . or time to talk

Dear Editor,

As a Trade Union Representative, employed in the country's largest Class Manufacturing Industry, I feel that your Editorial (2 September) must not go unanswered because it was somewhat paradoxical. On the one hand you say:—

"There isn't the slightest chance that the TUC leadership can alter the fundamental direction of the Tory Government's economic policy. To ask Tebbit, Thatcher, Lawson and Co. not to attack the living standards of working people is like asking

the devil to renounce sin".

Yet you go on to denounce the TUC leadership for wanting to enter into talks with the Government. This just does not make sense. The only way to turn the tide is to talk, and to talk now. This may be extremely unpalatable to many a Socialist at whatever level, but, in my opinion it is nonetheless essential.

In the face of impending legislation the TUC leadership must be fully equipped to take up every challenge which may be necessary to steer the future aims and objectives of trade unionism.

Obviously in a constantly changing environment, considerable efforts have to be made to ensure that the end product of talks result in the restoration of the right to work for all people.

Your comrade in the fight for right.
Noel Davies
St. Helens.



Barking, London 1982—cuts worsen class differences in education.

Intense favouritism

I read a newspaper article about a girl who failed to get into Oxford university. Nothing new about that, but the girl was working class and had gone to a comprehensive. What amazed me was that she had attained five 'A' level passes. The college said that competition

was 'intense'

A spokesman claimed that the interview let her down, and that their own entrance examinations are a "better indication than 'A' levels of suitability".

This makes you think what questions are in the entrance exam, and why the interview is so essential. I would suggest that her unsuitability is derived from her

background.

Only a socialist government can give an equal education, where students are given the right to further education on their true ability, despite 'intense competition'.

Rob Rogers
President, West Notts
College of Further
Education Students'
Union

Right to sell *Militant*

Dear Comrades,

This LPYS branch wishes to express its disgust at the bans imposed in the *Militant* and the expulsions of the Editorial Board.

We feel that this decision is a direct attempt to witch-hunt the ideas of Marxism from party meetings and premises, and we oppose the

NEC's decision to do so.

The majority of our members are not, at the moment, *Militant* supporters, but recognise the importance of the paper, and its right to be sold.

Yours fraternally
Peter Gillan
Secretary
Musselburgh LPYS

YTS and the Post Office

Dear Sir,

The Union of Communication Workers has agreed to allow up to 4,000 YTS trainees into the Post Office. The agreement was reached without any discussion at annual conference or any consultation with the membership.

Many people are disgusted by the agreement reached because:

(1) During 34 weeks of "on the job work experience" the trainees must not affect the normal hours, overtime, duty schedule, patterns attendances and working arrangements. But the union leadership must have known when they agreed to this clause in the agreement that the trainees can very easily begin to replace full time postmen.

(2) The local union officials

have to supervise the trainees and safeguard working practices, and yet because the trainees are employed by the Manpower Services Commission they can dodge the closed shop agreement and refuse to be UCW members.

(3) The Post Office already has the Postal Cadet Scheme to recruit 16-18 year olds. The Youth Training Scheme is therefore an even cheaper way of using young people the only way to get work after the training scheme is to become a cadet.

To sign such an agreement with the Post Office is an open invitation for them to exploit young people even further and to make even greater labour savings.

Yours fraternally
K Butcher
East Berkshire LPYS

Anti-abortion point of view

Dear Comrades,

As someone who has very recently progressed from being pro-abortion to being anti-abortion, I write to answer the article, 'Right-wing move against abortion'

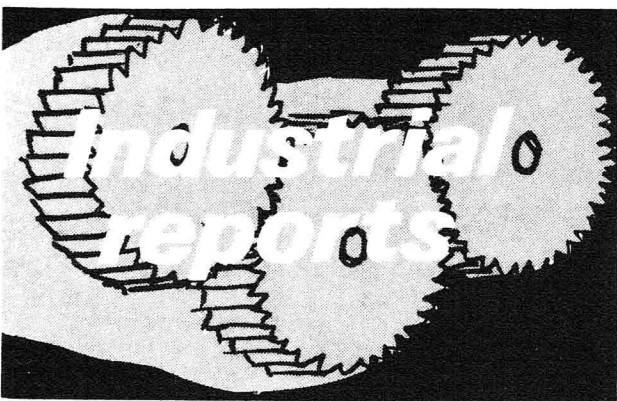
Firstly, not all anti-abortionists are right-wing Catholic fanatics, as the article liked to portray us. Some are, like me, socialists and proud of it.

Secondly, the article evades the point of what abortion is—killing helpless babies, which have the right to live just as all humans have rights.

Even if "abortion on demand" did "relieve working class women of the tremendous strain of pregnancy" it would also take away the life of—in other words kill—a large number of unborn babies.

Which factor, is the most important? We should be campaigning for better conditions and facilities for working class women, not against a child's right to life.

Yours fraternally
Paul Hillier
Bournemouth East LPYS



Massey—court action

FOUR HUNDRED Massey Ferguson clerical workers on strike over the bosses' intention to pay their next pay rise out of their pension fund at Banner Lane, Coventry, have had a High Court injunction taken out against 128 of them by management.

64 men and 64 women are prevented from going on the company's land; meaning that they can't use toilet facilities while picketing this rather isolated factory, and union officials have agreed to the

dismantling of barricades the strikers had erected across the main gates.

Nevertheless, picketing has been kept up, despite last week being a holiday week. Pressure has not just come from Massey's management, strikers have been refused overdrafts by one bank.

Massey's have used the injunctions before—against manual workers. They burnt them and went on to win the strike. The clerical workers are also determined to succeed.

Swansea POEU

ALMOST SIX months ago Swansea POEU instituted an overtime ban in order to protect the jobs of 110 Telecom engineers.

A special branch meeting on 28 September is to consider whether it is time to lift the overtime ban.

The alleged surplus problem has eased according to the Area Manager, and discussions can take place about next year's budget.

The overtime ban has been very successful. The unity and solidarity shown by the rank and file on this issue shook management. This led to a turn-around and they have recently been appealing to the branch officials to lift the ban, offering to withdraw 'surpluses' in order to attain our agreement.

The role of leadership is vital. The victory in Swansea is a small indication of what would be possible on a national scale, with national unity and real determination.

If the membership does agree to lift the overtime ban, it will be essential for tight control to be maintained on the level of overtime worked, but not only in the Swansea area. So called

job surpluses have now arisen in Cardiff and many other areas of the country. POEU Head Office is aware of the areas, and should lead a national campaign on the issue of job protection.

These attacks are being mounted as a consequence of BT management advising the POEU NEC that they were no longer willing to discuss manpower at a national level! The right wing NEC accepted this and advised branches to seek meetings on manpower with local management.

It is part of an attempt to break the POEU into separate bargaining units, related to 'profit centres'. Unless defeated it will lead to the destruction of the POEU as a national bargaining union.

The new left NEC must reverse the policy of accepting the break up of national bargaining and take BT management on over the issue of job security.

The membership will follow, as was shown in Swansea.

By Phil Lloyd
(Secretary, Swansea POEU personal capacity)

S & K—12 weeks out

TWENTY WORKERS at Sandhar and Kang Cash & Carry, Birchall St., Birmingham have been on strike for twelve weeks to prevent management transferring two workers to another (specially set up) company.

One of these workers just happens to be the shop steward. The management were hoping to break the union, which was only recognised last year after a long struggle.

All the workers have now been sacked, but are getting no

benefit from the DHSS. Even the two workers that were transferred have been sacked by their new company despite never having worked for it.

Management are trying to starve the workers back. Please send financial assistance urgently to allow them to continue the strike; S & K Strike Fund, TGWU, 211 Broad St., Birmingham B15.

By Simon Heather
TGWU 5/29

Esso strike—official

THE STRIKE of 2,000 subcontract workers at the Esso, Fawley refinery near Southampton is still on. The strikers received a boost when the TGWU at last made the strike official on September 23. This has greatly increased the effect of the picketing, especially on the TGWU organised drivers.

Pressure is increasing on the management of both Esso and the sub-contractors. Officials from ACAS have been brought in, and the management have been issuing threats of redundancies if the strike is not settled. Both are sure signs that the management are increasingly worried.

Some of the statements of the trade union officials involved are causing concern among the workers. There are some signs of a poor compromise in the offing, with pressure being exerted for less effective picketing.

The strikers' claim on pay, hours, and continuity of work can be won. Action needs to be stepped up. Unions on the railways, oil tankers, tugs, should be approached to black the refinery. Picketing needs to be made more effective. If the determination of the workers is matched by their officials they can be sure of victory.

By Nick Brookes

Residential social workers

ON THE 15 September, residential workers in childrens homes and officers in old peoples homes began industrial action against their local authority employees.

They are banning overtime and new admissions.

Gail Tattersall of Davyhulme LPYS spoke to a residential child care officer in Manchester who explained why she decided to take action.

"We work a forty hour week, it's a hard and demanding job working with 16-18 year olds, all with various social problems. How can we begin to help those young people overcome their problems if we're tired and over-worked?"

"My rota may include sleeping in, this could mean that I don't get to bed until 1.00 am, and then I have to be up at 6.45 am to wake all the kids who work."

"I'm usually so tired by the end of the day that if anyone does need some special help or simply just a chat it's impossible to give them all the attention they need. We desperately need a 35 hour week. We're also demanding to be paid time and a half for Saturdays, double time for Sundays, Bank and Public Holidays, and premium payments for shift and irregular working hours."

"The home where I work is understaffed, which makes things even worse. We can take fourteen residents and there are only two, sometimes three, members of staff on duty at one time. I'm the lowest grade and the youngest member of staff. Quite often I'm left to cope alone. I'm on a monthly contract, I don't know from one



Photo: John Smith (IFL)

Picket at Newhall Hostels for Mentally Disabled, in Liverpool, in support of eleven Nalگو care staff/house parents who are working to rule.

month to the next if I'm still going to be employed.

"The local authority have cut back on everything. They have a typical penny pinching Tory attitude. I remember once, a young boy stayed the night at his friends and so was entitled to a rent rebate from the home, we accidentally paid him 2p extra. The next thing we knew a letter arrived demanding the 2p. It cost the authority more to send the letter than to overlook the 2p."

"Everyone where I work has responded really well, nobody is working overtime. It's the only way we can get through to the local authorities; the unions have

been arguing our case for a year. "The union leaderships must make every effort to involve all sections of their membership to ensure a speedy and successful end to this dispute."

Strathclyde

EIGHT RESIDENTIAL establishments have been closed. 45 admissions of children into care have been refused and therefore taken places in the voluntary sector.

450 temporary staff have been employed and 30 permanent new senior staff have also been employed.

On 21 September the Regional Council threatened closure, and consequently redundancies. The next day a mass meeting of residential workers agreed to take strike action if intimidation or threats of sackings were carried out. The Regional Council has approached the national employers to open negotiations with the union on the whole issue.

A mass lobby of Strathclyde Regional Council by residential workers took place on 28 September.

By Stuart Bates
(Strathclyde NALGO residential disputes committee)

Brum Tories attack NALGO

IN OCTOBER last year, a "victimisation" agreement was drawn up between Birmingham Tory Council and the Birmingham branch of NALGO, as a direct result of last year's privatisation dispute.

The council alleges that the branch has broken this agreement. It was pointed out during talks that if members wished to discipline other members for strike-breaking and black legging, the union constitution must be abided by.

At present disciplinary in-

vestigations are taking place against nine members.

In retaliation, Tory councillor Bosworth has stopped direct deduction of NALGO subscriptions from salaries.

A members' meeting decided to support their stewards collecting two months arrears of subs manually.

Councillor Bosworth has threatened to discipline any stewards carrying out this action during work time.

Two days after the meeting, stewards started collecting subs.

Two stewards, one the Branch Treasurer, received notice of their suspension, and it's possible that over a hundred stewards will receive similar notices.

It is clear from Tory councillor Bosworth that his actions are a direct attack on the trade union movement in Birmingham.

By Denise Taylor
(Birmingham NALGO)

IRSF Broad Left

A RECENT meeting of the Broad left of the Inland Revenue Staffs Federation re-affirmed existing policies, including support for union amalgamation and affiliation to the Labour Party and detailed proposals for democratic reform of the union.

A motion calling for activity only at office level, which would mean abandoning the branch committees and the executive to the right wing, was heavily defeated, leading to a small number of ultra-leftists leaving the Broad Left.

Speakers in the discussion supported more involvement for members at office level, including workplace branches of the union, but opposed separating policy making and elections as proposed by the right wing. For decisions on industrial action it was felt that the tradition of democratic mass meetings should be maintained, rather than splitting the members up by office ballots under more pressure from the press and local management.

By a Steering Committee Member

Castleford march for glass jobs

A MARCH and rally was held in Castleford, on 24 September to protest against the closure of United Glass, and 350 redundancies at Rockware Glass in Knottingley.

After a four week "reconsideration" period the management at UG announced the closure was to go ahead.

About 600 people attended the march which was organised by Pontefract and Castleford Trades Council. The rally was addressed by Bob McCusker

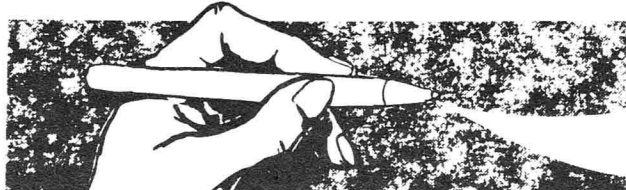
(Asst. General Secretary ASTMS), Mike Davey (Regional Organiser TGWU) and Geoff Lofthouse MP who said, "The management never had any intention of backing down because they were expecting an easy ride, but the easy ride isn't coming, and workers must unite as they have never united before."

Len Formby (Yorks and Humberside TUC) told the rally the UG bosses intended to close the factory but use the machinery elsewhere.

There was a good spirit throughout the morning and the message to the management must be that the battle has only just begun.

Messages of support to: The Joint Unions Committee, United Glass containers, Albion Street, Castleford, W. Yorks.

By Martin Fenton
(Pontefract and Castleford LPYS)



Workers' notebook

Conflicting economic forecasts continue to arrive on our doorstep. Nevertheless, last week's Workers' Notebook misprint claiming that Britain next year will have the slowest growth in the world was jumping the gun. The forecast referred to, however, was predicting a mere 1 1/4% growth next year. The Treasury is sticking to a

forecast of 2% growth this year and a slow but sustained recovery lasting well into 1984. The CBI's monthly survey of 1,800 companies forecasts a slow-down in growth next year—possibly not lasting beyond the first quarter of 1984.

The take-over of Dunlop's European tyre operations by

Japanese firm Sumitomo will be accompanied by the loss of about 5,500 jobs. Sumitomo have refused to take several plants at all, including the car tyre manufacturing operation at Fort Dunlop—which means 1,000 redundancies. 1,400 will be left at Fort Dunlop making heavy duty tyres. Altogether 5,800 former Dunlop employees will be kept on, 2,600 in Britain and 3,200 in Germany.

The VAT man cometh not. The Society of Civil and Public Servants claim that the government is currently losing £21 million a year in unpaid Value Added Tax because there has been a cut of 300 VAT Control Officers. The

cost of each officer is £17,100 a year whilst on present performance each one discovers unpaid tax of £87,000 a year. If only Labour looked after its own so well.

Trade union legislation is another favourite Tory ploy to help the bosses. The Engineering Employers Federation are egging Tebbit on to widen his current proposals to impose ballots of all members before industrial action can be taken. The EEF want that extended to virtually any form of industrial action—overtime bans, working-to-rule and "working without enthusiasm". Could be very time consuming.

Vauxhall- lead needed

VAUXHALL WORKERS have rejected the company's improved offer and are now on the brink of strike action.

Having been warned that if they walked out trouble might follow, there were a further number of stoppages in protest at the offer. It was decided to call a combine meeting of leading trade unionists from the three plants, Ellesmere Port, Dunstable and Luton, to co-ordinate industrial action. It was decided to wait until meeting the company on 23 September, and if nothing was forthcoming then an all-out strike would be called along with a blockade of the docks handling GM cars and parts.

In a circular entitled "substantially improved wage offer" the company offered a 14 month contract instead of 15 months. That was for September to November '83 at 6½% and for November '83 to November '84, 8%. They withdrew an annual offer. The £1 bonus was not to be consolidated. All other points remained the same. There were no improvements with regards to a call for a 38 hour week or any of the other points asked for in the latest submission.

The union side made it clear that the 14 month deal was not acceptable. It is a tactic to weaken the union's position, because it would probably mean calling for workers to take action around Christmas time. The car market then is also at a low ebb, so any effects would be softened.

Vauxhall's is in the front line for wage negotiations and the bosses would rather start talks later. A victory for Vauxhall workers means that workers in BL, Fords and other firms will demand the same. The bosses hope that if others do the bidding first and settle for low wage increases this would further weaken the unions.

At a joint shop stewards' meeting held on the 26 September the Joint Works Committee at Luton recommended that a mass meeting be called and that two resolutions be put to the membership:

- (1) An endorsement of the union's rejection of the substantially improved offer.
- (2) To secure support for the

endorsement and to call a strike, commencing end of shift on the 30 September in conjunction with the other three plants.

There is no doubt that the offer will be rejected, the question is what next?

Senior stewards at the three plants are waiting for one another to make the first move. The three meetings of the company have achieved nothing and further negotiations are likely to prove fruitless without industrial action. One convenor at Luton described the situation as, "a new air of militancy at Vauxhall's."

The Luton joint shop stewards' meeting overwhelmingly supported both resolutions which are to be put to a mass meeting on the 28 September at Luton as a first move. Ellesmere Port's resolution called for a rejection of the offer and to call in national officials to negotiate and to recommend strike action if any of the other plants take action.

That resolution was accepted by the T&G membership at a mass meeting in Ellesmere Port today (Tuesday). The AUEW will be holding a meeting on Thursday with a similar resolution before them. Dunstable AUEW have gone for a ballot instead of a mass meeting.

It seems that the position agreed at the Combine meeting has fallen apart, with only Luton sticking to a strike—but only in conjunction with the other plants, a position that has been reviewed before Thursday's mass meeting.

A proviso has been added that if no definite commitment is given by Ellesmere Port and Dunstable by the end of the week then the strike action will be postponed until action is agreed.

It is known that the AUEW National Official, Gerry Russell, is against strike action.

If a clear lead is given the rank and file will rally to the call. With that unity Vauxhall workers can strike a tremendous victory, not only for themselves, but will inspire millions of other workers to fight back as well.

By Robin Harris
(T&GWU Shop Steward
Vauxhall, Luton,
personal capacity)

Thorn-EMI: Balloting by the boss

THE DISPUTE over pay and conditions at the Thorn EMI factory in Padiham, Lancs, entered its sixth week with an attempt by management to organise a secret ballot of all employees on the question of a return to work.

Having failed to divide the workforce by the dismissal of twenty-nine employees and to force us back to work by the stopping of holiday pay, sick pay for those entitled and a

refusal to pay tax rebates, they have gone over the heads of the shop stewards, directly to the shop floor.

In their letter to the workforce management claim they have gone as far as possible in negotiations with the union.

This angered workers on the picket line as management had given a firm commitment to open talks on the very morning the ballot papers were sent out. The local Labour MP, Mr Peter

Pike, had offered his services as a mediator and was told at the end of last week that talks would begin on Monday morning. It is no wonder that workers were angered to wake up with ballot papers on their doorsteps.

The ballot will not be conducted in the democratic traditions of the Labour movement and is completely open to manipulation by management. The unions do not acknowledge such a ballot and will hold a

mass meeting to counteract management's tactics.

Messages of support and donations to Peter Longworth, 6 Barry Street, Burnley. Any cheques should be payable to MAINGAS 250 Club.

By Jason Hunter
(AUEW Shop Steward
Thorn-EMI, Padiham)

Around the pits: What really happened in Barnsley

ERIC RICHARDSON, President of Church Lane NUM Branch, covering Dodworth Colliery, talked to Militant.

This strike has been a victory for the grass-roots members. The response we've had from the rank and file has been absolutely tremendous. The aim was to get George Marsh reinstated at Dodworth Pit. We will not stand by and see our member go down the road after twenty years' service at the pit.

He has never tried to hide the fact that he assaulted the overman, but he was severely provoked. He was dismissed on 10 August, but at a special branch meeting we agreed to continue working whilst putting the issue into the conciliation machinery. At the meeting with management we pleaded with the board to show compassion on this issue, that this man had a record second to none, and had been severely provoked. We even offered

to pay a £500 fine, which is an unprecedented amount in our industry.

We believe there should be discipline in the pit, but it has to be on both sides. The Board wanted to ignore the actions of the overman. Even now, we have a further meeting pending about his attitude towards another member. Our colliery manager openly stated in front of coal board officials and NUM representatives that he could do with more men like this overman. This we saw as giving him a license for going round provoking our members with his hostile attitude.

Church Lane/Dodworth is one of the strongest branches in the coal field, and if they can get away with it here, then they can get away with it anywhere. We don't want to appear ungrateful to those who negotiated for George Marsh to be transferred to Barrow Pit, but when he went

to start there he broke down, he couldn't face, after so many years, being forced to uproot his place of work.

This was not a strike that just blew up on impulse. We really put deep thought into it. It is an issue which should never have gone out of the pit yard, but our members sincerely believe that George Marsh should be reinstated at our pit where he rightfully belongs.

The agreement which has ended the strike, is that George Marsh signs on at Barrow, and is suspended on full pay pending the outcome of an enquiry.

Today's decision, on the advice of the branch committee, to call off the strike undoubtedly took into consideration the decisions of the Doncaster panel and area council of the NUM in favour of the Barrow option and the enquiry.

I would like to state that this dispute has not been against the

Yorkshire area officials, the media has definitely tried to use this dispute to undermine and split the authority of our area and national officials. The TV, press and radio have tried to turn our campaign against our union leadership. I would like to refute any statement made by the Press, TV or radio against the ability of our officials.

I never believed that this dispute would gather momentum throughout the Barnsley coalfield the way it did. Unfortunately we had to fight quite a few branch officials before getting through to the members, but we have uncovered feelings we didn't know existed.

I am certain that if the support is there for George Marsh, that it is there to be tapped on other important issues affecting miners. Bigger issues, like protection of earnings, pay and conditions and pit closures.

Monktonhall

THE STRIKE at Monktonhall colliery originally began when men on the day shift were sent home for being about 5-10 minutes late to go down the pit, after attending a meeting to hear information about redundancy and the general state at the colliery.

Day shift men already down the pit came up again in sympathy with their colleagues.

This strike is a culmination of pent up frustration over continual harassment by management. They have refused to consult or discuss issues such as development of new sections or manning levels or output of coal at the pit.

The miners see this as an attempt to run down the pit leading to closure. The pit delegate, David Hamilton demanded a guarantee for the future of Monktonhall colliery. No guarantee has been given.

The halting of development and the removal of machinery from developing sections which are the lifeline of any pit confirm fears of closure.

The board cannot use the argument of exhaustion or unsafe conditions. Instead they pour out lies of "lazy miners". Yet Monktonhall has a section, L43, which has regularly been in the top six producing facelines in Britain.

Monktonhall opened in 1964 and has long been considered the flagship of the Scottish coalfields. The board believe that if they can get away with closure here it will pave the way for wholesale closure in Scotland and other areas. If the board intends to close Monktonhall which has constantly met production targets, then the future of any pit is in doubt.

At Cardowan and Kinneil the board guaranteed employment elsewhere. That tactic can no longer be used as all the relieving pits are saturated, indeed may be regarded as targets for closure.

This raises the question of compulsory redundancy. Miners cannot sit back and watch the devastation of the mining industry, the fight for Monktonhall is a national issue.

By Tam Dury
(SCEBTA, Monktonhall)



The media in Barnsley. A campaign has been waged to try and undermine the NUM leadership

Westhoe, S. Shields

AT A mass meeting on 25 September miners at Westhoe Colliery, South Shields, decided unanimously to take strike action over a management attempt to change from a 3 to 4 shift system.

But underlying the dispute is the introduction of a new MacGregor-type management who seem hell-bent on a confrontation with the workforce. The bonus was drastically cut then miraculously re-appeared a week before the ballot but the men are absolutely solid in their opposition to the managements proposals.

The lodge has the backing of the Durham Area Executive of the NUM. The media, however, have tried to undermine the confidence of the miners, claiming that Arthur Scargill does not support this strike. This is completely unfounded.

MacGregor's strategy, which is the strategy of the Tories, will be to try and undermine the power of the miners on a local

MINERS COLLECTING for Monktonhall strikers at Francis colliery in Fife were harassed by management and John Mitchell the colliery delegate sacked for refusing to halt the collection. The men went on strike. After four hours he was reinstated and the collection completed. £150 was collected and a pledge of further support given.

A SUCCESSFUL Militant Miner public meeting was held in Barnsley last Tuesday to discuss the local strike and hear a report from Monktonhall. Eric Richardson, President, Church Lane/Dodworth NUM, Chris Herriot (Monktonhall NUM, personal capacity) and Peter Jarvis for Militant were the main speakers.

level. Local disputes have to be seen in this context. That is why it is important for the miners to take their case to the local labour movement and link up with other miners in struggle, and with other sections of workers fighting against the Tories.

By Dave Cottrell

Wolstanton, N. Staffs

WOLSTANTON COLLIERY in North Staffordshire is being asked to shed 350 jobs and to go on one face production.

The NCB say they will extend the life of the pit to 7 or 8 years if Wolstanton becomes economic. What they fail to mention is that if Wolstanton fails to become economic under the new plan it will close completely within 2 years.

The men at Wolstanton are to be given a free vote on whether to accept the job losses.

Hem Heath, Holditch and Silverdale collieries are being asked to accept men transferred from Wolstanton. With these pits being flooded with manpower how long will it be before the NCB says that they are uneconomic and must accept closure or partial closure?

Wake up miners and fight for your jobs and your sons' jobs. Socialism and the planning of industry by the workers is the only way forward.

By Dave Cliff
(Hem Heath branch NUM
personal capacity)

In brief

UNION NEGOTIATORS for UK Atomic Energy Authority workers have rejected an offer of 2.5% to 4,500 craft and manual workers. It seems from management's presentation that they have little room for improvement of the offer. The unions are demanding substantial increases.

there will be victimisation of returning strikers.

ANOTHER ESSO dispute is taking place (see Southampton report, opposite page). Workers at Shellhaven oil refinery started a week-long overtime ban last week in protest at plans to cut the workforce from 1,100 to 655 by the end of next year. A mass meeting voted not to take part in reorganisation of departments and teams. A T&G official said that if management take disciplinary action there is the possibility of strike action.

A MAJORITY of the 1,300 workers at BREL's Horwich works have voted to end their fight against closure. The NUR's 450 members did not vote. Temple Mills workers made the same decision several weeks ago. There is a fear of losing redundancy payments. Resistance at Sildon is continuing.

THE STRIKE at Britain's toy factory in Walthamstow, E London looks to have petered out. All the women strikers went back early last week. They felt isolated from the running of the strike and there were rumours that the night shift were going back. Unfortunately no mass meeting had been held for three weeks of the strike and pickets were subjected to continuous police harassment. At a meeting on the 25th the remaining hundred strikers voted 22 to stay out, 30 to go back, the rest abstaining and the night shift not attending. It is felt that

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Belgium-Workers bitter at union deal

ON FRIDAY 23 September, the Belgian General Strike came to an end.

The so-called "pre-accord" between the leaders of the Catholic unions and the government gave only a minimal reduction in the severity of government proposals, but it proved to be a fatal blow to the development of the movement.

The workers returned to work today (Monday 26) feeling bitter and humiliated. At a meeting in Charleroi of the workers who had walked out and sparked off the greatest class conflict in Belgium for 23 years, the local representative broke down weeping as he called off the action.

When the CSC (Catholic union) gave the signal to call off the action, the strike movement was still gathering momentum, as many fac-

By a Belgian correspondent

tories and workplaces in the private sector were joining the strike. Mass meetings in Antwerp, Ostend, Ghent, Liège, Brussels, Namur, and Charleroi, involving members of both the FGTB (Socialist trade union) and the CSC voted to continue the strike.

For a time, the FGTB leaders spoke of carrying on alone, but on Friday night they too called off the action. Workers are now left with a serious reduction in pay of approximately 20 per cent over the two years 1983-84.

Many lessons for the movement can be learnt from this conflict. The trade union leaderships of both

confederations have been found seriously lacking throughout.

The Catholic union leaders were in fact led by the membership. Whilst in the mass meetings, they echoed a call for a general strike of the whole working class, put forward by the workers, they gave no hint of the deal which was being made with the government behind the scenes.

The FGTB leadership reflected the aspirations of the workers to a greater degree, but they refused to mobilise the power of the movement.

Fuller report— See page 18

Day after day, the public service workers were asked to wait for the decisions of "tomorrow's" meetings of the leaders, and the call to generalise the strike never came. At rank and file level, the workers were ready to extend the strike, to link up the struggle in the different regions, putting forward

more radical slogans than the simple demand that the government should "rethink the budget" put forward by the two federations.

The leaders did all within their power to isolate the strike to within their own localities, limiting the action and the programme of the movement. This would have eventually sapped the morale of the strikers.

This was a defeat, but it was not a rout. The government can take little comfort from what has happened. With different leadership, a complete general strike could easily have developed, which would not only have meant the downfall of the government, but would have forced into question the very existence of capitalism itself.

The organisations of Belgian labour remain intact, to fight another day. The enormous power of the working class, and the magnificent capacity to struggle shown by the workers, together with the lessons of the battle now over, will eventually settle accounts with the Martens-Gol coalition government and the class it represents.

Lessons for British labour

The public sector general strike in Belgium was a foretaste of the developments likely in Britain over the coming months and years.

The dispute lasted for two weeks, starting from a local railworkers strike, and bringing in more and more workers day by day.

As the articles on page 18 and below show, the strike was taking on an ever more openly political nature against the Tory coalition government. As in Britain, workers in Belgium have faced massive redundancies, particularly in Wallonia, and the ruling class have tried to use mass unemployment to lessen the power and militancy of the unions.

In Britain, at present,

many "experts" among the capitalist class consider the working class to be spent force, cowed into submission by the recession. These ideas have been echoed by sections of the labour movement.

The strike in Belgium shows how quickly moods of resignation in the face of attacks can develop into their opposite; a fierce wave of determination. The next few months in Britain will see many fights reaching a new peak.

Health workers, miners, telecom workers, engineers, local authority employees, all face battles to save jobs and maintain living standards. A spark from one of these disputes could transform the mood of the entire labour movement.

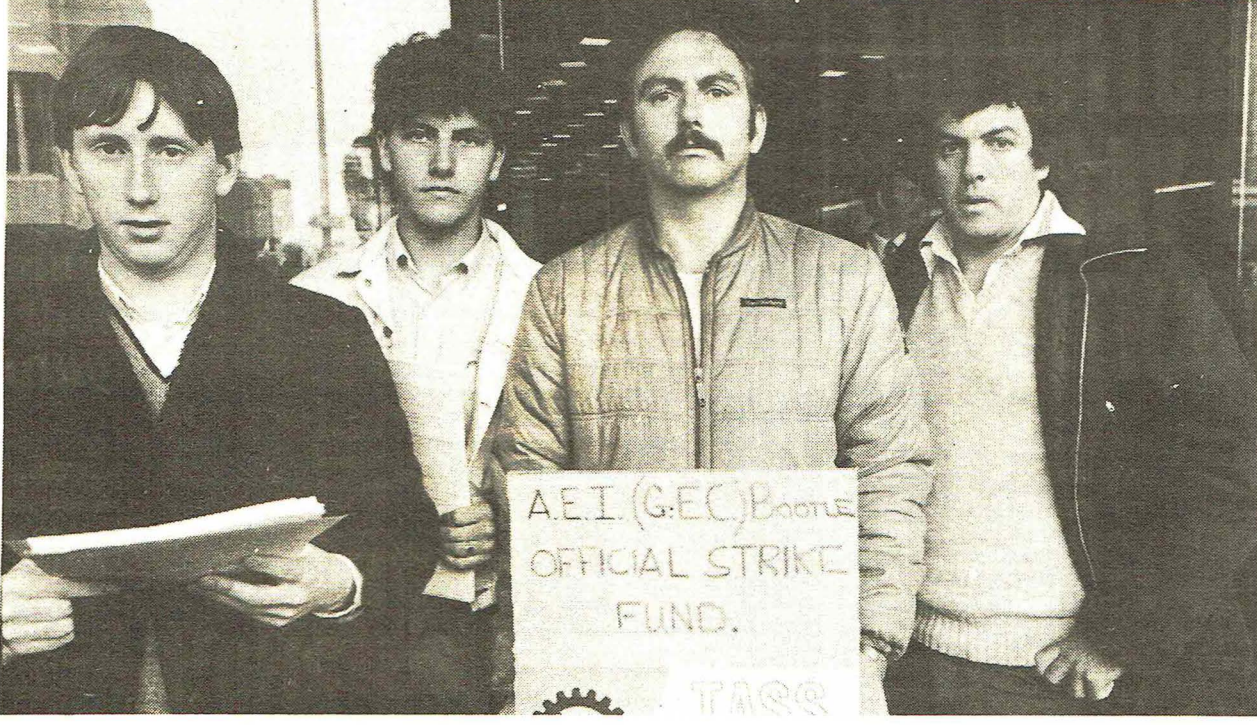


Photo: Militant.

AUEW members at AEI in Bootle lobby TUC conference. The trade union rank and file are the firm base of the Labour Party. Labour must support them.

Fighting future

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

disputes, demonstrations and strikes.

1.3m under-25 year olds rot on the dole—a potential powderkeg as the riots of '81 showed. By their own defiance workers all over the country have shown that Tebbit's anti-union laws can be beaten. In Liverpool radical

socialist policies achieved Labour's best results in the General Election following parallel success in the local elections.

Last week hundreds of shop stewards attended a meeting called by the Labour council to discuss how to defend Liverpool from the Tory blitz. This strategy must be employed by Labour councils throughout the country in a co-ordinated campaign. In South Yorkshire every

section of the workforce—local authority, steel, mines, rail is under threat. The call is going out for a public sector alliance to unite all sectors in the battle to stop the Tories.

Nearly every major organised group of workers—Post Office engineers, miners, steel, rail and gas workers, local authority and health workers—all are anticipating clashes with the Tory government.

Women, blacks, youth in general, every section of the working class is under fire, and will back Labour if offered a fighting alternative.

It is up to Labour at this conference nationally and then locally to provide that lead. Only a party united behind radical socialist policies, not divided by witch-hunts and blackmail, can build on the struggles we face and unite our class. That is the message for Labour's Conference.

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