

# Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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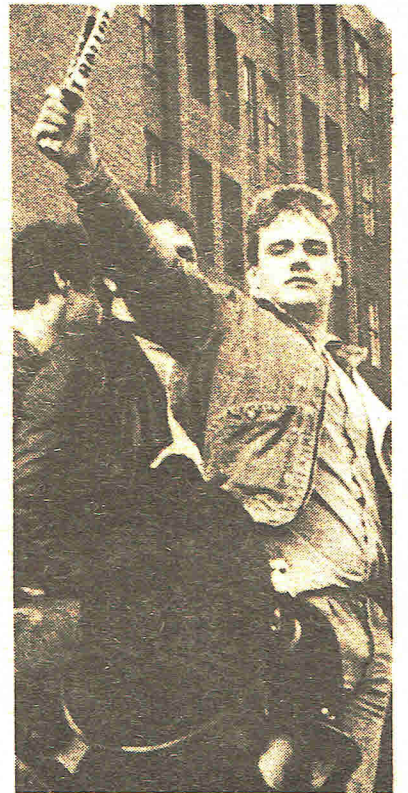
## Miners' dispute

Pages 2, 3, 4, 5, and 15

LPYS 23rd National  
Conference

Pages 7, 8, 9,

# Rally round the miners



## Stop all coal

**NOW IT is a fight to the finish, for the future of the coal industry and for the hard-won rights of all trade unionists.**

The battle lines are drawn. Around the country workers are getting organised to support the miners.

MacGregor is ready to consider using troops to move coal; he has threatened that many more jobs are in jeopardy because of the strike and he is ready to starve us back to work.

There are clear signs that those miners still working are now moving in favour of striking. MacGregor's threats have blown away any illusions that there are "safe" areas or pits.

**By Stan Pearce**

(Lodge Delegate,  
Monkwearmouth  
Colliery NUM)

Support from the rest of the trade union movement is now the key to success. NUM vice-president Mick McGahey has called for a stoppage throughout Scotland on May Day, and a resolution for this was carried by the Scottish TUC. This demand should be taken up nationally. A one-day general strike would be a warning to the Tories of the Labour movement's might.

### Support from movement

In particular there has to be a drive to stop the movement of coal. MacGregor made it clear that he is determined to keep the power stations supplied. The railwaymen, lorry drivers

Continued on back page.

- *The miners' fight is our fight.*
- *Collect money, send donations to NUM area headquarters.*
- *Organise solidarity meetings with NUM speakers.*
- *Provide accommodation and help on picket lines.*
- *Join Militant in the fight for socialism.*

## Notts—thousands striking

CONTRARY TO Coal Board propaganda, the Nottinghamshire coalfield is not working normally; many thousands of miners are out on strike.

All the picket lines are now manned by Notts miners.

At Clipstone 100, pickets turned back 200 out of a day shift of 460, 75% of the afternoon shift and 90% of the night shift. At Blidworth, 200 out of 450 on the morning shift refused to cross the line of 300 pickets. At Welbeck, the night shift has not gone down for five weeks and production is down by a third.

JIM ROBINSON, a face worker from Cotgrave has been on strike for 3 weeks and has picketed continuously every day, 3 shifts per day, sometimes alone.

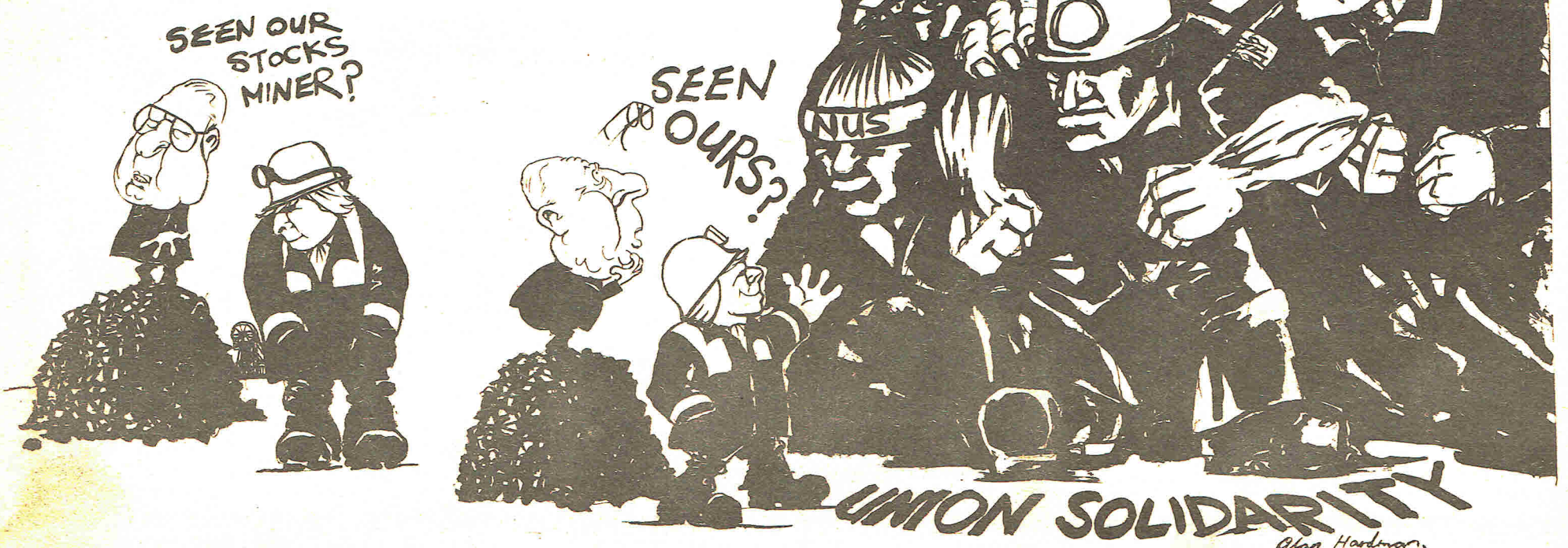
Jim says he will hold to his

beliefs in the principle of trade union solidarity, not cross a picket line and give support to any miner fighting to save jobs.

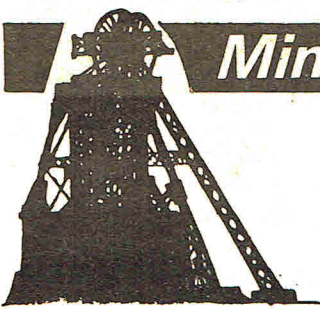
"Every miner should remember that present good wages and conditions enjoyed by the Nottingham NUM members have only been won by building a strong and united union nationally and by the sacrifices and solidarity of past generations of miners.

"I would like to make an appeal to other miners, firstly to those outside of Nottingham to remember that we are not all scabs but more importantly to appeal to miners in Cotgrave and Nottingham for unity in action. This fight is about saving jobs. We will win but quicker and better if we stand together."

By Wayne Jones







Miners' dispute

# National wave of supp

## Dorset stops coal

When South Wales miners arrived in Poole they expected to get some hostility from a Tory area. But things worked out very differently.

By Julie Harris

Poole Labour Party originally intended just to put out an appeal sheet, but we then decided to invite miners from Pontypridd in South Wales into the area. They arrived the very same evening.

We took miners round to Poole Docks where the convenor and senior steward assured us no coal was moving. There had been an attempt to get coal through—as industrial waste. The dock workers found out what it was and sent it back! The T&G branch organised a collection and arranged a mass meeting.

We also went to Weymouth container docks and spoke at a mass meeting on privatisation organised on the ship Earl William and held a bucket collection which raised £181.

We visited Winfrith Nuclear Research, Metal Box, local hospitals, Westland Helicopters at Yeovil, local Labour Parties

and the miners even got interviewed by the local press. They held collections everywhere and didn't get any hostile remarks.

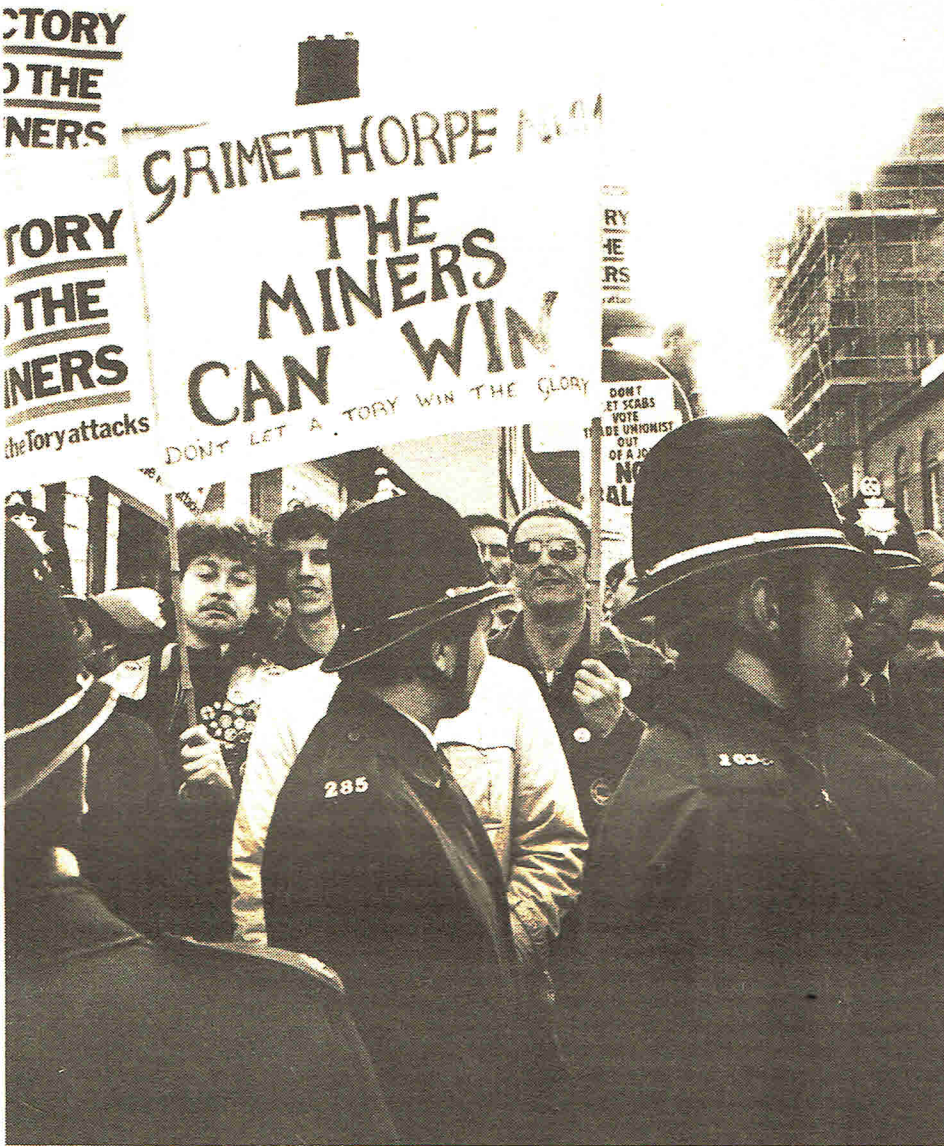
If you can do that in Poole and Bournemouth you can do it anywhere. We are going to May Day in South Wales and the miners are coming to the Tolpuddle celebrations in July in Dorset.

However remote your area may seem from the pits, the miners struggle is of vital importance.

## 'armless

AS A result of an accident down the pit, a young miner from Treeton, South Yorkshire, has an artificial arm. When a constable went to arrest him on the picket line, he grabbed the arm and pressed the catch which released it from the body. He had arrested one disembodied artificial arm!

Photo: Jacob Sutton



Yorkshire miners message at last week's Sheffield lobby—see report page 15

## Derbyshire marches

2,500 MINERS and fellow trade unionists marched through Chesterfield on Saturday to a rally addressed by Tony Benn and Jack Taylor of Yorkshire and other miners leaders.

The march had a tremendous impact. £350 was collected for the strikers, the shoppers were deeply impressed perhaps especially by the obvious sight of battle scars on a number of miners' faces. Old men nodded their heads, remembering past battles, astonished youngsters joined the march and were approached immediately by LPYS members.

## Winning run

Gordon Butler of Derbyshire NUM urged Nottinghamshire men to ask themselves why the Board was prepared to pay them to go to work simply to play football. The loudest cheer went to Jack Taylor when he declared "we are on a winning run now". He also told the rally "We've not got to be too proud to talk to the Notts miners. We've got to tell them, we've to explain to them."

By Roy Davies

Chesterfield Labour Party

# Militant

## Tories on war footing—labour must prepare

THE STAGE is now set for a decisive struggle by all the areas of the National Union of Mineworkers, backed by the labour movement, against all the forces of the NCB, the Tory government and the capitalist state.

This is potentially the most profound class conflict for a decade, perhaps eclipsing even the miners' strikes of 1972 and 1974. But the Tories, already making elaborate plans for facing out what they expect to be a long and rough confrontation, may have seriously underestimated the determination of the miners and the enormous underlying strength of organised labour.

Thatcher's "War Cabinet" of senior ministers shows the seriousness with which the representatives of capitalism view the strike. They have been backed by the CBI, the Institute of Directors, the Fleet Street moguls, and all the bosses' organisations who can see the clear class conflicts of interests.

For British capitalism it has become a dire necessity that the miners be beaten and humiliated. The Tories understand that if the miners were defeated, it would be possible to ride roughshod over all other workers who are desperately trying to defend living standards under attack from this government.

The more far-sighted strategists of capitalism have no illusions about the scale of the struggle upon which

they are now embarked: it is one pregnant with the possibility of major industrial battles, even of general strike proportions.

"The odds are", the *Sunday Times* editorial commented, hopefully, "that the strike of 1984 will end like that of 1926. The 1926 strike also began in the spring. The TUC called an ineffective general strike in support."

"But by the autumn miners were drifting back to work and the union had to settle for worse terms than it could have had at the start. After 1926 the number of days lost through strikes plummeted. A clear defeat for the miners in 1984 might have a similar effect." (15 April, 1984)

This shows the capitalists' ruthless determination to starve the miners back, in order to intimidate the rest of the working class into giving up all hope and all struggle for a decent life.

## 'New realism' discredited

Entering such a serious struggle, it is absolutely vital that workers also understand, though from their own class standpoint, the lessons of 1926.

As the *Sunday Times* intimated, the TUC leaders of 1926—the majority being nominally on the 'left'—led the general strike to a shattering defeat. Whereas the Tory government of the day had long prepared for the strike (as, no doubt,



MacGregor

MacGregor and Thatcher have now)—the TUC leaders stumbled into supportive action without a plan, programme or perspective to take the movement forward.

Without socialist goals, without being prepared to mobilise the organised working class to change society, the TUC leaders became a brake on the movement. From the very first hours of the general strike, the TUC leaders were looking for an excuse to call it off.

Most miners today have already realised that the majority of the present TUC General Council are no better than the leaders of 1926. Their policy of "new realism" has meant little more than abject surrender to the Tories' vicious anti-trade union policies.

Faced with Thatcher's "war cabinet", the trade union movement should have its own "general staff", working out the best forms of support and solidarity action for the miners. Any

Labour or trade union leader worthy of the name should be now preparing to mobilise the full strength of the workers' movement behind the miners.

## Trade unions stronger

Unfortunately, many of the leaders of the movement have been conspicuous by their lack of support. Miners might be forgiven for thinking Len Murray was on holiday, so little has been seen of him.

Nevertheless, there are also significant differences with 1926 that workers have to take account of. Despite the recession and the fall in trade union membership, the labour movement is today immeasurably stronger than it was in 1926.

Many of those sections of workers who would have been used to break the strike of 1926—white collar workers, teachers, and students for example—are now themselves members of trade unions or are in sympathy with the miners. Teachers are presently involved in industrial action over their own pay claim, partly inspired by the example of the mines. Nurses and civil servants have joined miners' picket lines and held collections for them.

This huge reservoir of support must now be tapped and must be organised, if not by the TUC General Council, then by the left leaders of

the industrial unions and by socialists and trade unionists at a local level.

The Tories' attempt to starve the miners back to work could explode in their faces. Recent polls have shown the growing determination of miners not to give way in the face of MacGregor's contemptuous threats.

The special conference of the NUM, giving greater official backing to a national coalfield strike, must be followed up by mass meetings in all pits to explain the issues, win over any miners still doubtful, and to involve the majority of miners in the campaign and in the picketing.

## Socialist perspectives

A strike in the whole of the British coalfield would immediately invoke the tidal wave of support which has been temporarily held back while the miners achieve complete solidarity in their own ranks.

It is only a matter of time before other groups of workers come to the aid of the miners by industrial action: on the railways, in the docks, in the oil industry and, ultimately, in the power stations.

Any attempt by the Tories to use the anti-trade union law courts against miners, or to use the army to move coal stocks will only inflame workers and increase solidarity action.

The strike may prove to be an important landmark in British politics. More clearly than at any time since the war, this is a battle in which, as even Tory spokesmen have commented, it is *class against class*.

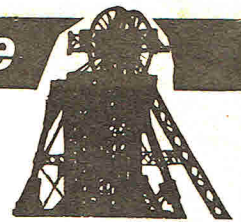
Workers, and especially the National Union of Mineworkers, will never be the same again. Many thousands, especially young miners, will draw the conclusion that theirs is not only an industrial struggle, but a political fight to change society.

Socialist change is the only real guarantee that miners or any workers can have for a secure livelihood. Capitalism means only more and greater insecurity and hardship.

Referring to last weekend's miners' meeting in Nottingham, one *Guardian* correspondent commented, "This was a rally of mainly young men, who had been on the picket lines most of the week, who feel a sense of bitter injustice, who want a social revolution..."

As Marxists have always argued, the raw human material for socialist change will come from the bitter experiences of workers under capitalism. The actions of this Tory government and this strike in particular, will prove a milestone in convincing thousands of workers of the absolute hopelessness of capitalism and the urgent need for a struggle to change society.





# Port for miners' struggle

## Miners' wives get organised

**WE FORMED** our own women's action group covering Clowne and Barlborough. First we went on soup runs to Whitwell and Bolsover picket lines. We got a great response at Whitwell and the men gave us NUM badges at Bolsover.

We stood on the picket lines and at the end the men gave "three cheers for the ladies" after picketing from 4 to 6 am we went to Oxcrats Seens. There we turned four wagons away. Then the snatch squad came, so we went quick! We've helped form groups in Eckington, Doe Lea and Creswell.

### Feeding the families

Our concern during the Easter break was that miners' children would be missing their main meal, which they had been getting at school. So we decided that was our next main task and we now have council facilities to go ahead and provide a meal during the holiday.

We went round local shops and got a good response, collecting £25 cash

and groceries. We have written to various organisations and have received £50 from Hosiery and Knitwear workers, £300 from Clowne Parish Council, and £11 collected at Clowne Labour Party; other donations are to come, we hope.

On our first day we provided meals. Our project after that is to make sure no striking miners' families go without food. We have been to two emergency cases in a Notts Area village with food parcels. They were in considerable hardship but the determination to stick it out was greater than ever.

One of the miners said, "they can starve us but there is no way we are giving in". They are now forming their own women's action group.

By Sue Albery  
(Clowne Labour Party)

## Peaceful picketing

**AFTER MY** husband, John was beaten over the head with a truncheon and then banned from picketing, I decided to go as a substitute.

One hundred of us went to Blidworth in North Notts. We were only allowed to picket one gate and not allowed to speak to the day shift. Most of the men went in. The coppers were from Bristol and quite friendly.

Later Notts coppers arrived and said they were going to escort us out of the county. We said "no way! One

arrest, all arrested!" They took names, addresses, and car numbers. Then they accepted we could have six pickets if the rest of us stood across the road. Since that was than better we were allowed in the morning, we agreed!

The pickets were so peaceful. That is how every one would be if the police just left them alone.

By a miners wife

## Barnsley bills protest

"**BARNSELY** WOMEN oppose pit closures" consists of wives, girl friends, daughters and mothers of striking miners.

Last Wednesday about 50 of them, armed with posters banners and placards, lobbied Yorkshire electricity board (YEB) rooms to protest at threats to cut off supply to miners' families unless bills were paid immediately.

Even where YEB give time to pay their demands are exorbitant. As one woman explained "families claiming £14 a week social security are expected to pay £6 a week, those getting in £6 a week are expected to pay £3."

Another woman explained "I won't pay bills while my husband is on strike, I need it for other things. We don't know how long it is going to last. I had 3 on strike in 1972 and 74, two babies as well to

look after. This isn't going to bother me. I am not going cap in hand to anyone. We should approach the power unions and ask them not to cut off the electricity. The media make out that we want the men to go back to work but we are right behind them."

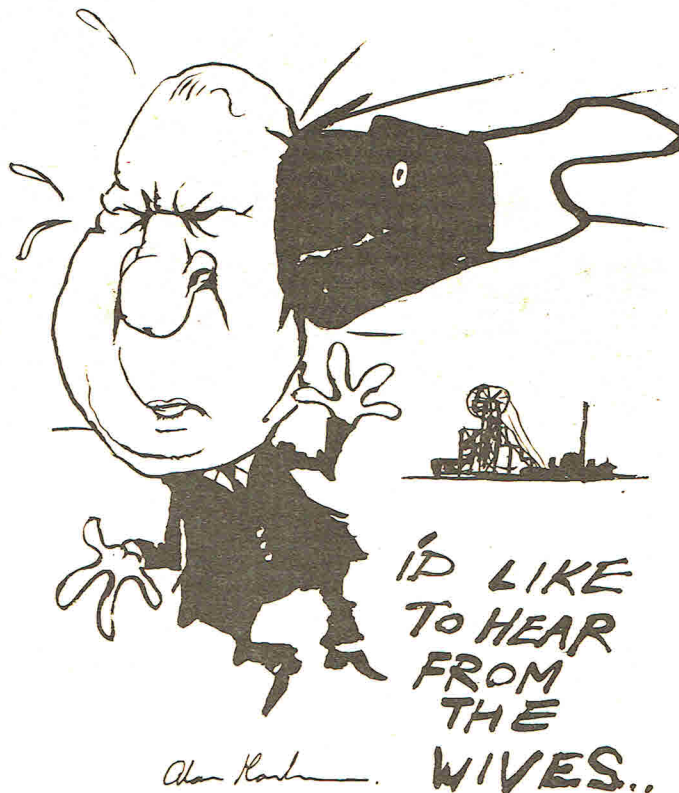
### "Our future"

"**IT'S ALL** right for some of the older ones who might not mind taking redundancy but what about the young ones, what future is there for them if they don't stand up to the government to save the pits." (Anne Kenrick, miner's wife, Westoe, Durham).



Photo: John Harris (JFL)

Kent wives led the way with their march in Leicestershire last month



## Northern Ireland backs the strike

**LAST WEDNESDAY**, I visited the Northern Ireland Congress of Trade Unions conference in Coleraine to see if any money could be raised for the miners' strike funds.

The previous day, two Ayrshire miners had addressed the conference and they had been given a standing ovation even before they spoke! It is difficult to express in black and white the mood of support which was generated at that conference.

### "Adopt a pit"

The NUPE delegation said that they were planning an "Adopt a pit" programme, where union branches in Northern Ireland would send money to a particular pit on a weekly basis. This is an excellent idea which could be raised in other unions.

Apart from the financial support we got, delegate after delegate expressed without qualification support for the strike. "You've got to win, not just for yourselves but for all of us". That was the most frequent statement made to me at the conference, and it was made

by firemen, boilermakers, transport workers, engineers, health service workers and a host of other trade unionists.

I also spoke to a meeting of fifty Catholic and Protestant workers in the centre of Belfast. Despite the fact that many of those at the meeting were unemployed, £207 was raised for the strike fund. This was a real financial sacrifice for those involved and again demonstrated the tremendous solidarity and support that there is for the miners.

Finally I could not help but to be impressed with the friendliness and helpful attitude of the people I meant when going into shops etc. The media's portrayal of Northern Ireland is to concentrate 100% on the 1% of sectarian violence which interests them, and thus try to generate prejudices among workers in Britain. It is a gross caricature and an obscene insult to the people of Northern Ireland.

By John Cunningham  
(Ellington NUM  
Strike Committee)

## Kent miners reach journey's end

**LAST SATURDAY** thousands of miners and supporters gave a heroes' welcome to the thirty miners who marched from Kent to Nottingham.

The march moved 280 miles through London, Watford, Luton, Bedford, Northampton, Leicester to Nottingham. At every stop there was a good response and a warm welcome from local people and labour movement activists.

Terry French, one of the leaders of the march, explained that their fathers and grandfathers had walked to Kent from all over the country, mainly because they had been blacklisted in their home coalfields. They marched down for work and they were marching back to keep their jobs. "We have no right to sell our jobs. We

are only the custodians of the jobs for our children," he said.

Most of the lads had huge blisters and really bad feet as well as bad knees—but they were determined to complete the trek.

At journey's end in Nottingham some were in tears at the incredibly emotional reception. The Kent lads had the honour of marching in front of the national NUM banner at the head of the march.

The marchers returned to Kent having made many friends and comrades on the way, links that will never be forgotten. They are more positive than ever that they will win an historic victory and save their jobs and communities.

By Mick Rogers

## Welsh out to win

**A WHIRR** of cameras and a bustle of interviewers broke the peace of the mining village of Tumble in West Wales. The hawks of the media had descended on a mass meeting of miners hoping to discover a renegade lodge that could break the unity of the striking South Wales miners.

Cynheidre lodge has long been a moderate pit. Stan, an older miner once told me: "Some of these at Cynheidre are like the Titanic; they won't realise they are heading for an iceberg until it is too late".

The recently deposed Chairman of the lodge had instigated this meeting, hoping to overturn a previous decision. He had boasted of leading men through the

picket line. But Cynheidre miners stood firm.

At the earlier meeting one older miner had spoken of his fears of industrial action. He said that his 35 years of service to the industry could be affected by indiscriminate action. A younger miner replied: "I've only been working five years in the industry, but I want the chance to work for 35 years."

That was the mood at the second meeting too. 80% of miners present voted to continue the strike. As one miner said to me afterwards: "We've been out for four weeks. What's the point of going back now—let's go all out to win".

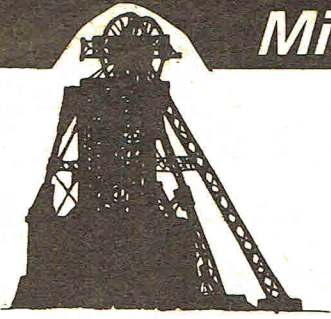
By Neil Williams

## NUPE lends a hand

**THE NORTHERN** Division of the public workers' union NUPE have agreed to hold a weekly levy of all their 50,000 members for the miners. They are sending a letter to all 1,200 shop stewards asking what they can do to help the miners. They are ask-

ing for picket volunteers and have taken 10,000 copies of *The Miner* to distribute to every workplace. They have also hired five mini-buses and put them at the disposal of the NUM and agreed to do all the printing of local NUM material.





## Miners' dispute

# Welsh/Staffs Solidarity

Miners from our lodge have had a marvellous response amongst Staffordshire and even Notts miners. At Hem Heath colliery in Staffordshire we faced the rumour that 'Big Jim', one of four scabs who sat in during the strike, was threatening to lead 200 miners through the picket line. It looked like trouble.

On the morning he only turned up with nine scabs expecting to goad the pickets into violence.

By Arwyn Rees  
(Cynheidre Lodge Committee, South Wales)

Instead all the pickets showed their contempt by simply turning their backs and remaining quiet. It had an incredible effect. In the horribly moving silence you could hear their boots crunch on the ground.

The Hem Heath lodge have produced a strike bulletin. Here's an excerpt: "Support from Welsh miners was much appreciated. They backed up local NUM men in a disciplined manner despite severe harassment from police en route."

### Decent men

Local people who took them into their homes found they were responsible, decent men—a far cry from the hooligans portrayed by the media. With comradeship like that we can't lose"



Chris Herriot, Monktonhall NUM, speaking at Lothian LPYS meeting

## Lothian shows the way

IN THE LOTHIAN area, LPYS and Militant supporters have been active in organising meetings in support of the miners.

Tranent LPYS held a joint public meeting with the Labour Party and local strike committee, addressed by Johnnie Walker of ASLEF, Peter Hogg and Alex Bennett from the NUM. About sixty people attended the meeting, 90% of them miners. Several showed an interest in joining the LPYS. There was a tremendous mood of enthusiasm which was helped by a contribution from the floor from Tam Dury, chairman of Tranent strike committee, and an active

member of the LPYS.

Midlothian and Musselburgh LPYS branches have also organised meetings on successive nights which were again very successful. Dozens of posters were put up and thousands of leaflets distributed in the run-up to the Midlothian meeting. As well as selling *Socialist Youth*, over 140 copies of *Militant* were sold in Mayfield.

Both meetings were attended by about forty, and were addressed by Eddie Donaghy, Scottish Regional Committee of the LPYS, and Chris Herriot, a miner from Monktonhall and a member of the central strike committee. Chris explained

the determination of the miners to win and also described the hardship which many miners were suffering as a result of government policy in cutting welfare payments.

Joe Owens, youth delegate from Polkemmet, who also spoke at the meeting in Musselburgh, spelt out clearly that this fight was vital for the future of young people. The mood of the meetings so far has been one of defiance and confidence that the miners will win.

By Andy Clachers

(Scottish LPYS Regional Committee)



Pickets out at Prince of Wales pit in Yorkshire

Photo: Richard Clarkson

## Police obstruct court appearance

WE SET off from Kellingley early on Monday morning, 18 of us from Kellingley, Nostell and Prince of Wales collieries along with a few supporters, to Mansfield Magistrates court.

We faced various charges, from obstruction to threatening behaviour, following incidents in Nottinghamshire.

From day one of our arrest the joke had been that we would be stopped by police on the way to court. Sure enough, it happened!

On a roundabout on the A617, about six miles out of Mansfield, we were stopped by a police road block. Dave

Miller, Kellingley NUM branch secretary, went to meet them. "Where are you from?" they asked. "Yorkshire" Dave replied. "Are you anything to do with the mining community?" they asked. Dave replied, "Look, we are going to Mansfield on official business, I am not obliged to tell you anything else. I'll give you my name and address and those of everybody on the bus and nothing else". They then followed us all the way to the courthouse.

In court we were up with about another 20 lads, and our cases were adjourned.

We appealed for conditions of bail to be lifted but the Magistrates ruled against us—that means we still can't go near NCB premises.

As we returned to Yorkshire we were again stopped by police at a roadblock. They asked Dave, "Have you been to a Mansfield pit picketing?". Dave, somewhat annoyed, replied: "We are going home and we are telling you nothing else." We eventually returned to Yorkshire, with a police escort most of the way.

By Richard Clarkson  
(Prince of Wales NUM)

## Flying tea urns

THE LAST few weeks have seen Leicestershire caught up in the mass picketing organised by South Wales and Kent miners. Leicestershire miners, despite the closure of two pits already, plus the remaining four on the closure list, have not yet walked out. Bagworth pit voted for a strike, but local leadership ordered the men back to work.

This Monday (9 April) Bagworth men walked out again, sickened, one young lad said, at having to cross picket lines set up by the Welsh NUM. But, at least a half of the workforce is continuing to go into work.

Younger miners told YS members that they blamed the union leadership in Leicestershire for the chaos in the NUM currently. They told us

that local leaders are coming up to retirement and are content to sell young miners' jobs away. One lad told us that when one leader went to address a canteen meeting, he was booed for several minutes.

### Accommodation

Members in Leicester have been on picket lines at 5.30 most mornings since the dispute. We are well known for our 'flying tea urn' which we take out for the pickets in the mornings and also for putting up miners from Kent and Wales in Leicestershire itself. We have accommodated eighty on some occasions.

By Steve Score

## Wigan YS

ON THURSDAY 12 April 40 people attended a meeting in support of the miners organised by Wigan LPYS in Goldburne, Lancs.

This is the first YS meeting organised in the village. In the audience were 15 miners from Goldburne pit. They supported the strike even though their pit was working.

On hearing speakers from Maltby and Silverwood collieries, Yorks, and Sutton, Manor, Lancs, and Andy Boardman from LPYS regional committee, the miners from Goldburne agreed to invite a Yorks speaker to the pit canteen to put their case.

They also agreed to put Yorks miners up if they were willing to join the picket.

## If the cap fits Chapple . . .

"HE IS ignoring his members until they have been harangued, manipulated, brow-beaten and intimidated into toeing his line."

"There was a breathtaking arrogance behind the constitutional trickery employed by the miners' president"

These are not the words of a *Sun* editor, a Tory MP or even Ian MacGregor, but of Frank Chapple, general secretary of the EETPU writing in last Sunday's *News of the World*!

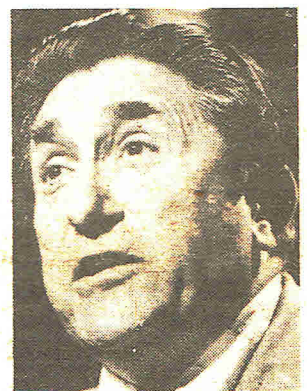
He doesn't even stop at Scargill. He says Kinnock "has stalled and played with

words when home truths, not funk, was desperately needed."

### Harvest of anger

He backs up the Coal Board's argument that "uneconomic" pits cannot be indefinitely sustained," and ends by claiming that Scargill's "undemocratic posturing will alienate much of the limited support from other trade unions. It should only be a matter of time before his own members begin to rumble him."

Miners, those millions of other workers who are supporting them, and above all, members of his own union in



Frank Chapple

power stations whose jobs are closely tied to the coal industry, will react with fury to these attacks on workers in struggle.

## ADS

West London BLOC meeting  
'Save the pits, save jobs'  
Speakers from NUM, BBC-ETA, NUR. Wednesday 18 April. Hammersmith Labour hall, 446 Uxbridge rd, W9

Portsmouth Militant Meeting  
'Defend the Pits'  
Speakers: Alison Hill (Militant), NUM speaker. Thursday 26 April 7.45pm. Room B, Central Library, Guildhall Sq, Portsmouth

OLDHAM PUBLIC RALLY  
'Support the miners'  
Speakers include Sam Thompson, Vice-Pres., Yorks NUM and Michael Meacher MP. 27 April Friday 7.30pm. Pennine Lounge, Bus Garage, Mumps, Oldham.

Greenwich, Woolwich & Eltham Labour Parties  
'The miners must win—march and rally'  
Assemble 28 April 2pm Cutty Sark Gdns. Rally 3.30pm Woolwich ferry

East London Campaign  
'Against the Police Bill  
'Policing and the miners strike'. 7.30pm Wednesday 25 April, 7.30pm East Ham Town Hall, High St South, East Ham, E6.

USEFUL ADDRESSES  
Kent NUM. Miners' Offices, Waterside House, Cherry Tree Avenue, Dover, Kent CT16 1RW. Phone 0304 206661/206271

Yorkshire NUM. Miners Offices, Barnsley, Yorkshire S70 2LS. Phone: 0226-840069  
South Wales NUM. AEU Building, Sardis Road, Pontypridd, Glamorgan CF37 1DU. Phone: 0443 404092/5

## Ayrshire

THE VILLAGES of Ayrshire would be industrial deserts if the two remaining pits, Barony and Killoch joined the long list of closures.

The mood in villages like Catrine, Mossblown and Muirkirk is determined. Rob Gray of Netherthird put it straight "Wir nae gaeing back til we've won".

In the villages butchers are donating meat and farmers bags of potatoes and turnips at the nine satellite strike centres and two major ones at Drongan and Netherthird.



# Six year plan to break miners

IN 1978, a year before the Tories came to power, a secret report was leaked to *The Economist*. Written by right winger Nicholas Ridley, it set out what he wanted a Conservative government to do with the nationalised industries. Reading it again today, in the midst of the miners' strike, shows the extent to which the Tories' onslaught on the trade union movement had been worked out in detail even before Thatcher was in No 10.

The report considered the possibility that "the enemies of the next Tory government" might pose a "political threat". He had in mind the victorious battles waged by the miners in 1972 and 1974. To try and prevent a recurrence of these type of events, he put forward a five-point strategy, every part of which has been, or is being put into practice.

## Vulnerable

The report distinguished between "vulnerable" industries, like sewerage, water, electricity, gas and the health service, where the workers could cause most disruption, "intermediate" ones like railways, coal, the docks and dustmen, and "least vulnerable" industries—other public transport,

education, telephones, air transport and steel—where they thought they would "win" most easily.

According to *The Economist*, the five-point plan was:

1. *Return on capital figures should be rigged so that an above-average wage claim can be paid to the "vulnerable" industries.* They certainly abandoned this when it came to the Health Service, and only partially conceded to the water workers after a long battle, but the logic behind this is made clear in point 3.

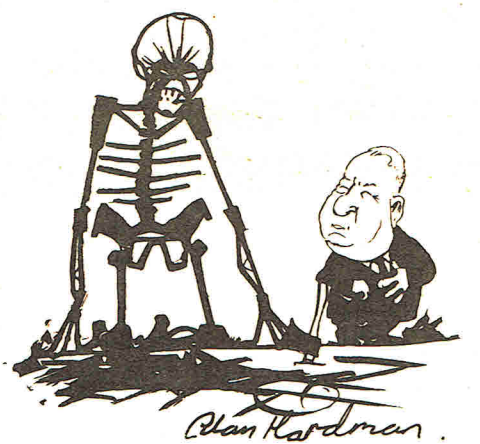
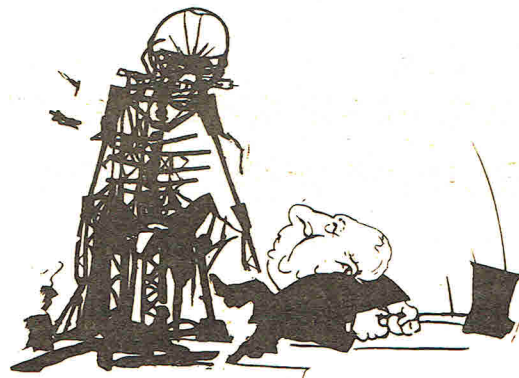
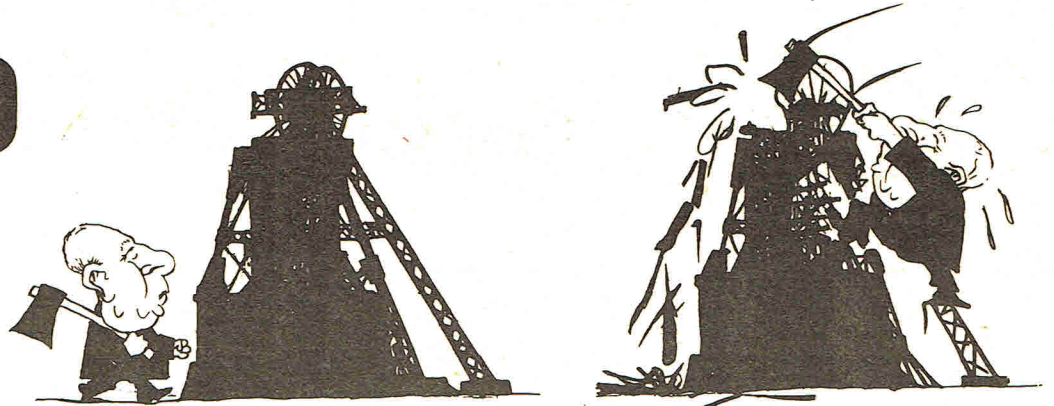
2. *The eventual battleground should be on a ground chosen by the Tories, in a field they considered could be won (the railways, British Leyland, the Civil Service or steel).* That one was most certainly im-

plemented.

3. *Every precaution should be taken against a challenge in electricity or gas, where anyway redundancies are unlikely to be required. The most likely battleground was the coal industry. Therefore the report proposed that the government should (a) build up maximum coal stocks, particularly at the power stations; (b) make contingency plans for the import of coal; (c) encourage the recruitment of non-union lorry drivers by haulage companies to help move coal; (d) introduce dual coal/oil firing in all power stations as quickly as possible.* We are now seeing the end-result of these proposals.

4. *As a deterrent to strikes, the government should "cut off the money supply to the strikers and make the union finance them."* That too has been done.

5. *There should be a large, mobile squad of police equipped and prepared to uphold the law against violent picketing. "Good non-union drivers" should be recruited to cross picket lines with police protection.* So much for the Tories'



claim that the present police operation against the miners was worked out by the police themselves with no direction from the government!

## Conspiracy

Those on the left are sometimes accused of believing a "conspiracy theory" of politics—that polices are carefully and secretly worked out by leading figures in industry, the banks, the press and the Tory party, in other words the ruling class. They on the other hand

would have us believe that government decisions are taken purely according to the strength of the arguments, and the pressure of "public opinion".

The Ridley report tears their argument to shreds. It proves that our enemies do indeed plot and plan. All the attacks now being launched against the miners were planned six years ago; all Thatcher waited for was what she hoped would be the best opportunity. After backing away from a battle with the miners two years ago, she now thinks the hour

has come.

But "the best-laid plans of mice and men, (and Tory women) are gang aft aglay". The miners now have the chance to prove Ridley wrong and prove what has always been the case, that once the power of the working class has been mobilised in action, it is the Tories and their economic system which are "vulnerable", and that like Heath in 1974, Thatcher can be forced out of office.

By Pat Craven

# Productivity deal divides workforce

Last week, KENNY SUMMERSGILL a miner at Monktonhall colliery near Edinburgh described the working conditions down the pit. He now continues his picture of the life of a miner.

WHAT THEY call a 'day' shift is laughable. You get up at 5 o'clock to get down the pit for five to seven, and I'm not far away from it. It depends on the time the buses come. You've got to be there in time for the bus; if you miss it, that's it, you've lost a shift.

I leave the house at a quarter to six and I'm back at quarter past three in the afternoon. I'm away nine and a half hours, yet I only work for 7¼ hours. Your whole day is unsoiciable; you can't call that a day shift! The only real day shift is what we call the ham and egg shift, when you start at ten and finish at five. A day shift is when you get a decent night's sleep, not five hours and having to run home like a wee boy to be in your bed at 12 and asleep for five past.

The shift allowance is £10 a week for night shift, £2.50 for back shift, and for what they call dayshift you get £1.25 a week! When I was 17-18 I worked for an American firm making car exhausts, operating presses

and metal spinning machines. I was on two shifts, 6 am to 2 pm and 2 pm to 10 pm and I was getting a third of my wages extra, per week! And it didn't matter what shift you were on; the usual practice in engineering is a quarter or a third extra.

## Bonus system

Since I have been in the Coal Board, for nearly four years, that shift allowance hasn't gone up once. People in light industry, if they get a wage rise, their shift allowance goes up by the same percentage, but with the Coal Board it just stays the same. It must be the worst shift allowance in Britain if not in Europe.

The bonus system is laughable. At a big bonus pit, a faceman isn't working as hard as at a low bonus one. You've got these coal seams in parts of England that are easy-going, no stone to bore on the faceline, no bad roof, no problems. They are not dragging heavy "pigs" up and down the place. So the man who just

happens to be in a geologically better place does less work for more money, and the man that's in a geologically not so good a place is knocking his pan in for less money.

At Monktonhall, when we were told that we were the laziest miners in Britain by the media, we were actually the second biggest producer in the Scottish coalfield. So if we are the laziest, where does that put the rest of the coalfield?

The bonus system works according to a "contract" agreed through the union, that the men on a particular faceline will get so much per foot. The brushers get the same per foot; some of the men who don't actually work on the face get 75% of that rate. Men working on a line that hasn't got a contract get 65% of the pit average contract; the "on-cost" workers like me get 50% of that pit average; and the men on the surface get 40%.

## Short cuts

In my view everybody contributes towards a bonus. I must be contributing only 50% according to them, which is stupid. It's section against section and men working against men, and it's bound to be dangerous trying to short-cut all the time to make more money; the fastest way is not the safest way in a highly

dangerous job.

If we were paid a proper wage there would be no need for a bonus. We are not paid a proper wage whatever the papers say. They take one or two people's wages at one or two pits. What about the other thousands of men who are not getting near it? What about the surface workers? Some of them are going home with £60 a week. There are men who wouldn't come off the dole for £60 a week.

## Redundancy pay

The older men are told that they are going to get £1,000 for every year they have worked. That's the impression that's been given by the media, but they don't show you the small print, which says that it is subject to you having been earning £165 a week on average. And they are going to be asked to live off this money by the DHSS; they are going to lose their coal allowance and other benefits.

To live a decent life, you're going to need £5,000 a year in your hand; maybe if you're lucky you'll get a week at the seaside, things are going up so fast.

For every five years they've worked they're going to have enough to keep themselves on for a year—£30,000 is pennies nowadays when it comes down to it, six years wages, that's all. A lot of people will



NUM banner on People's March for Jobs shows history of struggle against coal bosses.

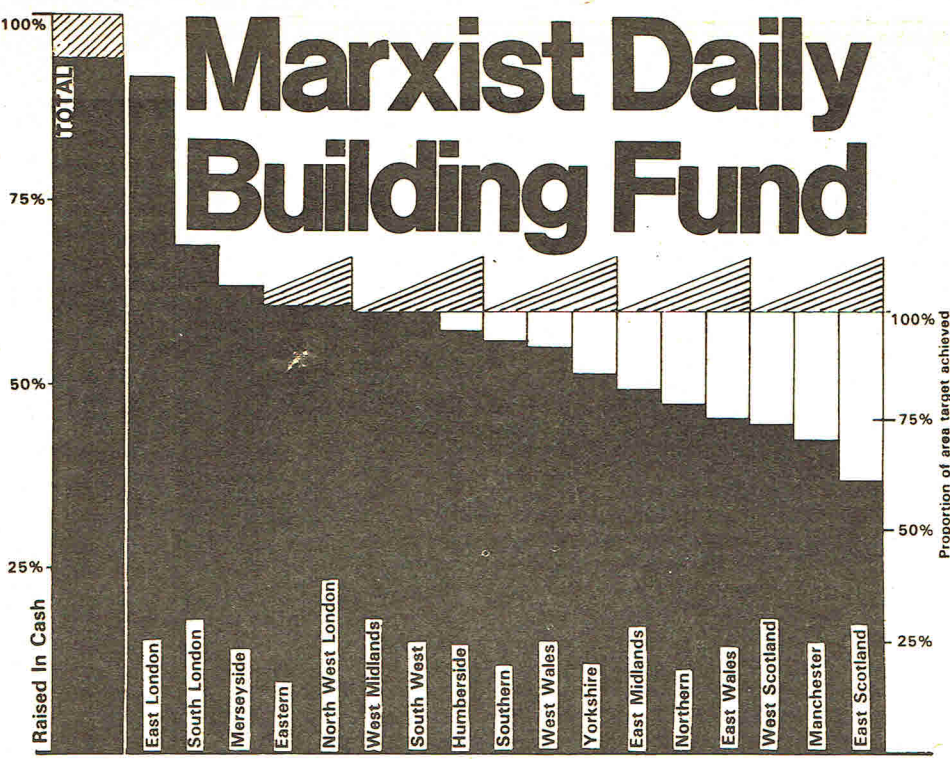
be wanting to use it to buy a car and to do this, that and the other, but what they don't realise is that when the money has gone, they are accountable to the DHSS about why they squandered it. They can turn round and say, "Oh you've got a car—well you can sell that so that you can live off the money".

After that you're on the

buero like everybody else, and your TV's not going to stay new, your carpet's not going to stay good, your clothes are going to wear out and you are going to start missing going down to the club and that week's holiday with your kids.

Continued next week





**THE MONEY still comes in. We now have a total of £140,495 in the fund. Two more areas in our chart have reached their target, South West and West Midlands.**

Which area is going to be next? We need to make sure that the remaining £9,505 is sent quickly. The move into new premises could be taking place very soon so we need the money now.

The Mirror Group of Newspapers is planning to launch another tabloid paper after the group goes public in July. The chairman, Clive Thornton, has apparently had talks with senior Labour Party and TUC figures to try to get them to back the paper

by pushing pro-Labour bodies to purchase shares.

We can have no confidence in so-called Labour papers like the Mirror to honestly represent the views of workers. We must ensure the production of a genuine workers' paper based on the active support and finance of workers themselves.

**Labour paper**

Last year a feasibility study into the prospect of a pro-Labour paper drawn up by Lord McCarthy estimated that £6,700,000 was needed to launch such a daily. It seems that the Labour Party and the TUC look at a daily workers' paper in capitalist financial terms rather than as an absolutely necessary in the fight against the Tories.

We are determined to pro-

duce a daily Marxist paper as soon as possible. As shown by the contributions to our fund that determination is matched by hard cash. We are not asking for £6m (though if anybody out there has it, we'll be glad to take it off your hands!) but £150,000 to purchase suitable premises.

There should be a large number of LPYS branches making donations at the National Conference this weekend. There have been a large number of donations again this week, including: £100 from A Wells, Humberside, on top of £20 previously given; £70 was sent in by J McGurk, Glasgow and £10 by Imtiaz Ahmed Bhalli, the President of the Pakistani People's Party in Holland; Kings Cross ASLEF branch have sent £25.

**FIIGHTING FUND** Total £27,363

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
Eastern	1701		2500
East Midlands	1369		2900
Humberside	1064		1500
London East	2580		3250
London West	891		2050
London South	2052		2650
Manchester & Lancs	1243		3520
Merseyside	1658		4000
Northern	1674		3350
Scotland East	975		2150
Scotland West	1165		3000
Southern	2485		4300
South West	813		2000
Wales East	1234		1880
Wales West	896		1650
West Midlands	1445		3500
Yorkshire	2631		4100
Others	1488		2000
<b>Total received</b>	<b>27362</b>		<b>50,000</b>

**THE TOTAL £27,363 raised in the last quarter was a tremendous achievement by all our readers and supporters. It shows that workers are prepared to help a cause which they see helps them. Our paper is more and more being taken up as the fighting banner of the workers' movement.**

An example of the willingness of workers to contribute financially to aid the struggle of the working class against exploitation is given in the special strike issue of *The Miner*, the journal of the NUM. "A man walked into NUM reception and simply handed over his unopened pay packet for the week. It contained £71". This is the sort of support that should mean victory for the miners.

In the course of the dispute *Militant* supporters have been actively raising money for the miners. Organising collections at

work, on the streets and at meetings to help give the NUM the resources to fight. Such activity is, of course, second nature to *Militant* supporters.

These are hectic times with activity almost every minute of the day. All the more reason why we need the money to be able to finance the increasing amount of work we have to do.

The target for the new quarter is £65,000 which should be achievable on the basis of our increased circulation. But it means that every area has to plan fund

raising activities straight away. Make sure events are organised and that every reader is involved.

The summer draw tickets are now available and should prove to be a successful fund raiser. Don't hang about. Organise now.

**By Nick Wrack**

**CONTRIBUTORS THIS WEEK INCLUDE:**  
 Helen Delaney, Linwood £20; D Staples, Gloucester LPYS £13.25; E Burgess, Swansea £10; E Charlesworth, Selly Oak TGWU £5; G Phillips, Swansea Councillor £5; K Donaghy Edinburgh UCATT £5; M Hanson, Sittingbourne £3.75; Jim Ryan, Dagenham EETPU £2; Retired Miner, Coventry £4.75; D Wilkinson, Nottingham NUM, 75p; S Taylor, Kent LPYS 70p.

**ADS**

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

**'Militant Turn Left for Workers' Unity and Socialism'**  
 T-shirts - £6.75 - white, yellow, navy, dark green.  
 Small 32" - 34" chest  
 Medium 34" - 36"  
 Large 36" - 38"  
 Extra large 40" - 42"  
 All proceeds to *Militant* Fighting Fund. All cheques and postal orders with size and colour preference to R Harris, 2 Dukes Brow, Blackburn, Lancs.

**'RAISE POLITICS at work!**  
 Buy a *Militant* mug." £1.50 + 45p p&p from 56 Hartley Avenue, Leeds LS6 2LP. Cheques payable to: Chris Hill. All proceeds to FF.

**WANTED**-Room in shared flat or house near centre of London. Contact Mike, 67 Ness Rd, Burwell Cambridge. Phone Newmarket 741471.

**World Socialist Books**

**BOOKLIST 1984**

**ACCOMMODATION WANTED** in South/Central or South East London. Contact '*Militant* Circulation'.

TO Chris and Nicki of Milton Keynes, a daughter, Elizabeth.

**CASSETTE TAPES** with two issues of *Militant* (one each side). Available fortnightly. £3.50 per quarter, £13 for year.

Also now available on cassette: all centre page articles from issues 668 - 692. Send either six blank C-90 cassettes or £5.40 payable to '*Militant* Tapes' to: '*Militant* Tapes', 25 Aston Terrace, Harehills, Leeds 8, or phone: (0532) 493440.

**GRAND LEEK** show includes bingo, "Go as you please" etc. The cultural event of LPYS conference. Saturday night, after *Militant* meeting, Southcliffe Hotel, opposite conference hall. Tickets £1.50 - limited number available, from Geordie comrades. Dress: flat caps and mufflers. Whippets must be left outside.

**HUNDREDS** of books and pamphlets available by Marx, Lenin, Engels, Trotsky, Luxemburg, Connolly, Plekhanov, Grant, Cannon, Gramsci and many others. Writings on economics, philosophy, politics, science, war and peace, nuclear weapons, socialism, women, international developments, etc.  
 Send for your copy of our new booklist. Available (free) from World Socialist Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

**Meetings**

**For events in your area contact your local Militant seller.**

**SUNDERLAND:** "A workers' MP on a worker's wage". Speakers: Dave Nellist MP, Stan Pearce (NUM, Wearmouth Lodge, personal capacity), a Labour Party Young Socialist. At the Transport Club, North Bridge Street, Sunderland on Wednesday 25 April, 7.15 pm.

**LINCOLN:** Marxist Discussion Group. Every Tuesday at the Victoria Pub, Union Road, Lincoln, 7.30 pm. For further details tel: (0522) 27922.

**THANET:** *Militant* Readers Meetings are held on alternate Monday evenings. For further details phone (0843) 291293.

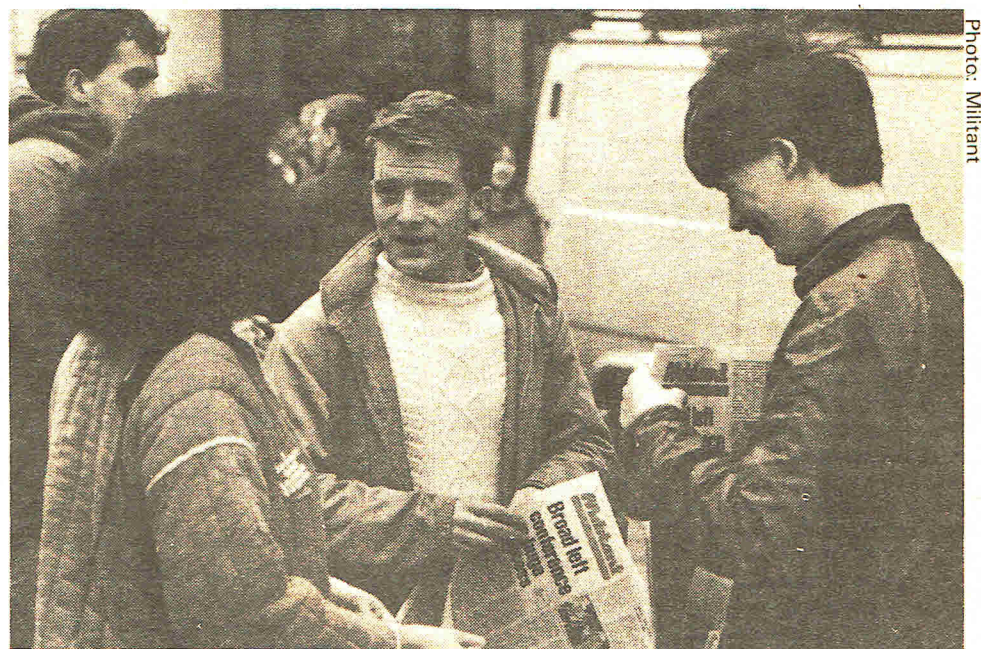
**HARTLEPOOL:** Marxist discussion groups. Held weekly. Ring Malcolm Fallow, Peterlee 867789.

**DONCASTER:** *Militant* Discussion Groups. Every Thursday, The Woolpack, Market Place, 7.30 pm. 19 April - *Militant* and the Trade Unions. 26 April - Socialist programme for Labour.

**SRI LANKA:** The tasks today. New pamphlet from the Nava Samaja Party (UK Branch). Obtainable from World Socialist Books (see address below). Price 75p plus 10p postage.

"The Workers Press - Lenin and Trotsky". £1 including postage, bulk copies over 10 at 75p. Available from World Socialist Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

**SELLING Militant**



Selling on Liverpool streets.

**LAST WEEK we heard unconfirmed reports that there are a few readers who are still not selling Militant!**

A spokesperson for the paper immediately issued a statement pointing out that these were clearly scurrilous rumours concocted by agents of capitalism in a calculated and desperate attempt to discredit *Militant* and its supporters.

Anyone who has read even a few issues of *Militant* knows the unique coverage it gives to big events in the labour movement. Every reader can see why *Militant* should be read by all workers. Take BLOC conference: the biggest meeting of rank and file activists for

years. *Militant* was the only paper to give a comprehensive review of this historic gathering.

Where too could workers find better reports of Liverpool council or the miners' strike? Our paper is written by the activists, by the councillors and by the miners involved in the struggles. It is the best antidote to the poison of the Fleet Street press.

**Record sales**

That is why we keep getting news of record sales. On the Liverpool demonstration there were some tremendous examples. Superseller Pete Tyson had already chalked up 62 the last time we saw him. A comrade who only started selling a few weeks ago, Chris Johnson, came

up from Wrexham and sold 33.

Meanwhile in the mining area of Blackwood in Gwent the locals snapped up 150 copies when they held a demonstration last week. In fact all mining areas have reported increased sales.

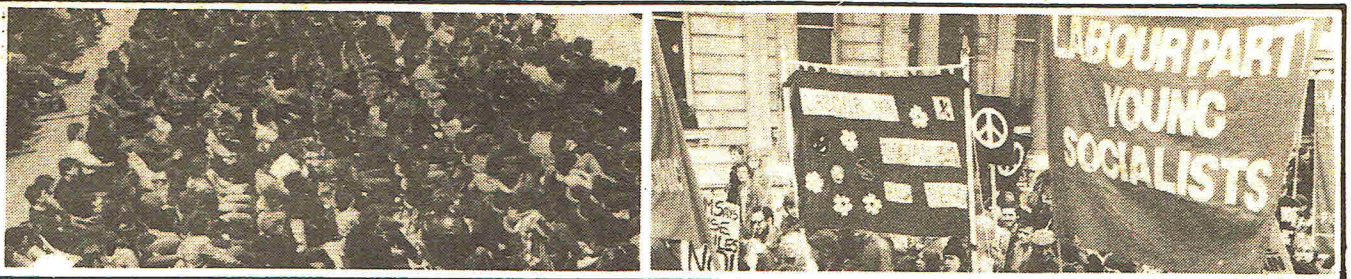
If you are not selling *Militant* to your friends and workmates it can only be because you are waiting to find out how. Take a "sale or return" bulk order every week by returning the form on the back page.

If you would like to help but don't know who to sell to, write in and we will even fix that for you. If you agree with our ideas, don't keep them to yourself—help build *Militant*.

**By Andy Beadle**



# LPYS 23rd Annual Conference '84



# Socialist ideas will win young workers

**SINCE THE Marxists took the leadership of the LPYS in 1970, its history has been one of consistent campaigning on socialist ideas, and is now the largest active socialist youth movement in Europe.**

From the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment in the late seventies to the Youth Trades Union Rights Campaign of today, the LPYS has taken up every issue of working class youth and moulded them into a fighting programme to take on the bosses and change society.

Over the years, as the bosses' system has plunged deeper into crisis—a demise the Marxists in the LPYS predicted—attendances at our demonstrations, rallies and conferences have grown and grown. The LPYS were the first to campaign against YOP schemes (the forerunner to YTS) and in 1982 we organised a magnificent 3,000-strong lobby of Parliament. This shook the Tories—imagine what it must have been like for the then Employment Minister, Norman Tebbit, to be confronted by 3,000 organised young people.

## 10,000 marched

Events like the lobby and numerous other local initiatives were instrumental in getting many trade unions to take up the issue of cheap labour YTS schemes and to start programmes of union recruitment amongst trainees.

Our national demonstrations have grown in strength. We organised the first national demonstration against the Thatcher government in February 1980. The demonstration in Liverpool in October 1982 marked a turning point in our history, when over 10,000 young people from all over Britain marched against the Tories and for socialism and a future.

Local and regional LPYS demonstrations have been hugely successful—the latest being the

By John Hird  
(LPYS National Committee,  
Northern Region)



LPYS lobby Parliament in 1982.

3,000 miners, their wives and supporters who joined a local LPYS march in Mansfield on 7 April.

Amongst young workers, the influence of the LPYS is already deep-rooted. The programme outlined in our *Young Workers' Charters* throughout the past 14 years has been adopted by an increasing number of trade unions and their youth sections. At every union youth conference that takes place, members of the LPYS are putting forward our ideas and getting support. In unions which do not yet have youth sections it is our comrades who are leading the campaigns to get them set up.

The depth of support for the ideas of the LPYS amongst trade union youth was shown at the Young Workers' Assembly held in Manchester at the end of last year, when over 2,000 delegates and visitors attended the launching of the *Draft Charter for Young Workers*. At the assembly the authentic voice of young trade union activists was heard in an



LPYS in the forefront of the fight for jobs and services in Liverpool, 29 March.

Photo: Ben Eastop

organised fashion for the first time in decades.

Every attack the Tories now make on working class youth is met by bigger and bolder campaigns by the LPYS. They cannot keep us down! Most regions of the LPYS now hold street meetings and theatre which can attract hundreds in city centres. The Young Tories of course, are being hammered out of sight in every public debate they enter into with us. "One wonders why they bother, doesn't one?" Let us hope they continue to accept our invitations to debate.

Our 'opposition' represent their class well. Last year *The Times* publicised extracts from an enquiry into public schools and top universities. It said of Exeter University: "There is a group that is well heeled, flourishes cheque books around and indulges in vandalism. These become leading lights in the Federation of Conservative Students. Some time ago they hired a White Rolls Royce and drove it ostentatiously around the campus to demonstrate that some students have lots of money."

## Profound changes

In the real world, where the Tories have just cut £3.10 from the Supplementary Benefit of under 21 year olds, young people are learning from harsh experience that there is no future under the Tories.

The *Times Educational Supplement* recently let it slip that apart from a short period in the 1960s, young people have always been at the sharp end of society. Talking about the 1980s, it said: "The reduced spending power of young people is in itself going to bring profound changes in youth culture, the music, the clothes, the tribal customs, which commerce has con-

## The LPYS stands for

**OVER THE Easter weekend, the LPYS will be spelling out its policies and demands that can end the intolerable problems of capitalism faced by youth. The main demands of the LPYS are:**

- ★ End unemployment—the right to work for all.
- ★ Reverse the cuts—for a massive programme of public works in education, housing, the health service and public transport.
- ★ For a 35-hour week with no loss of pay.
- ★ For a £100 minimum wage for all.
- ★ Trade union rights for YTS trainees.

- ★ For decent grants for students, especially FE students.
- ★ Support for workers' struggles internationally.
- ★ Cut the waste of arms spending—for unilateral nuclear disarmament.

Above all, the LPYS demand the nationalisation of the top 200 or so monopolies, including the banks and finance houses, that control 80–85% of the economy. Nationalised under workers' control with compensation only on the basis of proven need, this would provide a firm foundation for a socialist planned economy upon which the above demands could firmly rest.'

jured from the short-lived youthful affluence of the past 30 years."

We would anticipate that the decisive change will come in young people's attitude towards politics too. As the ideas of socialism become the property of the majority of young people, through their own experiences and the corresponding work of the LPYS, politics will cease to be seen as boring and the pursuit of old men, but increasingly be seen as the means with which to change society.

This process is well on the way. Young workers in struggle are realising that their organisations have got to be used and transformed if any decent future is to be guaranteed. In the NUM dispute it is the young miners who are to the fore in the struggle to defend jobs. In a few weeks of struggle miners—who were at school during the strike against Heath in the early '70s—have absorbed the lessons of that strike and are putting them into action. Youth Committees

have been set up and young miners are relearning and putting into practice the vast experience and traditions of the NUM.

The LPYS has got a tremendous response with bulletins and meetings linking the political and industrial wings of the movement together through the youth. In Britain today where whole industries are devastated, not a single job is safe. When the axe falls and redundancies come, we are always the first to go on the basis of the 'last-in, first-out' system. There is no escape from the crisis.

But we will only win through if we are prepared to struggle. The sky is the limit for the LPYS. We can and will grow rapidly because the bosses' system is finished. Yet this will only be on the condition that we get out there and campaign—although the conditions exist for a mass socialist youth movement, it is not automatic. So organise and begin the fightback now.

## Build YS branches

**EVERY TOWN and city in the country must have a Young Socialist branch. Not just a few individuals meeting every so often in a small room chatting about the problems of the world, but an active, strong group of fighters for socialism.**

This can only be achieved by getting out onto the streets and putting the ideas of socialism directly to other young workers. This is the way the LPYS will be built.

After a long period of inactivity Dundee West LPYS was recently re-formed. Although having only

a handful of activists, the branch was determined to build itself into an active, campaigning body. We decided to undertake a series of large-scale public events.

First we organised a public debate with the Young Tories. Leaflets were produced and over 100 posters were flyposted. The response was overwhelming. Well over 60 people turned up to see the Young Tories' arguments demolished by Frances Curran, LPYS NC and Jim Bennett, Dundee West LPYS chairman. Seven of the audience signed up immediately for the LPYS, and the rest gave us a periphery from which to look for new recruits.

We followed up the debate by launching a Youth Trades Union



Scottish LPYS campaign against the Tories.

Photo: Militant

Rights Campaign petition in Dundee. A day of action was organised in the city square with a stall, YS literature, YTURC peti-

tions, copies of *Socialist Youth* and leaflets, advertising the YS's next public meeting.

We didn't know what to expect.

We were flabbergasted. In under four hours over 1,000 people signed the petition and £155 was collected to help in the campaign. Many young people promised to come to our public meeting.

## Firmly established

So enthused by the response of the people of Dundee to the YS, we decided that we'd be out again the following Saturday and leaflet Dundee Utd's European Cup tie.

The LPYS is now firmly established in Dundee with over 40 members, and is proud to stand firmly behind the policies of the YS nationally. See you at LPYS national conference!

By Malcolm Clark  
(Dundee West LPYS)



## LPYS 23rd Annual Conference '84

**YOUNG WORKERS** have borne the brunt of the Tories' Thatcherite policies. Mass unemployment has hit youth hard—half a million under-18s are on the dole, along with a million 18-24 year olds. Instead of investing in the nation's future, the Tories are stockpiling the scrapheaps of wasted talent.

Mass unemployment is bad enough, but with it comes a sordid array of related social problems as demoralised and desperate youth look for a way out. Serious crimes increased 30% during the first three years of Thatcher. There's a serious crime every 10 seconds. Alcoholism is on the increase with over 3 million excessive drinkers in England and Wales alone, mostly 18-24 year olds. Glue sniffing is still rampant. One of the worst scourges on the council estates is deadly heroin. The LPYS must cut through this morass with class demands that can rally young workers to the banner of socialism—the banner of hope and a real future.

## Drugs of despair

**THE DEATHLY grip of heroin addiction has taken its hold of working class youth. There are now nearly 150,000 addicts and the figure is rising by 40% a year.**

My home town of Hastings is a popular holiday resort, but the recent murder of Gary Collins, a suspected drugs dealer, highlighted the darker side of our town. Mike Bloxham, a leading advisor at Hastings Unemployed and Claimants Advice Centre told me about the town's drug problem:

"Youth between 14-20 are the main users, and after that they become addicts. I wouldn't say that

the unemployed are the main users, but the sense of hopelessness that is prevalent amongst the unemployed, the low paid and their children is a contributory factor.

"You must see drugs as any other business. A few people make an awful lot of money, and an awful lot of people have a lot of misery. Those who want to blame the user because they look unpleasant, unfriendly or whatever—remember they don't make the profits, they don't manufacture the drugs and they don't sell them—they are the very last link in the chain of someone else's profit making."

By Tony Georgiou  
(Hastings and Rye LPYS)

**THE HOUSING schemes of Strathclyde have had their fill of heroin. It has claimed the lives of eight young addicts in less than a year, including two 16 year old school leavers.**

On the huge Castlemilk scheme, eight people are fighting for their sight after injecting heroin infected with dirty yeast. The pushers don't care about the consequences of tampering with their sales, as long as they make the money.

On the Drumchapel scheme an addict was thrown to his death because of an unpaid debt.

Despite their pious statements, the Tories have no answer—in fact they are to blame. They have pushed up the hopelessness of mass unemployment, they have cut back the customs control staff which has given the gangsters a wider scope to bring in heroin. They claim 'there's not enough funds' for effective drug control or rehabilitation centres, but we can see where their priorities lie—there's unlimited resources for the police to attempt to break the miners' strike.

By Jackie Galbraith  
(Chair, Scottish LPYS)

## 'We need homes now'

**HOUSING IS a chronic problem for young people. House building is at an all-time low. Under the Tories it has fallen by a third, the lowest figure since the dark days of the 1920s.**

In my area of Walsall the situation for 16-19 year olds is getting steadily worse. Recently the Housing Associations, Neighbourhood Offices and Social Services have been forced to turn youth away because there simply are no flats, hostels or even rooms for them.

The local Citizens Advice Bureau have launched an appeal asking house holders with a spare room to take in one of these young homeless. But while this highlights

the problem, it is no real solution.

For those 'lucky' enough to have somewhere to live, the problems are mounting up. Since Thatcher came to power, rents have doubled and mortgage repayments have gone up by a quarter. 1,207,000 homes are unfit for habitation. 994,000 lack one basic amenity, like a bath or toilet. Two and a half million homes have serious dampness. These sort of problems affect 5 million people.

As far as big business is concerned of course, there's no money to be made in house building so houses don't get built. They can make greater profits by investing their money into building office blocks, warehouses—most of which stay empty for years on end—and property speculation while they sit back and wait for better times.

But workers and especially young people can't afford to sit back and wait. We need decent, cheap housing now.

By Katherine Armstrong  
(Aldridge/Brownhills LPYS)



Mick Hogan, LPYS representative in Merseyside, addresses the mass demonstration in support of Liverpool City Council on 29 March.

# ORGANISE AN

## Trainees get unionised

**ONLY 300,000 of the 460,000 places on the Youth Training Scheme had been taken up by the end of 1983. People are realising that these schemes are a swindle and are not prepared to be taken in by them.**

The Tories, angered by their YTS flop, are retaliating. Careers officers have been ordered to report on people who "unreasonably" refuse a YTS place so the DHSS can cut their benefit.

The Government are also cutting the number of places on what they call *Mode B1* schemes from 89,000 to 70,000. These are the community schemes with a high proportion of training such as the Arklow Project in Deptford, South London, and the Metro Action Scheme in Doncaster, which are both set to close. The Tories want to concentrate on *Mode A* schemes, the YTS places which provide cheap labour for private employers.

But Youth Trainees are fighting back. There has been a magnificent response to the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign, fully backed by the LPYS, and on some schemes trainees are organising into unions.

One such group is some 16 year old trainees in Durham, who have joined NUPE and are campaigning for a better deal for YTS. They attended a five day union steward course in Newcastle where they drew up a petition, leaflet, posters and press release about their campaign.

Their petition calls for:

★ A £40 per week minimum payment instead of the government's paltry £25.

★ Four weeks holiday a year.



LPYS support rights for YTS trainees.

★ Free travel to and from YTS jobs.

★ A guaranteed job at the end of the scheme.

NUPE are backing the petition and they have been collecting signatures at a stall in Durham town centre. NUPE is also making a video involving the trainees to help other unions carry out similar work.

Kaye Alderson and Sheila Hope are on a scheme at Dragon Enterprises and are both 16 year old NUPE stewards.

Sheila said: "At present our training on the scheme is pathetic and pointless. With so many young people unemployed we feel we have no future—we must stand up for our rights."

A great deal of organising of YTS trainees still has to be undertaken. Union organised schemes should link up and a campaign begun to recruit YTS trainees to the union, based on clear demands similar to that of the Durham petition or YTURC.

Above all, it is essential the trade unions back these moves both regionally and nationally. Employers will have to listen and concede demands if the trainees have strong union backing behind them.

By Fred Gent  
(Northern LPYS Regional committee)

## Young miners lead in closure battles

**A LOT of nonsense is written about young workers today. The Tory press would have us believe that all young people are interested in is "getting on", and are rejecting the trade unions and socialist ideas.**

But the fact is that young workers today are at the forefront of building the trade unions and take the lead in class battles. This is particularly true in the current miners' strike.

If you believe the newspapers, the young miners could have let us down. Hundred percent mortgages, interest free loans over seven years etc—all these things might have turned young miners away from this dispute.

## At forefront of fight

Far from it, however. This dispute has totally restored my faith in younger miners. My pit, Kellingley, is reported to be the youngest pit in Britain with an average age of around 34. The 2,000 plus miners see their pit with a life of up to 99 years. Yet the pit is solid behind the fight against pit closures.

It's not only at Kellingley. When we picketed Lancashire and Notts it was the young lads who refused to cross the picket line and stood with us. Some of the older men treated us differently. One asked: "Where were you in 1961 when they shut our pits?" We did explain—most of us were only



## FE students link with Labour

**YOUTH IN Further Education colleges are overwhelmingly working class. They come from the factories and shipyards, on day and block release courses. They come in on YTS or 'O' and 'A' level courses.**

**By Cheryl Varley**  
(Full-time Liverpool NUS  
organiser in FE sector)

Nursery facilities and higher meal subsidies were won in Central College by a campaign by the students, backed up by Labour city councillors and the trade union members within the college.

Labour Club members at North East Tech have also waged a campaign for higher meal subsidies. For this they've leafleted the college, called mass meetings, flyposted, held meetings with the different trade unionists in the college and invited Labour city councillors down to the college to speak.

The students then met with Labour councillors before the Board of Governors meeting at which they won the increased meal subsidy from 25p to 75p per day, the first reform students at North East Tech have won.

Youth in the colleges get support from local councillors and trade unionists because they've won their respect. Labour Club banners from Liverpool colleges were seen flying high on the NGA picket lines at Warrington and the CPSA 'GCHQ' demonstration. Students have been actively involved in supporting the council.

We invite trade unionists to speak at the college. LPYS members in the colleges have organised mass meetings of YTS trainees, addressed by local trade unionists. From these meetings a 'Liverpool YTS Council' has now been formed, with YTS delegates, Labour city councillors and trade unionists present. It is presently campaigning for a free bus pass for all trainees to and from college and work.

Youth in Liverpool are inspired by socialist councillors prepared to risk losing their livelihoods or being sent to prison because they believe in fighting for socialism. It's obvious to youth within the colleges that we need a society based on need not profit and that's why youth in the colleges will and are turning to Labour, who, in Liverpool, are offering a lead.

As such they do not get the kind of financial and parental backing afforded to many University and Polytechnic students. Resources for Universities and Polytechnics are of course under severe attack from the Tories and must be fought, yet the FE sector does not even get these paltry amounts.

FE students rely on discretionary awards. In a Tory controlled area you probably wouldn't get a grant, indeed you are usually asked to pay a percentage of your fees. Even in Labour controlled areas, the grant can be as low as £25 a year.

As FE students find it difficult to live on fresh air, many drop courses to get under the "15½ hour" rule—so they can claim social security benefit. Even then, as was witnessed recently, if you study more than 15½ hours a week—ie do homework—the DHSS can stop your benefit, because you are staying at home studying instead of out on the streets looking for non-existent jobs.

The facilities in FE colleges are the worst in the education sector. Almost all that FE students are offered is an overcrowded canteen. FE Student Unions don't even have a telephone, and are lucky if they have a broom cupboard as an office.

However, these conditions can be fought. Because of the campaigning work done by LPYS members in tech colleges in Liverpool, youth have begun to fight back for better conditions, higher meal subsidies and higher grants.

Militant supporters in the colleges have demonstrated in action that the only way to win any reforms is by linking with the labour and trade union movement.

## Pickets and police

**SOME PEOPLE have said the Tories should keep an open door for talks with the miners. Well they do—the door to a police cell.**

**By Richard Clarkson**  
(Prince of Wales NUM  
& Wakefield LPYS)

premises other than our own place of work. All this means is that until the court proceedings are over, we will only be able to picket power stations, docks and rail yards. Picketing is like a bug—once it gets hold of you there is no stopping you.

The funny thing is that this happened just a few days before MacGregor accused Scargill of using Nazi tactics! It's quite clear in my mind who the ones are using Nazi tactics.

The Tories have consciously beefed up the powers of the police, and it is young workers, especially young trade unionists, who are on the receiving end.

The Tories have increased police powers, not only to deal with the social consequences of their policies, but to be used—as we saw in the NGA dispute and currently with the miners' fight to attempt to break the power of the trade union movement. The Tories and the capitalist class know that the organised labour movement is the real force that stands between them and their aims to drive down workers' living standards, to protect the vast profits of the wealthy.

I was one of 18 pickets arrested because we climbed over a fence at the end of a public footpath. A policeman told us we'd be likely to cause a breach of the peace if we did. We climbed over the fence, virtually straight into the back of a police van.

It is not just the nature of our 'crime' that is disturbing, but also the incidents afterwards. We were put in a prison bus, our photographs were taken. I tried to resist and had my arms held down. We were detained at Mansfield station for nine hours while a special court was arranged for us. During that time we were taken individually for a 'cozy little chat' with two CID men.

We were asked questions like—Who is organising the picketing? How can you afford the petrol money? How much are you getting paid? What do you think about Scargill having a big car? And, ominously, what are your politics?

After the brief court appearance we were released on bail, conditional to us not visiting any NCB

# D FIGHT BACK

The LPYS must take to the streets to get its message across to thousands of young workers. Photo: John Smith (IFL)



Young miners on the picket line at Port Talbot steel works.

Photo: Dave Sinclair

seven at the time and still at school!

The lads who are fighting this battle are not 52 or 53 looking for retirement or redundancy. They are the youth, fighting for a future. The issues are not only pay and pit closures. We also want early retirement for mineworkers.

When you see what happens to miners, when someone's father dies a few months after retiring you can understand why we are determined on these issues. Working down the pit a miner can expect to live four or five years less than the average. Yet all that retiring miners get from the NCB is £500.

People know what we are fighting for. We have had donations from every union you can mention and even individual donations from hard-up pensioners. They know that we are fighting for jobs. I have two sons and I hope that they have more sense than to work down the pit. But if they want to, or have to with today's unemployment it's up to me to make sure there's a job there to go to.

It's issues like these that give young miners their loyalty to the union. Whatever the union decides, the lads will abide by it. However, the union still has a duty to educate the youth. Let them realise it's not a one-off fight—we are in part of a class war.

For my part I have always backed the Labour Party, along with my father and mother. But I can remember watching the telly one Thursday night. It showed several people in a tap room saying "The Labour Party this" and "The Labour Party that". Then a voice said: "Are you a bar room Labour man? If this is you, join the Labour Party". So I did.

### Get involved

Other workers should look to their own conscience; it's not a question of paying the £7 to join. It's a question of getting involved. I would like to see a big influx into the Labour Party and the Labour Party Young Socialists. Not only at our pit but throughout the coalfield and all industry.

In effect there are still not enough working people who get off their rear end. Until we get the youth involved we won't be able to win the full fight against unemployment.

Even now it takes the threat of a strike or an overtime ban before we get a full turn out at union meetings. The *Young Miner* meetings are an excellent idea. We need to go out to our young members. In five to ten years time the running of the union will be on their shoulders. The leadership will be in their hands and they need to step forward now and groom themselves for that job.

Being active is something personal with me. I don't want my sons to look back at this period and say: "Why did you not do anything to stop the Thatcher government?" I would feel embarrassed. That's why I am fighting pit closures now and that's why I'm in the Labour Party.

**By Colin McDonald**  
(Kellingley NUM,  
Strike Committee)



# Reagan's war in Central America

**AT TIMES of crisis, the ruling class abandons its usual methods of deception and hypocrisy, and speaks to the workers in the language of force, as in the massive mobilisation of police in the miners' strike.**

In both home and foreign policy, the class nature of the state is shown, as in the crisis over Nicaragua, against whom American imperialism has been waging "illegal" and covert war. These actions, and the speeches of the American leadership, especially President Reagan, show clearly the class interests of the capitalists which the state—the armed forces and the police—have been set up to defend. Their interests predominate and determine policy.

At times when fundamental interests are not threatened, the capitalists can hypocritically pretend to stand for agreement through the "dis" United Nations; at times of crisis they speak the language of force and brutality. Their class interests come openly to the fore.

## Other means

Their attitude has nothing at all to do with morality, peace, freedom, the rights of small nations, or any of the other lies which are put forward to fool the masses into supporting their own ruling class.

The great German military theoretician Clausewitz once declared "War is the continuation of politics by other means". Foreign policy is the continuation of home policy. What determines the policy of the different nations and Alliances is the class interests of the countries involved.

It is not a question of honour, democracy, or freedom which determines the policy of the imperialist powers, but the naked interests of profits, privilege, prestige and power. Lenin and Trotsky painstakingly explained that the policy of the imperialist powers was determined by the need for colonies, raw materials, markets, spheres of influence and spheres of investment.

In Central America what determines the policy of American capitalism is the strategic and economic interests of the United States. Central America was virtually a colony of the USA and has been dominated and bled white for generations militarily and economically. These are the famous 'Banana Republics' so contemptuously referred to by the spokesmen of American capitalism.

The consequence is hunger and poverty for the big majority of the population. All American presidents, both Democratic and Republican, backed Somoza, the brutal and bloody former dictator of Nicaragua. They are not in the least concerned about democracy or the hunger and poverty which their support for Somoza's narrow clique meant to the overwhelming majority of the population of Nicaragua.

## By Ted Grant

Now all the peoples of Central America are trying to free themselves from the domination of the dictatorial cliques, which have nothing in common with democracy or freedom, but which represent the landlords and capitalists who in turn act as agents for the American imperialist multi-nationals. This is leading to revolution throughout Central America.

## U.S. puppets

Consequently where the US puppets have been defeated in Nicaragua and are in the process of being defeated in El Salvador, Reagan is preparing open intervention against the peoples of these countries. They are not at war with Nicaragua, yet agents of the CIA are mining international waters on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of Nicaragua, to the danger of neutral and all shipping that uses this area. So much for the freedom of the seas so hypocritically preached by British and American imperialism in the past!

Reagan has been given enthusiastic support by British capital and its spokesmen. *The Times* has printed an article by Lord Home, a former Tory Prime Minister

bullying and blustering language, should have declared that "force" was part of the foreign policy of the United States. "Military force, either direct or indirect, must remain an available part of America's foreign policy" he declared in a speech defending the mining of Nicaraguan waters.

In reality that is the doctrine of all the powers, and in a world dominated by class divisions and imperialists and capitalist profit-making, that is inevitable. They are not piling up arms to roll Easter eggs but in defence of the profits of the powerful multi-national monopolies. Despite the collapse of its empire, weakened British imperialism sent armed forces abroad 48 times since 1945.

Lord Home comments, "Once such Western interests are identified, the important thing is that they should be defined with preci-

**"Military force, either direct or indirect, must remain an available part of America's foreign policy."—Reagan**

sion, so that the Soviet leaders understand the limits they cannot exceed without calling forth forceful retaliation..."

He then goes on to say "if Soviet coups on the pattern of Angola and Grenada are to be anticipated and avoided, it will be necessary for



The Nicaraguan army commissioning new tanks.

Photo: Pietro Gigli (IFL)

pressed by Thatcher and Tory politicians in Parliament, in the press, radio and TV. It was the Russians who had flouted "international law". Yet Reagan is making all the preparations when his puppets fail, to intervene militarily against the government of Nicaragua and the guerrilla movement in El Salvador.

Probably they will provoke a war between Honduras and Nicaragua to give a pretext for intervention. This is despite the fact that the leaders of the revolution

America cannot be tolerated by American imperialism, despite the fact that its leaders have leaned over backwards to try and placate them. It is not the Sandinista government who are intervening in Central America, but the CIA—mining international waters and arming their hirelings, the remnants of Somoza's armed thugs to murder, maim, destroy and invade Nicaragua.

It is Reagan who is intervening in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador in an endeavour to prop up the rotten capitalist-landlord regimes. He is preparing to invade Nicaragua if re-elected, or even before the election, if he thinks imperialism can get away with it without mass opposition from American workers and people.

*The Times* was too hasty. The editor must be biting his tongue. When the CIA involvement, in an election year, was exposed in the United States, the Senate voted by 84 votes to 12 to condemn the CIA's mining as illegal and without Congressional sanction even though secretly given written consent by Reagan. Even the right wing Republican Barry Goldwater declared that this was "an act of war on the sly".

## Cannibalistic

As *The Times* elegantly remarked, "It is a dirty war or a dirty peace in Central America, in which legalistic criteria and solutions can offer only a tenuous discipline until the real balance of power has been established." That is the cannibalistic voice of big business when fundamental issues of policy, their friends' interests and profits are at stake.

The right wing leaders of the Labour Party, and the Tribune MPs look to the "dis" United Nations and the International Court to settle disputes. The crude and open brandishment of military power by Reagan, the open doctrine of "force" as an indispensable part of foreign policy answers this argument completely. The vested interests of the powers and the greater power of the biggest ones shows that the road to peace does not lie in the forum of the United Nations.

Not even small conflicts are settled here. Since 1945 there have been only 17 days of peace in the world. 25 million at least have been killed in wars. Not only chemical and nuclear

weapons have been piled up, but the greatest array of "conventional" weapons in history. One million million pounds are now spent by the world on war every 2 years three months.

If only "conventional" weapons were used in a world war, whole continents would be reduced to rubble. Civilisation could disappear within weeks or months. Nuclear world war would mean the destruction of all life on the planet, including the plants.

## Fabulous profits

Even unilateral nuclear disarmament would not render any country safe. While supporting unilateral nuclear disarmament as a step forward, Marxists explain that it is not a solution to the problems of war or peace. This depends on the relationship between the classes. Like all the other problems in society, the solution lies in the hands of the working class of all countries. If the money spent on arms was spent on productive purposes, the whole world could be transformed.

The military industry complex dominates the economy of the capitalist countries. They decide the policies, with more power than the President or Prime Minister or all the members of the Cabinet. They benefit in the arms race by making fabulous profits. For example, in America the defence department was charged \$1,075 for a 67 cent bolt and \$2,000 for a 13 cent nut to go with it. Standing in the way of changing the world is the class nature of society.

If Britain had a socialist democracy, where the working class controlled society, then it would paralyse the Stalinist regimes in Moscow, Eastern Europe and Asia. The working class and peasants would respond to an internationalist appeal and overthrow their bureaucratic rulers. On the other hand, US imperialists wouldn't have the excuse of opposing dictatorship and totalitarianism to disguise their naked support for private capital and profit. They too would be paralysed.

The collapse of capitalism in any important country in the world and the democratic rule of the workers would lead to a socialist United States of Europe and a socialist world federation. That is the only "practical" road to peace. All other roads lead to disaster.

Photo: Jenny Matthews



A Nicaraguan military patrol returning from the Honduran border.

who says, in brutal language, what in reality is the policy of all imperialist powers when their fundamental vested interests are threatened.

## Military force

He advocates collective intervention of the NATO powers against socialist revolution in any part of the Colonial world, using the pretext of "Soviet subversion". He denounces "the Soviet Communist doctrine that the use of force is legitimate to achieve a political aim." It is rather amusing therefore that the day before the article appeared, Reagan in crude,

countries situated in areas of strategic consequence to make contingency plans". (Angola and Grenada saw the uprisings of their peoples to liberate themselves from imperialism; in the case of Angola from Portuguese imperialism and landlordism and capitalism at the same time).

What Lord Home is advocating in reality is the preparation to intervene against movements of the colonial peoples with bloody brutality and "force". Just remember the campaign when they invaded Afghanistan! The two inch headlines in the press, and the "moral outrage" ex-



## Sri Lanka, Chile, South Africa

Sri Lanka - class unity  
against dictatorship

THE LAST four weeks have seen increasing political instability in Sri Lanka. The Jayawardene government's policy of military repression of the northern minority Tamils has been savagely intensified.

"22 people have been shot dead by the army in two days of disturbances in the Jaffna region" reported the *Financial Times* (12 April). Barbaric brutalities have once again been committed by the armed forces on innocent Tamil civilians.

The Nava Sama Samaja Party (NSSP) although still banned, continues to agitate for withdrawal of the armed forces from the north and their replacement by democratically elected

By an NSSP member

defence committees. We unflinchingly support the right of self-determination (including separation) for the Tamil-speaking people.

Since July's massacres thousands of Tamil youth have, in desperation at the lack of an alternative, joined Tamil terrorist groups, driven by a burning hatred of the regime that has brought untold suffering for their people. Despite their

heroism, these methods of individual terrorist assassinations, ambushes and hit-and-run attacks do not raise the consciousness or active involvement of the Tamil masses in the liberation struggle.

Further, their tactics have resulted in intensified military repression in the north and given the government an opportunity to once again whip up racialism amongst the Sinhalese and incite racial attacks against Southern Tamils. The methods threaten to cut across the growing working class struggle developing in the rest of the island and drive the Sinhalese masses into the camp of reaction.

### Massive strike

For the first ten days of April, 600,000 plantation workers, the biggest workforce on the island, struck for higher wages; the biggest challenge to the government since the 1980 general strike, in a conscious organised mass strike against their government employers.

By such class warfare methods the Sri Lankan government must be overthrown and a government of workers' parties established. The right-wing plantation unions, led by cabinet minister S. Thondaman, called off the strike after only some of the demands had been met. The NSSP has

struggled to build a revolutionary leadership within the trade unions, and unite all workers on a class basis.

### War hysteria

There have been a number of other strikes by Sinhalese workers and peasants. There is seething discontent at high inflation, corrupt inefficient government and the economic and political impasse of Sri Lankan capitalism. State hospitals have only 50% of the number of doctors required, and they are threatening industrial action for their economic demands.

Society is on a knife edge. All eyes are now on the May Day march which threatens to become a mass show of opposition to the government. However the attacks of Tamil terrorists and the reported armed training of 5,000 Tamil youth in South India allows Jayawardene to use the threat of an Indian army invasion and whip up nationalist war hysteria amongst the Sinhalese.

The only way forward lies in building on the present strikes and struggles to develop a mass movement to bring down this government and its replacement by a government of workers' parties representing both Tamil and Sinhalese.

A separate Tamil state formed on the basis of capitalism could not solve



Demonstration protests at Sri Lanka government inspired attacks on Tamils. July 1983.

the problems of unemployment, housing development or of accommodating the one million plantation workers who at present live in the South of the island.

### Force out Jayawardene

An Indian invasion would only serve the interests of Indian capitalism and would result in the establishment of a military dictatorship both in the north and south of the island. Capitalism offers the miserable perspective of increasing military repression and racial pogroms, economic misery and civil war for the mass of Sinhala and Tamil workers and peasants.

The socialist revolution is the only way for this nightmare to be avoided, and the only way to create a society free from national and racial oppression, homelessness, unemployment and hunger.

★ Lift the ban on NSSP and JVP

★ Force the government to resign.

★ For fair general elections.

★ For right of self-determination for Tamil speaking people.

Please send donations and messages of support to NSSP, 6 Ockenden Rd, London N1 3NP.



600,000 plantation workers struck recently. The strength of class unity is the only way to defeat Jayawardene.

## LPYS plan campaign to defend Chilean workers

ALL THE political events of the last ten months in Chile show that the youth and working class are recovering from Pinochet's terrible coup in 1973, which was backed by the Chilean and international capitalist class.

At present more than 50% of Chile's population is under 25 and the youth are the section most heavily punished by unemployment, which explains why they were the first to launch protests and struggles.

The coup represented a set-back of 50 years for the Chilean working class. The most elementary rights recognised by the labour legislation of 1924—the fruit of the revolutionary traditions and heroic struggles of

the last century—were torn up by the roots by the military regime. These were: the right to organise in trade unions, the right to strike, Sundays off, compensation for accidents at work, social security, the eight-hour day and many more.

### Activities

The current situation shows the absolute impasse of the regime and its inability to face the struggles of the people, except by a vicious increase in repression.

Because of all this, the LPYS has an inescapable responsibility, in line with its internationalist principles, to organise a campaign in defence of the workers' movement and the youth of Chile. This solidarity not only must show itself in the



Funeral of a police victim in Chile.

field of politics—through information, demonstrations, meetings, etc, but it must have clear financial objectives to help the Chilean working class to rebuild their movement.

We have already received a request for help from seamen and dockers in Chile to carry out the reorganisation of their trade union work throughout the country. Within the British labour movement our activities will be as follows.

★ The publication of a periodical bulletin where we will provide information about the course of the campaign and of developments in Chile.

★ A meeting on Chile at national conference.

★ A meeting in Liverpool in July, organised with the help of an MP.

★ In our Summer Camp a special event will also be organised around the Chilean campaign, and there will be other

meetings throughout the country.

★ In all these events, there will be collections to raise money to send to the interior, to provide the necessary help for the decisive struggles taking place.

★ The campaign will culminate in a protest demonstration on 11 September, the eleventh anniversary of the fall of the Popular Unity government.

### Solidarity

The only way to end Pinochet's dictatorship is by mobilising the masses on a programme of socialist transformation in Chile and throughout Latin America. The LPYS must play its part in the overthrow of the Junta by organising a mass campaign of solidarity with the youth and working class of Chile, carrying its message into every corner of the British labour movement.

## South African miners organise for safety

ON 12 September 1983 a methane gas explosion at Hlobane coal mine in South Africa killed 68 workers and wounded several more.

Hlobane was described by the government officials as "not a bad mine" presumably implying that others were even worse risks. Yet 14 electrical machines out of 29 in the area hit by the blast were not flameproof.

The mine was inadequately ventilated to dispel methane gas. A ventilation official admitted that not one mine in Natal was able to provide the correct amount of air, but at Hlobane a holding operation had short circuited part of the ventilation system.

### Capitalist neglect

A report of methane gas by a miner was ignored because officials believed the man was lying to cover up poor production. There were numerous other highly unsafe practices.

The National Union of Mineworkers in South Africa organises both coal and gold miners, mostly black workers who get the lowest pay and are most often victims of the appalling accident record.

In the current issue of the Marxist journal, *Inqaba Ya Basebenzi*, an NUM member

told of conditions in the gold mines. He pointed out that safety clothing was no protection against methane or rock bursts.

"In many cases you'll find accidents are caused by management neglecting safety precautions because they are in a hurry to get production. More especially if the price of gold on the market goes down, that's when you'll experience a lot of accidents.

### Profits come first

"The management say rockbursts are natural—you can't stop rockbursts. But according to other mining engineers that is nonsense.

"Most accidents are not reported. But that will change once the union gets to all the mines and recruits the workers. About 3 or 4 workers are dying every day on the mines. About 1,000 die every year—and about 17,000 are seriously injured.

"When you are injured you get one-third of your wages. If you die, your dependants get 24 times your monthly salary, and nothing more.

"Management are interested in their profits, not in the safety of the workers. This will not change as long as the mines are controlled by bosses and not by the workers."

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# Letters

Write to *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

## Workers taking heart

Dear Comrades,

It was Thursday 29 March, "Signing On" Day. I'd been down to the dole and back again. The rest of the day was spent stuck in the house with the baby. Needless to say, I was depressed. No money, nothing to look forward to—except the Giro coming on Saturday morning. How could I last till then? Nothing else to do but watch the telly. But when I switched on, what I saw swept away my misery instantly.

On the news, in Liverpool, the massive demonstration of young and old, workers and unemployed, in support of the Labour Council. In London, yet more workers marching against the Tories,

and then the reports of the miners up and down the country and their tremendous struggle to save the pits.

How could anybody be disheartened after seeing this? (Except the bosses that is!)

Workers, unemployed, youth, housewives, people all over the country will be watching these struggles and taking heart.

The fight for jobs, for a decent wage, for a future for our kids is on with a vengeance. The working class will win and what a massive victory it promises to be!

Yours  
Diane Harvey  
Govan, Glasgow

## Nursery outrage

Dear Comrades,

I am a single parent living in a housing scheme in Glasgow. For a number of years I have had to travel daily with my youngest child to a day-nursery outside my area, so that I could retain my independence and continue in employment. I also have another child attending the local primary. The travelling expenses to the nursery and fees for after-school care for my older child, are a great financial strain on my meagre salary.

I was therefore elated when the council completed a centre for under 5's with latch-key provision in my own district—which is incidentally a recognised deprived area. I made plans to use the money I would save; some new clothes for the kids; maybe even a holiday!

My elation was however short-lived. The centre has lain empty for over nine months. Despite letters to my Labour MP and various officials, I received no satisfactory explanation as to why such desperately needed facilities were not put to use.

This outrage cemented my decision to become a *Militant* supporter. Only through sheer determination have I managed to escape the isolation and poverty thrust upon single parents—men and women—who cannot seek employment because of the lack of nursery and child-care facilities. I consider this a basic right for all, the sooner it becomes a reality the better.

Yours  
Kathleen Donnelly  
Pollok Labour Party  
Glasgow

## Running for your (white) life

Dear Comrades,

Listening to the news I am amazed at all the fuss being made over the South African athlete Zola Budd. For everyone's information, she is an outstanding 'middle distance' athlete capable of winning Olympic gold medals and smashing all the records.

However South Africa is banned from international competition because of Apartheid, so the enterprising Miss Budd has applied for British Citizenship so she can run for Britain, much to the delight of the British Amateur Athletics Board.

I wonder if anyone of the

people deported under the vicious Tory Immigration Laws, or those waiting to be deported have considered taking up athletics. Obviously it means more to be "gold medal" potential, than to have lived in this country for several years, worked for this country, paid Tax and National Insurance for years and to have children born here.

If Miss Budd is granted citizenship I wonder if she will speak out against the barbarous regime of her country, being white or privileged, probably not.

It brings new meaning to "running for your life".

Yours fraternally  
Karen Price  
Hull

## Full support for miners

Dear Comrades,

On Thursday 5 April on ITV the programme *TV Eye* delved into the miners' dispute.

The last thing shown on the programme was miners' wives and children searching for coal on slag heaps. This was not pictures from some Victorian archive but film of miners' wives and children in Thatcher's Britain and the capitalist system of 1984.

The miners' battle is our battle. If the miners lose it could mean massive job

losses in every industry in the country. It would mean the loss of trade union rights which our forefathers fought for in many years of hard strikes and battles.

The time has now come for every every working class man and woman and youth to join the striking miners in their fight. Let's support the miners with donations so they can continue their fight and we can return a Labour Government with a Socialist programme so every one is catered for their needs, and not just the rich.

Andy Scott  
Outdoor Section Secretary  
Maidstone UCV



Young miners have been the most active in the present dispute—here Kent miners march through London 7 April.

## Young miners—we're striking for our future

Dear Comrades,

Despite the fact that our pit and the other units in Mid and East Lothian voted against strike action we accept the democratic decision of the majority. However, since we've been on strike the overwhelming majority of our members have come to realise that the strike is not only correct but essential for our future.

If Monktonhall was to shut, it wouldn't just be the 1200 miners who would go straight onto the dole queue,

but many other jobs from Bruntons Wire, Eastern Scottish and many other service industries which are dependent on the pits. In Midlothian at the present time, only 1 in 4 school leavers get a proper job—what would the result then be if Monktonhall were to close?

The antics of the NCB last September rang the alarm bells about the future of our pit. We held the fort for 8 weeks in a stoppage that went a long way to building

support for the overtime ban. We argued during that dispute that our stoppage wasn't just about Monktonhall, but about pit closures in general—that has been borne out. We've decided to stand up and defend our rights, defend our living standards and defend our jobs.

They've tried to witch-hunt Marxism from the Labour Party, but you cannot divorce the ideas of working class struggle from those who need that struggle

in order to survive.

Militant has been the only trend within the labour movement that has consistently argued that the working class of this country can pick themselves up after a series of defeats and fight again.

Yours fraternally  
Chris Herriot  
Central Strike Committee  
and Monktonhall NUM  
Alex Shanks  
SCEBTA Youth Delegate  
Monktonhall  
(both personal capacities)

## Harsh lessons of steel closures

Dear Comrades,

As a steelworker I am envious of the fight the mineworkers are making to secure their jobs, envious because in my industry the fight failed. Sheffield have over 20,000 steelworkers on the dole—but why?

Mr MacGregor did not just take 20,000 steel jobs alone, he had help—the help I am referring to came from our so called leaders—Bill Sirs etc.

By conversing with Margaret Thatcher's number one puppet, Bill Sirs ignored his members' pleas for help. Now he has the cheek to say to the miners, "Stop the fight, you are costing my members their jobs."

I know Bill Sirs has been to this part of the country. I know he has been to Scunthorpe. I also know he has been to Sheffield. I know this because I have read so in the press—where he has not been is to his members, workers who were pleading for leadership. The miners in Yorkshire, Kent, and Scotland have said, "No Mr MacGregor you are not taking our future away from us, not like you did with the steelworkers."

If the miners win their fight we win our fight, but the miners cannot win in isolation. It is up to all workers to back them.

To the so-called leaders of our unions, I have one thing to say "If you don't want to fight for your members, stand down and let us have a leader."

A Millward  
Shop Steward  
Sheffield Forgemasters  
(personal capacity)

## The thoughts of a miners wife

Dear Comrades,

Last week we had a Labour Party meeting on the miners' dispute. Three comrades from the NUM came along from the West Drayton picket, and we were

lucky enough to listen to them in the thick of their struggle. We came away saying it was the best Labour Party meeting ever.

I enclose a poem written by a miner's wife on her way to Leicester from Kent.

Unknown  
Brentford and Isleworth  
LPYS

*What is a miner?—What is he worth?  
When he spends his life in the bowels of the earth,  
Where darkness surrounds him  
The air full of dust,  
Work is no pleasure  
Hard feelings are just.*

*But who sympathises—who seems to care?  
The bosses don't worry as long as he's there—  
To carry on working—a bonus to earn,  
But when will he listen, when will he learn;  
That where there's incentive there also comes greed  
And those who earn plenty forget those in need.*

*When his job is threatened then he has the right  
To strike for his future and urge ALL to unite.*

*Each miner should listen and then heed the call  
To come out together, gain a future for all.*

*But shame on the miner who'll sell out his soul  
When he condemns another to life on the dole.  
Each one has a duty to his fellow man—  
He must join the battle against this closure plan.*

*A Union miner will join in the fold,  
A Union miner won't waver and wait to be told,  
For he knows he's worth more than redundancy payments  
That only results in a queue of dole claimants.*

Kay Sutcliffe

## Rail solidarity

Dear Comrade,

I spoke to Tom Flind secretary of Birkenhead NUR, and he was telling me about the solidarity of his union with the miners. On the 3rd of this month a train driver was told to move a load of coal to a depot for a coal merchant.

When he refused he was sent home. Next a shunter

was told to do the same and was sent home. Tom said that he was surprised at the speed the NUR members responded. Within ten minutes of the news being passed on not a train was running.

Good luck to the miners and all those taking action in sympathy. We can't afford to lose this fight.

Birkenhead Labour Party

## Prospects for coal

Dear Comrades,

I am on strike to safeguard jobs and to win a future for our industry. This is a fight for the youth who are the future of this industry and of this country. It is a fight for the future of an industry that has tremendous prospects.

The coal industry belongs to the people of this country and the jobs within it belong to the youth. We as miners have no right to sell that industry or those jobs down the river. We have no intention of doing so.

Marxism offers hope for the future which as a young miner in the present dispute I identify with fully.

Yours fraternally  
Joe Owens  
NUM Polkemmet  
(personal capacity)

## Scots firemen donate

Dear Comrades,

"Let's face it; these people who call for a national ballot are just looking for an excuse not to strike." So said one fireman at a recent branch meeting of McDonald Road FBU, Edinburgh.

During the Firemen's strike of 1977/78 collections at pits in the Lothians raised over £3,500 for the strike fund.

It was agreed unanimously by the 25 firemen present that regular donations would be taken on all four watches until the strike was won.

Peter J Luke  
Branch Secretary  
McDonald Road FBU  
Edinburgh



# Liverpool will fight on

**"EVEN MY mother-in-law, a moderate of 80 years of age, says these fellows are 100% right!" Eric Heffer MP told Patrick Jenkin, Tory Environment Secretary last Friday.**

He, Liverpool's other Labour MPs and the leaders of the city council were at a meeting to discuss the council's budget crisis. "Liverpool City Council", Heffer said, "have one of the greatest problems in relation to housing in this country. We have got system-built houses which have proved a total disaster and a lot of old slums. They have tackled this very seriously—they faced up to the schools problem, which no previous administration has faced and have worked out 17 housing priority areas."

"At the same time the Rate Support Grant is cut. If

we are talking about getting into a position of a legal rate, the choice is that you put the rates up or you cut jobs. These councillors are very courageous people, and they are determined to fight for what they think is right."

## Jenkin's proposal

From Jenkin there was nothing but demands for a "legal" budget, allegations that the council "seem to be running the city very expensively", and dire warnings about, "what happens if you run out of money? What happens to the schools? Who pays the council workers?" All that he offered was that "the Audit Commission could make an effectiveness and efficiency study."

He was answered by Councillor Tony Byrne. "The only thing you have

done is make the problem worse... in terms of the Rate Support Grant you have removed £120 million, in further education £18 million, in housing subsidy £62 million, from the Housing Investment Programme a cut of over £20 million and Housing Corporation funds have been reduced... We can identify a cut when we see one."

The council's case was summed up Deputy Leader Derek Hatton. "We got a clear mandate to protect jobs and protect services. On 29 March we saw 40-50,000 people on the streets and away from work, who felt the issue was so important to the city that they had to take that action."

"The sort of feeling and mood in the city means we will storm home in May. We have no choice in the matter—we are coming here

on behalf of the vast majority of the people in Liverpool, and 41 MPs have put down a motion asking for £120 million back, more than we are asking for."

"The fact of the matter is that the city has been driven to bankruptcy by the Liberal administration and the policies of your government, and you now talk as if it had nothing to do with you."

## Labour's reply

"We are prepared to discuss with you all day and every day about compromises, but there is a bottom line and that is that there will be no loss of jobs or services, no massive rate increases. The choice is not ours; we were elected to carry out these policies."



Photo: Paul Traynor

On the 29 March demo in support of the council's stand.

# Ballot-rigging at NOLS conference

**FACED WITH imminent defeat, under their own undemocratic rules, the "Clause Four" leadership of the National Organisation of Labour Students once again resorted to blatant ballot-rigging to hold onto their National Committee positions. Rather than explain serious irregularities in the balloting to the annual conference (held in Hull, 10-12 April), the Chairman and the Labour Party Student Organiser, John Dennis, arbitrarily closed the conference.**

Uproar over the elections followed a series of devastating defeats on key policy issues for the old leadership; three times they were censured.

The censure motions were against the NC refusal to condemn police violence during the NGA dispute and for their refusal to back the miners. On the chairman's report, John Mann was censured over the failure of the 'lefts' to use the resources of the NUS to campaign for

Labour in the general election.

In the balloting for NC positions, however, extra votes suddenly appeared, ten more than in the highest vote taken on the floor—a vote of censure on the whole NC, passed by 125 votes to 114 votes, just prior to the elections. When the NC results were announced, with Clause Four holding on against Militant supporters by only six or eight votes (except for NUS Officer, which Mike Higgins won 126-119), conference erupted in anger.

Demands for an explanation of irregularities and for all NC members to be given access to full details of accredited delegates were met with stone-wall refusals by the officers and an ultimatum from John Dennis, that he would close conference unless his dictat was accepted.

The delegates who remained, after Dennis suspended conference and Clause Four staged their walk-out, were

left with little doubt that the leadership had decided in advance to break up the conference rather than provide details of credentials and ballot papers.

Both the devastating political defeats of the old National Committee and the utterly undemocratic way the NC elections were conducted, more than justified the demand for a re-call conference.

Militant supporters clearly won the argument on policy, despite the debate being hampered by the agenda. Clause Four, who present themselves in the National Union of Students as the "Democratic Left", insisted on discussing Sexual Politics and Central America first, though these were at the bottom of ten selected by the clubs' priority ballot.

Education cuts, YTS and local government, which came top, were originally scheduled for the last session. The leadership could find no time to discuss the vital miners' battle!

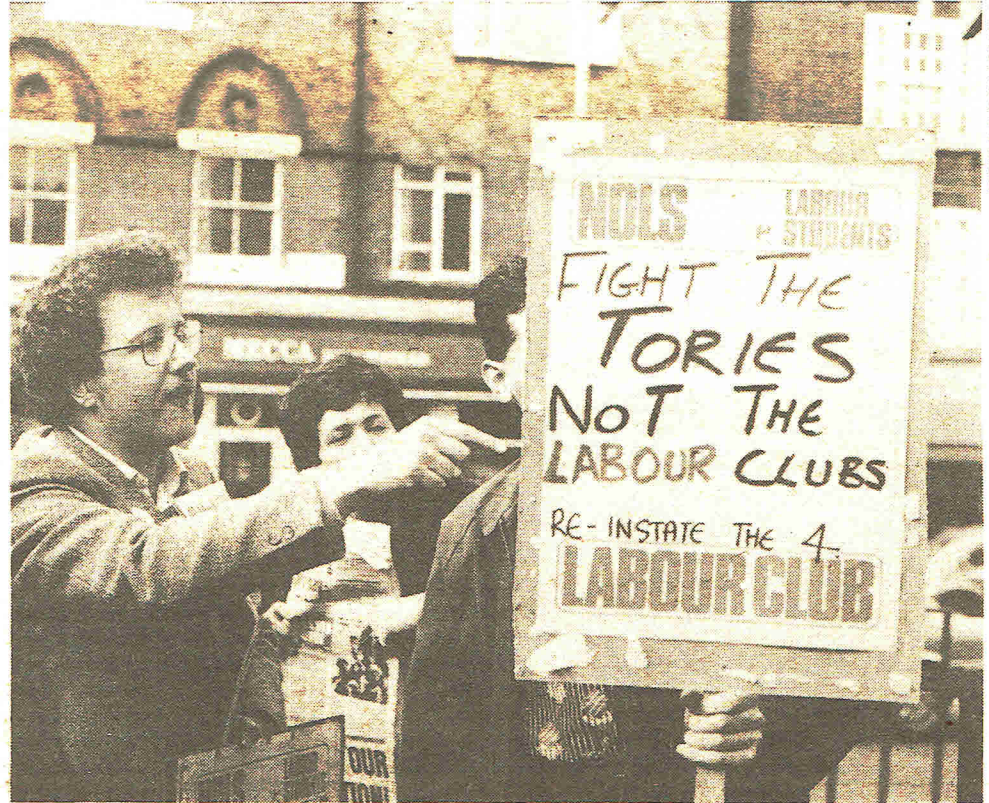


Photo: Mark Pinder

Lobby of March meeting of National Committee of National Organisation of Labour Students.

THE FIRST dispute about procedure, in a conference which as undemocratically administered from beginning to end, was over proposed new Standing Orders.

These would have given the chairperson power to adjourn the conference without challenge. They also abolished the roll-call vote, which is the only open procedure for checking who is a delegate and whether they are actually present at conference.

These were rejected by 116 votes to 95

With the defeat of these proposed Standing Orders, conference retained the right for disputed delegates to appeal, and a couple were accepted against the Student Organiser's ruling.

The appeals once again highlighted the arbitrary, undemocratic, and politically biased way NOLS's rules are enforced by the Student Officer and the present officers. Even before delegates got to the conference, some delegations had been inflated while others had been ruled out—on clear political lines.

When John Dennis announced that 250 ballot papers had been issued for the elections doubts were immediately raised. There were obviously some serious irregularities.

One glaring case was two ballot papers being issued to

an Oxford delegate. When raised in conference, this was explained as a "mistake".

How many other "mistakes" were there?

When the vote was very close, 126 to 120 for the Militant candidate for the chair, and another delegate (from Liverpool Central College) announced that he had been given an extra ballot paper too, there was uproar, with shouts of "rigged" from a large body of delegates. There were renewed demands for conference, or at least all NC members, to be given full details of delegates and ballot papers. To the amazement of most delegates and observers, John Dennis, instead of replying to these points, simply suspended conference.

Later, he scandalously claimed that he closed the conference because of

"scenes of disorder and violence". In reality, the uproar was provoked by his completely undemocratic action in closing the conference. There was, undoubtedly, some pushing and jostling as the Democratic Left's leading lights called on their supporters to walk out and disrupt the proceedings.

Accounts showed that 126 accredited delegates remained in the hall, undoubtedly a majority of *bona fide* delegates. These remaining delegates passed an emergency resolution to be placed before conference the next morning:

## Open books

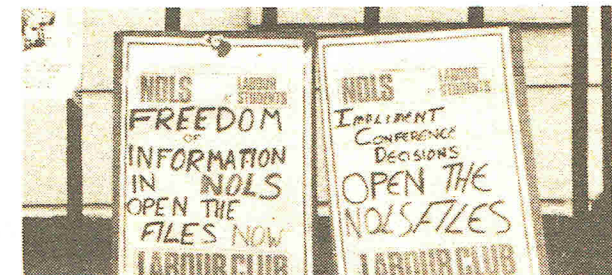
"This conference believes that the 1984 NOLS conference has been marked by confusion and serious doubt about the issuing of conference credentials and ballot forms. It demands that all individual members of the 1983-84 NC be immediately allowed to inspect all the cards, delegation forms and affiliation materials relating to the 1984 conference, and,

if doubt remains, that the elections be re-held". On Friday morning, John Dennis and the Democratic Left claimed that conference had been suspended because of an "atmosphere of fear". Their real fear was that some of their supporters would be exposed as phantom delegates with bogus ballot papers. Dennis even announced that a number of delegates had left the conference and would not be returning—ballot-riggers with an alibi!

## Closed down

John Dennis then gave conference an ultimatum: accept the results in the officers election and proceed immediately—by 10 am—to complete the elections according to his recommendation—or he would close down the conference.

The chair moved that one Militant supporter should be expelled from the conference because he had dared to challenge the procedure from the rostrum. The chair's ruling was challenged, and there were calls for a roll-call vote. At this point,



March lobby of NOLS.

Photo: Mark Pinder

John Dennis put on his coat, came to the microphone and shut down the conference.

For conference to be closed in this arbitrary manner is clearly a blow to Labour students. The undemocratic attempt of a group who have been decisively defeated on all the major political issues to hold onto control of NOLS could clearly cut across the clubs' work to build support and particularly to mobilise student support for the miners.

Labour Parties and trade unions should give full support to Labour Clubs calling for a re-call conference at the earliest possible date. To avoid the mistrust and suspicion surrounding the Hull conference, it will be vital that the 1983 NOLS conference decision to open all the files and conference

materials to inspections by all NC members is implemented. The elected leadership must reflect the actual balance of political views within the clubs.

One of the highlights of the conference was the Militant meeting, packed and enthusiastic, which discussed the crucial struggles now taking place in Britain. A member of the Yorkshire NUM spoke on the miners' fight, and Tony Mulhearn, president of Liverpool District Labour Party gave an impressive account of the development of the city council's mass campaign against Tory cuts—a campaign supported by the conference against the wishes of the NOLS leadership. £500 was collected for the Fighting Fund.



# INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

## Teachers need a national strategy

THE RECENT strike by members of NAS/UWT is a sign that teachers want to start a fightback against constant attacks on pay, jobs and conditions.

Since last conference, large numbers of NUT members have been drawn into action, not just for their own future but over GCHQ and "Democracy Day". What is now needed is concerted national action on the main issues affecting teachers.

At this year's conference we can see how job losses, worsening pay and conditions of service are added to by government attacks like rate capping and abolition of the Met authorities. Our futures are even more in jeopardy; we need a fighting union.

The government's action in withdrawing union rights at GCHQ threatens all the public sector. "No strike" or "no disruption" clauses are being sought by the Tories and some unions leaders like the EETPU look like they might swallow the bait in the private sector.

While our union leadership have paid lip service to opposing the government's action, they were not prepared to issue a strike call for the TUC "Day of Action", which in itself was a very limited response.

Ineffectual leadership against a Tory government with its knife poised over

By Bob Sulatycki

education and union rights is a catastrophe. We need a national mobilisation which can take concerted strike action.

But the NUT is crippled by Rule 8 governing our 'sustentation fund' which says members have to get full loss of earnings as opposed to strike pay. The Barking dispute—in the smallest authority in the country—gained a victory but an all-out strike for six weeks cost £½ million in payments. Concerted national action for more than a day could bankrupt us; Rule 8 must be amended to make this fund a strike fund.

### Defend jobs

On the Democracy Day issue, the NUT response to TUC call for action was to send two delegates along and inform chief education offices of this and tell them no disruption was envisaged!

The union executive memo to conference "Your job—the overriding priority" states the "proud record" of the union

in "ensuring that no permanently employed member has been compulsorily deprived of employment by reason of redundancy." This is a hollow boast when set against job losses over the last four years of 38,000 posts—11,000 of them in one year.

The author(s) seem to have a form of selective amnesia—particularly regarding a large section of NUT members—those on fixed-term contracts. These contracts are being abused on such a wide scale by local authorities (Ealing for example now has 15% of the teaching force on these contracts) that it is clear that they are being used to 'manage' the teaching force.

Effectively those on fixed term contracts have been pre-selected for redundancy, yet at no stage has the union taken seriously the rights of these members. The final paragraph that the union gives "highest priority to the avoidance of compulsory redundancy of members" must seem ironic to those NUT members on fixed term who seem to have second class status. Many local associations/divisions have realised for some time the seriousness of this issue but unless we have the Executive's commitment to a genuine bat-



The dispute in Barking 1982. The NUT needs a proper strike fund.

Photo: Militant

tle to eliminate the abuse of these contracts and to protect members on them from redundancy local activists will be severely handicapped.

This memorandum also raises the need to oppose the Rate Capping Bill. Even before rate capping education nationally will be expected to bear a huge share of the Tories' public expenditure cuts. The Rate Support Grant settlement has announced a cuts targets averaging 7% in local authority expenditure.

### Rate capping

The *Times Education Supplement* estimates spending will drop 6.9% next year compared to a 2% drop in pupil

numbers and the government White Paper also says about 18,000 to 22,000 teaching jobs will be 'lost' over the next three years. With rate capping legislation, the effect would be enormous as education represents 60% of local authority spending. If rate capping was introduced right away Avon, for example, would face a job loss of 600, Derbyshire 480 and Sheffield 560.

Unfortunately all our leaders recommend to fight this blatantly political Tory attack on working class areas is to write to MPs and councillors "regardless of political allegiance".

The labour and trade union movement is the only force which can defeat these attacks.

Teachers took widespread unofficial action on Democracy Day. With a lead like Liverpool council have given their workforce, teachers would rapidly take their place in the struggle.

### Refer back

This memorandum should be referred back as an insult to our conference which could threaten the discussion of resolutions like No 32 on teacher unemployment which do offer some strategy. If reference back is defeated, amendments like those from Bradford, Hackney and Westminster should be supported.

## Workers occupy North Sea gas rig

SUPPORT BARGE DV 100 and rough storage project 17 miles off Hull is now under occupation by its crew of 600. This dispute is the latest in a series of strikes and incidents over pay and conditions throughout the industry.

The rig is being built for British Gas by a string of private contracting and sub-contracting agencies, operators who have shown in the past little concern for their workforce. Trade unions aren't recognised, 'political' organisation and discussion is a dismissable offence, while food and living conditions are appalling.

### Low pay

"Despite what most people think, the pay is terrible" said one worker, "I know men on the rig who draw Family Income Supplement and Social Security because the pay is so bad. The painters, for example, are paid £3.75 an hour flat rate for 12 hour shifts, and for the two weeks each month the painters are off they are paid nothing, not even a retainer."

Unlike oil rig workers, gas rig workers are not covered by an off-shore contractors agreement the OCA, which provides

minimum guidelines on pay, and safety conditions for management. "Last month our shift were ordered to cross between two platforms on a bridge to a platform of planks lashed together with ropes.

### Work conditions

"We refused on safety grounds and then we asked to see the insurance certificate for the structure; the management replied by sacking the whole shift. We refused to be moved off the platform and as the helicopters arrived with the next shift we appealed for them to join us, which they did. After two shifts management took down the bridge and reinstated the sacked men.

"This incident was by no means isolated but is typical of the sort of things we have to put up with. This time the mood has hardened. The lads are determined to get firm and lasting reassurances on safety and work conditions." Messages of support from trade unions and Labour Parties should be rushed care of Newcastle East LPYS 191 Middle Street, Walker, Newcastle.

by John Falkenstein

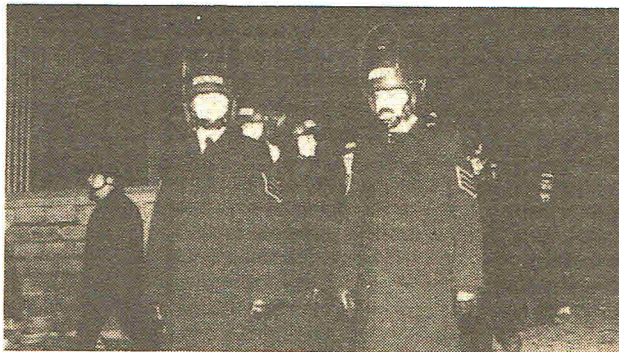
## The power of solidarity

ON 3 April at the Vittoria Dock, Birkenhead an ASLEF member was asked to move coal stocks from the dock and an NUR shunter was told to work with him.

Both men refused to move coal in support of the miners strike and were immediately sent home. A railway worker told me that within 15 minutes all NUR and ASLEF members walked out, with total 100% support.

All rail workers on the Wirral in effect had stopped all the trains within 15 minutes!! The strike lasted only 12 hours, but was so effective that management soon issued an instruction that no coal was to be moved. This, according to reliable sources, was a direct instruction from 'Euston House' headquarters of BR in London, to local management.

By Martin Booth.



Police in action at Warrington last November

## Warrington appeal

JOHN FURNISS, a former member of SOGAT, was standing outside Eddie Shah's factory in Warrington last November peacefully picketing in support of the NGA. He was not at any time involved in fighting. A sudden surge in the crowd found him on the ground surrounded by police and he was arrested. John was at first charged with breach of the peace. Then three weeks later he was charged with assaulting a policeman! All this for taking part in a peaceful protest in defence of basic trade

union rights.

John is a college student and will have difficulty paying his fine of £425. Failure to pay could end up in imprisonment. Please send as much as you can to the address below, with cheques payable to Bradford West Labour Party. AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL!

John Furniss Appeal Fund, 7 Burdale Place, Bradford 7.

By Pete Watson (Bradford South Labour Party)

## Perkins Engines strike over pay

SHOPFLOOR WORKERS at Perkins Engines in Peterborough, walked out on 13 April on indefinite strike in support of their annual pay claim. Only 30 or 40 of the 3,500 employees involved, voted to accept the company's offer of 4%.

Talks between management and the AUEW were started last month with the union negotiators demanding a substantial increase. Management finally responded on 9 April with an offer of around

3.3% worth an average of £3.80 per week. The offer was described by AUEW district secretary Dick Shaw as a slap in the face for the workers who have done everything possible to make the company viable.

### Angry reaction

Over the last 4 years, there have been substantial periods of short-time working, several hundred redundancies and a series of low pay awards. Last

## Barking Hospital arrest

ON 4 APRIL I was arrested outside Barking Hospital. A picket line has been in operation here from 19 March over plans by the contractors Crothall's to cut the domestics' hours by one third and holidays from four to two weeks and also stop sick pay.

### Legal rights

I was charged with threatening behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace. I was not informed of any legal rights or the procedure relating to the court appearance. After being called various names by the police I was placed in a cell, about half hour later I was taken from the cell to have my fingerprints taken and be photographed.

When I asked if I could refuse to have this done I was told that a court order could be obtained and the prints would be taken forcibly, and as I didn't fancy any broken fingers I agreed.

I asked if the fact I had been arrested on a picket line had

anything to do with the photo and prints. I was not given any answer to this, I also found out later that the police had no right to take either prints or photo.

I appeared in court two hours after being arrested, was not represented legally, and being a bit naive-I thought if I pleaded guilty I would be treated more leniently. I was fined fifty pounds, to be paid at five pounds per week.

I told the court about the photo and finger prints and asked if anyone arrested on this charge had these done. I was told I had to complain to the division superintendent.

### More determined

This incident has made me more determined to fight for socialism, and showed me what is in store for active socialists and trade unionists in our fight against this corrupt system.

A Barking Militant supporter

some areas walked out spontaneously on hearing of it. Negotiations continued with the company improving its offer to just above 4%.

### Pickets set up

At Friday's mass meeting, workers cheered the negotiator's strike call and after the vote pickets were immediately set up on the main factory gates. The strike has been made official by the AUEW and messages of support and donations should be sent to the strike HQ at the AUEW Hall, Lincoln Road, Peterborough.

By a Perkins employee



# Sheffield-mass support for Miners' Executive

**MINERS FROM every coalfield in Britain travelled to Sheffield last Thursday to lobby the national executive.**

Scottish miners set off at 10 am the night before to make sure of a place at the front; at about 7.30 am some helped put up *Militant Miner* posters in the city centre.

By 8.30 am the scene was set and the auditorium jam-packed, with the NUM headquarters centre stage. The police, carrying out their well-rehearsed task were also here from all over the country. The jovial mood described later by the BBC was perhaps due to the constant banter between pickets and police, often recognising each other from picketing in Notts!

## Buzz of excitement

The atmosphere was likened to the "kop" in expectation of another three points. Iron determination to win had brought the pickets to Sheffield to lobby and nothing but victory would appease the 3,500 "young lions".

After three hours of impatient waiting, thirteen arrests and gallons of tea and soup and loads of butties supplied by the Sheffield Centre Against Unemployment, the news finally broke of the score being settled. The result was announced 200 feet in the air from Arthur Scargill's megaphone. The city centre buzzed with excitement; thousands of its citizens waited in anticipation on the pavements, but couldn't hear

a thing for the cheering. "Like all your birthdays come at once" someone shouted, men danced and sang, old and young alike, hugged each other, skipped and jumped cheered and sang.

"What did he say? What did Arthur say then?" "Have they won? Are they going on or what then?" Some pin-striped suits looked on in disbelief and they paled sickly grins before piling back to the office suites. One old lass said "Well I hope to God they do win; my husband was a steel worker here and I know what it would mean if they lost".

## Spontaneous march

An old miner had a lump of cardboard with a poem by "Cottley Tom", a miner retired through ill-health from Condsborough, who said "Will you stick this here on your banner and get folk to read it lads; its a goodun".

The police temporarily lost control as the massed miners broke into a spontaneous march and demonstration. It happened so quickly, an instinctive movement of thousands, to the chorus "Here we go, here we go, here



Defiant mood of the Sheffield lobby of the NUM executive, 12 April.

Photo: Jacob Sutton

we go", followed by "Arthur Scargill, Arthur Scargill, we'll support you ever more". Hundreds seemed to just melt into the throng as the whole city centre came to an abrupt halt. On both sides of a dual carriageway and a roundabout miners were the only thing that moved. Packed footpaths and walkways cheered and faced rapturous applause as the miners passed by.

What was thought to be the front of the march going in the opposite direction, was in fact

the march split into two. The miners I was with then tried to turn and rejoin their comrades. Then a bit of trouble started, from the police, spread right across the road five or six deep, some using provocative and despicable language, towards young miners. Their provocation was responsible for brief bouts of violence with a copper or two getting the worst of it. That pushed the day's arrests up to 23.

"They went for a national

ballot and now its backfired on the B's" shouted one huge young miner, then lifted my placard from me, and raised it high for all to see and shouted, "this is the best cartoon of the whole strike 'cos this is what it is all about".

The mood of excitement and high spirits passed on into local pubs where miner met miner. Scottish greeted Welsh and Yorkshire greeted the boys from the Black Country. They swapped badges and hand shakes and songs and

anecdotes from the picket lines. In one pub, verses of the *Red Flag* spontaneously broke out at an ear splitting pitch and the Welsh lads gave us a treat.

That day in Sheffield will prove not just to be milestone along the road to victory in this struggle, but will be a day in the life of Sheffield that won't be forgotten.

By Alan Hartley



Kent miners pose a good question.

## Durham pickets

**DURHAM PICKETS:** Brian Taylor, Davy Weston, Keith McDonald, Shaun Carroll, Shaun Palmer, Kevin Lowden, Michael Palmer, Kevin Legg, spoke to *Militant*.

WHEN WE went to Babington, Notts, the lodge secretary invited the police inspector to breakfast while we stood in the cold, facing police harassment. In Nottinghamshire they've split. Even in the canteen one of the women was

for, the other against.

If we all united this strike would be over quickly. MacGregor knows we have the power. The police are coming real hard, at Wearmouth they told some pickets they should be in a concentration camp.

The other day when twelve of us arrived at a picket site the inspector asked who was our picket leader. "Arthur Scargill, who do you think?" we shouted. He did not find it funny.

## MacGregor's 'talent for communication'

A MAGAZINE article in 1980 said MacGregor was offered his British Steel job because of his ability to communicate with unions. In his new job at NCB he's communicated with us all right, telling us that in the next five years half of us will be without jobs.

He had the nerve to say "my salary level is inadequate compensation for the enor-

mous difficulties that have to be coped with". All we are fighting for is a job!

Every man that crosses the picket line not only condones pit closures but helps create more difficulties for the miners. Now is the time for all miners to stand up and fight.

By Sean Coughlan  
(NUM, Lyttleton Colliery, Staffs)



## Fighting for my job

**GRAHAM REAY** on the picket line at Wearmouth Colliery, spoke to *Militant*.

"A SEVENTY-TWO year old bloke is telling men of 30 and 40 to take redundancy. MacGregor's all right he's into everything going. Anyhow, why take redundancy when we're winning, every day we get stronger.

"Most men at Wearmouth are transfers but with pit closures, where can men go now? I voted against striking twice, now I don't need a ballot—I'm fighting for my job."

## Cloth caps and whippets

**MANSFIELD** police interrogation: "What right have you got to stop people going to work? You miners have a lot of mouth on the picket line but you're as quiet as mice here. "Do you agree with Arthur Scargill? Why should they keep pits open if they are not making a profit? Are you a trade union activist? Who's paying you to come down? If you can afford it on Social Security we must chop it. You're all interbred in the villages aren't you? All born with cloth caps and whippets!"

By Philip Reddish  
(NUM, Markham No 2)

## Power picket success

IT'S TIME to go. It's still dark and frosty. We are off to Stella South power station, Ryton. We take a long route to avoid the "black-ice".

We arrive, six-thirty. Strange, only one inspector. Yesterday, there were sixty coppers. 'policing' twelve pickets: all had worn steel-capped boots. Soon a mini-bus of them arrive. Half stay in the bus the other half come to make sure we are good boys.

"You're not turning away workers, lads, are you?" asked the inspector. "No just coal". "Not much coming in today, we've been told," replied the copper. Due to our successful picketing the transport union had instructed members not to take coal to Stella.

Things turn-out quiet, but this gives us plenty of oppor-

## Police dragged me out

WE WERE lobbying at the Berry Hill union meeting. I was in the middle of scuffling and bustle. I don't know what went on, I got caught up in it.

The police entered the crowd and I got dragged out. The Durham lads tried to stop them arresting me. When it started getting rough. I said 'let me go, let me go'. I thought I wouldn't be charged because I'd done nothing wrong. I asked what I was being took for.

They took my photograph at 11.20 and took to court at 8.00 pm charged me with breach of the peace and assaulting a police officer.

By Graham Bennett  
(NUM N Derbyshire Area)



Miners picket Eggborough power station.

Photo: Richard Clarkson.

tunity to discuss the strike. Everyone is confident of winning and discuss what miners should do after the strike. "Why don't you join us, help us to change the Labour Party?" we ask.

## NUR members' action to support miners

ON APRIL 4 British Rail management in Coalville, Leicestershire ordered guards to work a coal train; they refused and were sent home, resulting in a walkout by NUR members. On the 7th, the NUR voted unanimously to continue the action and are now locked out by BR.

## European record

An NUR member said, "We took a stand and now we are looking for NEC and Labour Party support. We are fighting for jobs, we will be next on the line after the miners. The NUM are fighting for us as well."

This solidarity led to some

All we stopped was the mail van and a wagon carrying steel. Nine o'clock our shift is over, we head back to the Miners' Welfare, this time by the direct route—amazing how "black-ice" melts.

miners at Bagworth walking out on 9 April. This pit broke a European production record last month but about fifty Leicestershire miners were on the picket lines on Monday and about 40% of the afternoon shift turned back.

One picket was reported in the *Leicester Mercury* as commenting on leader Jack Jones, "We no longer recognise him as our leader. His comments about meeting violence with violence are deplorable and as a so-called trade unionist, he should be ashamed".

By Di Finlay,  
Dan Bintley,  
Keith Pattenden



# Militant

## LPYS Conference

### Militant needs cash to build

**THIS YEAR'S annual LPYS conference will yet again see overwhelming support for the ideas of Militant, the political majority in the LPYS.**

The *Militant* is the only paper to give full and regular coverage of YS activities. *Militant* supporters have been at the forefront of all the YS campaigns over the years and have built the YS into the largest socialist youth organisation in Britain. To help us continue with the successful work

we have been doing we need your support.

Youth everywhere are under attack. By giving us your cash you are helping to build the best counter-attack possible—a genuine Marxist leadership for working class youth. Whether you are at your first YS conference or your tenth make a big donation to our funds and show which paper has the backing of YS members.

By Nick Wrack

# Reagan - not wanted

**THOUSANDS WILL be on the streets this Easter weekend in peace marches, swelled by many who will have been provoked into action by the mining of Nicaraguan waters by the CIA under orders from President Reagan. (See article on Page 10)**

Wars are taking place in Central America, Lebanon, Iran and Iraq, Cambodia and Vietnam, Angola and Chad. These and many lesser conflicts, reveal the instability of the whole world, the impasse of both capitalism and bureaucratic stalinism, which can offer nothing but poverty, repression, war and the threat of nuclear annihilation.

The alternative to that future is the internationalist, socialist programme which will be debated at Bridlington by the Labour Party Young Socialists' national conference. There is the only way forward to any kind of future for mankind.

### Visit an insult

To focus attention on the issue of war and peace, the LPYS, with their comrades of Labour Youth in Ireland, are planning a major campaign around Reagan's visit to Ireland and Britain in June. In a joint statement from the two bodies, the visit is described as "an insult to the hundreds of thousands of young people who have taken to the streets in opposition to nuclear weapons and in support of world peace."

"Reagan heads the most ruthless capitalist country in the world. He has had no hesitation in financing some of the most horrific bloodbaths in Central America and in the Middle East.

"This year he plans to spend \$264,000 million on weapons of destruction, while 40 million children starve to death in the third world.

Photo: Militant



Youth CND rally in 1983. Millions of youth will be incensed by Reagan the warmonger's visit.

"In the US he has put 10 million Americans on the dole and has banned trade unions.

"This man is no friend of working people. The purpose of his visit is to meet the ruling class of Ireland and Britain—probably to advise them on how best to deal with workers and young people who won't accept unemployment and poverty.

"The British Labour Party Young Socialist and Irish Labour Youth, oppose Reagan's visit and all that he represents. The youth of Ireland and Britain will be preparing to give the President the welcome he deserves.

"Labour Youth in Ireland have organised a bus to follow his tour and intend to picket the entire visit beginning at Shannon Airport on

June 1st. Local meetings will be held in the build-up to a major public meeting on 2 June in Dublin on the eve of Reagan's visit, in preparation for a massive demonstration when he arrives in Dublin.

"The Labour Party Young Socialists have produced 200,000 leaflets and 5,000 posters to advertise a demonstration in London on

June 9th.

"Young people everywhere are invited to join in the campaign against Reagan's visit. But don't stop there, join Labour Youth or the LPYS and help in the fight to get rid of Reagan and his system altogether.

By Frances Curran  
(LPYS National Committee)

## LPYS Conference MILITANT MEETING

Sat 21 April 7.00 pm  
Spa Royal Hall,  
Bridlington

Hear Ian Isaac (NUM  
S. Wales EC)

In personal capacity

Terry Fields MP  
Ted Grant

All delegates and visitors welcome.

### Rally round miners

continued from page one

and power workers must ensure that they are not.

A stand by these workers, with the rest of the movement united behind them, will force the Tories and the Coal Board to back down. Threats to use troops or legal action will only harden our determination to see this fight through to a finish. Any attempt

to implement such threats will call forth a massive response from every section of the labour movement.

We can win, and in winning, the miners will be preparing the way for the defeat of the Thatcher government as one section after another pours through the breach in their defences which we will have made, to get their revenge for the blows that they have suffered at the hands of this government.



**Join Militant**  
... in the fight  
for socialism

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