

## Unions can beat Tory laws

# Miners say

# 'we will

# win'

A CENTURY and a half after the Tolpuddle Martyrs were transported for forming a trade union, the government and the ruling class are feverishly trying to pass new laws against the unions.

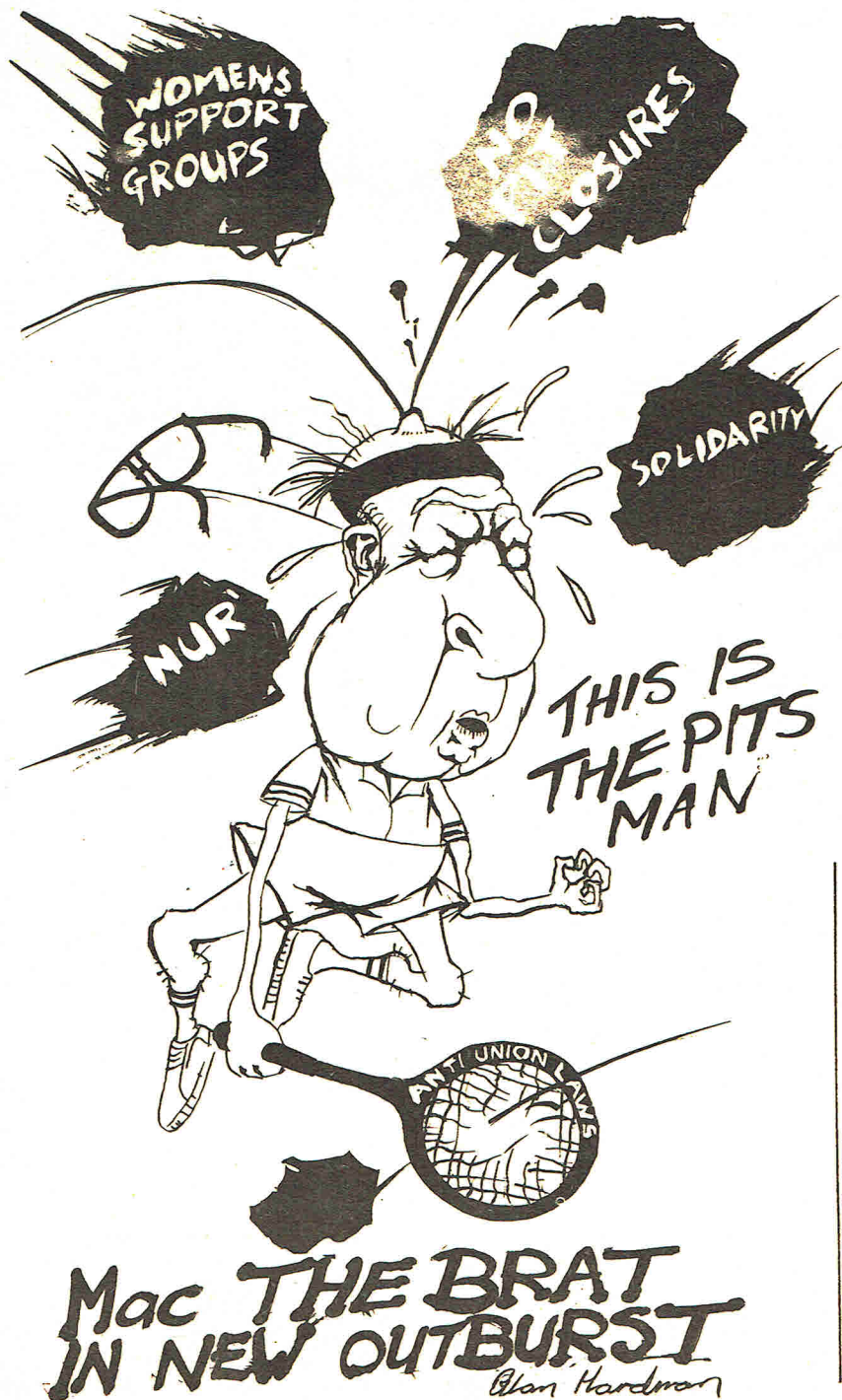
By Richard  
Clarkson

(Prince of Wales NUM)

The bosses have been shaken by the determination of the miners' strike and the solidarity being shown.

After a Tory "backbench rebellion", the House of Lords voted last week that national executives of trade unions should not be elected by workplace ballots or national conferences, where the rank and file can

Continued on back page



**Militant  
needs your  
money!**

Deadline 7 July

JUST OVER one week to go and still over £34,000 to raise—but already there has been a response to our appeal.

One supporter from Preston, Shaun Underwood has sent down his first pay packet of £29, an OAP from Thanet who gives £5 per week to the miners sent us £14 and £4 was received from a Herrington miner—how many of our readers are prepared to match these donations?

How about donating your wages for a week and follow the example of many of our supporters who have done so already—we CAN still reach the target—please help us—join our fight for a socialist future and send a donation NOW!

## Kent sackings: NCB start reprisals

**MINERS WHO last week occupied Betteshanger colliery in Kent to prove the pit was safe have been sacked by the Coal Board.**

This act of intimidation comes after the Betteshanger miners had proved the NCB had been lying over the condition of the pit.

The miners occupied the pit, both the surface stations and underground after reports in Sunday papers quoted the Coal Board as saying the pit was becoming vulnerable purely because of the strike. They occupied on Sunday 17 June and carried out their own inspection.

The miners found no problems and their findings were agreed by

senior management and backed up by daily reports on conditions carried out by the overseers' union NACODS. The miners returned to the surface on 20 June. Yet this Tuesday (26 June), 30 miners who took part in the occupation were given dismissal notices.

The chairman of Betteshanger NUM, John Moyle, told *Militant*: "We can quite clearly conclude from this that we have been sacked because we have exposed the Coal Board. Yet again they have been caught out with their lies and deceit"

However, the Betteshanger miners will not be broken by this intimidatory act, and there can be no national settlement until these dismissal notices are withdrawn.



# Militant

## Solidarity — with no strings

MINERS WILL welcome last Monday's speech by Tony Benn calling for increased solidarity action for the National Union of Mineworkers (see page 3).

This follows a letter from the Campaign Group of left Labour MPs to all trade union executives, urging increased support other than financial and moral for the miners. Tony Benn and the Campaign Group have set the right tone. There should be no qualifications or conditions attached by the Labour Party or the trade union movement to their support for the miners.

For the Tories especially this is no ordinary industrial dispute. They are consciously attempting to break the NUM, not only to run down the mining industry, but to prepare the way for an intensified campaign of public expenditure cuts, cuts in living standards and further anti-trade union legislation.

The statements of Tony Benn and the left MPs are all the more welcome because of moves being made by the TUC and the Labour leadership to intervene as "arbiters" in the dispute. It should be clearly said: it is not the function of the leadership of the labour movement to be neutral, trying to "bring the sides together".

They should be giving as much support to the class they are supposed to represent as Thatcher and MacGregor are giving to the capitalist class. What would soon be the bring the NCB to "talks" would be the realisation—in the face of labour movement solidarity—that they will not be allowed to decimate the mining industry.

Miners understand that any direct TUC intervention in the dispute, given the present right wing leadership and their grovelling policy of so-called "new-realism", would almost certainly mean an attempt to scale down the NUM campaign, especially the picketing. The miners are absolutely correct to resist any TUC involvement on these terms.

Rank and file union members should demand through their own unions that the miners be given full TUC support including industrial action, without strings.

If sections of the capitalist class and the Tory party are beginning to waver in their support for the inflexible stand of the 'Iron Lady', it is not for philanthropic reasons, but because the miners supported by other workers have shown an unbreakable determination not to be ground down. Moreover, the strike is beginning to have a general effect on the economic 'recovery', already very weak to start with.

Expectations of economic growth for 1984 have been scaled down from 3% to just over 2%. The longer the strike goes on, the greater will be the cumulative effect on the economy, and on the profits of the big business backers of the Tory party.

Although the NUM seems to have reached a brick wall with the leadership of the ISTC, the majority of rank and file steelworkers support the miners. As is the case on the railways, steelworkers understand the Tories' threat to their own jobs.

The steel, rail and mining industries are intimately tied up together and if the miners were to go down, it would be the green light for the Tories to implement plans already in hand to butcher the railways and to close more steel plants. But even if there is no effective Triple Alliance yet at national level, joint union committees should be set up at local district level of those unions involved. Such committees can hammer out in a fraternal manner, what solidarity action is necessary to win this strike.

On a wider level, the call of Tony Benn and the Campaign Group of MPs must be given a more definite form. All those unions that have supported the miners, especially the industrial unions in transport, docks and power, must organise a joint conference of union executives to plan effective industrial support. A campaign among the membership of these unions, including workplace meetings, special branch and committee meetings, leaflets and so on, would win over any remaining waverers or doubters to the side of the miners. Effective industrial action by these unions would win the strike in weeks if not in days.

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# Stop this witch hunt

By Brychan Davies

**"YOU STICK with it, I think it's great you've stuck up for Militant. The right wing are the ones who have really lost."**

These were the words of a delegate from Llwynypia after my expulsion was bulldozed through the General Management Committee of Rhondda Labour Party. He has since agreed to sell *Militant* along with five others at the meeting.

## Widespread anger

At the GMC on 22 June, the scandalous recommendation of the party's Executive Committee to expel me from the Labour Party for selling the paper, was accepted by 39 votes to 25. However, despite protests from the Mardy NUM delegates, no free debate was allowed and only after forcing the issue was I allowed to have the last word before the actual vote.

The CLP secretary read a brief summary of letters calling for my expulsion, yet refused to read the letters in my defence. A letter from the president of the South Wales NUM, Emlyn Williams, was ignored. It was clear that Rhondda CLP

officials set out with a deliberate intention to stifle debate on the issue.

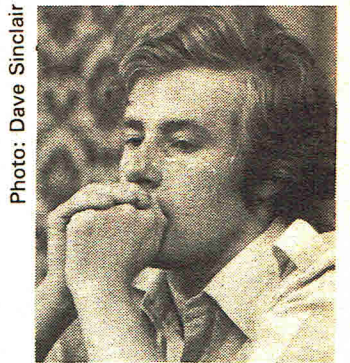
When a secret ballot was announced, many delegates objected vigorously. Len Jones, a delegate from Mardy NUM, called for a free show of hands as had always been the tradition in the labour movement in South Wales.

A member of Ynysir ward, who joined the Labour Party in the 1930s rose to her feet shouting "shame, shame, we need good Young Socialists" and marched out of the meeting. Many trade union delegates, especially those from the NUM, were clearly disgusted with the way the witch-hunt had been conducted.

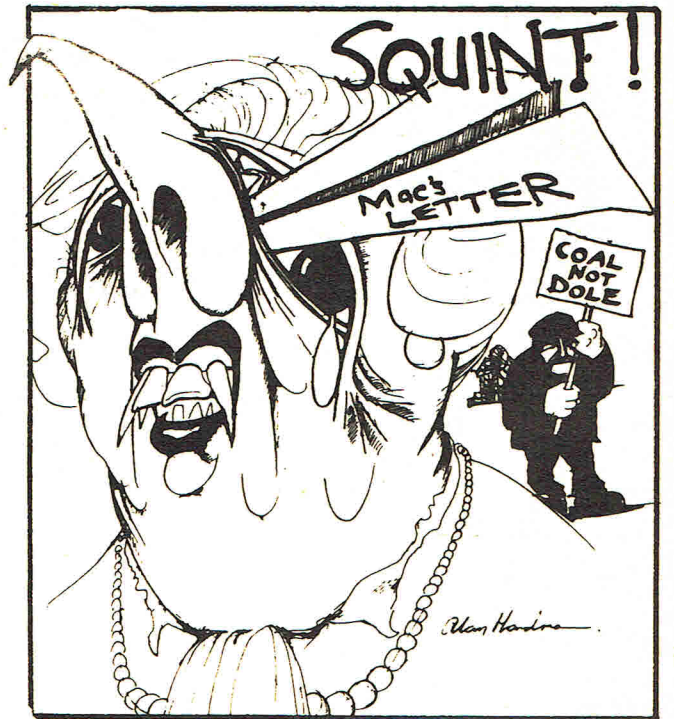
I will be appealing against my expulsion to the National Executive of the Labour Party with what I believe will be a very good case. My only 'crime' is to sell the *Militant*.

But the old, rotten right wing of the party are doomed. Already the LPYS have received 14 new applications for membership, and support for Marxism in the Rhondda has doubled. This growth can only be spurred on by this insane witch-hunt.

● Following the expulsion of Brychan Davies, who is vice-chairman of the Welsh Regional Youth Committee, Aberavon CLP are now attempting to expel the committee's chairman, Richard Morgan. On Friday 29 June, the executive committee of Aberavon CLP will consider his expulsion. It is criminal that at the height of a miners' strike, the right wing could consider a witch-hunt of the Marxists within the Labour Party and attack the Welsh LPYS.



Expelled — unemployed miner, Brychan Davies.



# Nellist kept out of Sri Lanka

**DAVE NELLIST, Labour MP for Coventry South East, has had to call off a visit to Sri Lanka after the Sri Lankan government refused to guarantee he would be allowed into the country.**

Dave was planning to go to Sri Lanka as part of a Parliamentary Human Rights Group delegation, to investigate conditions there.

The visit was effectively sabotaged before it got underway. Both the Sri Lankan government and the British Foreign Office put enormous pressure on the Tory member of the delegation, MP for Ealing North Harry Greenway, who decided not to go. The Sri Lankan government were thus given an excuse not to allow Dave Nellist to visit the island.

The ban on Dave's visit was because the Sri Lankan government of JR Jayawardene feared it would expose the role played by the ruling UNP Party in the riots last year and their continuing repression of trade unionists.

The behind-the-scenes support for the Sri Lankan government from the British Foreign Office was because the Tory government feared the embarrassment that would flow from Dave's findings, given the massive British aid poured into Sri Lanka.

The Sri Lankan acting Foreign Minister, Tyronee Fernando, said the delegation would not be welcome. This is hardly surprising as the delegation was to investigate evidence that the government inspired the massacres of July/August 1984 in which 2,000 Tamils were murdered. It was to have met—besides govern-



Young Socialists picket Sri Lankan President JR Jayawardene during his visit to Britain on Tuesday, 26 June. Botha, Reagan, now Jayawardene—by her friends shall Thatcher be known.

ment ministers—trade unions, civil rights and peasant organisations, and had asked to visit Welikade prison, the scene of a massacre last year.

Indeed, on the day of Fernando's statement (21 June) two students were shot dead when police fired on demonstrators, six universities shut down and all secondary schools in Colombo closed for four days, while opposition leaders, including Vasudeva Nanayakara of the NASSP, were arrested. (See report, right).

## "Colonialist"

Fernando has even had the gall to describe Dave as an "extremist, colonialist... coming to interfere". This is ironic given that earlier the Sri Lankan High Commission had invited Dave to take part in an official government visit to Sri Lanka back

in April. Dave had turned this down.

As he put it: "I was not prepared to accept condition of entry as a tourist. The reasons for my visit were the

problems facing working people and the invitations I had received from a large number of Sri Lankan organisations, including many trade unions."

## Workers' leader arrested

**VASUDEVA NANAYAKARA, President of the United Federation of Labour and leader of the banned New Socialist Party (NASSP) in Sri Lanka was arrested again on 21 June while addressing a meeting of plantation workers.**

Readers of *Militant* will be all the more surprised at this latest news as issue 704 reported that Vasudeva was released on 5 June after being interviewed by the Sri Lankan police, thus providing a mockery of the £140 ransom that was offered last summer for his capture. Now suddenly the police

levelling any charges against him.

The arrest of Vasudeva and 15 other socialists, together with the police shootings of unarmed students exposes the real reasons why the government blocked the visit of Dave Nellist MP to Sri Lanka. The British labour movement must send a flood of protest letters to the Sri Lankan President, President's House, Colombo 2, Sri Lanka demanding the immediate release of Vasudeva and all other political prisoners.

Photo: Mark Pinder



## Miners' dispute



There was a mass turnout of miners paying their respects at the funeral in Knottingley of Yorkshire miner Joe Green. Mr Green is the second miner to have been killed while on picket duty. As the card on the wreath from the North Derbyshire miners put it: "He gave his life in the miners' struggle A true comrade. We shall not forget".

Photo: John Harris (IFL)

### Shirebrook

TWO PICKETS were knocked down when a van carrying scabs mounted the pavement after being hit by stones during a mass picket in the mining village of Shirebrook.

The two miners, George Wilton and Simon Cross were taken to hospital, George with neck injuries and Simon with bones broken in his wrist. The police say they are not prosecuting the driver as the windscreen had been smashed by stones and he could not see.

But the miners point out that if the driver could not see then he would have more likely driven into a wall facing him.

Over a 1,000 miners joined the mass picket.

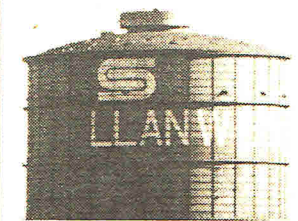
By Willie Lane  
(Bolsover Labour Party)

### Llanwern

THE MEDIA have been quick to attempt to sow divisions between steel workers and the miners.

They paint a picture that steel workers are not interested in the miners' struggle and the strike will be to blame if they lose their jobs; a situation unfortunately backed up by the comments of the steel union leaders.

But *Militant* supporters in Newport, where many Llanwern steel workers live, have found much confusion but then support when holding collections for the miners.



Mark Buttress from Newport said: "We began holding door to door collections for food for the miners. At first we got a bit of a hostile reception. Steel workers said the miners would close down Llanwern, they believed all the stuff that had been in the papers."

"But after we explained the miners' case, and pointed out the support the NUM had given them when they were on strike in 1980—the NUM blacked all steel and donated money to their strike fund—the hostility turned to support. We'd get comments like 'We're with you all the way'."

This support has continued with large food collections around the estates and an average £150 collected in Newport town centre on Saturdays.

### London

NOTTINGHAM-SHIRE miners will be joined by Young Socialists on a 20 mile march through London to raise cash for the strike fund. The Notts miners will march from Marble Arch to Watford this Saturday, June 30. They will set off from Marble Arch at 10 am, holding bucket collections on route.

## Coal Board fail at Bilston Glen

AT BILSTON Glen colliery, Midlothian, the NCB have tried in vain to score a propaganda victory over the miners.

Following the letter from the pit manager last week, offering holiday pay to any workers who reported for work (see *Militant* 704), handfuls of scabs had been turning up, to be met by mass pickets. These were met in turn by a massive police offensive, with 49 arrests.

### Mass arrests

Both the chairman and the treasurer of the Mid and East Lothian Trades Council, Chris Herriot and Thorpe Becker, were among those arrested. Chris was charged with breach of the peace, resisting arrest and assaulting a police officer. He was remanded overnight.

Safety cover was immediately withdrawn again; the numbers crossing the picket line dwindled to a handful again and no more coal was produced.

This week the union again restored safety cover, despite rather than because of, the threat by Scottish NCB director Bert Wheeler that the pit was in immediate danger of flooding and closure.

On Monday the pickets were reinforced by men from Durham. There was a small increase to 15 in the numbers of men working without union permission. For the second time the Board claim-

ed that coal had been produced, but Bilston miner Bob Devlin ridiculed the claim that this was 100 tonnes; "The only thing that moved yesterday was men up and down the shaft."

Miners were also asking how all that coal could be produced in a pit on the brink of closure!

Again the police moved in and this time 56 men were arrested, including Chris Herriot for a second time.

As the shift ended the picket split in two to seal off access to the colliery from both sides. Scabs had to wait for up to three hours before they could be escorted out. Two scabs did not escape the pickets' anger.

Tuesday morning saw the biggest picket so far, but this time miners trying to block access from the other side were stopped from getting within a quarter of a mile. Even so, the scabs were down to a handful again and arrived late.

### NCB plan

The struggle at Bilston Glen is of national significance. The Lothian pits' annual holiday is the earliest in Britain. The Coal Board will try to stage a similar drive in other areas two weeks before their holiday periods. If this manoeuvre can be defeated at Bilston, it will be that much harder for the NCB in all the other coalfields.

By Pat Craven

## Rail workers get militant

THE ANNUAL conference of the National Union of Railwaymen has been dominated by the miners' dispute, with a mood of determination to give the fullest support to the NUM.

And signifying the shift to the left in the NUR since the ousting of the old right-wing leadership, conference adopted a Marxist political programme.

Criticism was levelled at the leadership of the steel workers' union, and calls made to strengthen and give maximum support to the Triple Alliance.

Coupled with this solidarity for the miners there was an angry anti-Tory mood. *Militant* supporter Dave Evans (Liverpool No 5 branch) moved a resolution, passed unanimously, oppos-

ing the Tory anti-union laws, committing the union to refuse to comply with them and to take action in support of any union or member penalised by them.

Democracy was also an issue at conference. Delegates moved to elect the nominee to the Labour Party NEC, instead of the assistant General Secretary being the automatic choice.

### Witch-hunt

Unfortunately the resolution on the reinstatement of the five *Militant* Editorial Board members expelled from the Labour Party was rejected. Jimmy Knapp alleged that expelled *Militant* supporters from Blackburn Labour Party were in league with the SDP, an absurd accusation already

answered by *Militant*. However, he committed himself though to no more witch-hunts and no more expulsions.

Later during the conference the NUR adopted the programme supported by the Marxists in the Labour Party. A resolution, again moved by Liverpool No 5, was passed calling for a 35 hour week with no loss of pay, a massive programme of public works, a £100 minimum wage and the nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies. Conference also instructed the NUR representative on the National Executive of the Labour Party to support that policy at Labour Party conference.

By Bob Russell  
(NUR)

## Benn calls for widespread support

A magnificent rally in East London heard Tony Benn call for widespread strike action in support of the miners.

At the rally at East Ham Town Hall, Tony Benn said: "Trade unionists in a whole range of industries and services should plan to take industrial action where they work. No one need wait for permission to begin. An extension of the strike action would directly assist the NUM and give them a tremendous moral boost."

To much applause he also called for a "sustained national political campaign" called by the leadership of the Labour Party, of meetings, rallies and fund raising events with a national demonstration.

The rally was called by the Newham Miners' Support Committee, predominately

made up of local *Militant* supporters. 650 people came to the rally after a campaign of flyposting and leafletting. Every platform speaker received enthusiastic applause from the packed Town Hall.

First speaker of the evening was John Hird, LPYS national chairman, who urged young workers to join in the political struggle against the Tories and the capitalist system, by joining the LPYS.

The miners' case was graphically and emotionally put by Terry Harrison of the Kent NUM, and miner's wife Sue Bence of the Aylesham Miners' Wives Action Committee, to warm applause.

Tony Benn pointed out in his speech that the miners' strike was part of one big struggle against the Tories. This was emphasised by Derek Hatton, Deputy

Leader of Liverpool City Council, who described their running battle with the Tories over the council's budget.

The chairman of the meeting, Andy Bevan called the collection with an excellent £1,200 raised for the miners' strike fund.

There was time left for debate after the speakers, only marred by an ultra-left sectarian who accused the left NUM leaders of "sabotage". She was howled down.

The rally ended on a more positive note with a contribution from an 81-year old Labour Party member. He recalled miners' leaders in Durham, after the defeat of the 1926 General Strike, crying as they had to tell the men they were defeated and had to return to work. To cheers he shouted: "We won't let that happen this time!"



## Miners' dispute

# The battle of Orgreave

**SEVEN BUS loads of men left Ayrshire for Orgreave on Sunday 17 June. All the buses got through without any harassment, but the police were expecting them and were going to show them strike breaking tactics 1984 style.**

To be on the safe side the police stacked the cards in their favour. They deployed 70 horses with cossack-style riders armed with riot sticks. Hundreds of police with round shields and truncheons acted as snatch squads. More with large shields and protective headgear stood ready. They then balanced up the numbers with soldiers dressed as police.

Because no guns are allowed the police generals were guaranteed a field day outmanoeuvring the disorganised horde they faced. Well drilled squads covered each other, opening up when the pressure was too great to allow cavalry through, followed by riot squads.

Battle techniques learned from medieval generals, and perfected fighting savages when Britain was at the empire-building stage were employed. Orders were

**By William Hodge**  
(Secretary, Netherthird Strike Centre)

clear—a violent beating for anyone who could be hit. Prisoners were not to be taken. Intimidation was the order of the day.

## Full gallop

The rout was completed by cavalry at full gallop chasing pickets through the streets and gardens of the village, passing women with children in prams. Men were beaten and pushed over a sheer 40 foot railway embankment—casualties were then arrested.

The men were frightened but not subdued. No-one is going back to dig coal on these terms. I can only hope that something is done to cool the situation in case pickets decide to even up the contest and arm themselves

for the next confrontation with Police State 1984. The following casualties from Netherthird strike centre give an idea of what the pickets faced:

**William Hodge**—three broken ribs caused by police trampling over him.

**Clark Cochran**—twisted ankle caused by being trampled by police horses.

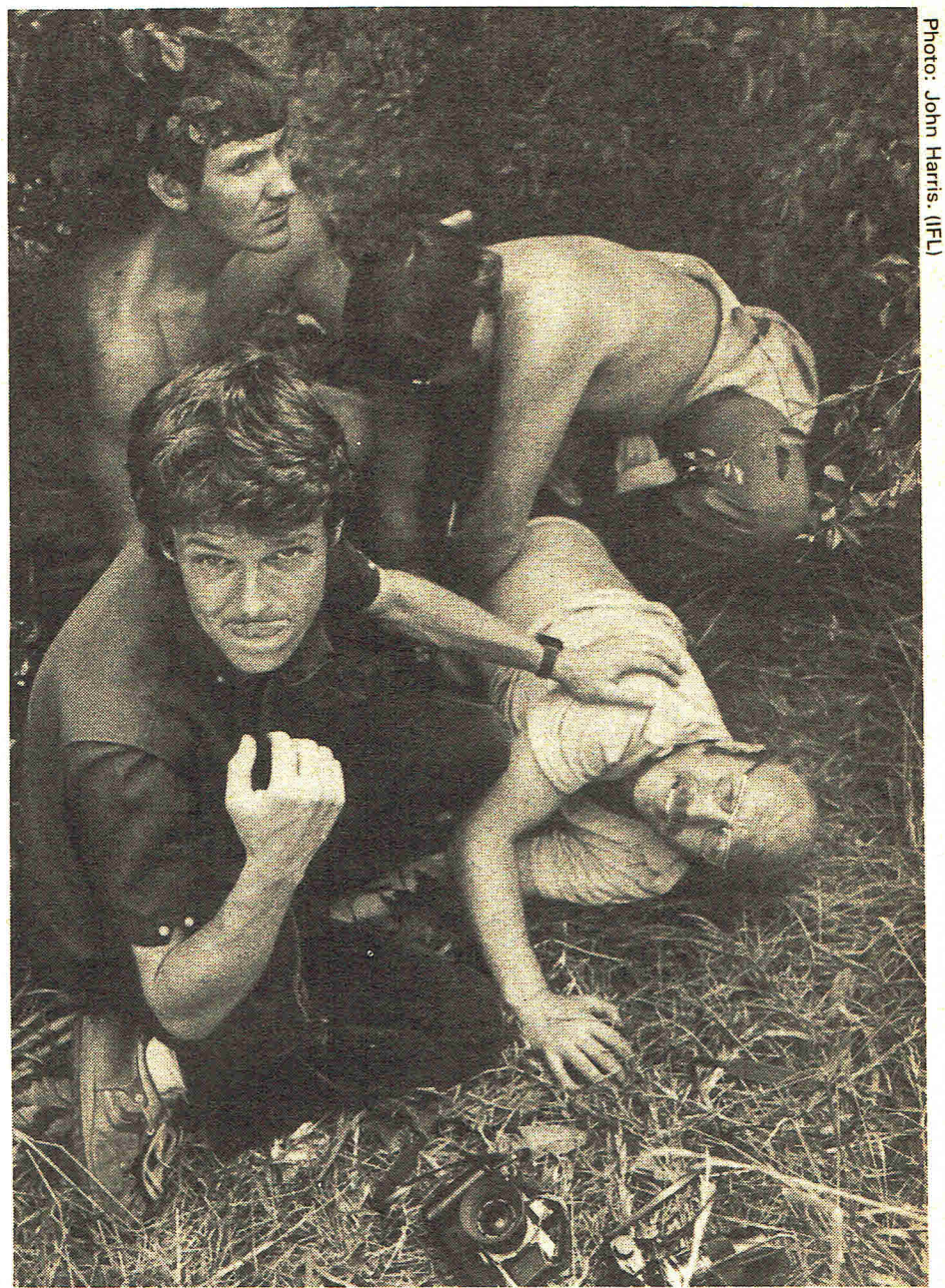
**Jim Anderson**—twisted ankle running from police horses.

**Dougie Blackwood**—bruising all over body after being thrown down a railway embankment.

**Allan Marshall**—whole torso badly scarred after being knocked into barbed wire fencing by a horse.

**Jim Parker**—badly damaged knee after being struck by a riot shield.

**Roy Brown**—twisted knee and ankle after being knocked over wall.



Miner lies injured on the ground after indiscriminate police violence at Orgreave.

Photo: John Harris (IFL)

## A letter to MacGregor

Dear Mr MacGregor  
According to the press and media pits are threatened by "fire, flood and collapse". The *Sunday Express*, 17 June, 1984 quotes senior Coal Board officials predicting that: "Up to 40 pits and 40,000 jobs will be at risk". Is this your view Mr MacGregor?

We know that you know nothing about the British coal industry but are all your colleagues equally ignorant or do they just have convenient memories? Let's deal with the threat of "Fire, flood and collapse" one at a time.

1) "Spontaneous combustion is a prime worry" (*Sunday Express*, 17 June, 1984). Spontaneous combustion (SC for short) is the slow ox-



Ian MacGregor.

Photo: Jacob Sutton.

idisation of coal or other carbonaceous materials, the coal is often low rank coal containing pyrites which is left as roof coal. As the coal face advances this roof coal is left to fall in the waste (gob) between the intake and return airways. Roof coal is also left in the park area.

... SC can occur whether

the pit is in production or at a standstill. The industry has dealt with this problem adequately for many years and is a world leader in the detection of SC. The board know very well that it is well within the capabilities of the deputies and managers who are still at work to deal with this problem.

Furthermore all collieries would provide teams to deal with these problems if the management proved incompetent.

2) Flooding: as with SC this problem has been handled adequately for umpteen years and all auxiliary pumping systems are under the direct control of the officials and management.

3) "The board have identified at least 18 collieries where geological problems are mounting" (*Sunday Express*, 18 June, 1984). 99.9% of all geological deteriora-

tion can be overcome even after a long period of inactivity. This has always been the case in the past.

### Exhaustion of seam

The health, safety and development of the pits and the coal industry is governed by one factor—finance, or lack of it. The closing of a seam, district or pit is finally decided by this factor alone. Exhaustion is the only exception on which we all agree. The average cost of a new coal face is £3 million, the present cost per week to the government as a result of the coal strike is £70 million according to *The Guardian* of 16 June, 1984.

Yes, Mr MacGregor the pits are in danger, but not from the miners who work long hours and years

underground, many of whom have given their lives for the industry, many of whom having spent all their working lives in the pits retire with lost limbs and debilitating diseases and who never live long enough to enjoy their retirement let alone reach the age of 70 like yourself.

If the millions and millions of pounds being spent to break our strike and smash the NUM were spent on investment and expansion in the industry then our problems would be over. If you have the interests of our industry at heart why do you not demand this from the government? Or is your brief from Mrs Thatcher the same as the one for British Steel where capacity was 'expanded' from a projected 35 million tonnes in the early 1980s, to less than 15 million tonnes when you left, and where you looked after the interests of your employees by throwing over 50,000 of them on the dole.

You can fly back to America and resume a life of

luxury and security whenever you choose. I cannot nor can thousands of miners who will have nowhere else to go if their pit with coal still in it closes. And a future for our kids? Do you care? Well I care and so do thousands of other miners who will continue no matter what to fight for their right to work.

### Our future

I am an ordinary coal face worker whose job, industry and children's future is not for sale, you will not defeat us Mr MacGregor, the issues for us are too great. You probably cannot understand this but let me assure you of one thing—we will continue to fight and struggle and we will win, we have to.

Yours sincerely  
JA Robinson  
Cotgrave NUM  
Nottingham

(Extracts from a letter sent to Ian MacGregor, National Coal Board Chairman)

## Around the country

Sixty people attended the first *Militant* Readers' Meeting in WREXHAM. The audience, including miners and their families, heard Terry Fields MP, Ian Isaacs (secretary of St John's Lodge NUM and the South Wales NUM Executive) and Martin Lee (Liverpool LPYS). £56 was raised for the fighting fund and the miners. (Sarah Norris and Stewart Whyte report)

Construction workers at the EASINGTON British Gas site, Humberside, have raised nearly £3,000 for the miners over the last eight weeks. 65 *Militants* were sold at the site last week. (Trevor Grewar reports)

LEEDS District Labour Party's Miners' support group was formed with the intention of raising £1,000 per week for the miners and their families. In the first week they raised £3,000! Jumble sales, street and factory collections and socials are under way. In the Leeds area five pits are on strike—Saville, Ledston Luck, Rothwell, Allerton Bywater and Allerton Bywater workshops. 30 miners have already joined the Labour Party. (John Appleyard reports)

Fifteen Ayrshire miners, staying with *Militant* supporters in GLASGOW, collected several hundred pounds around the housing schemes, shopping centres and fac-

ories. The visit ended with a successful day of action in the Argyll Street Precinct. (Ronnie Stevenson reports)

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING Trades Council raised nearly £250 for the miners at a recent public meeting. Over 80 people representing 21 unions heard Richie Richardson of Snowdon NUM, Caroline Sweeney for the miners' wives, and Alan Pooley, a NUPE official. Malcolm Pitt, President of Kent NUM will address a further meeting on Wednesday 4 July at 7.30 pm in the Len Fagg Hall, London Road, Tonbridge Wells. (Nigel Sheahan, Tonbridge and Malling Trades Council reports)

SHIPLEY Labour Party held a benefit day for the miners. Miners from Sharlston and

Cortonwood pits and local supporters heard Bob Cryer (MEP), Pat Wall (President Bradford and District Trades Council), and miners Mick Carter and Arthur Slater. The rally marched through Shipley to the Trades Hall for refreshments. Over £400 was raised including £100 from a pensioner. (Steve Wilkinson reports)

BRISTOL LPYS branches had an overwhelming success with their 'Music for the Miners' benefit on June 15. Over 600 people came to the concert to hear Billy Bragg, the Redskins and local band Brilliant Corners. The benefit raised £546 for the South Wales NUM. As the local music paper, *Venue* put it: "All in all, the best gig in Bristol for a very long time and a total triumph."

## Edinburgh Militant Meeting

MORE THAN 250 people attended a recent *Militant* Readers Meeting in Edinburgh—the biggest ever in the East of Scotland. A Fife miner, one of five miners who spoke, summed up the defiant mood of the meeting: "I'm a Fife miner; previous to that I was a Clackmannan miner; previous to that I was a West Lothian miner; previous to that I was a Shropshire miner. This is my fourth pit in five years and it's my last one, I can assure you of that. I am not moving again."

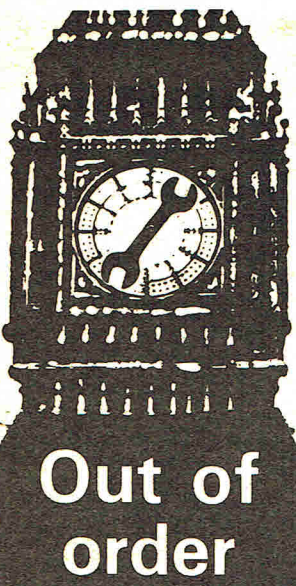
Chris Herriot of

Monktonhall NUM addressed the meeting only hours after being released from police custody following his arrest on the Bilston Glen picket line.

The miners' fight was linked to that of Liverpool by City Councillor Pauline Dunlop.

Peter Taaffe, editor of *Militant*, paid tribute to the magnificent movement of the miners which marked, he said, a turning point not just for the miners but for the whole labour and working class movement.





## Out of order

**HARDLY** A day goes by in Parliament without one Tory minister or another admonishing workers in the public sector to accept pay awards which mean a cut in their living standards.

One part of the 'public sector' is generally reckoned to have received higher pay than others—the police and the armed forces—but even there, the Tories' class instinct shines through.

According to recent answers given in Parliament, the minimum wage for police constables has risen from £61 a week in 1979 to £129 a week today—maximum pay has risen from £92 to £204 per week. Rates for the police in London are topped up from these figures by up to £16 a week.

When you add to that the allowances, in particular very heavily subsidised housing, then the Tories' preparation in attempting to buy the loyalty of those they intend to increasingly use as strike-breakers can be clearly seen.

Average basic pay for all police, under the rank of Assistant Chief Constable, has risen by 119.2% since April 1979—what group of public service workers could match that? Only, perhaps, the army?

Well not quite—and the position for the officers is entirely different to that of the rank and file. For privates, lance corporals and corporals, daily pay rates have actually *dropped* in real terms over the last five years.

For officers, real pay rates have *increased* by 7% for captains, 8% for majors, 11% for colonels and brigadiers, and 14% for major generals.

For privates, five years of Tory wage policies have meant a drop in daily pay, at today's prices, from £12.61 to £12.03 when starting, and from £20.14 to £20.06 at the top of the scale.

The Tories' logic is clear—'reward' the police to ensure loyalty for the government when sent in to break up picket lines; and reward the officers in the army to ensure they keep the ranks of ordinary squaddies well 'in line'.

These facts, along with the arbitrary nature of discipline and the lack of democracy, could, and should, be used by trade unions in a campaign to secure membership and representation of the rank and file of the armed forces.

Many of the soldiers who've suffered pay cuts under the Tories, are ordinary working class youth driven into the army and other services by mass unemployment, under the undemocratic control of their public-school educated senior officers. They are a section of the working class presently ignored by the trade union leadership—that must be changed in the future.

By Dave Nellist MP



Police force pickets' cars off the road and arrest the drivers, near Derby after a go-slow in protest at police road-blocks.

Photo: John Harris (IFL II)

# A state of siege

**"THE POLICE officer pulled me out of the crowd and two or three policemen walked me out. My arm was held behind my back. The police kept saying to me, 'You're the first, you're going to pay for this'. I didn't struggle. I asked them what I had been arrested for and they said Breach of the Peace."**

Review by Pat Craven

This picketing miner's story of his arrest is typical of many recorded in a pamphlet, *A State of Siege—Policing the coalfields in the first six weeks of the miners' strike* by Susan Miller and Martin Walker.

Its main conclusion is that a National Riot Force has been created from special units of all the different constabularies, trained in paramilitary strategy and armed with riot weapons. It is under the control of the National Recording Centre, set up in 1972 after that year's miners' strike, by the Association of Chief of Police Officers (ACPO). It has no statutory authority and is completely outside the control of the Police Committees of the local authorities.

## Rapid mobilisation

Its head, Humberside's Chief Constable David Hall, claimed that 1,000 policemen had been mobilised within three quarters of an hour of picketing beginning in Nottinghamshire, and that within a few days 8,000, from all but two forces, were involved.

Not only does this force lack any legal basis for its activities, but it has consistently violated the law in its dealings with NUM pickets:

"The officer searched the boot of the car and found our sleeping bags. We were told that we were suspected of 'going picketing' which may cause a breach of the peace. We replied that picketing was not illegal; he said, 'I'm not going to argue, if you don't turn back, the driver of the car will be arrested, the car impounded and the rest of you will have to walk home.'"

The pamphlet claims that the decision by the NCB not to pursue the union through the civil courts, using the Employment Acts, was part of a conscious move by the police and the government to rely on the criminal law instead. This made it far easier to obtain convictions and had the effect of "criminalising" the pickets.

Offences such as "obstructing a police officer" and "creating a breach of the peace" have been used against any picket the police choose to arrest. Magistrates have not only invariably accepted without question the police evidence in such cases; they have also at the request of the police, applied bail conditions, or even remanded men in custody, for no good reason. In two cases, the police, knowing that men had been wrongly charged, withdrew their case, but only in exchange for the defence agreeing that the men be bound over. These men were thus being punished without charge or conviction.

The police are also shown to have used the arrests to build up dossiers on union activists; questioning in the police stations ranged far from the alleged offence:

## Political questioning

"I was asked what newspaper I bought and who I had voted for in the pit union elections. I was asked about the Branch Secretary and where the strike headquarters were. What did I think about Arthur Scargill trying to stop the Notts miners from going to work. A plainclothes officer came into the exercise yard and tried to draw us into a political discussion. I remember him specifically saying, 'Scargill and Benn are not trade unionists,

they are political wreckers. At least under Joe Gormley you were in a position where you had a man who cared about your welfare."

More sinister methods of intelligence gathering were being used as well: "When we first came into the building the phones went dead and then were connected again. We had a visit from our friend at British Telecom (a union member who had helped the miners in their two previous strikes); he told us that they had put a tap on our phone and that although he could remove it there was no point because they would only put it on again."

Perhaps the most damning evidence quoted in the pamphlet is that of the Chairman of the South Yorkshire Police Committee, George Moores, who like his op-

posite numbers in other areas, has been reduced to a helpless bystander at events in which "his" police force are involved:

"Police from other areas are coming in here knowing that they are going away again. They come here, they attend the pickets, the adrenalin starts flowing and then the thumping starts. . . . There is no doubt that the police can be blamed for a lot of the violence that occurred on the picket line. . . . If I had to sum up what was most worrying, I would say that it was the concept of national policies that are carried out by police officers, without any legal standing whatsoever. Here we have state repression against people who are on the whole most moderate in their attitudes."

It is not "the law" which

the miners have had to face in this dispute. On the contrary, this pamphlet shows that the police have been guilty of far more violations of the law than the pickets. The "state", as Engels defined it, is in the last analysis, "armed bodies of men". In normal times, this reality is disguised by a network of legal, civil service and other institutions which seek to give the appearance of neutrality and impartiality.

It is only in periods of crisis that the instrument of class domination is revealed in its true colours. The miners' strike is just such a crisis, and Engels has been proved absolutely right. It is precisely "armed bodies of men" against which the miners have had to contend, in the form of the National Riot Force.

*A State of Siege* by Susan Miller and Martin Walker, published with the assistance of the Yorkshire Area NUM and Greenwich NALGO.

## Women jailed for crossing road

**FOUR WOMEN, members of Coventry Labour Party, were recently arrested and held overnight for 15 hours.**

They were arrested outside the gates of Coventry colliery and later charged with obstruction of the highway. The women, who between them have responsibility for ten children, two of them babies, were subjected to intensive questioning by police on their political activity, and that of their husbands. They were arrested at 9.45 pm for apparently "attempting to stop a bus". In fact they were walking across the road.

One of the women told me that the police were clearly trying to demoralise them. They were initially held inside the pit gates in a large garage used by the police as an incident room. They were later questioned further and were expected to answer questions like: "Have you ever been on a national demonstration? Are you a member of the Labour Party? Which branch do you belong to? Why were you on the picket line when you are



Miners' wives picket Florence Colliery, Stoke-on-Trent. Women are playing an increasingly important role in the dispute.

Photo: John Harris (IFL III)

not a miner's wife?"

They were not charged until 7 am the following morning, and even the police got the charge wrong because they had failed to account for a change in the law.

The women were later told that under normal circumstances they would have been held for only 2-3 hours, but because it was a 'picket case' they were held overnight, even though the police knew of their family circumstances.

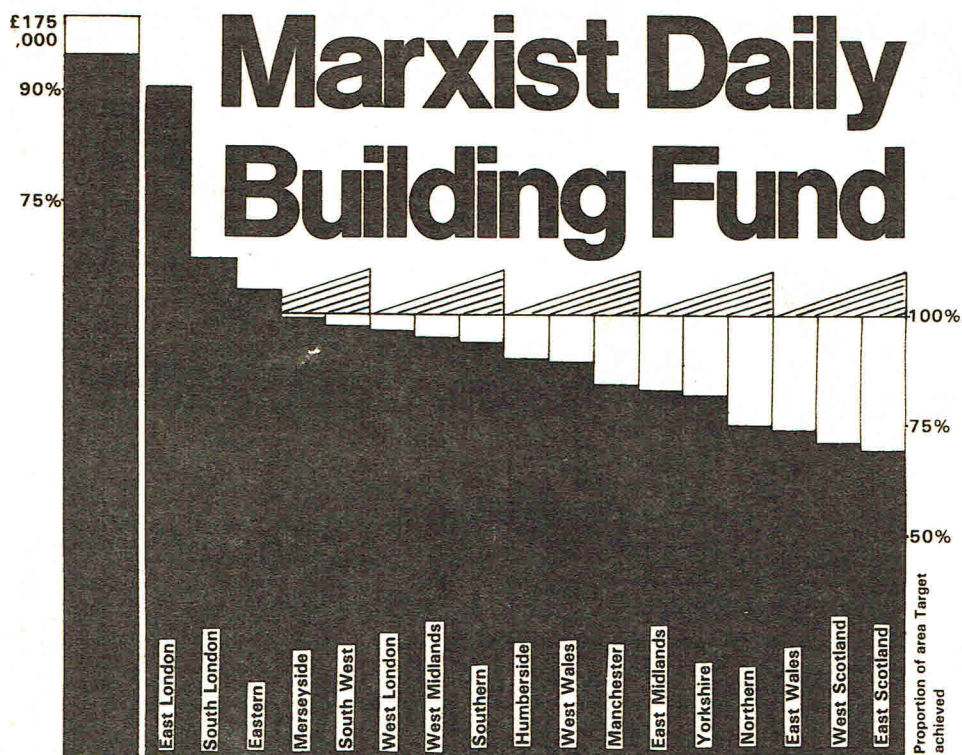
When Dave Nellist, Labour MP for Coventry South East, telephoned the

police station to question their detention, he was told to ring later in the morning when the usual press statements would be issued.

The maximum penalty for their 'offence' is £50. There was no reason to keep these women overnight away from their families. Far from demoralised, these women are now even more determined to continue their support for the miners and their families and help them to victory.

By Jane Warner  
(Coventry)





**THIS WEEK** we have received a further £1,485 for our new premises fund. It might not be a lot compared with previous weeks but it is still a tremendous achievement.

Even when things are going slowly in our fund raising work we are still racing ahead of any other political paper. This is because our readers and supporters see the vital importance of producing a Marxist daily paper which would arm the whole of the labour movement with a weapon with which to strengthen the fight against capitalism.

We now have a total of £165,586 in the fund leaving only £9,414 to raise. This

should be an easy task compared to the massive amount we have already raised. When we have the final total we can be proud of what will have been achieved—enough money to purchase premises to house a Marxist daily paper.

There have been a number of newspaper articles recently about the remarkable fund raising achievements of *Militant*. This is yet another example of it.

### No gimmicks

What a difference from the bosses' papers! They have to attract readers with gimmicks like bingo. Even *The Times* is now offering cash prizes in its stocks and shares game, Portfolio, in an attempt to boost circulation.

We don't give money away. We do the opposite. We ask workers to give us money on the basis that only in that way can we develop an answer to the lies and distortions of the Tory media.

Those who have helped in the campaign to fund the fight this week include: **A Brocklehurst, Manchester, £50; Denise Taylor, Birmingham, £50; Bob Longmore, Plymouth, £50; Dave Ridley, Wearside, £30; A Bennett, £30; Chris Broomhead, South Yorkshire, £25.**

Follow the example of these supporters. Do as thousands have done already and donate a week's income to the Building Fund. In this way we will soon have the full amount.

# ADS

# Militant

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

**9th South Wales Militant summer camp. August Bank Holiday, Friday 24 August—Monday 27 August.**

Talks on: trade unions, Central America, Ireland, M. East and Labour Party.

Cost only £12.50 per person (including snacks). £2.50 per child (5-16 yrs) FREE UNDER 5's Day trippers a minimum of £3 donation per day to the Fighting Fund. Venue—Horton, Gower, Near Swansea.

Book now. Due to past successful camps the first 250 adults will be our full quota.

Further details from, and cheques payable to 'Swansea Summer Camp'—181 Hanover Street, Swansea. SA1 6BP. Tel Swansea (0792) 436623. During day phone Swansea 466631.

**MILITANT PAMPHLET**—'The General Strike: 1926 and Now' by Lynn Walsh, (reprinted from MIR No 11, August 1976) Price 50p each or for 10 to 19 copies 40p each, and for 20 or more copies 35p each. Order your copy from Dave Backwith, 10c Anchor Close, Bear Cross, Bournemouth. BH11 9Y. Please make cheques payable to Militant Fighting Fund.

**THANET NORTH LPYS:** 'Save the Pits'. Speakers: Malcolm Pitt (President Kent miners) on Monday 2 July, 8.00 pm at Labour Hall, 42 Hawley Square, Margate.

**'SOCIALIST YOUTH'** badges 20p each or 15p each for 10 or more. Available from 'Socialist Youth', c/o LPYS, 150 Walworth Road, London, SE17 1JT. Cash with orders.

**WALLSEND WOMEN'S Section.** Weekend School 25/26 August. Crèche and accommodation provided. For further details, phone: Sandra Thompson (0632) 634889.

**BIG DOUG'S DISCO,** Saturday 30 June, 8 pm 'till late at 'The Charlie Chaplin', New Kent Road, Elephant and Castle, London SE1. Price: £1.50 waged, 50p unwaged.

**ABERTILLERY DISCO/DANCE** on behalf of the Gwent Miners' Food Fund. Abertillery Sports Centre, Friday 29 June, 8-1 organised by Abertillery LPYS.

## Meetings

Send us details of your Militant meeting (no charge). All copy must arrive here by Saturday.

**GREATER MANCHESTER Militant Women's Day School.** Saturday 21 July. Details to follow.

**SUNDERLAND:** Marxist Discussion Group. At: The Labour Party rooms, 5 Grange Crescent (Stockton Road).

Thursday 28 June at 7.30pm—'Do we live in a police state?'

Thursday 12 July at 7.30pm—Northern Ireland.

For further details, contact Kath Eglinton at 4 Alice Street, Sunderland.

**BASILDON Militant Public Meeting** Sat 30 June at 6.30pm Rokescroft Community Centre. Elm Green Pitsea, Basildon. Speaker: Kevin Miles (London Labour Party Regional Exec. personal capacity).

**WALLSEND Marxist Discussion Group,** every Sunday morning 11.30am. 1 Vindolanda, Ryton Gardens, Howden Wallsend. Phone Newcastle 341254.

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

**MILITANT MINER Public Meeting.** 'The miners' strike and socialism'. Speakers: Dave Hopper (Wearmouth NUM); Bill Hopwood. At the Royalty, Chester Road, Sunderland on Tuesday 3 July, 7.30 pm. All welcome.

**PENDLE: Militant Public Meeting** on 'Support the Miners, Support Liverpool Council'. Speakers: Cllr Felicity Dowling (Secretary, Liverpool Labour Party), Steve Sullivan (Sutton NUM), Peter Harris (expelled member, Blackburn CLP) at Silverman Hall, Nelson, on Friday 29 June.

Registered Promoter: D. Smith, 14 Station Road, Birlingshoe, Colchester, Essex.

## MILITANT SUMMER DRAW

- 1st Prize — £500 Holiday in resort of your choice
- 2nd Prize - Video worth £300 3rd Prize - Camera worth £100
- 4th Prize — 5 individual prizes of £20 worth of socialist books

PRICE OF TICKET 10 PENCE

All cash, counterfoils and unsold tickets to be returned to 1, Mentmore Terrace, London, E8 3PN by first post Saturday 7th July 1984. The draw takes place on Saturday 7th July 1984.

Printed to conform to Part II of the Lotteries and Amusements Act, 1976 & regulations made thereunder and registered by the Promoter. Also all other Lottery Acts in Force.

McKay's Printers, Service (T.U.) 72-74 Camberwell Road, London SE5 0EQ Telephone: 703 5825/6

Nº 018171

Get your raffle tickets from your local Militant seller

# FIGHTING FUND this week £3,017

| Area                  | Received     | % of target achieved | Target 7 July |
|-----------------------|--------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Eastern               | 1406         | 52%                  | 2700          |
| East Midlands         | 908          | 33%                  | 3050          |
| Humberside            | 934          | 34%                  | 1700          |
| London East           | 1378         | 51%                  | 3500          |
| London West           | 741          | 27%                  | 2100          |
| London South          | 1135         | 42%                  | 2850          |
| Manchester & Lancs    | 1383         | 51%                  | 3700          |
| Merseyside            | 1527         | 56%                  | 4800          |
| Northern              | 1090         | 40%                  | 4050          |
| Scotland East         | 725          | 27%                  | 2450          |
| Scotland West         | 978          | 36%                  | 3300          |
| Southern              | 1800         | 67%                  | 4400          |
| South West            | 657          | 24%                  | 2050          |
| Wales East            | 451          | 17%                  | 2100          |
| Wales West            | 551          | 20%                  | 1950          |
| West Midlands         | 1649         | 61%                  | 3800          |
| Yorkshire             | 1247         | 46%                  | 4500          |
| Others                | 11117        | 43%                  | 12000         |
| <b>Total received</b> | <b>29676</b> |                      | <b>65000</b>  |

**WE HAVE had an excellent £3,017 in this week pushing the fighting fund up to £29,676. But we still need a record fortnight to reach our target.**

It can be done if every reader gets out and asks every activist in the Labour Party and trade unions. We need the money to continue the work we have been doing in the miners' strike, Liverpool and in many other areas.

Support for the fund was well shown at the NALGO conference where £1,001 was collected. Again this week have had donations from striking miners who recognise the need to build the ideas of Marxism.

£4 came from a miner in Herrington and £8 from a regular miners' discussion group in Hetton, Durham. These miners like many

others during the strike have realised the importance of preparing the labour movement as a whole and want the *Militant* to become the paper every worker looks to.

What we need now is a massive final push in every single area to raise the rest of the money. Parties, discos, meals, video-nights—any number of fund-raising activities can be organised. Make sure you don't leave it too late. In Stockport £17 was raised at a curry night. In Islington £107 was raised at a Bar-B-Q.

Don't forget to take collecting tins on every paper sale. Comrades in Morecambe raised £6 in a bucket at a CND rally. If that were repeated all over the country it would give us thousands—and that's just what we want.

Don't sit at home. Go out

and raise some money. We could have yet another record if the work is done. Show our enemies that we are not satisfied with past successes.

We want to improve on them because there is always more work that needs doing. And that needs more money. Help us to get it!

### THIS WEEK'S donations include:

Dave Hollis, Berne Young Socialists, Switzerland £50; Ian Williams, Manchester £10; Lesley Cope, Stafford LPYS £10; B McCollum, Bolsover CLP £10.74; T Gibley, unemployed, Motherwell £18; TGWU 5/325 Branch, Birmingham £10; Southampton LPYS £7.50; Joe Pell, Sheffield £2; Neil Gallagher, Edgbaston LPYS £1; G Hargreaves, Handsworth CLP £1; Susan Fewings Unemployed, Battersea £1; Bob Brundrett Ryde IOW, unemployed £1.

# SELLING Militant

**PUBS PROVIDE** a difficult, challenging and entertaining way of getting our ideas over and selling the paper. In my local I am frequently greeted with the raised, clenched fist and I am known as a *Militant* supporter by everybody. A lot of the local comedians have a good laugh at my expense.

One day we went through the usual routine, but this time I threw down the gauntlet, "Why don't you buy a copy?", I asked. There was some resistance to this idea as money had to change hands. After some persuasion I managed to sell a paper. This has now become a regular sale; in fact, the next week he asked me for a paper!

### Pub argument

Some months later I was again reading the paper while waiting for a game of pool. One of the pub regulars came in and asked if I was "one of those militants?". I said I was.

He asked me why I read this *Militant* rubbish. I told



Militant bookstall at last weekend's Liverpool conference.

him he couldn't have read the *Militant* as he wouldn't call it rubbish if he had. My remarks were addressed to the other people in the room, as reasoned discussion was out of the question with this character.

He took the paper out of my hands and proceeded to tear it up. After destroying the paper he said he didn't like militants because they were aggressive and violent!

I told him that he would have to pay for his

recklessness and I managed to squeeze 30p out of him. More importantly, however, I sold two papers to other people in the room because of this incident. The moral of this story is that it not only needs boldness and audacity to sell the paper but also the initiative to turn any situation to your advantage to sell our paper and build our ideas.

By Paul Holmes

## MARXIST NORTHERN WEEKEND SCHOOL 7-8 JULY

Courses on Marxism, state, trade unions  
At: Clarendon Building,  
Southfield Road, Middlesbrough

Cost £7.50 (£4.00 unwaged)

Crèche provided—when booking give ages of children  
Send bookings with cheques/PO to:  
Norman Hall, 30 Aske Road, Middlesbrough



# 150th ANNIVERSARY

## Tolpuddle Martyrs

# The birth of the workers' movement

## A new political force

**THE THATCHER government has ruled that effective solidarity action by trade unions is "unlawful". Tory anti-union laws, along with attacks on the funding of the Labour Party are designed to undermine the whole existence of the labour movement.**

Yet 'moderate' union leaders such as Len Murray have refused to support resistance to these attacks. The POEU and NGA have suffered serious defeats as a result of moderates' insisting on working within the law.

But if trades unionists had not been prepared to fight in illegal conditions the unions would have been crushed in their infancy. This article, the first of an occasional series on the history of Britain's unions, examines how they fought the Combination Acts.

This period also shows the political affiliation of the early unions, and gives the lie to the myth of 'non-political' unions, which the Tories are striving for.

Trade unions were set up during the 18th century. Groups of workers in the same trade joined trade clubs, which joined together into unions. They represented the skilled artisans—goldbeaters, hatters, etc, trades long since obliterated.

### Early unions

They operated as Friendly Societies, performed social functions and operated a restricted entry to the trade which was often protected by the local corporation. The City of London for instance protected Billingsgate porters. They often acted to raise wages by appealing for action from Parliament or local magistrates.

The British capitalist class

By Barbara Humphries

attacked the movement at the end of the 18th century in order to flood industry with cheap unskilled labour. It was the beginning of the industrial revolution, which would eventually destroy the livelihoods of handloom spinners and weavers. Women and children were pulled into the new textile mills while skilled artisans starved trying to compete with this new machinery.

The Combination Acts 1799-1800 outlawed both unions and employers' organisations but in practice they were only used against the unions. The government also pursued its 'laissez-faire' policy by repealing the Apprenticeship Laws. The powers of magistrates to fix wages in times of recession were also repealed. The government wanted a 'free' labour force, free to be exploited by the industrial capitalist. The unions were now on their own.

Unions were under attack from the law and directly from employers who were attempting to replace union labour. Unions like the Cabinet Makers Society were faced with competition from 'dishonourable trades'—the practice of employers setting up new workshops with new work practices and cheap methods of production. This was similar to the methods used by employers to defeat the print unions today. Skilled artisans, even when

destitute, were hostile to seeking work in the new mills, where they would be subject to an alien harsh discipline.

But the unions continued to thrive in illegal conditions. Loopholes in the law allowed Friendly Societies. Together with the old practice of 'tramping' to find work these were used as a cover for union activities. Old unions survived and new ones were set up, and amalgamation went ahead. Many unions went underground, adopting elaborate initiation ceremonies and secret oath taking.

### Secrecy

The Society of Ironfounders met at night on the moors and buried its records in a hole in the ground; officers of the union were kept secret. Many rituals survived after the ban was lifted. Unions such as the London tailors adapted a highly centralised organisation in response to illegality. By 1815 there were at least 1 million on record as members of a trade union.

Some small masters were opposed to the Combination Laws and refused to prosecute. Prosecution was difficult because of the impossibility of finding witnesses to denounce an illegal union. Blacklegs and hostile employers could be subject to direct action.

But most of all prosecutions were avoided when employers found themselves 'on the run' in a dispute, just as the firms which backed Project Mercury reacted when faced with successful blacking by POEU members.

The miners were par-

ticularly hard hit as many coal owners were magistrates. In 1809, so many Durham miners were imprisoned during a dispute that the Durham gaol and the House of Correction were overfilled and the rest were imprisoned in the Bishop's stables!

The Combination Laws' failure to restrict unions led reformer Francis Place to campaign for their repeal, claiming that 'the laws induced (working people) to break and disregard the laws...they made them hate their employers with a rancour which nothing else could have produced. And they made them hate those of their own class who refused to join them.'

Place hoped repeal would mean collapse of the unions and a new co-operation between employers and workers. The exact opposite happened. The number of disputes rose as unions came out into the open. Unions increased their support and attempts were made to build links across different trades. John Doherty of the cotton spinners founded the first general union—the National Association for the Protection of Labour. This did not survive but was followed by a second attempt, by supporters of Robert Owen in the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union.

### Political reform

The years when unions flourished illegally coincided with an increased number of radical political societies, committed to political reform. Societies, like the London Corresponding Society worked closely with the illegal unions. The early 19th century was a very



Photo: Militant

NGA dispute 1983; police employed to enforce Tory laws.

stormy period for the capitalist class as they confronted the early labour movement.

At the end of the Napoleonic Wars there were marches of the unemployed and attempted local uprisings against the government. Workers protesting against new machinery threatening their jobs used the threat to destroy this machinery as a form of "collective bargaining" known as Luddism.

The government used brutal repression against the Luddites, and in peaceful demonstrations such as in Manchester in 1819 (the Peterloo Massacre), many workers died at the hands of the forces of law and order, or were hanged for defending their rights.

In these early years the labour movement learned through its experience of struggle. The 1832 Reform Bill enfranchised the industrial capitalists and ensured a 'Whig' government which continued its Tory predecessors' work of repression. In 1834 came the Tolpuddle Martyrs.

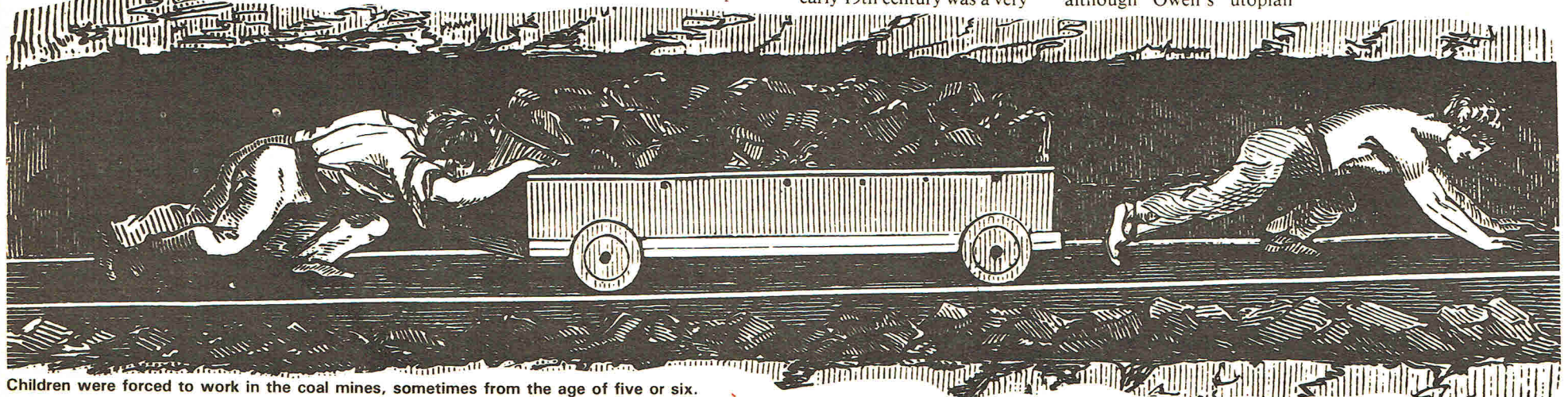
The unions were involved with the Owenite movement although Owen's utopian

socialism appealed mainly to the skilled artisans who could operate his co-operative exchanges. The unions, including miners in north east England, textile workers and the London artisans formed the backbone of the Chartist movement.

### Chartism

In 1839 and 1842 trades unionists struck in support of the Charter, which they believed would give political power to the working class. They saw that trade unionism was not enough and that political action on behalf of the class necessary. Radical Liberals and Tory reformers had attempted to win the support of the working class for their own campaigns. But Chartism was the first independent workers' political movement.

Today the Tories want to depoliticise the unions by breaking their links with the Labour Party. This will fail. Unions are, and have always been forced to be political, because of the constant attacks from the political representatives of the ruling class.



Children were forced to work in the coal mines, sometimes from the age of five or six.



# 150th ANNIVERSARY

# The Tolpuddle Martyrs -trade union pioneers

**TRADE UNIONISTS** this week pay tribute to the Tolpuddle Martyrs, who, 150 years ago, were transported for their attempts to form a union. Here we look at the background to their struggles.

Those events took place at a time of enormous change, when many workers were striving to build their trade unions to alleviate the terrible conditions they faced, both in the sprawling manufacturing cities and in the countryside.

The capitalist class outlawed unions by the Combination Acts of 1799 and 1800 but they were forced to repeal these by 1825. In the town protests sometimes took the form in the 1820s of Luddism, the physical smashing of the new machinery that lowered wages and threatened jobs.

In the rural areas, the agricultural peasants and workers became increasingly proletarianised as they were forced into deeper and deeper poverty. The revolt in the countryside against the miserable conditions often took the form of burning barns and ricks, destroying threshing machines and threats against the landowners to force them to pay higher wages. The revolt in the 1830s went under the name of a mythical Captain Swing.

## Miserable conditions

The conditions of agricultural workers were miserable, with wages being forced lower and lower, to ten shillings a week, then eight, then six and so on—not enough to keep one man alive, let alone his family.

These conditions were aggravated because of the Enclosure Acts of the 1820s by which much more of the common land was seized by big farmers and landowners so that the workers lost their historic rights to use this land. Landowners took over this common land forcing the workers to rely completely on wages from working for themselves, and no compensation was paid them.

Perhaps we can remind the Tories that their inheritance was stolen from the farm workers of Britain—when in the future the labour movement nationalises big industries with compensation based only on need.

By Brian Beckingham

Retribution to the Swing rioters was severe. 250 were sentenced to death (19 were actually hung) 481 were transported and 644 imprisoned in England. The Tory establishment could not allow the spread of revolt into their "home" areas of the English countryside.

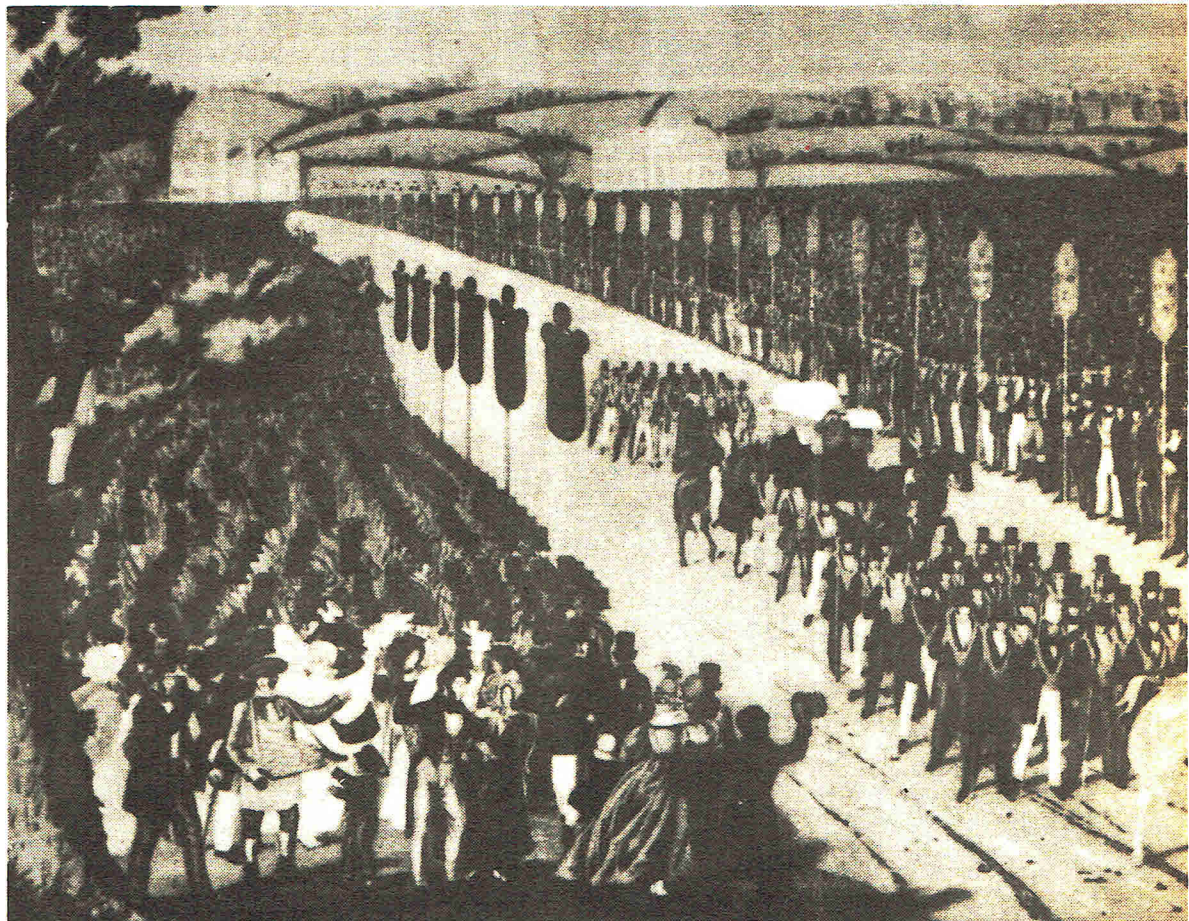
These were the forerunners and this the background to the Tolpuddle events. In 1834, six agricultural labourers from Tolpuddle in Dorset were sentenced to transportation for seven years. What terrible crime had they committed?

These six men, George and James Loveless, Thomas and John Stanfield, James Hammett and James Brine were given this sentence, branded as criminals for the act of administering an illegal oath under the Mutiny Act of 1797. That was the excuse. They were really convicted for forming a trade union for agricultural workers in the village of Tolpuddle, in an attempt to lift themselves from the poverty wages that were being paid.

The union, a section of the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union, established by Robert Owen, had held a meeting. 40 labourers had attended, almost the entire male population of Tolpuddle at the time.

The sentence of seven years transportation shocked the entire working class movement and others besides. Why was it so severe? The reason was made clear by Judge Williams, presiding in the court.

"Such societies (unions) were calculated to shake the foundations of society and bring the country into extremely perilous circumstances" the judge said, according to the *Dorset Chronicle*,



Tens of thousands of workers turned out to protest against the sentences in this demonstration in Copenhagen.

"... The object of all legal punishment is not altogether with the view of operating on the offenders themselves it is also for the sake of offering an example and a warning".

Such sentiments have been repeated again and again by the judges of this country against working class fighters. This year the same reason was given to justify the vicious sentence meted out to Sarah Tisdell for exposing the way Michael Heseltine had lied to Parliament. Sarah Tisdell was jailed for six months. Things have changed very little!

## Cheltenham unions banned

Unions were supposed to have been 'legalised' after the repeal of the Combination Acts in 1825. The statement by Judge Williams that unions would bring about the downfall of society was made in 1834, however. The same kind of arguments were trotted out again by the Tories as the reason why they banned union membership at GCHQ Cheltenham only a few months ago.

After they had been sentenced to transportation for seven years, one of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, as they came to be known, George Loveless scribbled a poem on a piece of paper and in an act of defiance threw it into the crowd as he was led away in chains. On the paper was a poem that was to

become widely sung in protest meetings and in Chartist meetings throughout the country. It became known as the *Song of Freedom*:

*God is our guide, from field,  
from wave,  
From plough, from anvil,  
and from loom,  
We come, our country's  
rights to save,  
And speak a Tyrant faction's  
doom,  
We raise the watch-word  
liberty;  
We will, we will, we will be  
free.*

*God is our guide! No swords  
we draw,  
We kindle not war's battle  
fires,  
By reason, union, justice,  
law,  
We claim the birth-right of  
our sires:  
We raise the watch-word,  
liberty,  
We will, we will, we will be  
free!!!*

The poem summed up the attitude of these six Dorset labourers. Five were strong Methodists. In fact George Loveless was a Methodist lay preacher. They were forming a union to improve their terrible wages and conditions, but they were opposed to acts of arson or violence against landowners.

After sentence, the men were to be sent to 'hulk' ships, then put onto convict ships to be transported to Australia and Tasmania. The

conditions faced by convicts were horrific and many never survived the ordeals of starvation, disease and floggings.

The hulk ships were semi-derelict ships moored off the coast. The conditions were so bad that long-term prisoners in the hulks only had a 1 in 3 chance of survival. Inmates included boys of 14 who had been sentenced to 14 years transportation for stealing food.

Prisoners were kept chained permanently. Each of the three decks held 500-600 prisoners, including Irish republican prisoners, Luddites, Swing men and trade unionists.

The Tolpuddle men were lucky. Theirs was only a brief stay on the hulks before transferring to a convict ship. But here conditions were hardly better. A birth about six foot square was all that was provided for six men to occupy day and night. Here you were confined chained, 20 out of 24 hours per day.

## Convict population

On arrival in Australia convicts were 'assigned' (virtually sold as slaves) to a free settler, or put onto government road parties. Hammet described how he was "sold like a slave for £1. The convicts' names were written on slips of paper, the agents drew lots, each man at £1 per head".

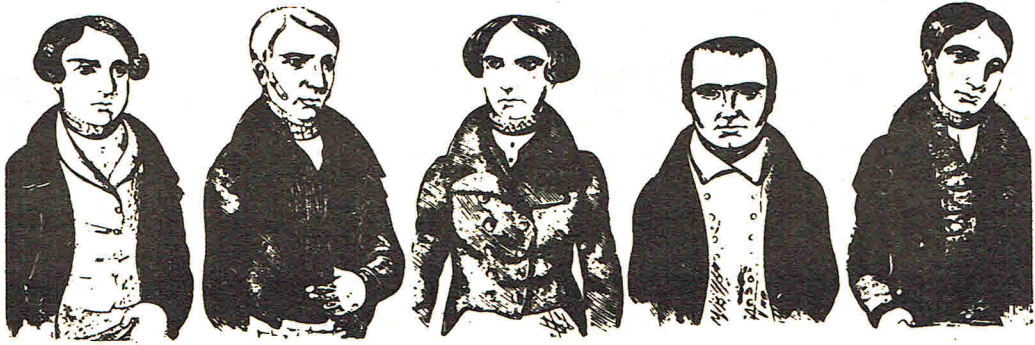
The experiences of the six, like



'The Skeleton at the Plough' Nineteenth century woodcut.



# 150th



James Brine Aged 25    Thomas Stanfield Aged 51    John Stanfield Aged 25    George Loveless Aged 41    James Loveless Aged 29

**CAUTION.**

WHEREAS it has been represented to us from several quarters, that subchievants and designing Persons have been for some time past, endeavouring to induce, and have induced, many Labourers in various Parishes in this County, to attend Meetings, and to enter into illegal Societies or Unions, to which they had themselves given the ignorant and unwary... WE, the undersigned Justices, who artfully disguise their intent by the name of Public Notice, and CAUTION, that all Persons may know the danger they incur by entering into such Societies.

ANY PERSON who shall become a Member of such a Society, or take any Oath, or consent to any Test or Declaration not authorized by Law—

Any Person who shall administer, or be present at, or consent to the administering or taking any Unlawful Oath, or who shall cause such Oath to be administered, although not actually present at the time—

Any Person who shall not reveal or disclose any Unlawful Oath which may have been administered, or any Unlawful Act done or to be done—

Any Person who shall induce, or endeavour to persuade any other Person to become a Member of such Societies,

**WILL BECOME**

**Guilty of Felony,**

**AND BE LIABLE TO BE**

**Transported for Seven Years.**

ANY PERSON who shall be compelled to take such an Oath, unless he shall declare the same within four days, together with the whole of what he shall know touching the same, will be liable to the same Penalty.

Any Person who shall directly or indirectly maintain correspondence or intercourse with such Societies, will be deemed guilty of an Unlawful Combination and Conspiracy, and on Conviction before one Justice, on the Oath of one Witness, be liable to a Penalty of TWENTY POUNDS, or to be committed to the Common Gaol or House of Correction, for THREE CALENDAR MONTHS; or if proceeded against by Indictment, may be CONVICTED OF FELONY, and be TRANSPORTED FOR SEVEN YEARS.

Any Person who shall knowingly permit any Meeting of any such Society to be held in any House, Building, or other Place, shall for the first offence be liable to the Penalty of FIVE POUNDS, and for every other offence committed after Conviction, be deemed guilty of such Unlawful Combination and Conspiracy, and on Conviction before one Justice, on the Oath of one Witness, be liable to a Penalty of TWENTY POUNDS, or to be committed to the Common Gaol or House of Correction, for THREE CALENDAR MONTHS; or if proceeded against by Indictment may be CONVICTED OF FELONY, and be TRANSPORTED FOR SEVEN YEARS.

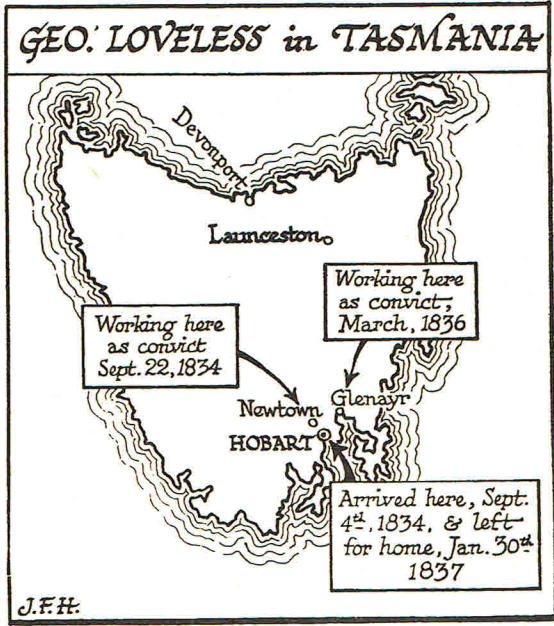
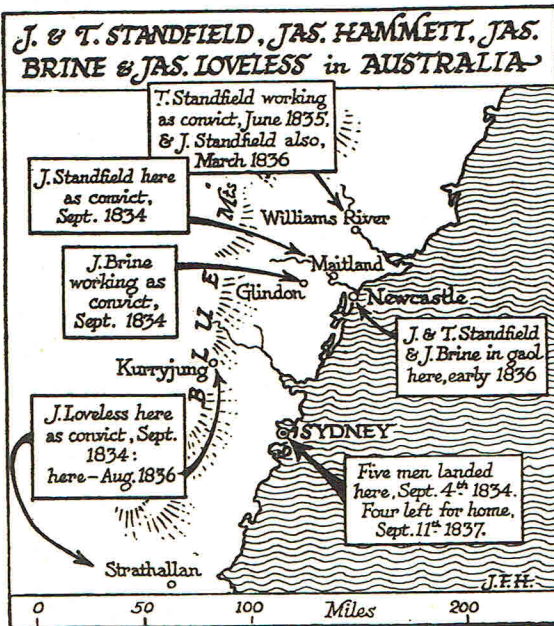
**CONVICTED OF FELONY,**

**And Transported for SEVEN YEARS.**

COUNTY OF DORSET.  
Dorchester District.  
February 22d. 1834

C. B. WOLLASTON,  
JAMES FRAMPTON,  
WILLIAM INGLAND,  
THOS. DADY,  
JNO. MONTGOMERY COLSON.

HENRY FRAMPTON,  
RICHD. TICKLER STEWARD,  
WILLIAM R. CHURCHILL,  
AUGUSTUS FOSTER.



magistrates, refused parish relief to the families.

Diana Stanfield, with five children, was told, 'You shall suffer want. You shall have no mercy, because you ought to have known better than to have allowed such meetings (of the union) in your house'. The trade union movement set up a hardship fund and supported the families, otherwise they would have been allowed to starve to death.

Today, the Tory government is trying to starve miners' families in order to force the men back to work. Our answer today has to be as determined as the movement was then, raising the cash and food and solidarity action to ensure total victory for the miners.

### Massive protests

The sentences on the Tolpuddle six aroused enormous protests throughout the country. Massive meetings were held, marches were organised and Parliament and the King petitioned for a free pardon.

On 24 March 1834 between 5,000 and 10,000 attended a protest meeting in London and a committee was set up to lead the campaign and raise money to support the families. This meeting was organised by Robert Owen, leader of the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union.

By 26 March the first petitions were handed in, amazingly quickly, given the level of communication in those years. Ironically, one of the first petitions to be sent in by 26 March came from Cheltenham, home of GCHQ in 1984.

Large protest meetings were held throughout the country in Birmingham, Nottingham, Yeovil, Hull and Leeds. Soon 800,000 people had signed the petitions. On 21 April a massive demonstration was organised and led by the Central Committee of the Metropolitan Trades Union.

### Tolpuddle six pardoned

The Times reported it to be 35,000-strong but other estimates spoke of 200,000. Lord Melbourne, for the government, refused to accept the petition and took the precaution of drafting-in large numbers of troops and 5,000 special constables, though, perhaps wisely, did not use them on that day.

As a result of the massive protests organised by the labour movement the Tolpuddle six were granted conditional pardon in June 1835. But the protests continued

and in March 1836 all the men were given a full and free pardon. The government even paid the fare home for the men—an unheard of move!

The authorities, however, took their time in getting the men back to England. In June 1837 George Loveless arrived back, followed in March 1838 by James Loveless, the two Stanfields and Brine and finally Hammett arrived back in 1839.

The men were welcomed back by local trade unionists in Plymouth and public meetings were held with a procession and celebration dinner in London. George Loveless wrote a pamphlet of his experiences and the conclusions he had drawn from them and these writings became widely distributed, particularly in the Chartist movement growing in that period.

In his second pamphlet, *The Church Shown Up*, replying to the established Church (Loveless was a radical Methodist follower) he concluded: "The poor were rapid-

ly becoming their own teachers. They could see that labour was the source of wealth, that all men were born naturally free, that all had an unalienable right to receive sufficient maintenance from the land that gave them birth".

The Tolpuddle men returned to England and settled in a small farm in Essex (which was bought for them from the collections). They became involved in the Chartist movement which was the first mass political movement of the working class in Britain.

But after a time the pressures of notoriety became too much for the Tolpuddle men and their families and five of them emigrated to settle in Canada. The sixth (Hammett) quietly resettled in Tolpuddle and worked as a building worker.

Then as now capitalism always

makes the working class pay for any crisis in their system. It was workers like the Tolpuddle six who built our movement to the tremendous strength we have today. The courts, the law, the whole state machine (including the press, as in 1834) are being used on a large scale by the Tories today on behalf of the bosses.

### Fundamental Tory aims

But the trade union movement stands in the way of the destruction of our living standards that capitalism demands if it is to survive. One of the fundamental aims of this Tory government, therefore, has been to weaken the trade unions and even destroy them if they could get away with it.

150 years on from Tolpuddle we have seen recently the violent attacks on the Warrington NGA picket lines, the outright banning of trade unions at GCHQ, the at-

tempt of a genuinely free, classless and socialist society.

Our movement today has and will continue to prove itself worthy of the inheritance of the Tolpuddle Martyrs. There is no better way to end than in the words of George Loveless himself in the pamphlet: *Victims of Whigery*, where he wrote:

"England had for many years been lifting her voice against the abominable practice of Negro slavery. Numbers of great men had talked, have laboured and have struggled until at length emancipation has been granted to the black slaves in the West Indies.

"When will they dream of advocating the cause of England's white slaves? When will they attempt to raise working men to that scale in society to which he can lay claim from his utility? Never, no never, will, (with a few honourable exceptions) the rich and the great

**"Never, no never will the rich and the great devise means to alleviate distress and remove the misery felt by the working men of England...the labouring classes must do it themselves or it will be left undone."**

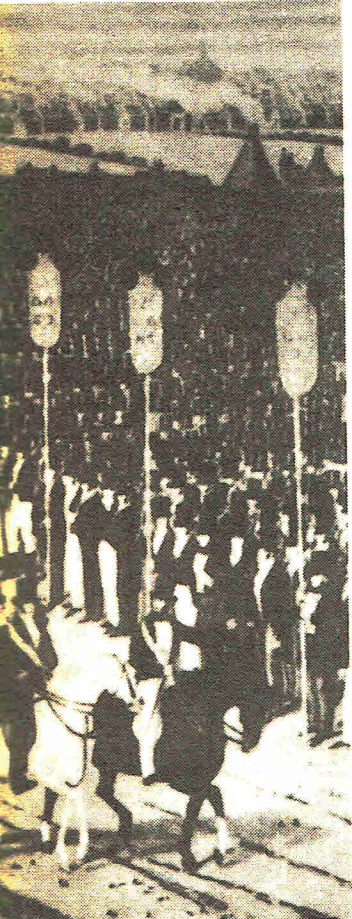
—George Loveless

devise means to alleviate distress, and remove the misery felt by the working men of England. What then is to be done? Why, the labouring classes must do it themselves or it will be left undone...

"Every working man come forward, from east to west, from north to south; unite firmly but peaceably together as the heart of one man; let them be determined to have a voice in, and form part of, the British nation... Arise, men of Britain and take your stand. Rally round the standard of liberty, or for ever lay prostrate under the iron hand of your land and money—mongering taskmasters!"

### Determination and courage

All this, however, will not go unanswered by the workers. The millions suffering under this system in crisis have been or will be drawn into mass struggles. The miners in struggle today have shown the same determination and courage as the Tolpuddle six. This will result in a struggle to transform the trade unions and the Labour Party, replacing those leaders who stand in the way, with genuine socialist fighters dedicated to the achieve-



gen place in North London.

those of all convicts were hard and bitter. they were put to work in penal settlements, on farms and in chain gangs. Their status was virtually one of serfdom.

Flogging was commonplace for convicts. On road parties they worked at least 14 hours a day, often in temperatures of 115°F, and then herded into boxes holding 20 to 30 men with no room to lie down, at night.

It was difficult for convicts to avoid punishment, as the free settlers or supervisors were often the most brutal characters. Convicts could be convicted again for 'crimes' such as stealing food, although they were on a starvation diet.

In 1834 in New South Wales the number of convict convictions was 22,000. The number of floggings 3,000. The total convict population was 28,000.

This, then, was the punishment the Tolpuddle six had been sentenced to, for the crime of forming a trade union. The 'democratic' credentials of the British ruling class all but disappear when we study the history of how they treated the pioneers of the labour movement.

In order to emphasise just how serious a "crime" the men had carried out, the local Tolpuddle magistrate, James Frampton, took vicious measures against the families of the men. He denied their wives and mothers permission to visit them before they were transported. He, and other



# 150th ANNIVERSARY

## Tolpuddle Martyrs

# Thatcher's Combination Laws

Photo: Andrew Wuard (Report)



The Tories' attacks have not just come through the anti-union legislation. Here Civil Servants protest at the government imposed ban on unions at GCHO.

SINCE THE Thatcher government came into office in 1979, they have tried to hold back the strength of the trade unions through new legislation.

They tried to bring the courts into strike battles through the 1980 and 1982 Employment Acts. The most relevant aspect of this was the attack on so-called "secondary picketing" trying to stop the picketing of firms or organisations not directly in dispute with the union.

### Learning from the past

The law courts are not of course the only weapon the Tories used. They remembered only too vividly the laws passed by the Heath government of 1970-74, which tried to curb the power of the

By Roger Shrivies

organised working class. All that did was add to the bitterness of a huge wave of disputes.

Miners gained two magnificent victories by ignoring anti-working class laws and London dockers who were imprisoned under the Industrial Relations Act in the summer of 1972, (the Pentonville Five), were released by the "miraculous" intervention of the Official Solicitor when the bosses faced the threat of a general strike. The only major legal victory against the workers was the imprisonment of the two Shrewsbury pickets for picketing during

the 1972 building workers strike. There they used archaic "Conspiracy" laws.

The Tories had planned things differently this time. Nicholas Ridley had produced a report saying the ruling class should take on weaker unions at first such as the steelworkers and civil servants before going for their big enemies like the NUM.

They wanted to destroy the unions once and for all and they hoped they had a new weapon. In the battles of the 1970s unemployment, although rising, was still below the million mark. Monetarist policies, they believed would not only make the "healthier" industries "leaner and fitter" (a total delusion) but they would also increase the pool of unemployed and make workers, and their leaderships, scared to fight.

The measures against secondary picketing have been used against the Post Office Engineering Union for its action against the Project Mercury scheme and against the National Graphical Association during the *Stockport Messenger* dispute. They only succeeded because of the woeful desertion of the printworkers by the TUC.

### Police intimidation

Government ministers had to drop very hastily their half-baked plans to require an absolute majority of union members to vote for a strike before any union could obtain immunity from legal action. But their plans have not come to a halt.

Government ministers

hypocritically describe their new draft proposals for a third Act as designed to "give the unions back to their members". They would in fact be handing the unions over to the capitalist class.

Measures proposed include secret ballots before any union authorises a strike or any industrial action "which interferes with or breaks employment contracts". Legal immunity will go under these plans if unions don't hold a ballot. Damages and legal action like that against the NGA last autumn are the Tories' weapons.

They also want secret ballots for electing union leaderships and suggest a whole array of "safeguards" which would be a lawyer's dream of heaven. They could give a hundred reasons

why a ballot result unacceptable to the bosses should be invalid. There are also restrictions on the political funds of all unions.

All these laws would be useless scraps of paper if the trade union leaders used the muscle of the movement in disputes like the NGA. Noticeably the government have not *as yet* seriously tried using the Employment Acts against the NUM. The Tories have relied on police intimidation on the general catch-all grounds of "defending law and order".

Just like 150 years ago the rulers want to put the workers' movement in chains to defend their class. And just as 150 years ago, but with far more organised strength at our disposals, the working class must fight for its rights.

## Primary picketing illegal?

**FORGET the Employment Acts, the Tories don't need them. Not just 'secondary' picketing but 'primary' picketing is illegal. You can't even picket your own place of work!**

That is what striking miners at Point of Ayr colliery in North Wales have been told by a judge.

After appeals to non-strikers crossing the picket line had failed, steps were being taken to suspend them from the union. However,

before this action could be taken, three working miners went to the law. A judge issued an injunction not only stopping the suspensions, but also saying that the union could not call the strike "official" (even though the majority of the men in the area are out).

### Liverpool shows support

The strikers could not communicate with those men working and no picketing by local NUM members would be allowed. If any of these provisions are broken then the main executive members of the

NUM lodge will have their possessions seized. The injunction was issued without the knowledge of the NUM and so the union was not even able to have its representatives present to argue against it being taken out.

The union is now preparing to fight the case in court. However picketing continues with striking miners from South Wales and the unemployed from Liverpool taking the place of Point of Ayr men on the picket line, with the local strikers standing across the road giving vocal support.

In fact one of the biggest pickets so far took place

after the injunction had been taken out when, on 21 June, two buses came up from Liverpool carrying Liverpool Labour Councillors, the newly elected MEP from Merseyside West, Ken Stewart, Labour Party members, members of SOGAT and NGA, unemployed, housewives and others.

### Legal costs

They were all there to express their support for the struggle of the miners, and to express the need to link the miners' struggle to that of the Labour Council in Liverpool against the Tories.

Photo: Dave Sinclair



NUM members from Point of Ayr.

The irony of the injunction situation is shown by a report that the three men who took out the injunction then went back to the others still working and asked them to each contribute £5 towards the legal costs.

Some of them have refused to hand this money over and have been threatened with "disciplinary action"!

By Dave Clark (ASTMS)

## Australia: Bad news for the bosses

**HOW IRONIC it is that in Australia, where the British ruling-class attempted to crush the seed of trade-unionism by transporting the Dorset labourers, there now exists one of the strongest trade-union movements in the world.**

What a horrifying thought it would be for those gentlemen of the mighty British ruling-class to know that now, 150 years after they'd tried to smash the embryonic workers organisation springing up here and there, that in Australia where they slung the refuse, 55 percent of all wage and salary earners, nearly 3 million workers, are members of unions. This is not a new

phenomenon. In the very life-times of those gentlemen, had they kept up with the news from the colonies, they would have realised there were dangerous things going on down-under. In 1860 the London Building Trades were unsuccessful and in fact took a bashing, in their fight for the nine hour-day, but in Melbourne, stone-masons, plasterers, bricklayers, carpenters and joiners,

slaters, plumbers and printers achieved the eight hour-day four years earlier in 1856.

### Victories and defeat

There have been defeats as well of course. In a series of extremely bitter strikes in the 1890's the unions were hammered with extensive use of troops and the police. As one worker said, "The union leaders had been told in the liberal textbooks on political philosophy that the state was an umpire between conten-

ding groups... now a few perceived that the state was an organisation for the suppression of one class by another."

As a result of these defeats the realisation that industrial action alone was not enough, massively accelerated the moves towards workers setting up their own party—the Labor Party. In fact the first Labour government elected in the world was that in Queensland in 1899.

Now 85 years later a Federal Labor government is in power, under the leadership of Bob Hawke. As the capitalist world lurches from

recession to little boom to yet deeper recession, any charlatans, boys from the bourgeoisie in labour clothing, will more and more be exposed for what they are. All Labour and trade union leaders, however 'sincere' their motives may be, will be under scrutiny.

### Shackling the unions

Hawke is at present extremely popular with Australian workers but if he continues on his present course of shackling the

unions, all the more disgraceful seeing he is a former union leader himself, it's only a question of time before that popularity begins to fade.

The wages, conditions, and very jobs of Australian workers have been too hard won to allow them to be just handed away because of the spinelessness of Labour leaders. In the months and years to come Bob Hawke will discover that.

By an Australian Labor Party member



## Greece

# Right wing attacks fail to stop PASOK

**THE ENORMOUS polarisation of society during the crisis is pushing the two opposing classes in Greece into struggle.**

After the election of the left wing PASOK in 1981, the ruling class until recently used a tactic of "wait and see", of pressurising the government behind the scenes to try and make it move to the right.

But in the last three weeks the capitalists, in a co-ordinated campaign, have begun to play all their cards against the government.

First of all President Karamanlis, who had been trying to appear 'neutral' in the previous period issued a declaration to the people a few days before the elections asking them to vote for the EEC, in essence for the right wing New Democracy, the only party which favours the Common Market in Greece. This caused uproar even in "liberal" capitalist circles.

The Greek equivalent of the CBI, which previously pressurised the government in the background, suddenly at its Congress a few weeks ago, elected a "militant" new leadership for business. They not only booed the Minister of the Economy who wanted to speak to them, but co-ordinated a campaign of unity of all "private enterprise" people, creating for the first time in Greece something of a "patronat" of industrialists, big hoteliers, large scale merchants, major importers, etc.

## Right wing hooligans

A week ago this body called a public meeting in central Athens. Compared to their expectation, it was a failure with only about 2,000 to 3,000 people turning up, mostly paid up hooligans of New Democracy.

But most significantly in the last few weeks the right have mobilised gangs of hooligans to terrorise people in the streets. This was shown to be co-ordinated behind the scenes by former officers in the forces and police.

They attacked selected working class neighbourhoods, 200 or 300 of them with chains, iron bars and dogs, trying to intimidate the youth, party workers and workers in general in Athens and Salonika.

The front pages of the papers were filled with pictures of Pasok supporters with bloody faces. Even the Director of Police in Athens was forced to say these were the result of the New Democracy campaign and accused former ministers and MPs of that party at their rallies, who were actually pushing these hooligans to attack Pasok and Communist Party supporters.

The ruling class have decided they cannot afford this government any more because of the dire crisis of Greek capitalism, two thirds

**Nicos Remoundos, editor of Xekinima, the Greek Marxist paper spoke to Roger Shives**

of industry is near bankruptcy and the other third is not far off. An estimated 80% of the assets of industry are loaned from the banks and only about 20% is their own capital.

So when interest rates went up two or three years ago industry had to borrow far more money just to repay interest. Huge concerns of the traditional big bourgeois families have begun to collapse one after another and the government was forced to intervene and take them over, "socialise" them as Pasok calls it.

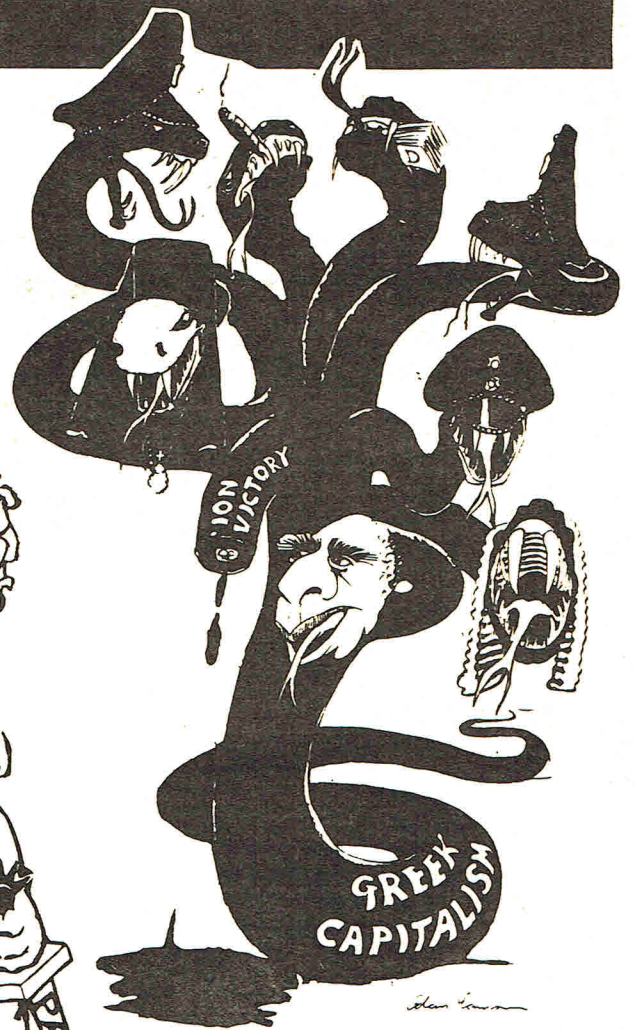
Also since joining the EEC when tariff barriers went down, EEC products started flooding into the Greek market while Greek

back the sliding scale which it had watered down in 1983. They have also manoeuvred with the Greek TUC, controlled by Pasok since the last congress, to compromise with the industrialists and quickly settle the question of the national wage agreement to avoid mobilisation from workers. They also had an agreement with the "Communist" Party leaders, the "moratorium" where the CP accepted the role of helping to hold down workers' struggles.

## General strike threatened

Despite this, we saw an enormous spontaneous movement of workers and a large strike wave with an estimated 1,700,000 workers striking in the first four months of this year in comparison to 800,000 in the whole of 1982 and 1.7 million in the whole of 1983. The Greek working class is only about 1.6 million in number!

Greek workers have had battles without stop since the collapse of the dictatorship in 1974. It is estimated that from 1974 to 1984, 16



them".

The government has been trying in the past 2½ years to appease the ruling class, trying to balance between the capitalists and the workers. Particularly in the last four or five months it has taken a very rapid rightward turn, calling on the people to be very patient, not to polarise the situation or provoke actions, started talking about "good" industrialists and "bad" industrialists implying there is a wing of the ruling class that wants to invest and co-operate with the government.

## PASOK revolt

They reached such a level of bankruptcy that Papan-dreou himself said that in the past two and half years, Karamanlis had been so neutral and democratic that PASOK will be considering voting for him in Presidential elections next May!

The Minister of the Economy gave an interview to a capitalist economic paper where he explained that the government does not want to socialise any industries but they are forced to take over some concerns because they are bankrupt. When these industries are made healthy again by the government paying their huge debts then, he said, private enterprise would be allowed to take them back again!

All this had begun to create tremendous confusion in the ranks of the party and the working class. But after workers began to see the government was not willing to work towards socialism they knew they had to take their destiny in their own hands.

The PASOK leadership called a Congress in May, the first since the party formed in 1974! They thought just one month before the elections, that the leaders would just be clapped by the rank and file. But four weeks before the Congress, in branches which have been half dead in recent years, discussions have taken an explosive character 90% of the area committees throughout the

country are estimated to have voted down the document of the Central Committee in pre-conference discussions.

Members counterposed books which Papan-dreou himself had written in 1974-75, in essence calling for a return to the left traditions and socialist policies of its early years. One older worker who took part in the resistance against Nazi occupation and the civil war said "in 1944 reaction raised its head and began to massacre us only after we gave up the guns. Now our leadership is giving up socialist policies and the reaction again is raising its head. Can't you see what's happening?"

A young worker said to the leadership "you have forgotten our policy of socialising the strategic parts of the economy. You have put these ideas on the museum shelves. Are you keeping the shelves warm, until Britain gives us back the Elgin Marbles?"

That was the kind of climate in party branches and conferences throughout the pre-conference period.

The Congress ended with Papan-dreou pushing through most of his policies for two basic reasons, one, the leadership rigged the conference by having at least one-third of delegates already appointed before hand, secondly because this revolution within the party ranks was not organised. In effect most delegates elected were careerists, who jumped on the bandwagon, spoke left in order to win rank and file votes but then went to congress and did nothing.

So the leadership who are really terrified by this enormous revolt controlled conference but theirs is a Pyrrhic victory. The policies voted for by Congress will be voted down by the workers every day in their struggles.

Despite the confusion and disorientation caused by the leadership's policies, workers see the bosses' reaction and see the danger of New Democracy being re-elected. They suddenly feel

the whip of counter-revolution and are starting to gather around PASOK the biggest workers' party to stop a right wing comeback. This was revealed by Papan-dreou's huge rallies in the cities of Greece, thought to be even bigger than those in 1981 before PASOK's victory.

PASOK lost fewer votes in the European elections than would have seemed likely a month or two ago, going down to 42% from 48%. The total left vote was still 57% compared to 60% in 1981. The loss was mainly in urban middle class areas, the workers and peasants were solid. In the coming general elections too PASOK will most probably be re-elected in 1985 with majority enough for government on its own.

But this renewed support is not unconditional. The leaders should not assume this means support for their right-wing policies. Workers' struggles will prove that.

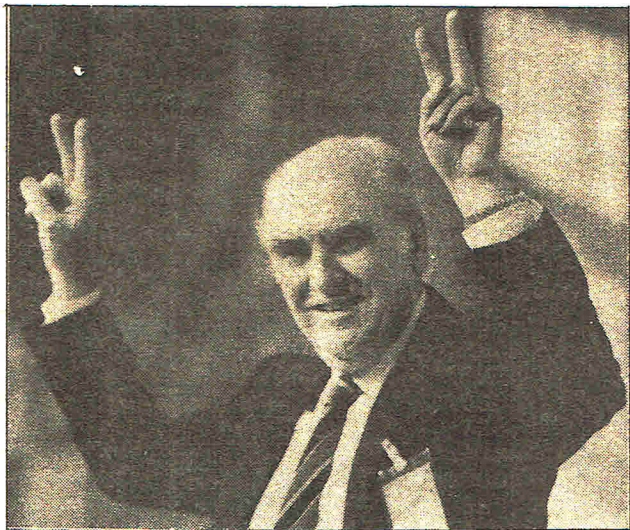
## New society

Workers in Greece have shown many times in history their capacity to take power in their own hands. In 1923 after the rout in Asia Minor, workers, peasants and soldiers arose. In 1936 in the panhellenic general strike, in the civil war of 1941-49, in the period of 1958 to 1967 and again since the junta tumbled a decade ago.

Enormous opportunities will come the way of the working class and PASOK. Capitalism can offer us nothing. We must create a party of power which can be the means by which the working class can build a new society.

## XEKINIMA Greek Marxist paper

Regular coverage of developments in Greece and internationally. Obtainable from, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace London E8 3PN or XEKINIMA, Odos Maisonos 1, Athens, Greece.



Andreas Papandreu, PASOK leader.

products were less successful. This meant further exacerbation of the crisis.

Traditionally Greece imported more industrial goods and exported more agricultural goods. Now it imports more of both. Also the balance of payments used to be more or less balanced because of remittances from seamen, immigrants in Germany etc. These are going down, with the crisis in shipping and with immigrants leaving Germany as unemployment grows.

## "Moratorium"

The enormous devaluation of the drachma has also affected tourism.

The Greek ruling class has an immediate need for a hard Thatcherite government to try to break the will of the workers and take back all their past gains.

At the beginning of 1984 the government, under pressure from the workers was forced to give workers

million workers have been on strike.

The New Democracy's use of fascist bands made the workers angry. The same TUC which sabotaged the earlier struggle was forced to call an extraordinary meeting and threaten a 24-hour general strike.

Also unions, particularly those big sections controlled by PASOK, issued very hard statements calling on the government to move much faster towards socialism. When the provocations started the ranks of the PASOK and the Communist Party were taken by surprise as were the people in the neighbourhoods. But quickly when they saw the dangers they began to organise. When the attacks happened again they found a mass response by the party ranks. The population were coming out from flats and houses to encourage the workers fighting the battle in the streets telling them "Kill the bloody fascists, smash



# Letters

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

## Crick's Militant lies

Dear Editor,  
My attention has been drawn to a number of passages appearing in a book entitled 'The Militant' by Michael Crick which refers to an interview the author had with me about a year ago.

Unfortunately, despite the fact that he gave me a clear understanding that he would check back with me before publication, Mr Crick has gone ahead and printed a number of treacherous comments and remarks attributed to myself.

Despite the categorical statement I made to Mr Crick that I would have no part in any attempt to witch-hunt the 'Militant' comrades, nor would I be prepared to be party to the NEC's hunting the boojum of the 'RSL' Mr Crick insisted on interrogating me about this "conspiratorial organisation" in his vain efforts to confirm what "others" had told him.

Mr Crick "discovered" too, that I had spoken on 'Militant' meetings—"frequently", he told me—how many times he did not say,

and quotes me as saying "I was simply being used by them." I do not recall that Mr Crick had a tape, unless it was hidden in his pocket or behind his jacket—still less do I recall him having taken any but the most cursory of notes, based on events which took place nearly twenty years ago. I would like to take this opportunity of categorically refuting Mr Crick's suggestion that I was "being used".

I cannot think of any good reason why I should wish to repudiate or change what I wrote at the time, nor amend or correct what I said on the platforms from which I spoke, whether they were organised under the auspices of 'Tribune', 'Militant' or the London Labour Party.

More to the point I have consistently opposed the nebulous, ill-informed and downright damaging campaign (damaging to the Labour Party I might add) that was initiated by Shirley Williams and her friends—many of whom have now defected to the SDP—with the object of expelling the 'Militant' and other left comrades from the party.

Yours fraternally  
Ellis Hillman  
Hornsey Labour Party



## 1926 & 1984—productivity, poverty and police

Dear Comrade,  
Miners face the most vicious attack by the Tories in recent years, and I would like to draw some similarities with the 1926 strike.

In 1926 the issue was less pay for more hours and the mine owners refused to negotiate. In 1984 the issue is a 25% increase in productivity plus a loss of 20,000 jobs (for now) and the NCB's refusal to negotiate. In 1926 the benefits set by

the government were five shillings for a wife and two shillings per child, which was considered starvation level under the poor law. In 1984 the benefits are much the same starvation level as then, at £6 for the wife and £3 per child, and we don't need a poor law to tell us what that amounts to. In both cases no payment is received for the striker because "work is available".

In 1926 the police force

had been increased to 226,000, from 98,000 in 1925. The Specials had been increased by 50,000, mainly from the middle classes, the professionals and ex-army officers—all out for a "jolly good time", proven by the fact that the Specials were present at all the worst trouble spots. In 1984 the police have been brought into Notts and now Yorks in thousands try to smash the NUM and the spirit of our members.

It is imperative that we also support the teachers and the comprehensive school system because if we allow the Tories to break them they will be taking away the thing we couldn't get in 1926—education.

Yours  
Michael Ellis  
Maltby NUM  
and Militant supporter

## Bosses, cops and Rollers

Dear Comrades,

Did anybody else bump into a member of the ruling class in his Roller on the 9th June Reagan Demo? High Peak YS had the unexpected misfortune to do so.

During that baking hot day, some of us went in search of drink. During our search through a very posh street we came across a Rolls Royce, with its own personal guard. A policeman standing right by it with nobody or nothing else in sight!

With picket duty, and demo duty the police have a new line of work—ruling class car park attendants.

To cap it all the owner then appeared looking just like Alan Hardman's cartoon bosses. He announced that we should be walking on the other side of the road from him!

The events of the day will not be forgotten and indeed on the coach on the way back the songs about Reagan (unprintable) were replaced by even more unprintable songs about the ruling class.

Yours fraternally  
Andrew Divall  
Secretary High Peak YS

## Apprentice striker

Dear Militant,

Being a member of the NUM I am obviously directly involved in the present dispute. I am though, more fortunate than most in that I am still serving my apprenticeship.

The terms of my contract with the NCB state that I can take no part in any industrial action. Under the same contract the NCB should pay trainees and apprentices a basic weekly wage through the period of the dispute.

I have kept my part of the agreement but the NCB have totally ignored theirs. Through negotiations between the NUM and the DHSS I began to receive unemployment benefit of £27.05 per week. For reasons unknown to me, and it appears unknown to anyone, this money has been postponed.

This appears to me to be one more step towards trying to starve the miners back, it will in fact feed our determination even more and put more youth on the picket lines. The younger generation is as determined as any

to save our industry from butchery, and to fight against the Tory government who are trying to smash the working class into the ground.

Apprentice mechanic  
South Yorkshire NUM

## Bosses reach new depths

Dear Militant,

Several weeks ago two Welbeck brothers (miners) were evicted from their houses for failing to pay two consecutive instalments on their second mortgages to Cedar Holdings. Their se-

cond mortgages were taken out to improve their ex-NCB houses. Their 1st mortgages were with Nat West.

Within the last 2 weeks the Pit have sent out letters to NCB tenants threatening to evict them if they don't pay their rent.

Anyone who wants to start back now must first have a personal interview with the manager to point out the error of our ways. About 300 have started back under these threats or due to financial pressure leaving 500 or 600 still out.

Bill Davies  
Wellbeck NUM N. Notts

## Lessons of Pompey by-election

Dear Comrades,

The media has gone wild over the surprise victory of Mike Hancock, the SDP candidate in Portsmouth South. To those working in the election it was not so surprising. Early in the election the vote appeared to be split three ways equally between the parties, with huge Tory disillusionment likely to lead to abstention.

On polling day Tory voters were either staying at home or voting SDP as a protest at being taken for granted—with a Tory Central Office candidate who three weeks previously didn't even know where Portsmouth was.

On the doorstep many voters queried whether they should vote SDP or Labour as the best way of defeating Thatcher—significantly very few voters, Tories included, even knew the name of the Tory candidate and most were well fed up with the government. Compared to the 1983 general election Labour lost 500 votes, SDP gained 2,000 votes and the Tories lost 11,000 votes.

However of most interest



The SDP won't get any help from up there either. The SDP Euro-vote and opinion polls shown they are on the way down, Portsmouth was a by-election fluke explained in Ian Jenkinson's letter.

to workers is how come an engineer, AUEW shop steward and radical fighter could join and stand for the SDP.

Mike Hancock joined the Labour Party some 15 years ago when the party had an influx of AUEW stewards. Like his contemporaries he soon fought and won a city council seat. For a long time he fought for the interests of council tenants and squatters and became a thorn in the side of the council establishment.

Later he was unsuccessful in winning nomination as parliamentary and European parliamentary candidate. The course was then set for

someone who wished to liberate working people from drudgery, even if it meant one by one, starting with himself. If Labour wouldn't have him as a candidate then perhaps another party?

At this point he discovered a conscience and a plot; the dogmatic left were taking over the party. His defection to the SDP went with TV programmes, and press coverage. He levelled charges against unspecified individuals for unspecified action. Facts didn't matter, the publicity was the important thing.

To those who knew Mike as a fighter and who stood on picket lines with him his

new role as SDP MP will be a cruel disappointment. But it's also a salutary lesson.

Such changes inevitably start with a lack of confidence in the working class. The individual's view of their own importance is magnified often leading to a vision of being Robin Hood. Inevitably it ends in disillusion and cynicism.

The end of the road for Mike Hancock as an out and out collaborator with the employers against working people is yet to come, but I fear we shall see it soon enough.

Yours fraternally  
Ian Jenkinson  
Portsmouth

## LEFT and RIGHT

### Euro-enthusiasts

The Euro-elections may not have aroused a lot of enthusiasm amongst British voters but certainly will have amongst those lucky enough to be joining the European Parliament following the elections. Just think about this: £16,106 per annum (same as Westminster MP); a general expense allowance of £12,715 a year; a secretarial and research allowance of £12,000pa; accommodation and subsistence, £75 a day; travel allowances, 44p for the first 250 miles and 22p per mile thereafter. Tax liability is reduced by the number of days out of the country. Feeling a little more enthusiastic about the Euro elections? Too late—you've missed the gravy train again.

### Euro-mugged

Here's a lesson in Tory ingratitude which won't get a mention in the law and order debate at their next conference. Two miners collared a couple of muggers who attacked the campaign team of Liverpool's Tory Euro-candidate, stealing a handbag. After chasing the muggers and cornering them to get the handbag back they asked the two Tory ladies for a donation to the miners' hardship fund—and were refused.



# Liverpool - how we built support

**THE CONTRAST** between the approach of Liverpool Council and those of many other Labour Councils was a marked feature of last weekend's Fightback Conference.

**By Jim Chrystie**

A council worker from Tower Hamlets and Dave Archibald, a Newcastle councillor spoke of how they had respectively either gone out on strike or been expelled from the Labour group because they opposed their Labour councils' imposition of cuts.

The first lesson from Liverpool was clear. There must be a political determination to resist the Tories.

But more than that is required if a successful campaign is to be built which fully mobilises people to defend jobs and living standards. Two contributions at the Conference highlighted how Liverpool had created that campaign.

## Council workers

Firstly as Secretary Pete Creswell gave a useful speech outlining how the Joint Shop Stewards Committee had been built. It had first brought together white collar and manual workers in a fight during the 1970s against Liberal plans to privatise the cleaning services. A one day strike had help up the Liberal plans.

But workers obviously recognised that they needed a political alternative and members of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee played an important role in arguing the case for Labour. Now they had got a Labour Council it did not mean that all problems had been resolved. But when differences did occur, the JSSC did not allow them to lose a sense of proportion; the political focus was kept firmly in mind.

In recent months members of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee had been going round with Councillors to workplace meetings to discuss finance. Pub discussions were not now limited to football; you also heard groups discussing the grant related expenditure.

Creswell's outline was built upon by Terry Harrison, Vice-President District Labour Party, explaining how the party had developed close links with the workforce. A unique feature of Liverpool was the close involvement of manual workers both in deciding party policy and canvassing



Some of 93 miners from 21 pits who attended Saturday's Fightback Conference in Liverpool.

for the party. The District Party laid out the main policy lines which were followed by the Councillors.

Close links between the party and the JSSC had been built over the year beginning with a joint Labour Party-Trade Union Committee set up to fight the Wilson-Callaghan governments' cuts. Now there were trade union representatives on Council committees. 50% of those taken on for work by the Council came from the list of unemployed provided by the trade unions.

## Labour Party

No one could be in any doubt about the success of building the Labour Party first and foremost upon the local workers. At the

"It's been marvellous. While I've been staying up here I've seen children and unemployment put in the buckets whilst those scabs are still working. I've hardly been able to spend the little money I was given before I came up here. I went up to Halewood Labour Club and wasn't 'allowed' to buy a drink".

Philip Manton (Bolsover, Derbyshire)



weekend's Conference there were from just the Merseyside alone, 444 trade union delegates representing 128 organisations; many of those were from the GMBATU, the main council union.

"Our pit filled up a double-decker to come to Conference. Liverpool Council have helped us tremendously—food parcels, donations, discos, Terry Fields has been down on our picket line many times.

"This conference is a lot better than I thought it would be. I imagined it'd be boring, but it's great 'cos there's so much support. Liverpool Council is taking a good stand. But Kinnock seems to be sitting on the fence. He's got too many middle-class friends.

"We've had lots of support from Tony Benn and



Dennis Skinner. But the Labour Party should be doing a lot more."

Alan Duffy (Sutton Manor NUM)

Both Larry Callaghan, a Councillor from Glasgow and Graham Skinner, leader of Manchester Council paid tribute to the stand taken by Liverpool. "In fact", said Graham Skinner, "Liverpool Council leaders John Hamilton and Derek Hatton had helped Manchester elect a Labour Council because the media, Tories and Liberals had kept saying Manchester would become another Liverpool if you voted Labour."

## National struggle

The overall message of the Conference was clear. As Terry Harrison said: "If you want to make the struggle national, then follow Liverpool's example locally."

Photos by Tommy Carroll



"Some of us went out this morning on a street collection in Liverpool. We got a fantastic response. Children, OAPs and unemployed were giving us their last coppers. We had a bucket collection and tins. But you could not get any more into the tins.

The Wrexham area has been starved. Liverpool has been talking about twinning with a mining town; we wouldn't mind them twinning with Liverpool."

David Roberts (right) and Gary Jones (left) Bersham Colliery, N Wales.

## Asian youth conference

### Saturday 14th July

**By Hamid Khayah**  
(Bradford LPYS)

UP AND down the country Asian youth are under attack. In Newham, just months after the end of the 'Newham 8' case, seven more Asian youth are facing new charges of 'affray' and 'conspiracy to cause criminal damage'—all because they defended their community from racist groups.

It is because of such attacks, police indifference and harassment that we have called the first ever LPYS Asian Youth Conference—and we are hoping 250 will attend.

Through the course of our campaign many Asian people and shops have been approached and so far we have raised a magnificent £300. We

have also approached labour organisations and received a good response. We have organised a benefit concert for 28 June in the Queen's Hall, Bradford to raise more money towards the total cost of the conference which is £800.

This conference is mainly aimed at the black and Asian community in Bradford but other areas in the country can send delegates and help to raise money. The sessions are as follows:

**SATURDAY 14 JULY:** 10.30 am—Start of morning session—general discussion on conditions faced by black and Asian youth. Speakers—Max

Madden MP, Pat Wall, Anil Singh (LPYS), Hashida Dev (LPYS).

Afternoon session begins with two seminars on women and race and education. Speakers: Hashida Dev (LPYS), Hamid Khayah (LPYS). The rest of the afternoon will be spent discussing the whole of the Indian sub-continent (province of Punjab, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh). Speakers—Dave Nellist MP, Farooq Tariq PPP, Bob Lee, Chris Weldon.

For details of how to obtain tickets and send donations please contact:

Anil Singh, Flat 24, 5 Oak Avenue, Bradford 8. Tel: (0274) 498875.

## Four weeks till LPYS camp

AFTER OVER 3 months on strike miners deserve a small break. Many will have cancelled their holidays because of hardship during the strike. For this reason we are asking LPYS branches to make special efforts to get young miners and their families to the Camp. Sheets are available from A. Bevan, 150 Walworth Rd, London, SE 17 which can be used to appeal to the Labour movement for money to help send young miners to Summer Camp.

● **WHEN IS IT?** A week starting Saturday, 28 July until Saturday, 4 August 1984.

● **WHERE IS IT?** At the Braceland Campsite, near Coleford, in the Forest of Dean, Gloucester. The nearest railway station is Lydney.

● **WHO'S IN CHARGE?** You are! Each village at the camp elects its own council to supervise its affairs. The camp is run by an elected Camp Council—a week of socialism in practice!



Tony Benn speaking at a previous LPYS Summer Camp. This year's camp will have similar top-line speakers.

● **HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?** £27—and that includes the camp fees, your admission to films, discos, and other events. The use of a full range of sporting equipment from cricket to volley ball is free!

● **WHAT DO YOU BRING?** A tent, sleeping bag, stove, cooking utensils. The LPYS shop on site supplies food etc. Bring a complete change of clothing,

wellies and a kagool, just in case it rains (although socialist planning should take care of that!).

● **WHAT ABOUT THE KIDS?** Bring them—they have a better time than anyone else! There's a professional creche provided. And there's pony-trekking, swimming, and lots more to keep them happy (Children under 3—free; 3-12 years—£13.50).

Photo: Militant



# INDUSTRIAL

# BLOC lobby TUC

**GEORGE WILLIAMSON, Organising Secretary of BLOC (Broad Left Organising Committee) talked to Militant about the planned lobby of the TUC on Monday 3 September.**

**Militant: Why is BLOC calling this lobby of the TUC?**  
 GW: Millions of working people are under attack from the Tories. And when they begin to fight back, like the miners and the NGA, they have to face the police and the Tory anti-union laws. BLOC believes we need a fighting trade union leadership who will respond to these attacks immediately, by mobilising the power of the movement behind workers who call for assistance.

**M: What is your assessment of the present position of the TUC?**  
 GW: The right wing leaders of the TUC have failed miserably to provide a lead, in fact in some cases have at-

tempted, as Len Murray did recently in Yorkshire, to stop solidarity action taking place with the miners.

While the miners are showing the type of determination that's needed, Len Murray and other trade union leaders are getting out of the kitchen because of the heat; resigning in the middle of the most crucial period of struggle facing working people for decades.

**M: So you don't subscribe to the idea of many on the left and right that the unions are incapable of fighting back?**  
 GW: The policy of 'new realism' espoused by the likes of Murray and Graham is now in tatters. The new left wing leadership of the CPSA Executive, because of dissatisfaction at Graham's

role has now decided to remove him from the TUC General Council. This is a major victory for all trade unionists looking for a fighting leadership.

The move to the left and the radicalisation beginning to take place in many unions arises from the hard fact that working people are being forced into struggle to defend themselves, and in those struggles they are learning fast, that we must have a fighting leadership. That's why our first national delegate conference in March received an overwhelming response. 2,500 delegates and visitors turned up in Sheffield to hammer out a fighting strategy to defeat the Tories.

Now the BLOC is organising a national lobby of TUC Congress in September. We hope to drive home to delegates and our leaders at Congress, the feeling of rank and file unionists.

**M: Will the lobby be raising any specific demands?**

GW: The lobby will be saying quite clearly that the scandalous decision not to support the NGA, taken at the December meeting of the General Council, must be overturned and that if any union is attacked in future with these anti-union laws then an immediate 24-hour general strike should be called, as a beginning of a campaign of support for those workers.

But we hope that over all, workers who find themselves in struggle or will be forced into struggle in the next period, will come along to Brighton on 3 September, join our campaign at national and local levels to support the miners and demand that our leaders begin to lead from the front, to mobilise a mighty movement to sweep the Tories out of power.

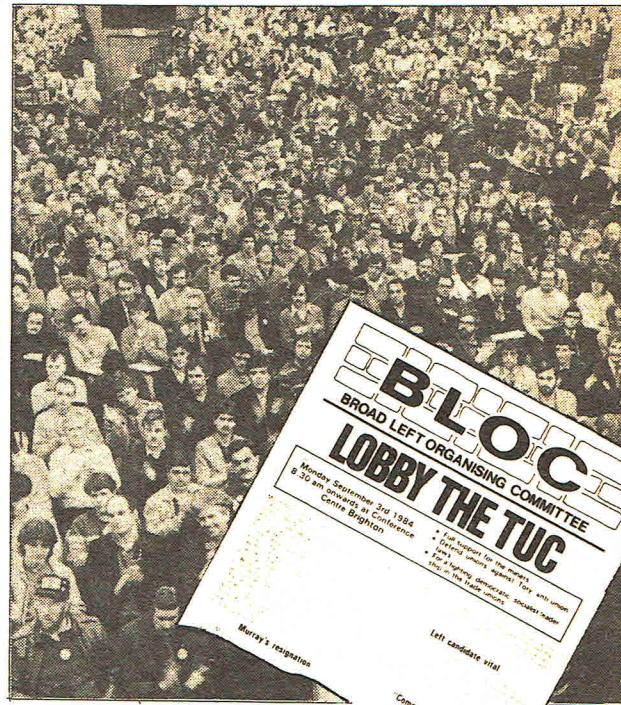


Photo: John Woulfe

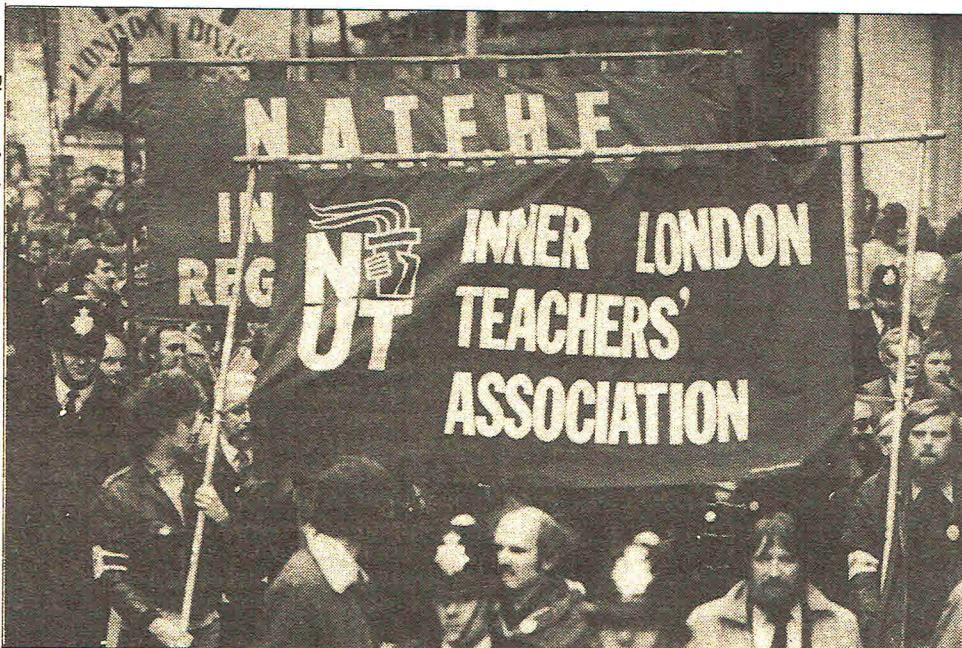
**BLOC conference in Sheffield last March—biggest gathering of union militants for many years and new leaflet out.**

**ORGANISE NOW!**

BLOC supporters should get their union branch, shop stewards' committee, trades council, Labour Party, Labour Party Young Socialist branch, to book buses now. Local BLOC committees have been set up in some areas and will be meeting to co-ordinate the work.

For this event—if you want help, contact G Williamson, 11 Sutton Place, London E9 6EH. Sponsor the lobby—send a donation to organise the lobby and other events.

Photo: Andrew Ward (Report)



Teachers march in 1981—the middle class image is being destroyed as a result of Tory attacks.

# Teachers' partial pay victory

By Bob Sulatycki  
 West London Association  
 (personal capacity)

**LAST FRIDAY'S teachers' pay negotiations (23.6) marked the capitulation of the employers' side. The Tory diehards on the ACC chose to concede arbitration in the face of mounting teachers' anger and the threat of further industrial action.**

The leaders of the NUT and the NAS/UWT have sought to portray this as a historic success, and have called off all action. In reality, arbitration only represents a partial victory. The nature of the claim and the manner in which it has been fought, have in all probability ensured that the first opportunity in ten years to return to Houghton levels has been missed.

years, in which time our salaries have been eroded by 30%, were arrived at by arbitration. There is absolutely no reason to suppose the arbitration will be any more generous this time.

**Let it slip**

If the union set a target of 12.5%, and argued for this to be distributed on a flat rate basis, and fought a more decisive campaign, then the government would have been forced to intervene. Given the miners' dispute they are especially sensitive at the moment and would have been forced to dip into the contingency reserves to buy us off.

The government has been let off the hook—and quite happily maintains there is no more money available. Therefore, they claim, any figure the arbitrator sets above 4.5% can only be met through cuts in jobs and services.

What ever the final outcome of arbitration, union

members will be asking: "If arbitration can be conceded with such a restricted campaign, what might have been achieved with a more determined mobilisation?" Many members—and not just in the metropolitan areas—feel angry that they were not called out on strike as part of the campaign.

Although the NUT has been profoundly radicalised by the campaign, it is essential that the lessons of this year's action are learnt, not just in time for next year's special salaries conference, but also given the massive impending battle over rate capping.

**Leadership**

The present right-wing of the teachers' unions are quite incapable of leading any such struggle. Our membership have now shown themselves deserving of a more committed and vigorous leadership.

**Past arbitration**

In upholding arbitration the union leadership have ignored the fact that many of the deals over the last ten

# Scottish teachers' conference

By Lynn Divers  
 (Glasgow Local Association Delegate) Personal capacity

**THE CONFERENCE of Scotland's largest teachers' union, the EIS, took place against a background of 5,500 lost teaching jobs in Scotland over the period of Thatcher's government, and the prospect of a further 5,000 disappearing over the next three years.**

A series of victories for the left on key issues reflected the mood of rank and file delegates in the light of the current struggles by teachers in England and Wales. Had it not been for the refusal of the EIS executive to provide a recommendation to reject the abysmal offer of 4.5% earlier in the year, the vote to reject would undoubtedly have climbed above the 48% it reached.

**No pay campaign**

The conspiracy of silence on the part of our 'leadership' on the question of the pay offer certainly influenced conference to overwhelm-

ingly back a call for a campaign on pay for the autumn onwards. However, the narrow defeat of an amendment demanding that there should be no trade of working conditions for pay rises indicates that hard work on the part of working class activists within EIS to build mass support will be necessary.

**Tasks for left**

The defeat of that amendment and the defeat of various proposals which would have committed the leadership to campaign for and negotiate improved working conditions, class sizes, preparation time etc., show the extent to which the right within the union must still be challenged on many of the bread and butter issues. In this respect the left have the opportunity to generate political discussion within the mass of the membership since the right-wing completely base their

position on acceptance of cuts and erosion of working practices.

Conference agreed to accept a "closed shop" motion covering Scotland's three teaching unions; a motion was passed opposing Thatcher's anti-trade union legislation and committing conference to give "positive aid" to unions finding themselves in breach of such; and a motion calling for a ballot of the membership on the question of affiliation to CND was also accepted.

**Potential**

On average, left strength emerged at around 180 (out of 380) on the issues where the leadership carried the day. This solid base of support and the election of left-winger Kenny McLaughun as president show the potential to transform EIS into a fighting union capable of defending education in Scotland.

# GMBATU miners debate

**I WOULD like to expand on some of the facts about the emergency motion on the miners at the GMBATU Annual Congress as reported in issue 704 and correct a false impression given about the debate.**

**Two motions**

The report referred to just one emergency motion on the miners' dispute. There were in fact two, both from Southern Region. One was from Wandsworth local

authority branch and a more substantial one from Bournemouth branch.

A point not covered in the report was that both motions were given the full support of the Southern regional delegation at their meeting on Sunday. But it became clear on the Thursday morning, following a question from the rostrum to the chairman of Standing Orders about the motion's position on the agenda, that their motions had been brought to the attention of the Standing

Orders Committee four days after being accepted by the delegations!

**Action needed**

Support for the miners was expressed by many delegates in their contributions to congress, members of the union now have the duty to ensure that words are turned into deeds.

By Dennis English  
 (Wandsworth local authority GMBATU)



## Union unity vital

### EETPU/TUC

ERIC HAMMOND, EETPU general secretary elect, Chapple's successor, has pledged to leave the TUC should the September congress deny his right to make a "no strike" agreement.

A report in *The Times* (19 June) states that Hammond now has the unanimous support of the Executive Council for such a move. If this development comes about it will lead to the eventual break-up of our

union. It also diverts attention from the struggle of the NUM.

Many EETPU members will be critical of the TUC leadership in the NGA and Cheltenham GCHQ disputes and may be lulled into thinking it will make no difference. The majority of trade unions within the TUC need a fighting leadership based on accountability to the rank and file. This process is beginning to take place. The way forward is to transform the TUC into a democratic, fighting organisation.

By an EETPU member

### ASTMS/APEX

THE WHITE collar union ASTMS is in a protracted dispute with its clerical staff employees (members of APEX) over their 1984 pay claim. This has now reached the stage of an all-out strike which has closed ASTMS offices all over the country.

ASTMS full-time officials are trying to run a skeleton service for their members from their own homes, and the ASTMS annual delegate conference has been postponed 'till November.

The attempt to use ACAS to settle the conditions for a return to work after arbitration had taken place failed. It is clear that the im-

asse now reached is due to the total lack of trust that has been created, not only currently, but over the last few years.

The ASTMS national executive, who state that their first concern is to provide a service to their members, are clearly failing to do so. The dispute should be settled by the intervention of the ASTMS membership, particularly as the ability to do so at ADC has now been effectively removed from them.

Divisional councils should call for a special one-day conference of DC executives, to which both sides could put their case. The conditions for a return to work be settled by this conference.

By an ASTMS DC exec member

# Stop privatisation

Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)



Hammersmith hospital workers on strike against privatisation threat. Over a thousand NUPE members marched from Tower Hill to the office of top privateering firm Pritchards (parent of Crothalls the firm behind the Barking hospital dispute), as part of a NUPE national day of action on 26 June.

## Six months on Manchester picket line

**PHILLIPS RUBBER Strike in Manchester is now entering its sixth month and the strikers are determined to fight on.**

They first came out in January and were immediately sacked by the management when they refused to accept a 4% rise on their £48 basic for a 40 hour week.

They have since occupied the factory twice and maintained a constant picket all through the long strike. They are not going to go away as the management would like. Marina Crola one of the

strikers talked to *Militant*:

"We believed the management when we asked for a pay rise and they pleaded poverty. Mr Roland Jones said there was no money. One year we even gave them our holiday pay to keep them going but we never had a word of thanks not even at Christmas.

### Bosses' lies

"Then we found out that in a sister firm in Stranraer the workers were paid £75 basic compared to our £48 basic. That's when we got

militant and came out on strike. We had been lied to for years about the amount of profit they were making and they had used the blackmail of redundancies to keep us there for years.

"110 of us came out on strike and the scabs that remained in the engineers, the AUEW and the other from the T&G just tore up their union cards and started to do our jobs. People who we had known for years from being kids—it just makes me sick at heart and now the firm has started kids and is exploiting them. They just

can't see further than their noses—a couple of bob extra than the dole and they will take it away, they just don't understand. But we are determined to go on.

### Support

"We have had a lot of support from the other unions and we are still fighting to keep going but we need more financial and moral support, please send donations to; Brother Mark Onley, 13 Kingham Drive, Ancaops, Manchester 4."

## More support for Newcastle DHSS pensions strike

**260 SHIFT workers in the computer area dealing with pensions and National Insurance at the DHSS Newcastle Central Office are still out on strike.**

The cause of the dispute is an attempt by management to change shift workers' starting and finishing times and consequently a cut in shift working allowances from 20% to 10.5%.

In an effort to isolate the strike management are attempting to ban weekly levy collections and the distribution of circulars concerning the dispute, while at the same time issuing threats to remove union facility time. Management are distributing weekly propaganda sheets denouncing strikers' activities and at the same time offering scabs overtime.

### Solidarity

When data processors were asked to do the work of these strikers they took the magnificent decision to walk out on strike rather than scab. On 22 June management issued a circular stating

that scab labour would be recruited from existing day shift staff but despite constant attempts at intimidation the strikers remain strong.

Washington Child Benefit staff voted on 25 June to join the strike after management tried to force them to scab.

### Organised

Weekly strike bulletins are being produced, weekly strikers' meetings are being held, 24-hour picket rotas are in operation. The long term potential consequences of defeat would mean a possible move towards full computerisation of DHSS with a subdued, pliable workforce and the ensuing loss of many civil service jobs.

Messages of support and donations to Doreen Purvis, CPSA secretary, Room 61F DHSS, Newcastle Central Office, Longbenton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

By Colin Eley

## Leyland's ludicrous 'communications'

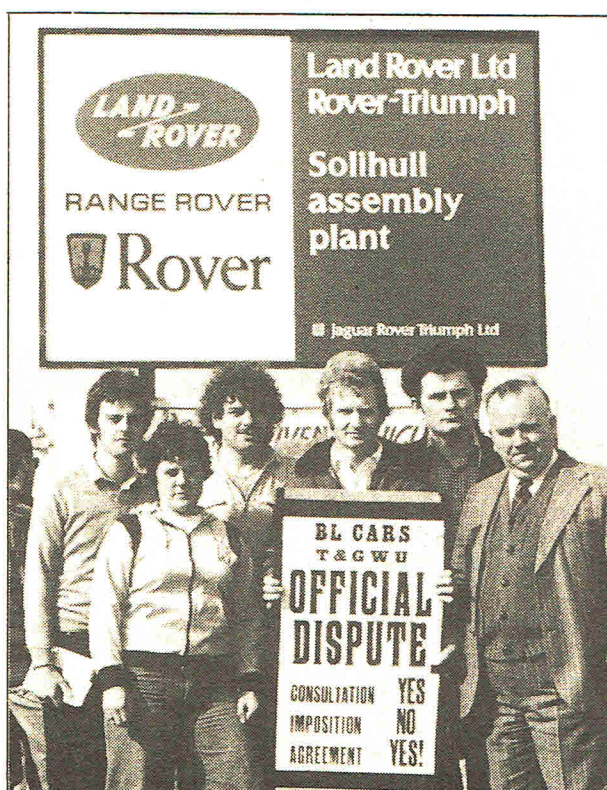
MANAGEMENT AT Land Rover Ltd. love to "communicate" with the workforce. It usually occurs just before a wage claim. Letters are delivered courtesy of the foremen explaining why we all need to work harder to make the company profitable.

Of course management do not give the same facilities to the trade unions. Recently the convenor was given a verbal warning for "lack of enthusiasm" while holding a mass meeting.

### Pep talk

I have worked at Land Rover for a number of years but Tuesday 12 June surpassed all previous communication exercises. We were told on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of that week all 9,500 workers would benefit from a management pep talk. Production would cease for two hours so all the workers could attend a presentation by Gilroy (El Supremo of Land Rover Ltd.). Those who did not attend would be disciplined.

Tracks on the Range Rover stopped at 9.20am



Workers strike for their rights in 1980—the battles in the past few years in the face of Leyland management's assault have produced massive cynicism amongst the workforce.

and workers in groups were ushered to the waiting double decker buses. Workers entered into the spirit of the occasion, with good

humoured chanting as befitted our little outing. When we reached our destination—the now closed Rover car plant—we were

seated in rows facing the mighty Gilroy. He introduced the proceedings to a barrage of jeers and shouts. And the message, you've got it, "we have to work harder."

### Contempt

For an hour he tried to sell his patriotic message—we must work harder if we are to compete with the Japanese and our watchword must be 'think quality'. At one stage I expected the Union Jack to come down and management to lead us in a chorus of 'There will always be a Land Rover'.

The meeting was treated with the contempt it deserved and a good time was had by all. The cost of this economic madness—£3,000 for the hire of the buses, £1,000 to get the building ready. And as for lost production—9,500 workers for two hours at approximately £3 per hour, that's £54,000.

By Ian Schofield  
(Deputy Senior Steward,  
Range Rover)

**USDAW  
Broad Left AGM  
2.30pm Sunday 8 July  
Star and Garter pub  
Fairfield Rd, Manchester  
(outside Picadilly station).**

All USDAW BL members welcome.

Information about the USDAW Broad Left is available from the BL National Secretary, 14 Johnson Rd, Blackpool, Lancs.



# Militant

Miners' strike reports  
Pages 3, 4, 5

## National Fightback Conference delegates tell Liverpool and miners . . .

# 'You're not alone'

**"EITHER THE Government gives us the money we need, or we will go back into the Council chamber on 11 July with the same Budget we put forward on 29 March." That was the firm message from Derek Hatton, deputy leader of Liverpool Council to more than 2,000 delegates at last Saturday's fightback conference.**

It was a statement fully in accord with the mood of the meeting: "Victory to the miners, Support Liverpool Council" said the platform banner and the fighting qualities shown in the two battles against the Tories had attracted widespread national support.

### Delegates from all areas

Delegates came from as far as Glasgow and London to learn and contribute to the struggles. These include: 810 delegates from 276 trade union organisations; 184 from 67 Constituency Labour Parties; 291 from Labour Party wards; 281 LPYS members from 90 branches and 45 councillors from 14 Labour Groups outside Liverpool.

There were 93 miners from 21 pits and their dispute provided the physical and political backdrop to the conference. Banners from North Wales lodges decorated the hall and delegates showed their support for the miners by raising over £5,000 for their funds.

### Confident mood

The mood of the conference was confident and enthusiastic, more akin to a rally. Not one of the speakers was contemplating defeat.

"It's not a question of *can*

speeches from the floor was a fiery speech from Bob Harker (Gateshead East Labour Party) who appealed to rank and file soldiers and police to remember their class and not to be used as political pawns for the ruling class.

As Alan Duffy, a miner from Sutton Manor, told *Militant*: "This conference is a lot better than I thought it would be. I imagined it'd be boring but it's great because there's so much support".

### Clay Cross

By coincidence, this conference was held almost ten years to the day (8 June, 1974) since *Militant* supporters helped organise a national conference in defence of Clay Cross council. Those socialist councillors had defied the Heath government and refused to raise rents to

Tory levels.

They were later abandoned by the Labour government, who refused to lift the restrictions imposed on them by the Tories, banning them from office and having them declared bankrupt.

The mood at the 1974 conference had been enthusiastic. But the bitterness of that defeat and all the others in the ten years since has left its mark.

The delegates at last weekend's meeting were determined that neither Liverpool nor the miners would be left to carry on the struggle alone. As Terry Fields MP declared: "We are compassionate towards our own people but hard and uncompromising against our enemies... now let's get out there and beat those bastards".

**How Liverpool built up its support see p.13**

Report by Jim Chrystie

the miners win. The miners are going to win" declared Peter Heathfield, Miners' General Secretary. Both he and John Hamilton, leader of Liverpool council received standing ovations for their determination to withstand Tory attacks.

Both of them spoke about how the government was using the forces of the state, police or commissioners, to try to defeat the aspirations of ordinary working people. Among many very good

Photo: Tommy Carroll



Tory Minister Jenkin visits Liverpool, 7 June. Sympathetic noises but little else from the government. Liverpool's fight goes on with added strength after Saturday's conference.

## Miners — 'We will win'

(Continued from front page)

discuss the issues.

They want the unions to use postal ballots where, they hope, the Tory press would have the most impact—upon workers isolated and away from their workplace.

This is now likely to be part of the Trade Union Bill working its way through Parliament. This attempts to place a whole host of new obstructions in the way of effective trade union action. They have plans for secret ballots before strikes and on political levies. The government has only reluctantly given up the idea that an absolute majority of all union members need to vote for a strike before industrial action becomes legal.

### Class laws

The Tories bleat on about "law and order" but that means for them *Tory law* and *Tory order*. They make 'criminals' out of workers, not for committing murders or burglaries, or molesting children, but for simply fighting to maintain their rights and living standards and to keep their own trade unions free from the influence of the bosses. And that is precisely why such *class laws* have no authority among working people.

But all the anti-working class laws in the world won't stop the miners. The battle the NUM have been waging for their future during the past fifteen weeks has been taken to heart by workers in other industries. Railworkers depend on a healthy coal industry. As the President of the National Union of Railwaymen told his union conference: "Coal and coke made up over

60% of the railway's freight-carrying last year. If MacGregor wins this battle with the miners, it will also be a defeat for railworkers. It will not only be miners' jobs and mining communities which will be destroyed".

Railworkers have succeeded in stopping some iron ore getting into Llanwern steelworks. BR also admit now that sympathy action by railworkers in Coalville and Shirebrook is biting, with power stations in Notts unable to get coal. The stoppages by railworkers in support of the London and South East Day of Action on 27 June is another marvellous show of solidarity.

### Challenge

At the time of going to press, print workers' unions in Fleet Street are considering stopping production of the capitalist dailies if managements refuse to print a prominent half-page statement in support of the miners.

This tremendous solidarity must be the model for the entire labour and trade union movement. All the Tory laws, all the national mobilisation of the police, all the press poison will come to nothing if the trade unions meet the challenge head on.

The miners' strike is a test of the resolve of the trade unions to stand up to the most vicious anti-working class government this century. There would be no more fitting tribute to the six Tolpuddle Martyrs than for the whole trade union movement to say "enough is enough! We have the power to 'transport' this government and we will do it!"

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