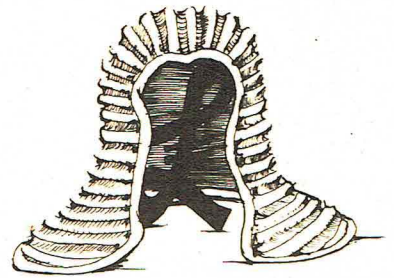


Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 679
9 December 1983

20p



The Law and the Unions
Page 9 and page 12

DEFEND OUR UNIONS

THE TRADE unions face one of their most serious challenges in the post war period. Their very effectiveness in defending their members' livelihoods has now been put in question.

It was no accident that Tory minister Norman Tebbit, in outlining his anti-trade union legislation, mentioned the need to "neuter" the trade unions.

By Alan Hardman
(NGA)

The Tories have set about the systematic destruction of all the health, welfare and education standards established by the labour movement in past decades.

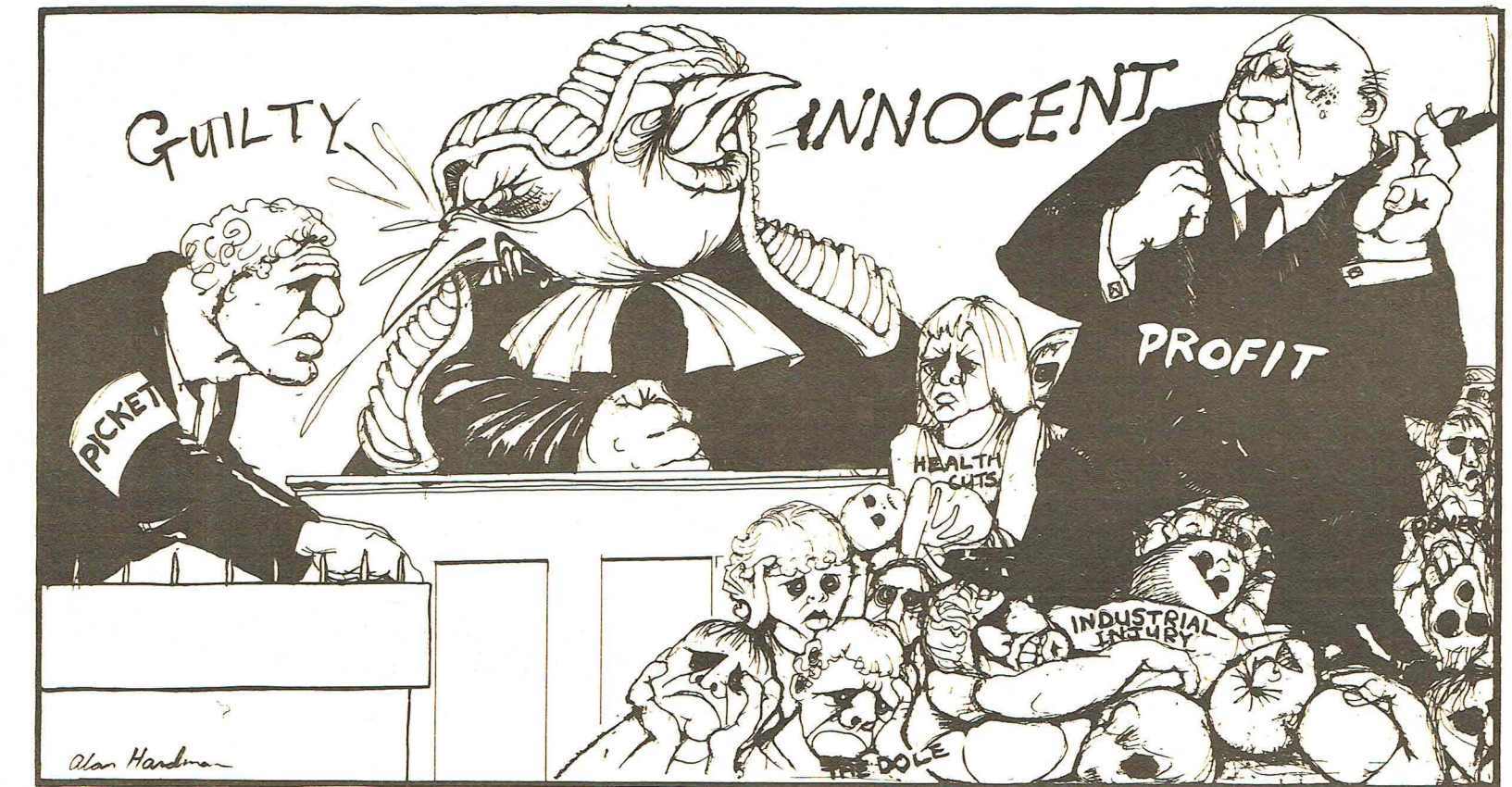
They have consciously raised unemployment to use the ever-lengthening dole queue to undermine the wages and conditions of those in jobs. The Tories want to bring workers standards down to the level determined by the "jobs market".

But the biggest barrier in the way of the Tories' headlong rush back into the 1930s, or even to Victorian standards, is the trade union movement—hence the desperate moves to deploy new anti-union laws. The trade unions are the only line of defence for workers.

Attack on wages

The method that would be used by employers to cut wages can be shown by the actions of Eddie Shah in Warrington. After inducing skilled workers to uproot their homes and move from Carlisle to Stockport, he now finds he has less need of their skills and wants to cut their wages by £70, and to do that he throws out a closed shop agreement.

There are thousands more employers ready to cut wages in the same way as Eddie Shah. The £70 a week gap is the difference between the wage rates in



the Tory "jobs market" and the pay achieved over the years by the National Graphical Association in the printing industry.

Millions of workers depend in exactly the same way on their trade union for their wage rates and conditions. Low paid workers and the unorganised benefit indirectly from union organisation. The general level of wages (and benefits, including pensions) is enhanced by the general application of trade union solidarity and the struggle for higher pay.

Employers use Tory laws

If the Tories are allowed to get away with their current attacks on the trade unions, therefore, the whole working class would suffer as a consequence.

The fines on the NGA, if allowed to stand, will be followed by others on the National Union of Journalists, and on other trade unions. Injunctions and writs are already flying about like snowflakes in a blizzard.

Effective unions

Tory law means that any effective action by trade unions can be outlawed. The bosses, if they get away with the action against the NGA, including the £3m writ for damages, will feel they have an open-ended authority to cripple the trade unions organisationally and financially. All working people will be weakened by this.

The trade unions must not give up their organisations and their rights. The closed shop, the right to picket, and the right to

Continued on page two

Young workers Get Organised

THIS SATURDAY, 10 December, about two and half thousand young workers will meet in Manchester for the Young Workers' Assembly organised by the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign.

The determination of young workers, to fight for a better future is shown in disputes like that at Lefray Toys in Aberbeeg, Gwent where most strikers are young, and new to trade unionism.

This strike for union recognition is now entering its sixteenth week, but there is no tiredness or defeatism on the picket lines, quite the opposite.

On 2 December a picket of over 100 trade unionists and Labour Party members assembled outside the factory.

At 1 pm, strikers blocked the exit gates from the factory and stopped the company lorry leaving for two hours. However at 3.30 pm police vans started to arrive from all over the area. The police started to march up the road to the factory in military formation. They then charged the pickets blocking the front

By Steve Thomas
(Ebbw Vale LPYS)

gates, who battled with them until the lorry finally got through.

Luckily no pickets were hurt or arrested by the police as had been the case a few weeks ago. The police showed far more restraint in front of both BBC and ITV cameras who were filming!

The strike also got unexpected publicity this week from the *Mail on Sunday*, not well known for balanced reporting. The piece on the strike was in the *Sun* school of creative journalism sensationalising the dispute and playing up divisions between the pickets who have relations scabbing in the factories.

But this type of Tory nonsense only strengthens the strikers' drive to win. To build support, they have organised a public meeting at Abertillery Miners' Institute on 8 December with over 15,000 leaflets distributed. There will be a mass picket outside Abertillery Magistrates Court on 21 December in support of the nine people arrested on the picket lines, at the sharp end of the brutal police tac-

Continued on back page

Militant

NGA *Messenger* dispute : drawing the balance sheet

THE NGA dispute has aroused the solidarity of the whole trade union movement. If it had not been for the seven day 'stand down', agreed with *Messenger* boss, Shah, there could have been a major escalation in the dispute.

It appeared last Friday that the NGA faced another swingeing fine and the occupation by bailiffs of its national headquarters at Bedford. Irrespective of the wishes of the trade union leadership, or even the NGA National Council, these actions could have provoked a massive walk-out in the printing and other industries, leading to a spontaneous general strike, as was the case in 1972 with the arrest of the five London dockers.

The widespread expressions of solidarity towards the National Graphical Association have completely scotched the idea that the working class is demoralised. It has been this newspaper alone that has stood out against all the Jeremiahs and pessimists in the labour movement and has pointed to the tremendous potential power of the trade unions, even allowing for the recession and the huge increase in unemployed.

Notwithstanding the Tories' huge parliamentary majority, *Militant* has consistently explained, there is a huge reservoir of anger within the working class. A call by the leadership of the trade unions could tap this deep well of discontent, and mobilise a massive campaign against the Tory government at almost any time.

The NGA dispute was nearly the issue that triggered off the explosion.

But in the intervening seven-day period, trade union activists will want to draw a balance sheet of events so far. On the negative side, it must be said that if the fines are allowed to stand, the whole of the trade union movement, not only the NGA, will have suffered an important defeat.

Legal straight-jacket

It is clear from the whelmer of injunctions and writs now going through the courts that the ruling class want to tie the trade unions in a legal straight-jacket. They have succeeded in this, at least up to a point.

It has also to be said that the attempt by the NGA to organise a mass picket ended in failure. Further mass picketing would probably have produced 10, 15, or 20,000 demonstrators, too numerous to be moved on by the police. The sheer weight of numbers would have stopped the Warrington printing plant, in the same way that miners' pickets combined with those of the striking engineering workers, stopped the deliveries from the Saltley Coke depot in 1972.

But the picket that did take place in Warrington failed to achieve its purpose.



Warrington mass picket. A demonstration of 20,000 trade union members would have been too large to move on.

It is not the function of the TUC General Council or its General Secretary to act as an 'independent arbiter' between the trade unions and their employers.

The large but amorphous trade union demonstration was battered and dispersed by a numerically smaller, but far better organised body of police, determined to succeed with whatever level of violence was necessary.

Future trade union mass pickets will need to be far more effectively organised and stewarded, now that the British ruling class have their own special riot police, ready and willing to go in with helmets, shields, batons and boots.

On the positive side has been the enormous solidarity shown by the trade union movement towards the print unions. Millions of trade union members have realised that fundamental rights are at stake in this dispute.

The trade unions rest on solidarity between fellow workers. The law, loaded to suit the employers, is effectively seeking to ban all such solidarity, except within narrowly defined limits.

The demonstrations of support for the NGA, including industrial action, could have been far greater than they were, given a stronger lead from above, but even if it has not shown its full potential at this time, the enormous strength inherent within the trade unions will be brought to bear against the Tory government in future confrontations.

But the key question arising from the NGA dispute is the role of leadership, the

most important issue facing the working class in modern times. Unfortunately, the TUC leadership have played a disgraceful role from the beginning of the NGA dispute.

It is not the function of the TUC General Council or its General Secretary to act as an 'independent arbiter' between the trade unions and their employers. What they *should* do is mobilise the support of other trade unions on the side of their brothers and sisters in dispute. Sadly, the present leadership of the TUC have all too often been prepared to let down workers who have found themselves in struggle.

Being so desperate, it seems, to appease the Tory government and to carry on the fake 'negotiations' with the Minister of Employment, some trade union right wingers have made statements on the NGA dispute which have been virtually indistinguishable from Tory speeches. Some right wing General Council members spent more time criticising the NGA, and in particular the organisation of mass pickets, than in criticising the government or explaining to their members the serious implications of the anti-trade union laws.

Unfortunately, the attitude of the Labour Party leadership has been little better. They should have been prepared to explain openly and without any reservation

the class basis of the Tories' laws, and to offer their support to the NGA.

The Labour Party leadership has enormous authority among working people. Imagine the reaction, for example, if Neil Kinnock had appeared on television and contrasted the monstrous £175,000 fine on the NGA, with the pathetic £1,000 fine on an employer found responsible for the death of four workers!

Explaining the issue in that way, in stark class terms, would have completely undermined all the baying and howling from the Tory benches, cut right across the artificial 'public opinion' manufactured by Fleet Street and would have rallied enormous support to the NGA.

The role of the Labour Party and TUC leadership, in refusing to give their whole-hearted support to the NGA, will not be lost among trade union and Labour Party members.

TUC not neutral

There was unanimous support within the ruling class for Eddie Shah. The whole of Fleet Street, big business, the Institute of Directors, the CBI and Tory MPs to a man—all supported the *Messenger* boss. Workers will—ask why could there not have been the same unanimity and determination from the leaders of the labour movement, defending working class interests, as was shown by the leaders of the capitalist class defending theirs?

Even the beleaguered leadership of the NGA could have been more forthright in their calls for solidarity, something that would have resulted in a greater response from other trade union members.

The future task that faces all trade union activists, therefore, is to build support within their own ranks for a leadership prepared to face up squarely to the tasks of the day. The Tories are determined to slash the established living standards and democratic rights of workers. That cannot go unchallenged.

For the moment the Tories seem to have avoided a major confrontation over the press industry. But the whole economic and political situation is still pregnant with sharp class struggles.

Thatcherite economic policy and the continued application of undemocratic laws against the trade unions will inevitably lead to big industrial conflicts in the future. If not now, then later. The longer it takes to come the more angry and bitter the explosion will be when it does.

Drawing together the lessons of the last two weeks—it is the duty of all trade union members to look to their own organisations, to discuss the anti-trade union laws, and the threat to living standards in their own shop stewards' committees, branches and district committees, and to prepare all the more seriously to fight back against Tory policy in the future.

Broad Left Organising Committee
National Delegate Conference
Sheffield, 24 March 1984

Delegates from workplaces, union branches, shop stewards' committees, print chapels, combine committees, district committees, trades councils, etc.
Credentials from:
George Williamson, 11 Sutton Place, London E9 6EH.

What TUC should have done

A DEFINITE plan of action should have been organised on the following lines:-

1) The TUC to call a 24-hour general strike, involving the whole of its membership, except those in emergency services.

2) An all-out strike in the printing industry. The NGA leadership itself should have called for solidarity action from within Fleet Street and from other print unions.

3) Mass picketing at the Shah plant in Warrington, involving thousands of workers nationally but particularly from the North West region, in a disciplined and well-organised show of strength, properly marshalled by rank and file shop stewards from within the movement.

4) All goods and services going and leaving the *Messenger* group of companies actively boycotted. The *Messenger* should have been deprived of its telephone, electricity, postal, gas, water and other service by the trade unions in those industries.

5) The trade unions should abide by the old motto—"a defeat for one is a defeat for all, a victory for one is a victory for all."

TU rights

(From page one)

represent the interests of their members, must be vigorously defended.

The TUC must work out a definite plan of campaign against the Tory laws. If the TUC General Council refuses to take any initiative, then the left wing industrial unions which have already expressed support for the NGA must themselves pick up the gauntlet.

The call must go out for special shop, office, factory, and work place meetings. Every single trade union branch and district committee must discuss the Tory laws and the implications for jobs and living standards.

The call must be made for a 24-hour general strike, with rallies and demonstrations to show the power of the trade unions, and to serve as a warning to Thatcher and company.

Illegal or not, a massive show of industrial force would stop the Tories in their tracks. The trade unions cannot acquiesce to their own legal suffocation.

Millions of workers are looking for a decisive lead to take up the struggle against the Tory government. The trade union leadership have the issue—and the duty—to provide such a lead.

Photo: Stefano Cagnoni, IFL

ON THE WARRINGTON PICKET LINE



113 people were arrested outside the *Stockport Messenger's* office on two nights last week.

Photo: Militant.

MILITANT SUPPORTER, FRED GENT, unemployed from Newcastle, described his arrest:

"We arrived around 12 o'clock, the atmosphere was really friendly and relaxed. About 12 of us linked arms, just practising, standing away from the cops. The police at the front of the line were laughing along with us.

"Then a group of heavies suddenly surged forward from the back of the police ranks. One of them said, 'We'll have him,' and they went for Steve Brown at the end of the line. When I saw them drag him I was startled by the change in the mood of the cops.

"I tried to drag Steve away but they quickly surrounded him and began working their way along the line. They were really brutal with Steve and some of the others, with the knees going in.

"Once I was immersed in a sea of black uniforms, I realised it was pointless struggling. A copper on each

arm dragged me backwards fast, about 500 yards to their hideout at the back of the factory.

"The arresting officer said, 'Think you can have a go at a copper, do you?', to my amazement. I said I'd done nothing of the sort. Then he came out with a load of abuse; he said, 'you're just a troublemaking s...'

"They frisked me up against the van, took my photograph with the arresting officer—another notch in his truncheon. They took my name and address and put me in a van, handcuffing me to the seat. There were five others in the van. After an hour or so, they handcuffed us all together, put us in a black maria and took us to the station. There they took our fingerprints and photographed us again.

"They stuck us in a cell at about 3 am. They said we'd be there about an hour (but we were still there at noon the next day).

"Later they opened the shutter on the cell door and



John Hunt, North-West representative on LPYS National Committee, after police attacks.

Photo: Viv Seal

called out asking who was the one living on their own (which I was). They told me that my flat had been burgled. I had to get in touch with the Northumbrian Police when I got back home, they then slammed down the

shutter and gave me no other information.

"My flat was burgled and my hi-fi was taken, although all my political material looked as though it had been gone through. What a coincidence."

Police comments

NOT ALL the police at Warrington backed their leaders. A policeman told one of our reporters of his distaste for the Special Riot Group: "By keeping charging at the crowd, they're just provoking it, they're making it worse."

He was even less complimentary about the police hierarchy. When asked if he was with the Merseyside police he replied, "No I'm not with

the rubbish they've got at the top of their tree. We got rid of our last Chief Constable. One man had enough evidence to indicate he was taking backhanders".

Another policeman after denouncing his leaders told our reporter: "I prefer the Labour party. I think their policies are better for the country. Especially the health service. We have got to defend that."

Video film available

An eleven-minute VHS video tape, called "Warrington...NGA On the Line" has been produced by Merseyside trade unionists.

Copies of the VHS tape are available from the Merseyside Trade Union, Community and Unemployed Resource Centre, Hardman Street, Liverpool (051-709

39955) for a £5.00 deposit (the material cost of the tape) which will be refunded when the tape is returned on the agreed date. The tape is available for showing at trade union, Labour Party and other solidarity meetings.

For more information contact: Iain Morton 051-709 9460.

Police tactics to blame for violence

THE MOOD was one of peaceful determination until columns of police suddenly moved in and pushed people away from the area in front of the factory. People were injured crashing into walls and vehicles as they were swept ruthlessly back.

By Frank Holt
(POEU, Manchester)

I saw one woman screaming with fear and pain as she was crushed between the police and a car bumper. She shouted to them to stop. But they kept pushing; they didn't seem to care.

I saw other lines of police move forward using knees and fists to push back the crowd. I saw men and women collapsing and gasping painfully for breath.

NGA van smashed

I saw and heard a man's leg break with a loud crack as a police snatch squad burst through to drag him out even though his leg was wedged in. I saw police kick a rain of blows upon men who had fallen to the ground. I saw fear and disbelief suddenly appear on the faces of men and women who had been manhandled without provocation.

Yet in spite of all this the demonstration remained amazingly calm. It required

tremendous restraint to avoid retaliating and aid men and women being battered and bruised by police. However demonstrators heeded the advice of NGA officers appealing for calm from the PA installed in the official van.

This system appealed to police to allow an ambulance through to tend an official who had collapsed with a heart attack—the request was ignored. Later I saw a stunned demonstrator report the the NGA van had been attacked by the police, the PA system wrecked and officials dragged off.

Riot Squad

Only then did a real mood of anger and frustration grip the demonstrators. This was further inflamed when a mob of special helmeted riot police charged, completely unprovoked, through the

Blood and bruises

JIM ROSIE, Scottish president of the NGA addressed a meeting of a hundred people, called by the Lothian LPYS. He described the events he witnessed.

"The picket line was frightening, and it has taught us all a lesson. Just after we arrived they closed all the motorway exits, so that no more coaches could get in. The lads were doing cross country runs to get to the picket line!

"The statements they made about injuries to the

police and pickets were just about the hospitalised ones. Every ten yards you walked there was somebody injured, with club marks on their head, blood running down their face, bruises, or kidneys damaged. It was nasty. It was an eye opener to us, as members of a quite small union. It disturbed an awful lot of people who didn't realise this sort of thing went on."

Later in the meeting, **JIM HARRISON**, Edinburgh branch secretary of the

picket and into demonstrators who had been standing harmlessly on a grass verge across the road from the factory.

Batons were wielded indiscriminately and without mercy. Men and women scattered in panic. Some were so afraid that they climbed over a fence onto a busy motorway in order to escape.

I saw a woman crying with fear and shock. It was only then that violence and disorder really flared up. But even then it was only a small minority of demonstrators who participated. Most were too numbed and bewildered to react.

I then saw a TV camera crew filing the violent response of the demonstrators but ignoring the police acts of violence that provoked the response. On TV the next day I saw the lies and distortions broadcast to the nation.

Learn from the Tories—Scargill

"IT'S TIME to stop talking and to start fighting", was a rallying call made by Arthur Scargill to 500 miners, rail and steel workers at a triple alliance meeting in Birmingham last week.

He evoked the memory of A.J. Cook the legendary miners' leader of the 1920s. The unions of the three industries would all respond "if any one of our unions finds themselves in conflict with the Tories."

To stormy applause he called on the TUC and the Labour Party "to show the same dedication and commitment to the NGA and our class as the

NGA, gave this graphic account. "I was awfully shocked, and I still am, at all the violence shown by the police. I have never been more frightened in my life.

"There was a guy there who was blind; he had a white stick. Somebody behind him lashed out and hit a policeman, but the policeman just whirled around, grabbed the first thing he saw in front of him, which was the white stick. He started laying about this blind guy with his truncheon. It was fantastic—holding this white stick in one hand and hitting the guy with a truncheon."

Tories show to their class, including the organisation of the most massive picket ever seen."

The meeting rose to its feet to greet Chris Newis of the NGA National Council. He was given another standing ovation from the platform as well as the floor when he finished.

His call for a 24-hour general strike to defend the NGA also had workers standing and applauding vigorously. "The NGA has nothing" he said. "We are outlaws now. Never mind getting off the fence. It's time for the TUC to get off its knees and fight."

Hunger strike to get release

THE ASTONISHING lengths to which police authorities are prepared to go against trade unionists emerges from the experiences of Bill Motterhead, a member of the North West regional committee of SOGAT '82.

Bill was on the picket line as an official steward. On Tuesday night he was arrested by police for obstruction. At Runcorn police station Bill was refused bail—despite the NGA's willingness to give unlimited sureties. Bill even offered to pledge not to return to Warrington, but this was also turned down.

Instead he was transferred to Risley Remand Centre, put in prison uniform, together with people charged with violent crimes. On Thursday Bill was told he would be remanded for three weeks. So as he had not eaten for two days, he decided to stage a hunger strike.

This transformed the situation. Suddenly a magistrates' hearing was arranged and Bill was let out on bail. At the magistrates court it was pointed out to the police that the maximum fine for obstruction is just £50.

FIGHTING FUND THIS WEEK: - £3009

KEEP IT ROLLING IN!

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Total 7 January
Eastern	2789		5150
East Midlands	2557		5050
Humberside	1432		2700
London East	3367		6350
London West	1852		3650
London South	3128		5650
Manchester & Lancs	3144		6350
Merseyside	3268		6500
Northern	2839		6400
Scotland East	2248		4200
Scotland West	2550		4900
Southern	4557		7600
South West	1353		3550
Wales East	1191		3450
Wales West	2166		4200
West Midlands	2923		5700
Yorkshire	3616		6600
Others	12007		12000
Total received	56989		100000

THE STOCKPORT *Messenger* dispute shows the importance of finance to the workers' movement. The bosses, through their courts, have attempted to hamstring the NGA by hitting at their funds.

The bosses see the importance of money in any battle. This also explains their wish to cut off funds to the Labour Party from the trade unions by changing the law on the political levy.

The Tories and union bashers like *Messenger* proprietor Shah get their money from the profits robbed from the workers. Shah reckons that his profit this year will be £600,000. He drives a BMW 735 and flies a Piper Seneca. His hobby is collecting antique golf clubs at up to £100 each.

The funds of trade unions have been built up over decades through the self-sacrifice of their members. The resources of the *Militant* too, have been developed only due to the support of ordinary Labour Party and trade union members, who see the need for a fighting

Marxist paper. We have to be able to respond quickly to events like the Warrington dispute but that entails spending a lot of money.

We need your support to ensure that we can continue to put across the ideas of Marxism inside the labour movement. This week we have had a tremendous response to our appeal for funds, with £3,009 being sent in.

Again we have had some magnificent donations and our thanks to: Jock Penman (EETPU, Rosyth) £59, Steve Stewart (EETPU, Rosyth, Branch Sec.) £15, and an appeal sheet in Edinburgh raised £15.

Kevin Sharpe (Boreham Wood), E Dinsdale (Camberley), Gerry Tyrell (Halewood) and Tony McKenna (East Lothian) each gave £10.

Tony Gill (Leeds ASTMS) £9, G Williams (GMBATU, Stockton) £8, G Fielding (NALGO, West London) £6, Bill Burns (AUEW/TASS, Hartlepool) £5.50, Alan Povah (Colchester FBU) £5, a Kurdish reader (Poplar) £5, Ken Donson (Newcastle) £5 and L Bharadwa (Selly

Oak) £5. E Clarke (Leicester) £1.50, R Yearle (Leicester) £1, Alan Tweddle (POEU, Newcastle) £1, R Simpson (Ashby) 80p, Peter Hayes (Hillingdon) 80p, T Lee (GMBATU) 60p, G Evans (TGWU) 30p, A Woodward (NUHKW) 30p and D Bell (Ashby) 20p.

We have also had some excellent workplace collections. Crewe Rolls Royce Strike meeting £7.40; from Hull, AUEW No 12 sent £3.65; and BR Gas workers at Laings construction site at Easington sent £2.83.

For those who witnessed the vicious attacks by the police on the strikers at Warrington last Tuesday, it is significant that this behaviour is not uniformly supported by all police. We were given £1 by a policeman in Wakefield which shows that even among the forces of the state our ideas can find an echo.

Keep the money rolling in. There is no respite for our work. Only with our support can we continue to show the direct route to socialism through the pages of the *Militant*.

By Kath White

Marxist daily vital

EVENTS ARE forcing the pace and demonstrating the crying need for a Marxist daily paper.

The dramatic developments around the printworkers' fight has seen *Militant* coming out twice a week as well as producing special broadsheets etc.

But this has stretched resources to the limit and brought home the vital importance of a full-scale newspaper headquarters building.

The Marxist Daily Building Fund has received a magnificent array of pledges and thousands of pounds have already come in to the account. But it is tens of thousands that have been promised and £150,000 that we need!! Only when that kind of figure is reached can a deal on premises be clinched.

A number of suitable buildings have been seen, but only your cash can turn

plans into a 'concrete' reality! Help us and yourself by sending your cash donation before Christmas.

Go to your section of the labour movement and ask them to give a hand. Point out what a daily Marxist paper would mean for them and for the whole of the working class in Britain.

Send cheques and POs to Marxist Daily Building Fund, c/o 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Militant ADS

MEETINGS

BRADFORD: Monday 12 December, 7.30pm. Room 1, Bradford Central Library. Speakers from labour movement including printworkers.

OTHER MEETINGS on the print dispute throughout the country. See your local *Militant* seller for details.

FOOTBALL programmes bought—Any quantity. Excellent way of raising money for fighting fund/Building Fund. Contact: M. Ingram, 206 Honeysuckle Rd, Southampton, Hampshire. Or ring (0703) 551420.

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

JIM AND Jayne McEwan are proud to announce the birth of their beautiful son Joseph, a new generation socialist.

"CONGRATULATIONS to Jim and Jayne McEwan on the birth of Joseph Francis, on 20 November. Your Comrade Granddad Stan Natrass."

BIKE FOR sale. Raleigh RFW 3, small wheeled model. Needs new tyres, hence £25 ONO. Buyer to collect. All proceeds to the Building Fund. Ring Iain, 01-689 4690.

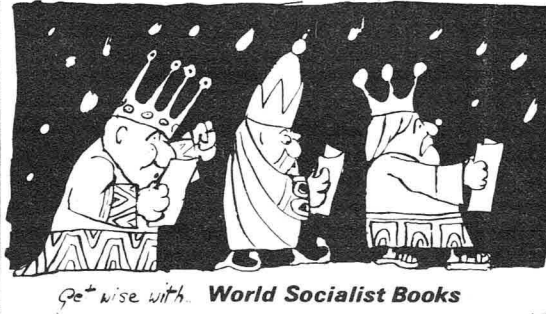
In memoriam
In memory of Sue Beekingham who died 2 December 1982—from *Militant* supporters in Bristol and the *Militant* Editorial Board, on behalf of all comrades who knew her.

CALLING ALL Marxist athletes. Have you past the finishing post for your pledge for the Building Fund? No? Then start training for the *Militant* Marathon! Join this fund raising event to be held in early spring. Contact Paul Henry, c/o 10 Kensington Road, Chorlton, Manchester.

WORLD SOCIALIST BOOKS VOUCHERS

—an ideal Christmas present

You send us the money (whatever amount you wish) and we send a Christmas Voucher card for that amount—n.b. redeemable only at World Socialist Books. Send cash, your name and address to World Socialist Books Voucher offer, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.



£1 entrance.
VAUXHALL *Militant*
XMAS PARTY
Jubilee Tavern, 74 York Road, SE1
(Opposite County Hall)
SAT. 17th DEC.
Starts 7.30pm
sounds by ★ KING TUBBY

IDEAL MARXMAS gift. Send your friends, workmates and relatives the best gift for Christmas—a copy of *Militant* each week. Use the form at the back of paper: special offer, five issues for only £1 (post free). Send *Militant*, the real antidote for a capitalist Christmas.

Militant sales shoot up

THE ACTIVITIES of *Militant* sellers throughout the country in response to the NGA dispute has been magnificent.

In five days not only did stocks of *Militant* run out, but supplies of our special broadsheet, of which tens of thousands were printed, were exhausted within two days. Hundreds of broadsheets and papers were sold at the Warrington picket line during the mass pickets.

From Newcastle (where 200 papers were sold in one day) to Swansea (where 170 were sold in a day) every effort was made to spread support for the strikers. In Fleet Street on Sunday evening over 500 papers and broadsheets were sold, mainly to printworkers.

All areas made efforts to visit all the major

printworkers. In all, over a thousand papers have been sold in Fleet Street.

factories—one of the best sales was at Drax B power station where 82 broadsheets were sold. The response from print workers has been good with the SOGAT '82 branch secretary in Solent taking 100 broadsheets for his members.

Paper sales are going well on Tyneside. During the week over 100 papers were sold in Newcastle City Centre, 50 at the Poly, and 60 plus at Swan House dole office. On a day's canvass of Newcastle East constituency, 49 were sold.

On a 'day of action' in the middle of the week, 86 papers were sold outside the shipyards and the dole office in South Shields, 19 were sold at the local college of Art and 19 outside the local newspaper offices.

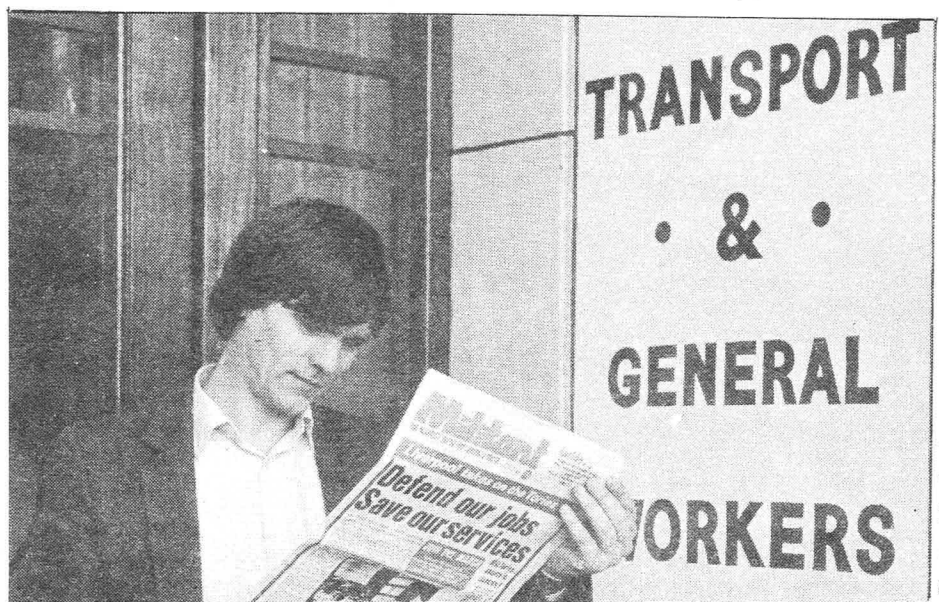
In East Wales 60 papers were sold every day on the streets, a total of 70 being sold outside the *Western Mail*.

In Kent sales have doubled with print workers congratulating sellers on their efforts. Llanelli sellers have taken to the streets with over 80 papers being sold in one evening. All pits in the country are being covered and two pits in South Yorkshire have taken bundles for sale inside.

At GEC Openshaw (Manchester) the regular sale trebled. We have had far too many sales to report but all sellers are straining every muscle to combat the lies of the Tory press and to secure victory for the NGA.

Fight the bosses' press with *Militant*—become a regular seller. Contact 'Militant Circulation' 1, Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN or phone 01-986-3828.

By Dave Farrar



Fred Johnson, shop steward at Beauty Care in Eccles where young workers are on strike. They support the paper that support them!

Photo: Viv Seal

CHRISTMAS CARDS NOW AVAILABLE

from 'Revolution Graphics'

Set of five different cards (plus envelopes) for only £1.20, post paid.

Bulk orders 10 sets or more are available 65p per set (incl p&tp)

All cheques/POs to be made payable to Revolution Graphics'.

Order from : Eddie MacParland, Revolution Graphics, 81 Troughton Road, London SE7.

Labours' ranks fight witch hunt

Expulsions condemned

A WAVE of anger is evidently sweeping through the Lancashire constituencies over the attempts by Blackburn Labour Party to expel eight of the best fighters for socialism in this region.

At a general committee meeting on 17 November, Chorley Labour Party decided by an overwhelming majority to send letters of protest condemning the (then) threatened expulsions to Jack Straw MP and the officers of Blackburn CLP.

At a well-attended meeting of over 40 delegates, the resolution was carried with only one vote against. In spite of an invitation from the chairman for speakers against the motion, not a single delegate was prepared to do so. The vote was particularly significant since every previous debate in this constituency party about witch-hunts of *Militant* supporters has resulted in motions being won or lost by a

mere two or three votes.

Condemning the threatened expulsions, county councillor Bill Challis said what a ridiculous situation it was to be trying to expel people from the Labour Party at a time when recruitment was so important. Shirley Fishman, a member of Chorley Women's Section, expressed particular support for Rossina Harris.

Not only has Rossina played a key role in winning a £35,000 grant for the setting up of a Well-Women's Clinic in Blackburn, but also she was recently invited to speak to Chorley Women's Section, was enthusiastically received by members and she gave much encouragement to the newly-formed Chorley Women's Section.

MPs protest

WHEN IT became clear that the executive of Blackburn CLP intended to expel eight *Militant* supporters (see back page) 20 Labour MPs, headed by Dave Nellist and Terry Fields, signed a letter of protest to the party.

Two more MPs, Peter Pyke and Stan Thorne, have since added their names to this list.

However, their protest received a sharp reply from the chairman and secretary of the Blackburn CLP. The secretary, Councillor Phil Taylor wrote, "I have no intention whatsoever in presenting your odious correspondence before the GMC", adding that everyone in the affair had been "fairly treated".

Chairman, County Councillor Eric Smith wrote, "I sincerely believe that only the delegates to the General Management Committee of any constituency party after consultations with their branches and being in receipt of all the relevant facts and information, are in a position to decide the business of their constituency within the constitutional rules of the Labour Party...I take strong objection to people from outside this constituency lecturing us on loyalty to the Party."

Nellist reply

Both letters had House of Commons postmarks!

Dave Nellist MP wrote a reply which included the following:

"The issue concerned...has been a national concern from the beginning. The

'report' of Michael Gregory...was circulated to national newspapers and television programmes in February this year. Reports of Gregory's allegations appeared in the newspapers like the *Daily Mail* and the *Times* at the same time that the National Executive Committee was considering the proposed expulsion of the five members of the *Militant* Editorial Board, and these reports were clearly intended to influence the NEC's decision.

Democratic rights

"I fully support the democratic rights of Constituency Labour Parties to decide their own affairs, and I am sure that your GMC delegates will make their own decisions. However, it must be of concern to Labour Party members generally when the officers of the CLP begin these disciplinary proceedings which are reminiscent of the witch-hunting methods used under the Gaitskell leadership, when many good socialists were expelled for their left wing views. I understand, moreover, that although Gregory's 'report' was circulated to GMC delegates in February and received national and local press publicity, the members facing disciplinary proceedings have not been given the opportunity to circulate a reply to all your GMC delegates."

By a *Militant* reporter

Liverpool NGA rally

A THOUSAND people crammed into a rousing Labour Party rally in Liverpool last week, in support of the NGA.

Appiause greeted deputy leader of the city council, Derek Hatton, who described how the council took a stand over the Group 4 security group who had been guarding Eddie Shah's factory at Warrington. He said they had got on to Group 4 and mentioned that

Group 4 had a £¼ million yearly contract with the city council, and told them how annoyed the council was that Group 4 men were used to breach the picket. One hour later Group 4 rung back and said that their men would never cross the picket line again.

MPs, trade unionists and an LPYS member also addressed the rally and there was over £800 raised for the NGA.



Keith Dickinson (centre) leaves the London Labour Party Conference back in March, after being ordered to leave. He was Hammersmith CLP's elected delegate to the conference. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

Narrow vote excludes Keith Dickinson

AFTER FEARS of disaffiliation from the national Labour Party, Hammersmith CLP decided by a narrow margin to bar Keith Dickinson from its future meetings as a delegate.

Although no official threat to the party was received from the national leadership at Hammersmith's November general

committee meeting, a resolution from a GMBATU branch and the presence of the party's regional organiser—for the first time in seven years—raised concern amongst the delegates.

Previously the GC had resisted barring Keith; after the party's National Executive decided to expel Keith from the party with

four other members of the *Militant* Editorial Board in February, and again after the conference decision in October.

However, at the November GC the GMBATU branch put forward a resolution (presented by a full-time official) which supported the Labour Party, "as the only effective political channel for

representing views of trade unionists" and stated, "recognising the disaffiliation of Hammersmith CLP would be against the interests of the union movement locally, this GC agrees forthwith to implement the...conference decision to uphold the expulsion..."

This resolution was 'backed' by a letter from the same branch, saying they would disaffiliate from Hammersmith CLP if Keith was not barred.

Delegates were also concerned over the appearance of regional LP organiser Steve Morgan at the meeting—it was the first time he had ever been seen at the GC: the last time a Labour Party official attended was seven years ago during a dispute when the former MP was being removed.

Mr Morgan's reason for being there, he said, was that a press cutting had anonymously been sent to head office and he had been instructed to attend: "I do as I am paid to do", he said.

However, given the anger at the meeting, Mr Morgan adopted a conciliatory tone and, while arguing that the party should abide by conference decisions, said that given the long standing membership of the *Militant* Editorial Board he would be "the first to welcome Keith Dickinson back into the party."

The GMBATU resolution was passed with 21 for, 19 against with one abstention.

The party secretary, Alan Breeze, said that in view of the vote and the LP official's statement he would immediately present Keith with a new membership application form. No protests were raised and the meeting moved on to other business; which included a resolution supporting the campaign to reinstate the *Militant* Editorial Board.

By Andy Herbert
(College Park and Old Oak branch LP)

Gillingham suspension opposed

THERE IS growing indignation within the labour movement over the suspension of long standing Labour Party member Bob Hurley from Gillingham CLP, for selling *Militant*.

Many organisations have written to Gillingham CLP voicing their protests. East Nottingham Constituency Labour Party passed a resolution saying, "Bob has been an active Labour Party member for 30 years

holding many positions within the labour movement. His suspension is part of the general witch-hunt by the right wing against *Militant* supporters at a time when the party should be uniting to fight the Tories."

Benchill ward of the suspended Wythenshawe CLP have condemned the suspension, saying "We totally oppose this form of Stalinist censorship..."

Telford Central Labour

Party branch have called on Gillingham to "reconsider" in "the name of party unity", as have Birmingham Ladywood LPYS who said, "The need for party unity and a common struggle against the Tories has never been so vital." They added, "Expulsions and witch-hunting...will only put back the day when a socialist Labour government is elected."

Packed rally condemns purge

DESPITE dreadful weather conditions, nearly 90 people packed into the Blackburn 'Anti-Witch-hunt rally' to show their solidarity with eight members of the local Labour Party who face expulsion.

Under the slogan 'Fight the Tories, not the socialists', the rally was opened by Peter Harris, one of the Blackburn *Militant* supporters facing expulsion.

Speaker after speaker paid tribute to the work of local *Militant* supporters. Secretary of Blackburn LPYS, Kay Wright, said they had not only built the party's youth and womens' sections, they had also been in the forefront of the battle

against the racists and fascists.

TGWU shop steward Harry Atwal was applauded when he said it was Gregory who was causing disunity in the party, by publishing his ridiculous report—he was the one who should be under question.

Other shop stewards and a councillor on the platform drew attention to the vital need for a healthy interchange of views within the party.

The two main speakers, Lynn Walsh (one of the *Militant* Five expelled in February) and deputy leader of Liverpool City Council, Derek Hatton, outlined the ideas that the ten supported.

They added that if the ideas are campaigned upon with conviction, they can raise enormous support from working people. The election result in Liverpool Broadgreen and the massive turnout of 20,000 for the Liverpool council demo were two cases in point.

Letters of support for the eight were read out from many activists who had leading positions within both the local and wider labour and trade union movement.

The collection raised over £60 which will go to help towards paying the printing costs of the eight's replies to Gregory's scurrilous allegations.



YOUNG WORKERS'

Stand up for your rights

The banner of the Carousel strikers, teenagers fighting for union recognition for nineteen weeks, reads, "1983 take home pay £37." This is just one example of sweat shop factories all over the country with young workforces and poverty wages. Greedy employers take advantage of high unemployment.

"If you don't like it then get back on the dole," they say. But young workers don't agree. They have said "We don't like it—but we're joining a union to fight!"

The young workers from Carousel, Beautycare and other strikes giving a real lead in fighting against poverty wages, will be amongst the 2,400 delegates and visitors who will gather in the Manchester Free Trade Hall this Saturday.

All those sections who are or have recently been in struggle will be represented. Monktonhall NUM, recently on strike for seven weeks over threatened pit closures, and Dodsworth NUM in Yorkshire are just two of the many NUM branches who will be present.

Shipyard workers, poised to take strike action, will be represented by young workers from all the big ship-building regions, Scotland, the North East and Merseyside.

The Post Office Engineering Union (POEU) and the NGA will both be represented. The 2,400 delegates and visitors representing youth in factories, mines, shipyards, offices and YTS schemes will be one of the biggest gatherings of young workers ever organised by the labour movement.

The *Stockport Messenger* dispute has brought to the surface all the underlying tensions between the classes in British society. Even if a 'settlement' is found to this particular dispute, sooner or later the pent up anger of the working class will erupt.

Millions of workers will be involved in struggle to defend union rights and living standards. Young workers will be at the front. It was young workers who led the struggles to build *Solidarity*, the free trade union movement in Poland. In Chile it is the young workers who are rebuilding the workers movement that will topple the barbarous Pinochet regime.

In Britain it will be young workers who will take up the frontline position in defending and building union rights.

LPYS support the printworkers

THE NGA dispute added extra significance to the Young Workers' Assembly and LPYS branches in the North East responded magnificently.

At a moment's notice, YS members produced 5,000 young shipyard workers bulletins and 5,000 general YS leaflets to appeal to young workers to support the print workers.

At Hawthorn Leslie shipyards in Hebburn, young shipyard workers were enthusiastically received by 300 apprentices and YTS trainees. In discussions with at least thirty young workers in their dinner breaks, YTS trainees condemned the schemes as a rip off while apprentices thought it unfair that they got paid more than the trainees for similar work.

Significantly apprentices recognise the dangers of YTS to their trade, their future and their rights. The basic ideas of trade unionism and common struggle were natural to the young workers. Nine immediately signed up to YTURC and agreed to attend the event.

Delegations to the assembly include young miners from Seaham and Westoe pit, currently in

dispute, Tyne shipyards, NUPE North Street Hospital branch sponsoring five delegates, Gateshead Local Authority NALGO branch two delegates and an ASTMS branch two YTS delegates.

In the last week before the event plans include a "blitz" on the FE colleges aimed at apprentices and YTS trainees and street meetings most days in the city centre.

There is certainly a changed mood especially amongst young workers that this is the time to struggle. In Sunderland leaflets are being taken from YS members' hands without having to push them. Four coachloads of shipyard workers, young miners, YTS trainees, unemployed, in fact young workers of every trade and occupation will be travelling down to Manchester from the Northern Region with a determination to work out a fighting Charter.

In the light of the Tory attack on union rights and NGA's fight we must ensure one call comes from organised young workers in Manchester. Action to defend the print unions! Young workers, start organising!

By John Hird
(LPYS National Committee)



Young workers fight for the protection of a trade union.

Photo: Militant

Victory for "Magnificent Seven"

THE STRIKE at Norman Packaging in Grimsby ended last week after a climb-down by management. Seven young strikers, all under 25, were nicknamed the "Magnificent Seven" for fighting for union recognition.

The bosses previously made it clear that the union was not welcome but they have now capitulated and decided to recognise to GMBATU. Negotiations are on the improve both pay and conditions.

The strikers were reluctant to return to work even after this concession. "We were

also seeking union rates of pay. If they don't come up with the goods we'll be out the gates" the shop steward said.

This strike was an inspiration to the local trade union movement. The strikers had never been involved before in trade union organisation. Yet their energy determination and enthusiasm inspired shop stewards from several local factories to assist with cash and on the picket line.

As one of the lads remarked "the struggle has only just begun. We've learned a lot from this dispute which will help us in our battle to strengthen trade union organisation back in the factory." All of them will be going to the Young Workers' Assembly in Manchester and are now keen to build the Young Socialists.

Wellglaze — all out for a union

IT WAS probably the first demonstration that Buntingford in Hertfordshire had ever seen. The fact that it was young workers fighting for union rights made it all the more significant.

Chants of, "What do we want?—Union rights!" were interspersed with "Maggie Out!" as the march wound round the High Street. The demonstration by workers at Wellglaze rallied to hear the TGWU official, a local Labour councillor, the president of Stevenage TUC, and the shop steward from Wellglaze.

The 15 lads who have been

out for four weeks feel sure they can win union recognition and with the backing of the wider movement they will. They have already learnt a lot. They now see the political importance of being part of the labour movement, even if some of them voted Tory or SDP at the election.

Now many will be coming to the Young Workers' Assembly as part of the next stage of the battle.

All donations should be sent to Geff Dilley, c/o 102 Gonville Crescent, Stevenage, Hertfordshire.

By Steve Glennon

No-training

THE YOUNG Workers Assembly will be discussing the Youth Training Scheme, (YTS), which is a central part of this Tory government's attacks on youth and workers in general.

Its implications are as dangerous for the trade unions as the Tories' anti union legislation. Like the 'Employment Acts', YTS is designed to undermine the trade union movement and to condition youth to accept being a cheap labour workforce.

YTS trainees get poverty wages, notorious health and safety conditions and blatant exploitation. "Training" often means just menial tasks or full scale production-line work with no real training.

For example, many YTS trainees in supermarkets are supposedly trained for 12 months as 'pricemarkers'. This consists of marking up the prices on tins and packets then stacking them on shelves. But even where YTS workers get good quality training it is training for the dole queue as there is no guarantee of a job at the end of the scheme.

Thousands of youth are boycotting this **Youth Training Swindle**. Only 250,000 out of a planned 460,000 YTS places have been filled. Young people often stay on at school or college without a grant rather than suffer the indignities of YTS.

Some sections of the labour movement argue that as YTS undermines existing wages and conditions, we should boycott it altogether. The YTURC believes this to be mistaken.

We wholeheartedly support unions like the miners

ASSEMBLY



Striking for a union at Beauty Care, Eccles near Manchester.

Photo: Viv Seal



Youth Turn to Socialism

The LPYS, the youth section of the labour movement, are in the forefront of the battle for union rights for young workers. But the struggle against low pay and unemployment won't succeed just through the actions of trade unions.

Together, they can't ignore us

Twenty YTS trainees marched out of Fielden Park FE college in Manchester some half way through a cookery class, to vent some of their anger and frustration at the lack of jobs and lack of training on the local MSC.

The YTURC had organised a lobby with Terry Fields MP. When instructors threatened to dock their pay £5 the answer was "you can stuff it!" Three lads off the Beauty Care picket also came along, they get just 60p an hour and are striking for the right to join a union.

As we marched up to the third floor, office workers were astounded. "Have you come to take over?" one asked laughingly. "Not yet", was the reply. Four delegates were allowed in as representatives.

While the rest were waiting Ian Campian, working for ASDA on YTS explained how joining a union had improved conditions at his workplace. The shop steward had negotiated proper training at work in the different departments, no compulsory overtime, and for vacancies to be filled by YTS trainees.

"I wish the union at Boots was like that" said Jackie Bradley. "Although at first my job was a 3 month probationary period, I was assured there'd be a job at the end. But just when my three months was up the firm decided to take on YTS so I was out on my backside. I don't agree with the schemes at all, they just stop proper jobs being created."

"It wouldn't be so bad if the boss made up your wages to the normal rate" said Elaine Fraser, a 17 year old YTS trainee, "I work in Altrincham. I leave home at 7.30 am and don't get home till 7.15 at night."

"I do six jobs to the other assistant's one. I clean, polish, sweep, make tea, I even do the manageress' daughter's shopping. A dress at the shop I work at costs £400. How could I ever afford that on £25 a week?"

"It's just rubbing your nose in it. I'm set a sales target like the others and I'm expected to meet it, even though I don't get commission. YTS is just a slave market. They use it at my place all the time."

"All the permanent staff are over 26. They're just not taking on young people permanently. You get messed around so much, for 3 months I've been trying to get £2 a week back in fares. I've been given the runaround, but I'll get it, I'm determined."

Back inside, the Assistant Director told the four delegates their grievances would be followed up. It turned out that even basic rights were not agreed to on some schemes. No log books to record hours worked and so on.

Elesha, one of the four, commented "what use to me is a certificate at the end of a scheme?"

I'll just be back on the dole. What boss will employ me on say £60 a week when he can get somebody else for nothing". She added "I know actions like this won't do anything for me. I'm seven months into my scheme. But it's important for the young kids coming up behind. Workers have always had to struggle for their rights."

When another trainee asked why there were no jobs at the end of the scheme the director said the MSC couldn't do anything about that. It depended on a "healthy economy". Terry explained that YTS was used by governments to mask unemployment figures. Most young people were scared to come forward but this sort of lobby encouraged them to put forward their ideas.

We all agreed we'd be there on 10 December. The local MSC couldn't ignore 30 of us and the Tories nationally won't be able to ignore two and a half thousand of us.

By Liz Holland

Our generation faces the cancer of youth unemployment. One in two teenagers and one in four under 25's are on the dole. In desperation some have turned to heroin.

The number of heroin addicts is likely to increase by 10,000 to over 40,000 in the next year. That is what capitalism has to offer youth today.

We live in a class divided society with the bosses and Tories on the one side and our class on the other. Youth have no future under the Tories and their rotten profit system.

An incredible \$600,000,000 million is spent, worldwide, on arms every year—the equivalent of \$1 million a minute. Imagine how these resources could be used in a rationally organised society.

In a socialist society with the economy nationalised under democratic workers control and management, unemployment and poverty could be wiped out overnight.

In this age of the microchip, on the basis of massive investment into industry though a democratic socialist planned economy, we could end the drudgery of the workplace, introducing just for a beginning, a 4 day week, 7 hour day. There would be a £100 a week minimum wage for all from trainee to pensioner.

Tom Mann one of the founding fathers of the labour movement in fighting for the eight hour day said "...the demands we as workmen make are for leisure not idleness. Leisure to think, to learn, to acquire knowledge, to enjoy, to develop; in short leisure to live."

This is the vision we hold for a socialist society in our lifetime as an alternative to the unemployment, poverty and misery of capitalism.

The meanest bosses

IN BIRMINGHAM, before Thatcher, employers were crying out for skilled labour and apprenticeships were numerous.

It is now a capitalist dead-end for youth seeking work. Fifty school leavers are chasing every vacancy in the city.

The Tories' solution to the problem as elsewhere has been to try and shovel youth onto first YOP and now the YTS schemes.

Many schemes have been taken up by private training agencies. In Birmingham and Solihull 40% of schemes fall into this category. YTS placements by these agencies have often been highly questionable in the quality of off-the-job training, health and safety matters and monitoring of schemes. Placements are often made at back street non-union sweatshops and with employers with very dubious motives.

As well as being a source of cheap labour YTS is further undermining the number of apprenticeships available in the Birmingham area. In recent years apprenticeships in construction and engineering have fallen from 1,369 to 292.

Despite the large number of schemes, virtually no employers


here have bumped up the £25 allowance to a more realistic level. Birmingham bosses may be mean, but employers in the Black Country town of Dudley must surely take the biscuit for 'entrepreneurial' utilisation of YTS.

Some bosses in the Dudley area have actually taken on trainees to dismantle the roofs of unused factory buildings so that they will be exempt from industrial rates. Another Dudley scheme has taken on trainees to firstly breed rabbits and then to club them to death so that meat can be produced for 'Meals on Wheels'.

The MSC, in a desperate attempt to create places, has often turned a blind eye to the motives of some prospective employers and agencies. Often any old scheme is accepted with no questions asked. For example a 'Massage Parlour' has taken on fifty trainees on a 'Beauticians Course'.

One Birmingham employer is known to be a casino owner. When Youth "Training" is put into the hands of such people it is clear that, under the Tories, the chips are down for working class youth.

By Les Kuriata
(LPYS NC, West Midlands)



Young workers assembly

10 Dec
Manchester Free Trade Hall

TO DEFEND UNION RIGHTS

Over 2,500 delegates and visitors are expected with speakers from TGWU, NUM, and other unions including Chris Newis, NGA National Council, personal capacity.

swindle

and printworkers who have used their power to keep YTS out of their respective industries. But in many industries YTS is now a fact. The 250,000 already on YTS constitute one of the most downtrodden sections of the working class—the trade unions have a clear duty to organise these young workers.

Every YTS trainee is supposed to have thirteen weeks off-the-job training, usually at an FE college. At Central Liverpool FE College meetings of YTS trainees have been organised with speakers from the trade unions, Labour Club and students union. These have led to many trainees joining a union and becoming active in the labour movement.

The Young Workers Assembly calls upon the leadership of the trade union movement nationally together with the leadership of the National Union of Students to co-ordinate a campaign to recruit every YTS trainee into a union whilst at FE college.

The unions must not only recruit youth trainees. It also has a responsibility to organise and educate them.

In Belfast, the Transport and General Workers Union organised a shop stewards committee covering 10 YTP (Youth Training Programme) workshops holding monthly meetings and regular union schools. This example must be taken up by the whole trade union movement.

If this organisation was extended to every YTS scheme in Britain, then the labour movement would be enormously strengthened and the Tories "Youth Training Swindle" would be seriously undermined.

WHO OWNS THE PRESS?

THE Sun

THE TIMES
SUNDAY TIMES

NEWS OF THE WORLD

Sun, News of the World, Times, Sunday Times

Owned by News International, part of Rupert Murdoch's world-wide empire. Murdoch owns over a hundred major newspapers throughout Britain, USA and Australia, as well as television and radio networks. He has just bought the *Chicago Sun-Times* for £60 million, and \$20 million's worth of shares in Warners, the US leisure industry. In Britain, News International's pre-tax profits for last year were £36.1 million, of which the *Sun* made £22 million. News International also owns a chain of weekly and daily regional papers in Worcestershire and Herefordshire.

SUNDAY EXPRESS

DAILY EXPRESS
THE VOICE OF BRITAIN

DAILY STAR

Daily Express, Sunday Express, Daily Star, Standard (London)

Formerly owned by the Trafalgar House group, which owns the Cunard shipping line and a string of hotels including the Ritz, its newspapers were recently 'floated off' (i.e. sold) and are now controlled by Fleet Holdings. Head of Fleet Holdings is Sir Victor Matthews, former managing director of Trafalgar House and is a former leading figure in the right wing Economic League. Pre-tax profits last year for Fleet Holdings which also has 20% of shares in TV-AM, were £9.5 million, of which the *Express* group contributed £2.9 million.

DAILY Mirror

Sunday Mirror

Sunday People

Daily Mirror, Sunday Mirror, Sunday People, Daily Record, Sunday Mail (Scotland), Sporting Life

The Mirror group of newspapers (MGN) is currently up for sale by its owners, Reed International. The Reed International empire owns the International Publishing Corporation (which produces over 200 magazines and comics, including such titles as *Woman, Woman's Own* and the *New Musical Express*),

Butterworth publications, Hamlyn Books and a chain of local papers. Last year's pre-tax profits for Reed were £32.9 million, of which the Mirror group made £8.1 million. MGN is up for sale for £100 million. Its new chairman is Clive Thornton of the Abbey National, whose annual salary is £65,000.

Daily Mail

The Mail
ON SUNDAY

Daily Mail, Mail on Sunday

Owned by the Associated Newspapers Group, Lord Rothermere's multinational. It also owns minority shares in the Express group's *Standard*, weekly and daily papers in Cheltenham, Derby, Exeter, Gloucester, Grimsby, Hull, Leicester, Plymouth, Swansea, Stoke and Torquay, and has now moved into restaurants, oil and transport.

FINANCIAL TIMES

Financial Times

Owned by the S Pearson and Son empire. Besides also owning the *Economist*, Penguin and Ladybird books, it also owns the Lazard brothers merchant bank, the Pearson Longman group, the US conglomerate Midhurst Corporation, Doulton ceramic industry, Longman Holdings and the Westminster Press group, which in turn owns 83 weekly provincial papers from Acton to York, ten evening papers, one regional daily paper and has shares in Metro Radio in Newcastle.

THE OBSERVER

The Observer

Recently taken over by the Lonrho group. Their other interests include gold and coal mining, agriculture and ranching in Africa; hotels and casinos; properties in the exclusive West End of London, and a string of leisure and engineering industries. Lonrho's pre-tax profits for 1981 and 1982 amounted to an incredible £186.7m.

The Daily Telegraph

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

Daily Telegraph, Sunday Telegraph

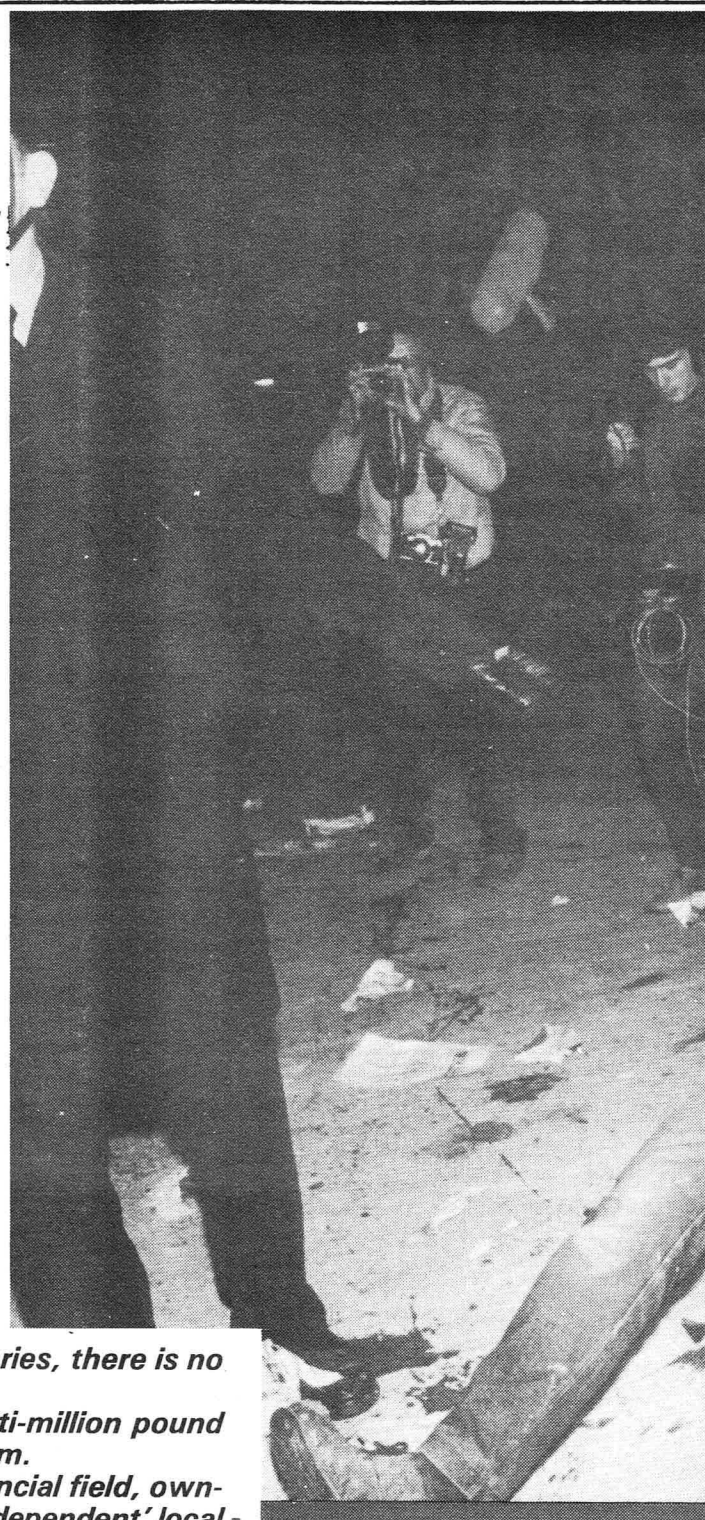
A rarity in Fleet Street, the *Telegraph* is an individual company. It is owned by the Hartwell family, with Lord Hartwell acting as editor-in-chief.

THE GUARDIAN

The Guardian

This is owned by the Scott Family Trust and therefore can afford its liberal stance. The trust also owns the *Manchester Evening News*.

CLASS, the PRESS the LAW



Despite the claims of the bosses and the Tories, there is no free press in Britain.

All the national dailies are owned by multi-million pound companies with vast resources behind them.

Their tentacles stretch even into the provincial field, owning whole chains of local papers. The few 'independent' local papers are controlled by hard nosed small businessmen of the Eddy Shah mould, who see 'news' not as a service to the community but a means to get-rich-quick.

THE BOSSES use their control over the media to influence society. All sections of the labour movement have felt the sting of the reactionary propaganda to pour out of Fleet Street or their local press. They also pump out a continuous stream of nauseating trivia to cloud over the real issues facing society.

The only permanent solution is nationalisation under workers' control—not of individual papers, but of press facilities as a whole, organised into one unit to serve all sections of society, and not just the capitalist class as at present.

Firstly, this would secure the jobs of workers in this industry. One of the main reasons the newspaper bosses are out to smash the print union is so they can push through new technology. Under the profit system this would mean massive redundancies for print workers, while the press barons hauled in even greater profits.

Under a planned socialist economy, with the nation's printing resources nationalised and under control of workers in that industry, new technology would be used to shorten the working week and bring in early retirement. Presently in Fleet Street, many printers without pensions are forced to continue working on a casual basis over the retirement age of 65.

With all the presses nationalised, using the revolutionary techniques of the micro chip now available for this industry, press facilities

could be opened up for use by the whole of society.

For example, in a planned economy much of the fruitless competition of present day capitalist society would not be needed, freeing the presses from the burden of needless advertising.

Imagine, the country's presses could be freed from having to print that seemingly endless stream of mindless bumph that pours through your letter box—99% of which ends up in the bin—and instead were handed over to local communities to be put to far more worthwhile causes.

Such a programme would lead to a massive expansion of the print industry and the creation of jobs, at the same time allowing the fullest development of new technology.

Democratic control

And with the presses under democratic control, it could be moved away from the present format under capitalism, of mixing news and 'comment' in the cause of propaganda, a trade the Tory press are expert at.

Certainly, it could end the "Tits and Bums Shock Horror" mentality of Fleet Street and instead direct the media towards the goal of raising the educational and cultural levels of society.

However, all this aside, the newspaper industry is not just any industry. Whoever controls the press, controls the means with which to influence society and has con-

trol over the 'freedom of speech'.

A genuine fear of many workers is that a nationalised press may not be a 'free' press, but merely present the line of the government in power, as witnessed under dictatorships. Of course the Tories and bosses play on this fear, pointing to the Stalinist regimes of Eastern Europe.

But a totalitarian press is a reflection of totalitarian society. *Militant* has explained the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracies in the East. Briefly, they resulted from the isolation of the Russian Revolution in the face of invasion by 19 imperialist powers, alongside the backwardness of the Russian society in 1917 with only a minuscule industrialised working class compared to a massive peasantry.

This, with the best revolutionary fighters being lost in the civil war, and the failure of the socialist revolutions in central Europe, created the conditions for the rise of Stalinism and the one-party state.

Militant has always argued that this would not be the case for advanced industrialised Britain today. The socialist transformation of society would be accompanied by workers' democracy, given the predominance of organised industrial workers in Britain and their long history of democratic traditions.

This would be the safeguard for a nationalised press, as it would on all institutions within a new

socialist society.

Democratic control of the press is not a utopian idea. History has given many examples of this. In the revolution in Portugal in 1974, (as in Spain in 1936) presses in some areas were taken over by the labour movement and run jointly by representatives of journalists, printers, local trade unionists and community groups and elected representatives of the local people i.e. councillors, MPs etc. The editor was under right of re-call by these committees.

This is not a blue-print for the running of the press but shows that the labour movement is quite capable of democratic control of the media.

Individual papers such as the *Sun*, *Express* etc, would not simply be nationalised and 'handed over to a left wing government'. Rather, the press facilities would be opened up to varying political opinions, but in proportion to the influence those ideas have within society e.g. gauged upon the votes a political party received in a general election. Obviously, except for fascists, the presses would be open to all shades of opinion within society including capitalists, but in proportion to their support.

This would be a far more democratic basis on which to rest the control of the media. It would ensure that the control of the press was kept out of the hands of individuals, whether the capitalist press barons of today or some would-be dictator, and were there instead to serve the wishes of the mass of the population.

By Bob Wade

When bosses sabotaged the law

Feature by
Jim Christie

SOME LABOUR movement leaders have argued that we must accept Thatcher's laws. Otherwise they won't follow Labour legislation when the Labour Party returns to office.

But the bosses don't see the law in this equitable, neutral light. For them it is an instrument of class rule. And if it does not suit their interests, they are quite prepared to break it.

You can get a glimpse of the ruling class' real attitude to the law by their behaviour when they saw the first post-war Labour government move to take over the steel industry. Employers had not been worried when other loss-making industries were taken into public ownership with generous compensation.

But when the profitable steel industry was threatened, they first claimed it was illegal, "This is not a Bill, it is a plot, a burglar's jemmy to crack the capitalist crib", screamed Winston Churchill.

Then they staged a 'political strike', obstruction in the House of Lords, and a wholesale policy of non-implementation. The Labour Minister complained that there was "concerted action by a number of people for the specific purpose of sabotaging Parliament." But

he did nothing about it.

By these means the employers forced the government to postpone the actual take-over until February 1951, the dying days of the Labour administration, and it was quickly de-nationalised by the incoming Tories.

But if they had failed some bosses had been prepared to consider more extreme measures. British businessmen, J Gibson Jarvie, of United Dominion Trust, told an audience in New York: "I believe the time will come if the socialists continue in power and continue their present line then the country will rise up against them. I believe in constitutional methods, but also I believe—and I make this statement quite deliberately that, when the government of the country is in the hands of reckless and incompetent meglomaniacs, there may come a time when the only possible course is to rebel if the country is to be saved." (*New York Times*, 15 October 1948).

In other words, behind their talk of legality, it is only the workers who must obey the law at all times. When and if it suits the bosses, they are quite prepared to drop all talk of legality, electoral mandates, and if necessary organise a revolt to preserve their class rule.



DEFEND THE CLOSED SHOP



Tony Mulhearn speaking at last week's Warrington picket.

The bosses hate the closed shop, and particularly the pre-entry closed shop. The former is where workers have to join in order to continue employment, the latter is where a workers has to be in the union before he takes up employment.

It deprives the employers of being as selective as they would like in filling vacancies, and it gives unions the power to undermine the blacklisting of trade union activists.

The closed shop has its roots in historic trade union struggles, the gains of which have been passed on to present generations of workers by the pioneers of the movement. It is firmly established in traditional craft industries like engineering and printing.

For the bosses, the closed shop represents an "intolerable encroachment" on their divine right to manage. The trade union power embodied in the closed shop

gives the workers' shop-floor representatives certain powers of checking and veto, vital elements of workers' control.

In fact, the shop stewards' organisation and shop-floor democracy represent in embryonic form the elements of a new and higher form of society, in which the working class would democratically own and run industry and the state in the interests of the big majority.

This is why the employers and their Tory spokesmen are so bitterly hostile to the closed shop. It is not just a matter of political prejudice: there is fundamental and irreconcilable conflict of class interests.

The closed shop means that the unions can veto the employers' rights to hire and fire.

The closed shop means that the employer cannot draft in potential scab labour in order to prepare for a dispute, nor employ workers who would be prepared to work for less than the established union or shop-floor rate.

It gives workers on the shop floor a feeling of solidarity.

Employers in Britain yearn to return to the "good old days" of the 1920's and '30's when they could select any number of workers from the unemployed and pay them starvation wages, using this as a threat to the rest of the workforce. If they did not get in line, sackings would then take place and their jobs taken by the wretched unemployed who would work for a pittance.

Each non-unionised worker in a factory is a Trojan horse for the employers who will use them to undermine the solidarity at the point of production.

Ten years ago Heath outlawed the closed shop. He quickly learned that what had been established as a result of decades of struggle cannot be removed by passing legislation in Parliament.

Like Heath before her, Thatcher will bite off more than she can chew. The Tories will learn that workers will not lightly give up a part of their organisation which is now an accepted part of life in many sections of industry. They will not hand back to the employers the absolute right to determine wages and working conditions.

The closed shop is now rooted in the consciousness of the shop-floor workers, and any attempt to outlaw that conquest will meet with the fierce resistance of the organised trade unions.

By Tony Mulhearn
(NGA, President Liverpool Labour Party)

[This is an edited version of an article which first appeared in *Militant*, 22 July, 1979.]

How to be a judge -

IF YOU want to be a judge it helps to be rich. There are proportionally even fewer (1.2%) judges from working class backgrounds than there were 150 years ago (2.8%).

Over 80% come from the upper class. A survey of High Court appointments, 1970-5, found that 68% went to public schools and 74% to Oxbridge.

The whole structure of the legal profession is geared in favour of the rich. Before you become a judge, you have to be a barrister. It is very difficult to survive your early years as a barrister

unless you have a private income. And your survival depends upon your contacts, so the old school-tie syndrome is much in evidence.

Even if you do have a radical youth, this is likely to evaporate as affluent middle-age sets in. And no 'dissenter' gets far.

The appointment of High Court Judges (salary over £30,000) is by the Lord Chancellor, and the Judges to sit on the Court of Appeal and Judicial Committee of the House of Lords are put there by the Prime Minister. Judges don't have to consciously search their brains to impose their bias. It oozes out of every social pore.

Their natural bias was perhaps best expressed by the very conservative Lord Justice Scrutton in 1922, and little has changed about the composition of the judiciary since his day:

"The habits you are trained in, the people with whom you mix, lead to your having a certain class of ideas . . . Labour says 'where are your impartial judges?' They all move in the same circle as the employers, and they are all educated and nursed in the same ideas as the employers. How can a labour man or trade unionist get impartial justice?"

It's very simple. Under capitalism, you can't.

Anti-union rulings

by
Jim Christie

SIXTY YEARS ago Judges were quite blatant in their political hatred against socialism. In 1925 Lord Atkinson ruled that equal wages for council workers was wrong as councils should not "be guided by eccentric principles of socialistic philanthropy or feminist ambition."

Nowadays judges may be slightly less all-embracing in their public declarations, but their political bias is much the same. Here are examples of some of their more recent rulings:

★ 1979 Lord Denning fines the NGA £80,000 in costs for appealing against a ruling preventing them from blacking the anti-union publishers, T Bailey Foreman. Lord Denning declares that such "interference with the freedom of the press is so contrary to the public interest that it has to be regarded as the employment of unlawful means".

★ 1980 Lord Denning tries to ban secondary picketing before Thatcher gets it on the statute book. He declares the steel unions action against private steel firms is wrong because it is "disastrous on British industry, grave danger to economy and puts whole nation and its welfare at risk". He is over-ruled, by the House of Lords, more for tactical reasons than for any

sympathy with the union. Lord Diplock declares in his judgement, trade unionist immunity was "intrinsicly repugnant".

★ 1981 Lord Denning declares illegal the Labour GLC decision to carry out its manifesto commitment to reduce fares. He explains his decision to overrule the electorate: "A manifesto issued by a political party in order to get votes has not got to be regarded as gospel. Many electors did not vote for the manifesto, they voted for the party. When a party was returned to power it should consider what it was best to do, what was practical what was fair." This time Lord Denning's ruling was confirmed by the House of Lords.

★ 1983 Lord Donaldson rules illegal the POEU blacking of the private telecoms network, Mercury.

Peru,

USA

PERU A shining path to nowhere

PERU SHARES many problems with the rest of crisis-torn South America. Economic decay is leading to mass poverty and hunger.

In Peru, the question of how to overcome these ills has been brought into sharp focus with the actions of the Maoist guerrilla group, *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path)

Over half the population is Amerindian, mainly in the rural and mountainous areas. The Indians and peasantry are extremely poor. In 1975, when real wages and living standards were far higher, only one in three Indian children reached adolescence and 70% contracted TB.

Rural poverty

Incomes are usually one tenth of that of the "European" population. Agricultural techniques, already grossly outdated now have to deal with drought. No rain fell in southern Peru between November 1982 and March 1983, the traditional wet season, and crop losses were about 70-80%.

On top of this disaster, the government has cut its spending on agriculture. Many poor farmers had to sell their livestock, the price of which had fallen by a quarter in a year to buy food and seeds for next year.

The government could expand the irrigation system to Eastern and Central regions where there is the most acute poverty. But the coastal region is dominated by the biggest, most powerful landowners and takes 90% of all irrigational investment.

Working class militancy

The working class have shown great capacity to struggle. No fewer than 900,000 people supported the call for a one day strike by the CGTP the largest union federation on 27 September, factories and banks closed and the police used tear gas and water cannon to disperse the crowds. There have been a number of other strikes this year of bank workers, railworkers doctors, nurses and even the civil guard. There were large scale protests earlier this year from miners.

The working class is obviously prepared to use its colossal strength to spearhead the fight to overturn their bankrupt rulers.

But the guerrilla activities of *Sendero Luminoso* have taken the headlines, not the actions of the urban workers. The Senderists have escalated their war against the hated government, particularly in the remote mountainous area of Ayacucho.

Their methods include the daily killing of policemen and individuals opposed to them, the bombing of a large factory in the capital Lima, the killing of town dignitaries and attacks on government offices. These tactics have gained some support from sections of the most downtrodden and isolated peasants.

The turn to guerrillaism has come about particularly because of the failure of the leaders of the unions and workers' parties who have the potential power, to provide a revolutionary alternative to the most deprived sections of Peruvian society.

Sendero Luminoso, which claims to be a revolutionary organisation has not advanced the cause of the workers or peasantry. It has, on the contrary; given the government and military a much sought after excuse

By a *Militant* reporter

to pass laws and take repressive action against the organised trade union movement and any organised peasant activity against the ruling class.

The assassination of local exploiters may have gained an echo, but their only lasting effect has been the government forming and strengthening local paramilitary groups in the rural areas. These murderous bands carry out atrocities which are blamed by the government on the Shining Path and "avenged". Amnesty International gave a horrifying report recently of arbitrary shootings of peasants in Ayacucho.

As always, Belaunde threw Amnesty's report in the wastepaper bin. He could not treat the actions of the mass organisations of the workers so lightly. But Belaunde is using the state of emergency he called "against the guerrillas" to physically harass and repress trade union activities.

On 5 June, various trade union leaders were arrested "on suspicion" while virtually all the delegates to the 8th congress of the union federation CGTP were arrested on suspicion of terrorism. Strikes have been brutally repressed, and peasant communities have been terrorised by state forces and their lands taken away arbitrarily, on very dubious "suspicion" of guerrilla activity.

These events show the futility of a guerrilla struggle like that of *Sendero Luminoso*. The main obstacle to change in Peru is the entrenched position of landlordism and capitalism and the only power which can overthrow them is the working class, backed up by the peasantry.

Guerrillaism—a blind alley

The struggle for socialism must consciously involve the masses themselves in transforming society. The Senderists are undoubtedly brave, but no small group of revolutionary heroes can take the place of the masses. The main battlefield must be in the mines, the factories and the peasant communities, building the strength of a united working class.

The Shining Path is a well worn road in Latin America.

Guerrilla ideas are a reaction to the total lack of lead from the tops of the organised working class parties who fail to use the workers' organisations to end capitalism.

Izquierda Unida has called for a "national agreement for defence of democracy" with other political parties, the trade unions and the church against terrorism! But the workers' organisations must be fighting against precisely the bourgeois parties who are committed to propping up the system. The best way to expose the futility of terrorism in Peru is by workers' action.

An independent class programme must be worked out, for the transformation of society to socialism, based on workers' organisations and peasants co-operatives. With such a lead, the Peruvian people would play a vital part in the revolutionary battles in Latin America.

LOCAL ELECTIONS in November brought defeat for the government in the capital Lima and elsewhere. In many areas, Belaunde's party *Action Popular* finished third behind *Izquierda Unida*, an organisation of socialist groups and the "middle of the road" APRA. Capitalism in Peru is totally unable to bring anything but poverty to the vast majority of the people.

This year according to the Latin American Weekly Report magazine the economy is expected to show "negative growth", i.e. a fall, of 9% while income per capita will most likely drop even more.

The International Monetary Fund advised the Peruvian government a few years back to turn to the "Chicago Boys", the monetarist economists. Ailing industry in consequence has sunk practically without trace. Exports fell heavily in the first quarter of 1983 leading to rising unemployment. Inflation is calculated at about 120% this year.

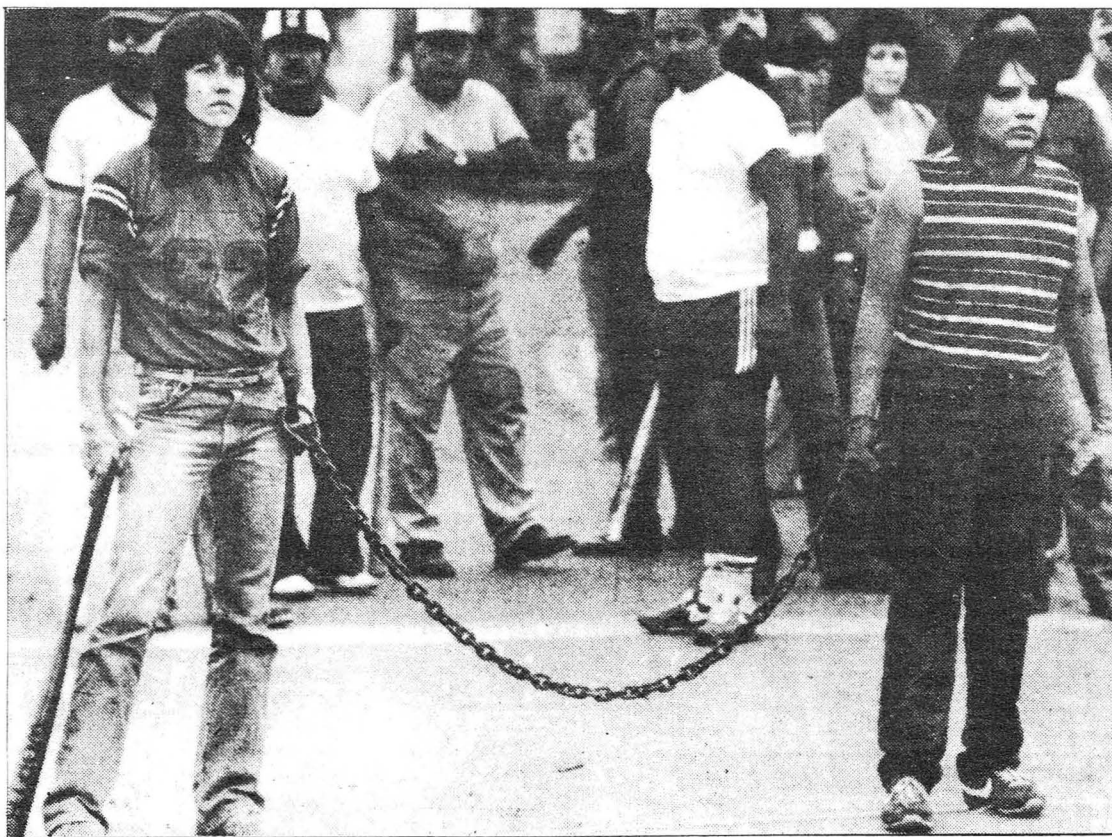
All are familiar tales in Latin America as

is Peru's difficulty in paying foreign debts. The IMF are due to visit Peru this month to "persuade" the government to cut its spending and pay it's \$1.4 billion debts.

The IMF are not pacifists but from a purely capitalist economic viewpoint they suggest that the Belaunde regime could spend less on arms. An abundance of helicopters, warships and jets have been bought from the USA, Russia and France. Arms take up 24% of the gross national product; with spending on police and paramilitary groups, this goes up to a third, a huge proportion for a country not at war.

The area is underdeveloped agriculturally and subject to frequent floods and drought; the fishing industry previously a mainstay of the economy has been hit by freak trade winds which warmed the oceans and drove away the vital anchovy. Education and health provision too have been put to the sword by the government who justify their priorities by citing previous wars with Ecuador and Chile's arms build up.

Copper miners fight scabs



Women pickets have been active in defence of striking workers. Future issues of *Militant* will deal with the wave of strikes in the USA.

OVER THREE thousand copper miners are now in their fifth month of struggle against Phelps-Dodge, the largest producer of copper in Arizona.

From the beginning, the strike has been absolutely solid, only 178 workers broke the strike out of the 3,200 workforce at the Morenci, Ajo and Douglas mines.

The company responded by sacking all the strikers and employing strikebreakers. This led to mass picketing and on 9 August over 1,000 pickets stopped the Morenci mine working for 10 days. But then the Arizona State Governor, Democrat Bruce Babbitt mobilised large forces of state police and National Guardsmen to ensure that the scabs were

able to work.

When this part of Arizona was hit by severe flooding at the beginning of October the state police and Phelps-Dodge made sure that the first people to get relief supplies were the scabs. The roads were also kept clear so that the scabs could get to work.

Over \$2 million has already been spent on extra state police and National Guardsmen who have been sent to protect the strikebreakers. The Arizona attorney general is now threatening to sue the unions to recoup this money!

Many of the strikers live in company towns and at the end of October Phelps-Dodge began serving eviction notices on strikers who live in company owned houses. Earlier, on 7 October, Dr. Jorge O'Leary was sacked from the Phelps-Dodge owned Morenci Hospital

because he supported the strike.

Days before this sacking Phelps-Dodge refused Dr. O'Leary's request to give free medical treatment for 10 days to flood victims.

This struggle has become a trial of strength between the unions and Phelps-Dodge. The company now maintains that there is no strike as the strikers have been sacked and replaced by strikebreakers. Clearly a defeat of this dispute would encourage other employers to try to break organised workforces.

The strikers, who are members of the Steelworkers, Machinists, Boilermakers, Electrical Workers and Transportation unions, require all the support that they can get.

Please send messages of support to: Morenci Miners Women's Auxiliary Box 981, Clifton, Arizona 85533, USA.

Holland rocked by strike wave

By Jo Hoffman
(FNV member of Civil
Servants union and PvdA)

ON 15 NOVEMBER firemen protesting at pay cuts, spread a carpet of foam 13 feet high around the Dutch Parliament. It was one more sign that the superficial air of tranquility in the Netherlands has finally broken. Public sector workers, from the railways to even the police, are in confrontation with the government.

Cuts of around £2.75 billion includes cuts in wages for public sector workers and unemployed of 3½%. The "automatic price compensation" (wages linked with inflation) would also be stopped for the third consecutive year.

In these three years public sector workers have suffered cuts of 10% in living standards. If the budget proposals of the government are carried through to 1986 at least another 10% is expected.

Government policy is determined by the catastrophic collapse in the economy. Dutch capitalism rode out the world crisis of 1974-76 on North Sea Gas. Their income from gas went up 500% in three years, but in 1981 the drop in oil prices affected gas prices too, while simultaneously there was a fall in demand.

Unemployment rose from about 250,000 in 1980 to 877,000 today, that is 17.6% of the working population,

the highest in Western Europe.

The economy is expected to grow by 0.5% next year, compared with an average 3% in other European countries. More than half Dutch industry is on the point of bankruptcy with another 200,000 jobs in danger. The government has adopted a vicious monetarist policy, slashing government spending by cutting services and driving down wages of those dependent on the state.

But public sector workers have declared with one voice "this far and no further." On the railways, the work-to-rule begun 15 weeks ago, causing chaos, in an attempt to pressurize the government to withdraw the 3½% cut before the last negotiations on 2 November.

Even the police have been involved. They have faced cuts in the last year, not only in wages, but in less overtime work, with losses of up

to £150 per month.

On 26 October the FNV (the Socialist-Catholic union Federation) made a last attempt to talk to the government. When Prime Minister, Ruud Lubbers entered the building, angry workers demonstrating outside shook their fists at him, shouting "Bread Thief". The police simply stood by, and later drove Wim Kok, FNV chairman in a police car with escort, sirens roaring, to the trade union rally near by.

Preparations for action

After the last round of negotiations ended in stalemate, preparations for action began immediately. Since 7 November tens of thousands of workers, have participated enthusiastically in the action. The workers say "If the government won't listen, let them feel".

Post Office drivers (at time of writing) are out on unlimited strike, nothing gets in or out of sorting offices. Electricity board workers and rubbish collectors are on strike in a number of towns, and public transport stops in most towns at least once a week. The railways work-to-rule is still on, with strikes for 24 hours or just for the morning rush hour. The groups involved are too numerous to mention.

For most workers it is the first strike movement they have been involved in, but they see clearly the power they have and they are prepared to stick it out as long as is necessary.

The government resorted to the courts. The police have been forbidden to take further action, though the government may consider making the police a "special case". The publishers' employers organisation have taken post office workers to

court which decided their actions were justified, but that the unions should re-open negotiations. A number of other actions now threaten.

The need now is to push home the advantage while the determination of the working class is at its height. A 24 hour general strike would be a clear warning to the government that any attempts to end the dispute by trying to split public and private sector employees would fail.

The workers' militancy forced the government to offer new talks on the cuts. But the government had nothing real to offer and the talks collapsed on 22 November.

But whatever the outcome of the strike wave, the last month has been a dividing line. The collapse of the North Sea bubble is bringing the class realities of life to the fore in the Netherlands.

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

NGA dispute— fundamental values challenged

Dear Comrades,

The fundamental values of the working class are being challenged by the courts and the government.

The trial at the moment is the NGA's struggle, but if the TUC and the rank and file of the labour movement fail to back the NGA, then the unions and the working class will cease to be a force to be reckoned with.

The law which has been introduced has no right to be part of the legislation of this country. So let's see some of the fighting spirit which is inherent in our class.

Yours fraternally
Iain MacFadyen
Erskine LPYS

Fight or lie down

Comrades,

I heard on the radio only recently that the "doves" among the Tories intended to doubt the cuts on our public services, while the "hawks"—in particular Nigel Lawson—wanted to see total privatisation in the NHS including the DHSS.

Labour MP Michael Meacher who briefly discussed this issue on Radio Manchester admitted that this would in effect turn the clock back to the days of the means test with catastrophic results.

These draconian initiatives are already bubbling in the pipeline now, with the Orwellian shadow of 1984 just around the corner. Enough is enough, unless the labour movement mounts a vigorous campaign in

defence of its councils and against the cuts, it is going to be too late.

It's fight or lie down. And this government kills defenceless lame ducks.

Fraternally yours
A Warner
Tameside

Ford pay vote

Dear Comrades,

The result of the pay ballot at Fords was thirteen plants voting in favour of the company's offer, and ten plants against. The Tories will no doubt see this as a victory for moderation, but in fact the result in terms of workers was fifteen thousand for the company offer, and twenty five thousand against.

But the Tories are only interested in democracy within the unions when the final result ends in their favour.

Yours fraternally
T Seddon
Sittingbourne CLP

Closed shops

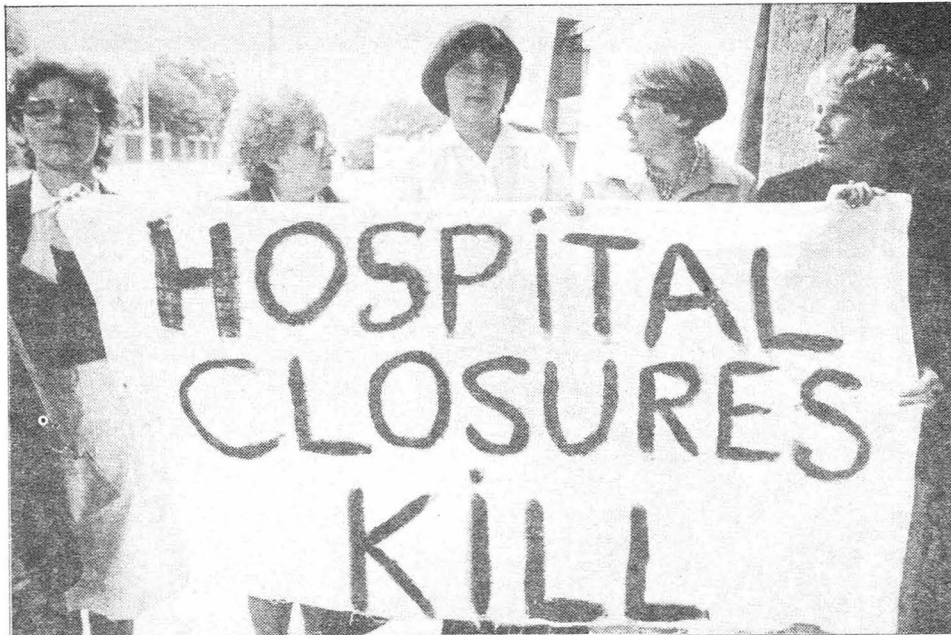
Dear Comrades,

I'd like to complain about closed shops in the printing industry.

During the national paper strike a sympathetic newsgazer sold *Militant*. On asking whether he wanted a regular order, he told me he'd like to, but had been warned by the local newspaper wholesaler, "sell *Militant* and you won't get any other papers, and you'll be out of business".

Will the Tories condemn this blatant closed shop which denies free speech?

Yours
B Lewis
Thanet North CLP



Merseyside health workers make their point.

Photo: Militant

Tory caught out

Dear Comrades,

On a BBC Wales radio programme just before this year's general election, I asked Mr Tom Hoosen, Tory MP for Brecon and Radnorshire, if the Tories' claim that the National Health Service was safe in their hands could be believed. Bearing in mind the lies they told prior to the 1979 general election about not raising prescription charges. In a fit of indignation Mr Hoosen replied that

Dizzy MP

Dear Comrades,

Recently I attended a local Fabian Society talk given by Austin Mitchell, MP for Grimsby.

The subject matter was "Labour: Phoenix or Albatross". Mr Mitchell showed a cynical attitude to the future of the Labour Party. He aired amongst others his pro-proportional representation views and even suggested a light-hearted pact with the Alliance for this end.

Mr Mitchell criticised what he named as sectarian factions within the Labour Party (with no explanation, of course). He expressed repeatedly that powers won by the rank and file at recent Labour Party conferences should be handed back to

Labour's accusation that the Tories would dismantle the NHS was itself a "disgraceful" and "most ridiculous" lie.

A matter of a few months later Dr AG Knight, Chairman of the University Hospital of Wales Consultants Committee has written to the Secretary of State of Wales protesting "on behalf of my colleagues at the level of proposed Health Service cuts in South Glamorgan".

Dr Knight points out that nursing levels are already

dangerously low even to the extent that one ward had been closed. The proposed cuts, he went on, would mean more wards having to close, operation numbers being reduced and increases in waiting lists for out-patient referrals, in patient admissions and operations.

Sounds remarkably like dismantling to me—Mr Hoosen, you lied again.

Yours fraternally
Chris Peace
Cardiff North
Labour Party

the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Although he seemed sincere in these elitist aspirations it became obvious that he has lost his socialist direction in the maze of Westminster although I am unqualified in saying this because I do not know if he ever had any true socialist direction in the first place. If he did, Mr Mitchell must be quite dizzy by now!

Yours fraternally
David Hussey
Bournemouth West LPYS

YTS hits apprenticeships

Dear Comrades,

Further proof that the government's "training" schemes are hitting jobs comes from recent figures

released by the Road Transport Industry Training Board. In 1983 only 100 apprenticeships were offered in road haulage and 1,000 in the road transport sector, which includes local garages.

This represents a 50% drop from 1982. In 1979/80 the figures were a vastly higher 714 and 10,000 respectively. Just by coincidence, the road transport bosses have taken on 7,000 YTS trainees this year compared with 2,480 under YOPS in 1982.

Since it costs about £20,000 to train an apprentice over four years, the reduction in apprenticeships this year will save the hard-pressed road transport bosses a cool £5½ million.

Yours
Iain Forbes
Croydon Co-op Party

Theatre closure

Dear Comrades,

One of the South's leading venues for live music and theatre is under threat of being turned into a bingo hall and 'social club' by its owners, the Rank organisation—despite the fact that there are already seven bingo venues in the area.

People travel from all over the South to come to see pop and rock concerts, films, live theatre shows, opera, ballet etc at the Southampton Gaumont.

Despite incredibly high admission prices, and full houses, Rank claim that they are losing money on the venue. There is a large protest campaign attempting to save the Gaumont in its current form. However, the only sure way of preserving entertainment and culture (at prices workers can afford) is by a Labour government including the profit-hungry entertainment groups such as Rank in its nationalisation plans.

Yours fraternally
Dave Thompson
Southampton LPYS

Police and army —bought and paid for

Sir,

The Tories (the ruling class) have seen to it that the police and army are well paid. This section of the working class has been deliberately bought and paid for, in order to keep the rest of the working class in their place—as serfs.

It has always seemed incredible to me how this 'armed to the hilt' section of our people should defend the laws made deliberately to favour the rich.

I hope the NGA's plight is being watched world wide. Can we expect the same treatment as our Polish brothers oppressed by a military government.

Yours
Z Rogers
Rotherham

The law against trade unions

By John Pickard

THE TORY press unanimously joined in the "law and order" cats chorus over the NGA/Messenger dispute, especially after the mass picketing. Tory spokesmen and the leader writers of Fleet Street jostled with each other to condemn the trade unions, comparing the pickets to "football hooligans", and demanding that they be brought in to line.

But their hysteria and vicious denunciations cannot hide the sickening hypocrisy of the Tory press and the bosses' representatives in the House of Commons.

The examples shown right, taken from two *Daily Express* editorials only a month apart, are by no means untypical of the doublespeak of the media.

There are supposed to be laws designed to ameliorate some of the worst conditions that workers face at work, but these are being flouted daily by the employers.

12,000 London Bosses break law

In London alone it is estimated that there are as many as 12,000 employers who pay below the statutory minimum wage set down by the Wages Councils. Up and down the country Health and Safety legislation is being ignored by the bosses, so that for the first time in years injuries and deaths in the workplace are on the increase. Yet there are no campaigns or outcries in the Tory media about these issues.

On the contrary, as the *Daily Express* editorial implies, where laws are broken to the benefit of employers, Fleet Street applauds.

Much of the legislation introduced by the 1974-79 Labour government, design-



Police methods against pickets reached a new stage in the state's attack on trade union rights.

ed to improve the living standards and conditions of workers, has been avoided, not only by employers ignoring the law, but by judges interpreting the law in a way unfavourable for workers. The 'letter' of the law is applied, but the spirit of the law is strangled and the many loopholes widened. Thus, despite the Equal Pay Act, there is still not equal pay for women workers.

Company law and tax laws favour only one part of the community—the rich. Company accounts can be managed so as to avoid paying tax. The rich can have their income channelled through a tax haven or a "trust" so as to give as little as possible to the Inland Revenue. How many of these tax fiddles are available to ordinary workers?

While ranting and raving against the trade union closed shop, there is of course, no outcry against the "closed shop" in the legal or other professions. Similarly the Tories decided not to offend their broker friends by in-

roducing legislation to stop the "restrictive practices" in the Stock Exchange and asked them instead to "regulate themselves".

In short, the whole judicial and legislative system is biased against working people. There is no need, therefore, for socialists to be shamefaced about the question of law and legality.

Workers cannot accept class laws

Workers cannot and must not accept class laws that are framed and introduced by the representatives of the capitalist class against their interests. Workers do not judge laws by abstract notions but by the class interests these laws serve.

The Tories' anti-union laws are on the statute book, not for the "national interest", but purely in order to weaken trade union resistance to cuts in living standards and conditions. They are class laws that workers cannot accept.

the price of bread and overthrow of the government and made links with radical political societies of artisans committed to universal suffrage.

Combination was specifically prohibited in certain trades. Also various actions trade unionists might take in compliance with union decisions could be held as punishable under the long-established Master and Servant laws. An example was striking "without completing commissioned piece work."

Combination Acts

The Combination Acts were repealed in 1824 and 1825. Trade unions were now protected from action for criminal conspiracy so long as they restricted themselves to determination of wages and hours. In particular the longer sentences were kept for specified offences such as violence, intimidation and obstruction.

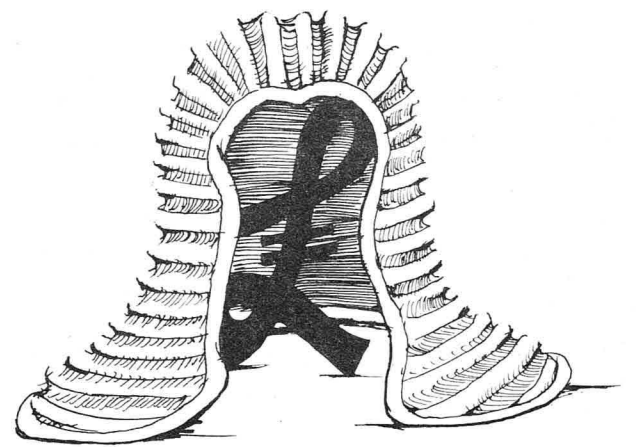
After the repeal trade unions grew rapidly. The first attempts to set up general unions included the

Injunctions galore!

THERE HAS been a sudden increase in the use of the anti-trade union laws introduced by the Thatcher government. Legal actions have been pursued by Mercury against the POEU, by the *Messenger* against the NUJ and then the NGA, by Robert Maxwell's BPCC against SOGAT 82 and the NUJ and by Shell against some of its TGWU employees.

If this trend continues, and if the TUC accepts it, then the trade unions will find it impossible to defend their members against the erosion of all their established conditions and rights.

As Tony Benn wrote in the *Guardian* (November 11), "many of the historic, hard-won and legitimate rights of trade unions to defend their members' interests would be swept away, leaving employers with the unchallenged power



One law for workers and another for the bosses:

PRESS

Daily Express editorial, on the Warrington pickets: "They are at war with parliamentary democracy. With the rule of law. With the British people." (December 1 1983).

Daily Express editorial, on allegations that job centres were breaking the law by offering jobs at wages below those set by Wages Councils: "If this is true it is excellent news." (October 31 1983).

FINES

Two contempt of court fines have cost the National Graphical Association 150,000 plus £25,000 costs.

The average fine for successful prosecutions under the Health and Safety Act is less than £200.

DONALDSON

Sir John Donaldson had become very conscious "that the legal system was not in practice even-handed as between employers and unions; current functions put the courts almost entirely in the business of restricting or penalising the latter, and not of remedying their grievances."

Minute of "informal" discussion between Sir John Donaldson and top civil servant Michael Quinlan, in 1982.

commodating in any 'negotiations' with the TUC. If the leaders of the trade unions accept the laws that are now being wielded, like a cudgel, against their rights today, it will only increase the Tories' resolve to bring in ever stronger laws to limit workers' rights.

The only language the Tories and the bosses understand is the language of industrial action. The trade unions still retain an enormous power in society today.

In a recent TV interview, Lord Denning, Master of the Rolls in 1972 during the time of the "Pentonville Five" strike, admitted that the anti-trade union laws of the time were virtually abandoned, not for 'legalistic' reasons, but because there was a "general strike situation".

What was true in 1972 could be the same today. Workers cannot accept the class laws imposed on them by the political agents of the employers: they must be opposed with all the collective energy the trade unions can muster.



Eddie Shah

Just as workers used their collective strength to establish basic rights, so the trade union movement must be prepared today to use its industrial might to defend its rights.

The Tories will not be ac-

Just in case you thought Judge John Donaldson and Shah were something new...

Our trade union rights are the product of over two centuries of workers' struggles. Every gain was won against the resistance of the employers. DAVID BRANDON, in a series of articles which will be carried over the next few weeks, charts the major milestones in over a hundred years of trade union legislation.

THE MODERN working class is a product of the industrial revolution of 1750-1850, which was a stormy period for British society.

The rising class of industrialists found themselves confronted with a growing class of propertyless workers. They used the law and all the other state forces to try and defeat this movement.

Protest by ordinary people against these changes was often violent. A well-known example is machine-breaking, often referred to as Luddism. As early as 1769 laws had been passed outlawing the destruction of machinery and farm buildings. In 1812

Luddism was made a capital offence. Eight workers were hung in York in 1813 for this 'crime.' In 1819 the army was used, with bloody results, against unarmed demonstrators at Peterloo.

Up to 1825 trade unions or 'combinations' were doubly illegal. The courts considered them criminal conspiracies "in restraint of trade" under common law, and they were declared illegal by the Combination Acts of 1799 and 1800.

The first trade unions existed outside the law. They often met secretly and held elaborate initiation ceremonies. They combined industrial with political aims—for the lowering of

National Association of Labour and the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union. The employers found other laws to use however.

In 1834 six Dorchester farm labourers (the Tolpuddle martyrs) were sentenced (under the Conspiracy laws) to transportation for 'conspiracy' to set up a union branch of farmworkers. A mass movement of support was successful in reversing the judgement after they had been sent to Australia.

From the mid-1840s to around 1875, Britain was the 'workshop of the world', the undisputed industrial and commercial leader of the world. During this period skilled, better-paid workers were the first to create permanent trade unions.

These unions strove for acceptance by the employers of the processes of collective bargaining. The leaders were anxious to promote an image of respectability and moderation in the eyes of the government, law courts and middle class opinion. In spite of their studied moderation, the early unions faced an up-

hill struggle.

One of their objectives was to secure an amendment of the Master and Servant laws. Legislation dating back to 1563 subjected the workers to severe penalties for such 'crimes' as breach of contract and leaving work unfinished. For such offences workers could be imprisoned on the verdict of a single Justice of the Peace, many of whom were employers themselves.

They could also be summarily arrested and held to await trial by order of a JP. While the employer could give evidence against a worker, no worker was permitted to give evidence against an employer or in self defence.

Criminal offence

Breach of contract by a "servant", ie. a worker, was a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment. But an employer who broke a contract with a worker could only be ordered to pay the amount

due or at most be sued for damages. This was naked class law based on the idea that labour was servile.

In the mid 1860s the employers launched an orchestrated attack on the trade union movement. Using as an excuse some isolated and untypical cases of violence in strikes in the Sheffield area they generated a massive anti-union hysteria.

They combined lock-outs of trade union members with propaganda aimed at persuading parliament and middle class opinion that the trade union movement needed to be suppressed since it was "a criminal conspiracy" against public interests.

The moderate trade union leaders hastily disassociated themselves from the so-called 'Sheffield outrages'. They hated strikes. They craved security—secure legal status and secure property. Their members had high contributions and benefits which made adequate protection of their funds from defaulting officials an absolute necessity.

A miners leader and 1926

NOVEMBER 22 marked the centenary of the birth of A.J. Cook. The occasion was remembered by miners throughout Britain and the world because of the enormously important role he played in the struggle to establish trade unionism amongst miners.

The battles Cook led and fought in the 1920s contain important lessons for trade unionists today and that is why we should carefully study his life and work.

The main influence on Cook's thinking was that of syndicalism. As a philosophy syndicalism is characterised by both strengths and weaknesses. It argues, and this is its fatal weakness, that the struggle for socialism is essentially an industrial struggle, which begins and ends on the shop floor. Marxism, on the other hand accepts the importance of industrial struggle, but also argues that on their own industrial struggles are insufficient to bring about socialism. Shop floor battles need to be generalised into political struggles linked to the perspective of achieving power for the working class.



A J Cook.

Syndicalism's strength in the early twentieth century lay in its progressive role in breaking down parochial attitudes amongst workers and in fighting to organise strong industrial unions, particularly among semi-skilled and unskilled workers.

This was true of one of the very early organisations in which Cook played a part. The South Wales Miners' Unofficial Reform Committee was formed out of the experiences of the 1912 miners' strike and the Cambrian lock out. Cook and Noah Ablett established themselves as dedicated fighters for the main demands of the committee, contained in *The Miners' Next Step*:

- ★ One union for all miners, with a strong and centralised leadership.
- ★ A minimum wage of 8/- a day
- ★ A seven-hour day.
- ★ Control of the industry to be taken out of the hands of the coal owners and run by the miners.

Cook's struggles in South Wales to win support for the demands of *The Miners' Next Step* were a mere for-taste of the titanic battles he was to lead in the 1920s. In this period the whip of the bosses, determined to make the workers pay for capitalism's crisis, and the inspiration of the Bolshevik Revolution, spurred the working class to colossal battles.

The first major battle came in 1921 when Lloyd George suddenly announced the ending of war-time control over the coal industry and the owners, proposing massive wage cuts, posted lock-out notices at every pit.

The determination of the ruling class to break the unions and in particular the

By Andy Price

(Cardiff Labour Party, personal capacity)

miners was observed by Julian Symons, not a writer noted for his revolutionary fervour; "A state of emergency was declared, reservists were called to the colours, machine guns were posted at pit heads and troops in battle order were sent to many working class areas." Symons—*The General Strike!* (our emphasis)

The working class were betrayed by their own leaders. Last minute hesitancy by miners' leader Hodges let the ultra-reactionary leader of the railwaymen, Jimmy Thomas, seize the opportunity he had been looking for off the strike of Triple Alliance unions. The entire working class, not just the miners, had been betrayed in a most abject manner. The miners, had been betrayed in a most abject manner. The miners would now have to fight on their own, and Friday 15 April, 1921 was to be bitterly remembered as Black Friday.

During the 1921 lock-out Cook achieved national status as a miners' leader. Correctly he tried to make the best of a very bad situation and worked tirelessly for the miners' cause. A parallel can be drawn here with the overwhelmingly successful struggle of the miners in 1972 when a little known Yorkshire organiser, Arthur Scargill, rose to national prominence.

Cook's high point

Given the betrayal of the leaders of what was subsequently referred to as the Cripple Alliance the defeat of the miners was inevitable. The betrayal wrought a terrible price not just on the miners who returned to work on the coal owners' terms of massive wage cuts, but within a year of the 1921 lock-out wage cuts had successfully been imposed on engineering workers, shipyard workers and cotton operatives. Drunk with success the coal owners and the government decided where ever possible to victimise militants. Cook was arrested, charged with unlawful assembly and sentenced to four months imprisonment.

One of the conclusions drawn by rank and file militants from the defeat of 1921 was the need to organise more effectively and to build a fighting leadership in the TUC. To this end Cook played an important role in the establishment of the National Minority Movement. In 1924 its founding conference was attended by 270 delegates representing a quarter of a million workers. At its peak the NMM had one million trade unionists affiliated to it, which represented only a



Miners' leaders meeting government in 1925. Cook in centre.

fraction of its true support and influence.

The newly formed Communist Party placed itself at the head of the Minority Movement and, because of this, the movement was never able to realise its true potential. Hindered by early bouts of ultra-leftism and fatally misled by Stalin during the general strike, the influence of the CP was another factor in the defeat of 1926.

In 1924 the solid support enjoyed by the Minority Movement among miners was reflected in Cook's election to the General Secretary's position of the MFGB.

Shortly after his election Cook led the miners into what appeared to be a great victory. The appalling mismanagement of the industry by the coal owners had delivered it to almost complete financial ruin. The coal owners, determined to shift the responsibility for the crisis onto the shoulders of the miners, served notice that the miners would have to accept less money for working longer hours. In June 1925 the owners served one month's notice on the miners to terminate the existing wages agreement, cut wages and enforce longer hours.

During this crisis Cook adamantly refused to even to speak to the coal owners until the notices were withdrawn. When the government, obviously stalling, set up a court of inquiry into the coal industry, which Cook correctly refused to appear before, so overwhelming was the case in support of the miners that the court of inquiry eventually ruled in their favour! At rank and file level the

miners enjoyed massive support from fellow trade unionists and this was sufficient to force the TUC General Council, frightened of losing its authority, to declare in favour of the miners and threaten widespread sympathy action in their support. In the face of such solid opposition Tory Prime Minister Baldwin capitulated and on 31 July announced a subsidy of £23 million to the coal industry to prevent wage cuts.

The miners had won a great victory largely as a result of Cook's determined leadership. 31 July went into the annals of labour history as Red Friday.

Battle lines

The tragedy of Red Friday was that many trade union leaders, even some on the left, believed that Red Friday was the end and not the beginning of the struggle. Baldwin's subsidy was to last nine months, until 1 May 1926. The ruling class was to use this nine months to prepare thoroughly for a major confrontation with the trade unions.

"Whatever it may cost in blood and treasure we shall find that the trade unions will be smashed from top to bottom"—declared Lord Londonderry speaking not just on behalf of his fellow coal owners, but on behalf of the whole ruling class.

"I mean all workers in this country have got to take reductions", said Baldwin.

The ruling class's meticulous preparations for civil war were spearheaded by Winston Churchill who never missed an opportunity to express his almost pathological hatred of trade unionism and socialism. The

TUC General Council did nothing.

When the general strike began the right wing leadership of the TUC were absolutely terrified of the force that had been unleashed. Again Thomas personified the sheer rottenness of their position.

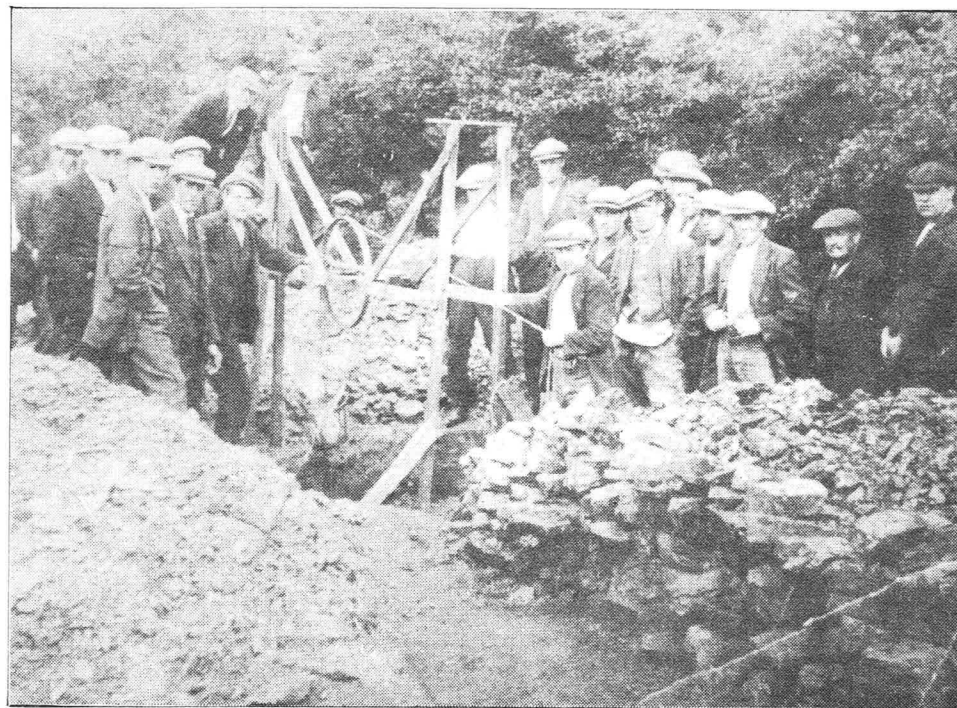
"What I dreaded more than anything else was... if by chance it should have got out of the hands of those who could be able to exercise some control, every sane man then knows what would have happened."

Cook declared a radically different, but nevertheless dangerously misguided, point of view. "A strike of miners would mean the end of capitalism" he declared on the eve of the strike.

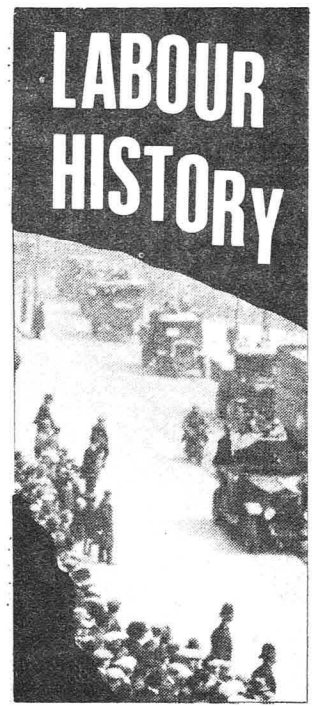
Throughout the nine heroic days of May 1926, whilst the right wing consciously sold out their members, Cook fought might and main for a miners' victory. But in this situation honesty and dedication were not enough. Cook did not, and as a syndicalist could not, understand the situation. The only way the general strike could have led to the end of capitalism was to link the struggle to the perspective of workers' power. This meant a leadership prepared to broaden the struggle to link the Councils of Action to the perspective of a democratic workers' state.

Unfortunately the Communist Party was totally misled by Stalin. They persuaded the Minority Movement to place their faith in 'the left' members of the TUC General Council. Two of these leaders, Purcell and Hicks, were to play a key role in the betrayal of the strike whilst the CP tail-ended the movement with the totally abstract slogan "All power to the TUC General Council!"

During the 1926 general strike the question of power was posed in the starkest possible terms in British society. Syndicalism was put to the test and failed. The main responsibility for the defeat of 1926 will always lie with the treacherous policy of the right wing leaders of the TUC General Council. Compared with Cook they will forever stand as pygmies in the gallery of working class leaders in British history. Having said this it would be foolish to deny that Cook's policies bore no



Unofficial coal-mining by workers in Clay Cross during 1926.



responsibility for the defeat of the general strike.

The position of Marxism and the brilliant predictions made by Trotsky in 1925 in *Where is Britain Going?* were borne out entirely by the events of May 1926. No situation could be of greater class polarisation than that of a general strike.

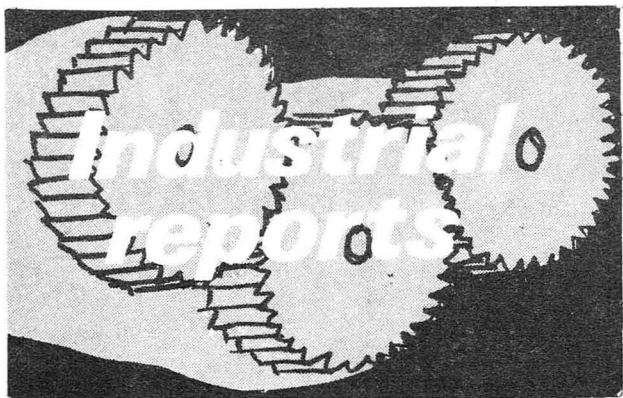
Despite Cook's total commitment to the miners' cause his confused position left him with no credible alternative to that of the right wing. In fact Cook withdrew from sale his pamphlet *Nine Days* in which he criticised the right wing's role in the strike. He refused to support the demand for the reconvening of the conference of trade union executives until after the miners' lock out. Scandalously in the first TUC Congress after the strike Cook added his enormous authority to the demand of the right wing that the strike should not even be discussed!

The defeat of the general strike, the long lock-out of the miners, and their return to work on the coal owners' terms shattered Cook. The general strike constituted the greatest ever defeat of the British working class. The unbelievable indignities the Tories inflicted on the miners, and the sheer desperation of the situation were summed up in a letter which Cook wrote in April 1929 to Arthur Horner:

"Practically every day young men, stranded, call for food, clothing and shelter at my office. Every day the post brings terrible epistles of agony and despair. I have helped all I can, begged all I can till I have been almost demented with despair."

Shortly after this Cook died of cancer. Every ounce of his energy had been devoted to the cause of socialism, and every penny he owned was given to the Miners' Federation. Hodges, his predecessor, was appointed by the Tories a member of the National Electricity Board. He later became a director of several colliery and iron and steel companies and died in 1947 leaving an estate of over £100,000. He represents the traditions of the right wing. Cook represents a tradition the right wing cannot begin to understand.

After 1926 the trade unions were broken. Company unionism spread like a cancer throughout the coalfields. Today the unions are infinitely stronger and in the coming battles we can learn from Cook's weaknesses, but more importantly draw inspiration from his strengths.



Land Rover jobs fight

AFTER THE initial shock of British Leyland's rationalisation/centralisation plan for Land Rover production, entailing thirteen site closures and the loss of 1,560 jobs including all 600 jobs here in Cardiff, some stock has been taken of the union's position.

It is apparent that the company are withholding details in an attempt to head off opposition that may develop once the plan and its effects become widely known.

At present the main fears are: increased outsourcing of work, accelerating job losses, and further moves towards privatisation. The union is seeking a national level meeting with Land

Rover and have rejected the present plan.

The message to Land Rover workers and the public must be—beware, the asset strippers of British industry are at work, resistance is essential. Land Rover is 80% export and a vital main-stay to jobs with a production content of 90% UK produced components.

Please send all messages of support and financial donations to me at 24, Lawrenny Ave, Leckwith, Cardiff.

By Kevin Brady
(chairman of shop stewards committee, Land Rover Cardiff)

Drax B pay lobby

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS on Drax B power station held a one-day stoppage on 7 December in support of this year's pay claim as information about the first round of negotiations came in.

The union claim is for: substantial increase in the basic rate and other payments, an increase in redundancy pay, a third meal break for shift workers (who are probably the only section in the country not being paid one) and a 35-hour week.

The employers offered a

meagre 3.8% increase in the flat rate, 10p a week increase in redundancy pay and no offer at all on the paid meal break or a reduction in working hours. AUEW official, John Wheatley, indicates in a circular that 5% on the rate and 10p a week increase in redundancy pay would be acceptable to the unions.

It is this statement by the officials that has angered the men on the site. Recent articles in the press state that since the national agreement was implemented Drax is six months ahead of schedule and £50 million within budget.

Workers on Drax have shown that they will not accept further erosion of their wages.

By Derek Platt
(GMBATU Steward, Drax B)

Bournemouth buses victory

FOLLOWING TWO successful one-day lightning strikes, National Express coach drivers based at Shamrock and Rambler depot in Bournemouth scored a victory when management withdrew their threat to impose a 10-hour working day.

Bert Worsfold, chairman NUR No. 3 branch,

Bournemouth, said that despite this victory, management were still seeking to impose economies and that after the Christmas season is over, management may well try to impose a 10-hour working day or similar again. Even so, the mood of the drivers is such that they will fight all the way to defend their present conditions.

By Andrew Dinkener
(Bournemouth East CLP, personal capacity)

Easington Colliery: Bottom 'ower best

A FOUR day strike took place last week at Easington Colliery in County Durham, one of the largest pits in the Durham coalfield.

The dispute began when the workforce effectively decided to run the national overtime ban in their way and not the way recommended by management.

The mood of the strike was

best summed up by one of the pickets who said "there's top 'ower strikes and bottom 'ower strikes". Top 'ower strikes are when the union bosses tell you what to do, bottom 'ower strikes is when the men decided to do something themselves because they're sick. "Bottom 'ower strikes are always best."

take on a different job.

The strike is solid. It has forced the complete shut-down of the workplace which after a slack period made large profits last year giving the managing director a 14% pay rise to over £20,000 a year.

"We only want a decent wage to take home to our families" said one picket. "But we'll stay out until we get it".

By Kevin Slattery
(Nottingham North)

Dowty mining supplies

OVER SEVENTY workers are on strike at Dowty Ltd, a north Nottinghamshire mining equipment company. The workers had unanimously rejected the firm's 3% pay offer and finally walked out after the sacking of two workers who had refused to

Save our services!

Class campaign to defend ILEA

ON THURSDAY 8 December members of the Inner London division of the NUT, together with parents and trade unionists, will be protesting about the threat to London's education service, the ILEA.

In its 'Streamlining the Inner Cities' Bill, before parliament in January, the government has declared its intention to replace the Inner London Education Authority with a "joint board". Education secretary Sir Keith Joseph intends to create a more politically pliant authority which will implement the savage cuts he intends to bring in.

Of immediate concern is the rate capping bill, before parliament in December, through which the government would enforce its targets. The government claim the ILEA is 'over spending' by some £120 million. Such cuts would have a devastating impact on staffing (with a loss of at least 2,500 teaching and 1,500 non-

teaching staff), maintenance of buildings and adult education provision.

While we must reject Tory plans to interfere in the affairs of ILEA, it would be wrong simply to campaign to defend local authorities' rights to increase rates. To raise the question in such terms is to give a propaganda weapon to the Tories in their argument that Labour authorities are profligate with rate payers' money.

ILEA should follow the lead of Liverpool City Council, not fight on the terms laid out by the Tories. We must demand: no cuts in jobs or services; no to central government interference: a return of the £150 million in rate support grants stolen from the people of inner London; not a penny on the rates; defy the Tory government.

Such demands will not be meekly accepted by the government. It will take a militant, determined fight uniting

ILEA and ILEA unions. A joint campaign to save the GLC and ILEA, mobilising support from London's working class, must be launched. It must be based on the strength of the trade union movement in inner London.

Such a campaign cannot be won by "cultivating friends in the House of Lords" as has been suggested by Francis Morrell, leader of ILEA and Bob Richardson from the NUT. The campaign must be linked to other struggles, particularly the struggle taking place in Liverpool.

Whatever happens protests are going ahead against the Tories' political and financial attacks on ILEA. This includes the possibility of all-day strike action on January 24 in conjunction with a day of action.

By Bob Sulatycki
(West London Association NUT, personal capacity)

Labour councils must work with unions

THE NALGO national delegate conference of residential workers (17 November) voted to ballot on escalating their current action by only working a 9 am to 5 pm day.

This recommendation was made by the national local government committee along with a call for a one day strike on 7 December to lobby the negotiations with the national employers.

Other resolutions were carried including one from Knowsley branch calling 'on the local government leadership to campaign amongst those branches whose employers oppose the opening of national negotiations to put pressure on the Tory employers.

The Knowsley resolution also pointed out that the Labour group on the National Joint Council (NJC) support the opening of negotiations. It calls

on NALGO to bring together those councils to give public support to the union.

It is vital that Labour Party members raise this issue at their district Labour Parties to ensure that this initiative receives maximum support from Labour Councils.

It is essential that the workings of the National Joint Council are not allowed to create the illusion that Labour councils share a joint interest with Tories against local authority trade unionists.

NALGO members in local government should have been campaigning for a massive turnout of residential workers on December 7, with branches encouraging non residential workers to strike in support of their brothers and sisters and to attend the lobby.

The campaign must be launched to ensure a yes vote in the

forthcoming ballot. The role of the national leadership must be critically highlighted. So far they have not campaigned to ensure that the existing action is universally supported. They have gone into discussion with ACAS on the dispute without any reference to the rank and file.

In fact the recommendations on the ballot had not been circulated to branches in advance of the national delegate meeting, giving the impression of a hastily drawn up proposal rather than a serious tactical decision.

This poor leadership may result in the loss of the ballot so it is important that residential workers continue to press for this strategy, particularly in Tory controlled authorities.

By Roger Bannister

By Christine Huxtable
(Harlow NALGO)

Land Registry set for victory

Over 500 members of CPSA and SCPS in HM Land Registry have been on strike since November 11. The action has been taken in opposition to management's plans to introduce major changes in working methods designed to cut 200 posts and downgrade work from executive to clerical grades.

An unprecedented display of trade union solidarity in the Land Registry, the action has forced a new offer from management which amends the original "Wider Issues" proposals so drastically as to make them virtually unrecognisable.

After a token attempt at consulting the unions, management tried to impose the changes in order to feed the Treasury's insatiable appetite for cuts. Neither Land Registry management nor the Treasury banked on such stern resistance from union members.

Management's latest offer was revealed in talks held last week. The CPSA Section Executive Committee and SCPS Co-ordinating Committee meeting jointly on Monday 5



Lobby of Land Registry negotiations.

December decided to recommend acceptance when the offer is presented to membership meetings at the 13 District Registries around the country.

The main characteristic of this dispute has been the excellent way in which the two unions CPSA and SCPS, have worked in unison. A lesson here for all CPSA and SCPS members!

The strike action has been financed from CPSA and SCPS National Fighting

Funds and a weekly levy of £2.50 per head from union members in the Department.

The success of the levy collection linked to the determination of the strikers has clearly influenced management's decision to drastically revise their plans. But whilst members are being consulted the action must remain firm. CPSA and SCPS shall be concentrating their attention to ensure that the levy collection continues to work smoothly.

Further messages of support or financial donations should be sent to John Macreadie/Chris Baugh, CPSA HQ, Park House, 64-66 Northside, Wandsworth Common, London SW1 2SH.

By Chris Baugh
(Chairman Land Registry Trade Union Side Personal capacity)

National shipbuilding strike

Photo: Dennis Doran



Shipyard workers lobby union negotiations at Tynemouth, 28 October this year.

TALKS BETWEEN British Shipbuilders and union negotiators have broken down and a national strike of shipyard workers is on the cards in the new year.

The GMBATU executive has decided to hold a strike ballot of its 30,000 members (about half the entire workforce) despite the fact that the Shipbuilding Negotiating Committee (SNC) already has a mandate for strike action. The result will be known on 16 December.

April 1982 was the last time shipyard workers had a pay rise. In April 1983 British Shipbuilders offered a nil pay increase. After "negotiations" they offered a £3.50 per week "support payment" which would not affect the hourly rate, overtime or holiday pay, etc, on condition that the workers accepted their 'national survival framework'. This included such "flexibility" clauses as to effectively tear up 100 years of custom and practice.

The offer has since been increased to £7 per week, but only over six months, by the end of which time it would be withdrawn if productivity was not up to requirements and the flexibility terms not implemented. A rash of strikes and overtime bans have taken place as a direct result of dissatisfaction and frustration at the British Shipbuilders' offers.

Ed Waugh interviewed two shipyard workers from the Tyne.

THE £7 increase is not a pay rise, it's not on the basic rate, but is based on demarcation.

It is a bribe, a profit on the selling of jobs, with the "conditions for acceptance to reflect conditions already put forward by management" according to *Shipbuilding News*, ie, the demands we had overwhelming rejected last month.

It is even likely that management will add more demands. The main one is the integration of trades. This will mean no longer having platers, or

At Vosper Thornycroft our mass meeting unanimously rejected the so-called 'Agreement for Survival', and agreed to support whatever industrial action was necessary to defeat it. That was the position of many yards. The Confed already has a mandate to call strike action.

Nevertheless the SNC, led by Jim Murray, saw fit to go into negotiations on our behalf. The view at Voster Thornycroft was that we had been sold out, and not for the first time. That a similar mood existed elsewhere was shown by the mass lobbies of negotiations which took place.

We got wind of the fact that management reps from all the UK yards were called to talks with Graham Day, chairman of British Shipbuilders, in Newcastle. At the same time the union negotiators were meeting with lay delegates from the yards in London.

The men at Vosper Thornycroft decided to stage a 12-hour strike to show that we were fed up with the eight months it has taken since April to get nowhere and to lobby the trade union talks. A coach was booked which took fifty of us up to British Shipbuilders' headquarters in London, where the meeting was to be held on 22 November at 4.00 pm.

welders, but all-round shipbuilders, who are tied to yards.

If a worker leaves the yard on the Tyne, he would only be able to move to other ship yards, and outfitters such as electricians and joiners would not be able to work outside. Management went to get rid of labourers and semi-skilled, in order to "speed up the jobs", but this will mean more time being wasted. Half the time will be spent humping gear around, instead of just getting on with the job. So much for productivity.

I also fear for safety. We will need all of the welding gear, enormous jackets, masks, shoe covers and knee pads, but these are clumsy to work with unless

etc, getting the train back to its destination early and the locomotive back to the depot well before rostered time.

"Because of this we are being penalised by being booked off duty and losing enhanced payments. The term 'enhanced payments' means extra money for working unsocial hours, including weekend work. All other depots on the east coast mainline (between Kings Cross and Edinburgh) receive the facility of enhanced payments irrespective of time worked.

"The facility of enhanced payments was written into the agreement of flexible rostering on 3 October 1983 and included depots not working on flexible roster. Doncaster was included, but could not get enhanced payments as agreed by Kings

We all managed to get past the receptionist and up to the boardroom. Jim Murray, the chairman of the SNC, was most surprised to be greeted by fifty angry shipyard workers when he arrived. We asked whose side he was on—why they were discussing the management's proposals when for the first time in years there was 100% support for action to defeat those proposals?—and other similar questions.

BS's decision to close the Henry Robb yard in Leith, the likely closure of Scott Lithgow on the Lower Clyde, and threat to Tyne Shiprepairers may have triggered the breakdown of talks. Jim Murray is reported as saying "Discussions have broken down, we have registered a failure to agree, and we will be reporting to the executive of the Confed".

We are approaching the end of the road and there is now an awareness that industrial action in the new year is on the cards. Wage levels have been so drastically undermined over the years that many shipyard workers claim state benefits of one sort or another to top up their pay. We feel we have got to make a stand—we have very little to lose.

By Dave Hulbert
(EETPU, Vosper
Thornycroft,
Southampton)
personal capacity

you are welding. It is possible even before this we would have to set up our own staging, (ie scaffolding). If this is set up incorrectly, it could be dangerous. Safety would definitely suffer. These are all possibilities but some people don't know how far it could go.

The general lessons have been lack of communication between the union tops, and the delegates, back to the lads. Remember there were 4,000 in Tynemouth and 2,000 in Newcastle lobbying. There was a bitter feeling and we wanted a fight back. Report backs are urgently needed, our "leadership" must not be allowed to take the lads for granted.

Cross depot. Every other depot in Doncaster division, with the exception of Frodingham and Grantham get this facility, irrespective of time worked.

"Sheffield division have received this payment since 1974! We are doing the same work as all depots, the majority of which have been paid enhanced payments—we have not!

"We are not asking for anything that we shouldn't rightfully be entitled to. The management are unreasonable, bloody minded and hardline for no reason whatsoever. The disruption caused to the public is on the Doncaster management's head alone"

STOP PRESS: management have agreed to talks. The action has been suspended.

"THE PEOPLE of Wigan haven't got a reputation for fighting but this time we'll really stand firm. We'll show people!" Said a young woman on a picket line outside Morris's Textiles Ltd of Wigan, as we warmed our hands at the brazier in company with other women who have been sacked from Morris for striking.

The woman has never been on strike before. Kathleen, one of the strikers, said, "I've been employed here for thirteen years. I'm one of the five top earners out of the 100 employees here and I was once told by the boss that if I wanted anything like £80 a week I should expect to crawl out of here on my hands and knees after each day's work!

"Most of the other women receive much less than I do and there are only six male workers in the place. We are all members of the Tailor and Garment Workers' Union. Last week (as our usual winter treat) we were trying to work in a temperature of 38°F. After two hours of this, this year we decided we just had to stop work, but we were told that we wouldn't even receive one hour's pay for that day and what did we think we could do about it?"

Wigan women stand firm



Morris strikers joined the NGA picket at Warrington.

"Soon after this our shop steward, my sister Colleen Catterall, was told we would have to be re-timed. In effect this means we would receive less money. Colleen refused (as of course she had been singled out first) and she was immediately surrounded at her machine by the bosses and escorted out of the factory. It was quite frightening!"

One of the other pickets broke in to explain that had the re-timing been put into effect she would have been put onto a 70% rate and her wages would have been reduced by about £8 per day. Kathleen went on with the story: "The boss then shouted, 'Now who

wants to follow her?'"

"I must admit, thoughts of Christmas, my mother and my marriage plans for next May flashed through my mind. This would be the first time I'd ever been on strike; but we all stood firm and from the next day we organised a 24-hour picket with the girls on the day shift and the six men covering the night shift. We were 100% solid!"

What these workers now need is messages of support, money and active help to keep the picket line going. Please send messages of support to: Mrs J Atherton, 37 Sycamore Avenue, Beech Hill, Wigan, Lancashire.

Furniture workers wage campaign

MITCHELL WALKER, shop chairman at Lucas Furniture in Bow East London, spoke to *Militant*.

IN THE current national wage negotiations the British Furniture Manufacturers (BFM) offered £3.50 extra on the minimum rate of £92 per week. Only 8% of the furniture industry workers are on it anyway, so 92% were offered nothing!

The General Executive Council of my union FTAT (Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union) called on all journeymen (skilled workers) to stay out half the day on Wednesdays, stop all overtime and work only enough time to earn a maximum of £100 per week. The action was strongly supported nationally and in London. At my shop we banned all overtime and came out the whole day one Wednesday and half a day the following one.

Lucas management threatened us with a three-day week, in my opinion only because we were taking action. To me, this was an attempt to undermine the union. They say they have no work for us, but they're putting extra porters on the lorries so they can unload them quicker during deliveries and get them back for another load.

In certain factories the managements have approached union representatives to make local agreements, which has been refused. Another case of management trying to undermine the union.

At Younger Furniture near us in Monier Road, Bow, management wanted to cut all journeymen's money down to £92 a week by scrapping the bonus system, and also threatened to close the factory when the workers took the action FTAT had called for. But the workers called their bluff, stayed outside the gate for about a day and were let in again.

The reason I know all this is because we had a meeting of workers from all the big North London furniture factories to try to co-ordinate our action and inform each other of what we were doing.

After two weeks of action, the BFM offered another 50p on condition that we accept cuts in the apprentices' money!

At the moment, FTAT has called off the action pending a meeting with the BFM on Thursday 8 December. If no reasonable offer is made, we're ready to go immediately into action again.

Insecurity at Sch...

MANAGEMENT at Schweppes in East Kilbride have been putting work out to contractors while the factory at Aintree in Liverpool has been closed down.

Workers in East Kilbride have decided not to handle any of this "contract" work. Management have retorted that anyone who doesn't handle this work will be sacked. At a meeting last week the workers decided by more than a 2 to 1 majority that if anyone at all was sacked they would go on strike.

This leaves the ball in the management's court. If they continue with the contract work then they will provoke a strike at a time of the year which is always busy for the company—the run up to Christmas.

In a year which has been one of the best in terms of profits for Schweppes they have closed one factory and have stated that they cannot guarantee that there will be no redundancies after 3 months. This effectively means that every single Schweppes worker is on a temporary contract.

Stephen Smellie
(East Kilbride LPYS)

Injunction corner—NUJ next in line

THE NATIONAL Union of Journalists have joined the NGA in defying the Tory anti-union laws.

They have told Judge Lord Donaldson that their members on the *Richmond and Twickenham Times* will not obey an injunction instructing them to cease picketing of the Richmond-based newspaper group owned by TV personality David Dimbleby.

The dispute started after Dimbleby demanded two redundancies of NGA press room members. This was resisted and a two-month strike took place by the twenty-four composing room and press room NGA members. Dimbleby's response was to transfer printing to non-union Nottingham printers T Bailey Foreman and sack the NGA members.

TBF is owned by the notorious anti-union Christopher Pole Carew, also

owner of the *Nottingham Evening Post*. In 1978-79 the NUJ fought a long, bitter and at times violent battle with Polecat (as he became known). He had refused to take back onto the paper 28 journalists who took part in the 1978 provincial journalists' strike.

The NUJ lost that battle and since then have tried to maintain blacking of both firms. Dimbleby's actions were therefore a double challenge to the NUJ.

The court decided that though both TBF and NEP are under the same legal control, with the same managing director, premises, address and telephone number, they are "separate legal entities", so the NUJ's dispute with the NEP does not cover TBF!

The NUJ told Donaldson on Tuesday, however, that their action was clearly in line with the agreed policy of the union and that "to defy that policy on such a fundamental

issue would be to fly in the face of democratic proceedings." But he rejected their request to wait for a special delegate conference of the union to test the members' feelings on the issue.

The question now is whether Dimbleby will go back to the court to get fines and sequestration of union assets for contempt of court as a result of continuing picketing.

The journalists involved have voted to continue picketing. Dimbleby has said he will take further legal action. Then it will all depend on the NUJ Executive and the support they get from the rest of the labour movement.

With sometime members like Eddie Shah (NGA) and David Dimbleby (NUJ) the print workers hardly need to worry about the Newspaper Publishers Association.

By Ian Ilett

Doncaster ASLEF

350 MEMBERS of the Doncaster branch of ASLEF are holding a series of one-day token strikes in a dispute over enhanced payments (the latest on Monday 28 November). DAVE COURT, ASLEF branch secretary spoke to Richard Beilby also of ASLEF.

"The series of one-day token strikes is because of management's intransigent attitude to ASLEF staff.

"A man can complete his diagram (work schedule) faster than management estimate by cutting down on terminal time

Blackburn Labour Party

Right step up witch hunt

AS THE Executive of Blackburn Labour Party assembled on Sunday morning (4 December), over fifty people gathered outside to demonstrate against the right wing's local witch-hunt.

Eight members of the constituency party were summonsed to this Star Chamber, and after a stormy meeting the EC recommended six Militant supporters for expulsions.

The lobby—well equipped with banners and placards—included Labour Party activists, Young Socialists, local shop stewards, and county councillors.

Rousing choruses of "The Red Flag" and good humoured chanting of slogans left the EC members meeting in the Trades Club in no doubt of the strong opposition to the Kangaroo court they were conducting.

Despite the opposition of a small number of EC members, the right wing were determined to stick to their undemocratic

By A Militant reporter

procedure and carry through the expulsions.

The eight were being tried on uncorroborated allegations contained in a "Report" drawn up by Michael Gregory, who claims to be a Militant "defector".

In fact, Gregory, who only rejoined the Party in 1982, deceived Militant supporters about his views to gain their confidence, and then concocted a document full of factual inconsistencies, false allegations, and outright lies. He alleges details about Militant going back 19 years: yet he is unable to give the surnames of five people he claims to have worked with in the Militant's "tightly disciplined organisation" for five months!

The EC and General

Management Committee delegates had received copies of Gregory's 'report', and have also seen extremely biased reports in the media.

Yet the CLP officers have consistently refused to allow the eight to circulate their detailed 87 point refutation of Gregory's allegations to GMC members—not even all the EC members had seen it. The ten minutes offered to each of the eight to answer the allegations at the EC meeting was entirely inadequate to answer Gregory's voluminous pack of lies.

Undemocratic procedure for expulsion hearings

Not only was the time inadequate, but the EC insisted on individual hearings, clearly with the intention of intimidating them.

Six of the comrades went up to the Executive to ask for the right to be heard together, on the grounds that they all faced the same charges based on the very same report. They also asked for a number of democratic guarantees,

More reports from Blackburn and fight against the witch-hunt. Page 5

particularly an assurance that they would be allowed to circulate their reply to GMC delegates before a final decision was taken.

The EC, however, would not even give them five minutes to put their request. Instead, the chairman, Eric Smith, called the police, later accusing the comrades of "barging in" and "hooliganism". There was no attempt to barge in. The comrades simply stood outside the door waiting for a hearing.

Two policemen arrived and were embarrassed by the whole episode. The senior officer, Inspector Ingram, said later "There was no trouble: I don't know why we were called."

The accused comrades waited for another two hours, telling EC officers when they appeared from time to time, that they were still willing to put their case provided there were a number of elementary democratic guarantees. The EC made it clear that they were uncompromising and determined to stick to the rigid

procedure of one at a time, indicating that the first on the list had already lost their chance.

There were heated exchanges on the EC, with a minority opposing expulsions altogether and a number supporting the proposal for the eight to be heard together.

At the end of the Star Chamber session, the Executive recommended the expulsion of six people.

However, although two of the eight were relieved, their cases only highlight the scandalous approach of the right.

50 years in the Labour Party

One is Micki Thornton—even Blackburn's neanderthal right-wing haven't the nerve to expel a woman who has worked for the Labour Party for over 50 years. Yet Micki completely rejects the idea that she is any way different from the others accused.

The inconsistency of the executive is highlighted by the fact

that Gregory alleges that one lot of 'secret Militant meetings' took place in Micki's house!

The other "reprieved" comrade did not take a stand with the other seven, leaving the EC his own short written statement. Later, he made it clear that he was not standing with the others because he had been under pressure at work, the local Royal Ordnance factory. He said he had been grilled by the ROF security police about being named in Gregory's report.

The EC's decision, however, is not the end of the story by a long way. Many party members who originally agreed there was "a case to answer" now believe that it has been answered and are outraged at the bureaucratic, and undemocratic, not to mention rude and hostile, attitude of EC members.

The EC's recommendation will now go to the local party's general management committee, where the six and Micki will insist on the right to put their case. Meanwhile, the campaign against the witch-hunt will go on until it is defeated.

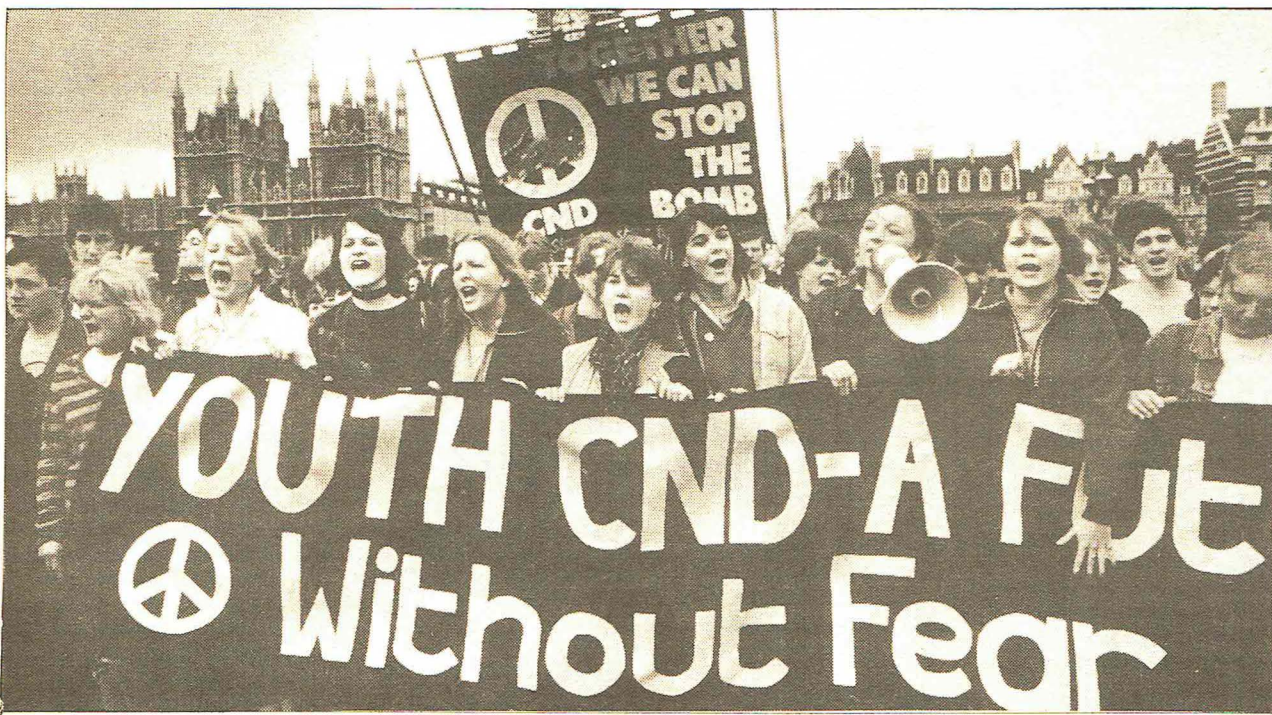


Photo: Militant.

CND members on the march. This weekend, thousands of women will converge on Greenham Common in protest at Cruise missiles in Britain. The women at Greenham have won widespread respect; But the urgent need now is to link the question of Cruise and defence spending to the need for the socialist transformation of society.

YOUNG WORKERS Continued from page One

tics applied a few weeks ago. Also an industrial tribunal will look into the dispute.

Young workers know that only a strong united working class movement can stop the Tories taking away all our rights and savaging even

more our living standards.

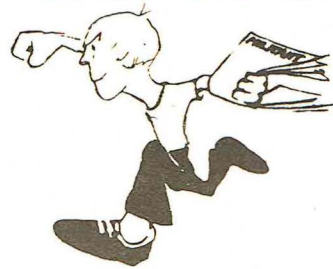
Workers on Youth Training Schemes will be in Manchester along with their brothers and sisters at other strikes like Lefray, at Carousel Wafers in Glasgow, for example. There a strike by young women workers began in the July heatwave and continues as

Christmas approaches. Strikers at Beauty Care warehouse near Manchester, also out for a union, will be there.

Young workers from trade union branches, factories, shipyards, mines, rail depots, offices, YTS schemes, all will be coming together on Saturday.

They all want a better deal for young workers and an end to the Tory system. Thatcher's government and her backers are prepared to sell our prospects for their profit. Don't let the Tories get away with it. Join us in Manchester this Saturday. It's our future and we're going to fight for it!

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