

Defy Tory courts

Support miners and dockers

A MINERS' victory is there for the taking. The magnificent show of solidarity by the dockers will now give a huge impetus to the fight to save our jobs and industry. The victory of Liverpool Council, forcing the Tories to retreat, is a beacon for the miners and the whole of the labour movement.

Even before the dockers struck against the use of scab labour on Humberside, support for the miners among trade unionists has been growing. There is overwhelming support for our fight among railway workers, who understand that their own jobs are tied to the health and success of the mining industry.

The British Railways Board have taken only 'token' disciplinary action against railway workers who have blacked coal and iron ore because they know that any provocative action on their part would cause a national rail strike.

Among the miners, especially the young ones, there is an explosive mood.

By Ian Isaac
(St Johns NUM and
South Wales EC,
personal capacity)

The NCB must not be allowed to go on playing games. Miners want a lasting agreement. The investment in the coal industry will have to be dramatically increased. Miners in the localities must be allowed to discuss and work out the investment needs for their own areas and pits.

There must be cast-iron guarantees. The Coal Board cannot be allowed to introduce by stealth next year what the miners stop them doing this year.

Dockers' strike Page 2

There is a bitter hatred felt towards the Tories and their rotten system. After eighteen weeks of bitter strike, miners will not settle for anything other than absolute guarantees about their future jobs, livelihoods and communities.

The miners now have to build on this solidarity to push home a victory. The secret negotiations have collapsed. They have been used by the NCB, along with their half-million pound advertising campaign, to try to demoralise and weaken the miners.

Secret talks must now be scrapped. All the deals and negotiations must be brought out into the open, under the scrutiny of the miners themselves.

There must be agreements on wages, the abolition of the incentive scheme and the four-day working week. These issues cannot be left to fade away in any discussions with the NCB.

Above all, it must be the rank and file miners, those who have been the shock troops of the strike, who must have the final say on an agreement. A special delegate conference will have to be called, after full discussions at mass meetings at every colliery, to ratify any agreement arrived at.

The miners have the scent of victory in their nostrils. We must now galvanise the support already offered or undertaken by other trade unionists. The National Union of Mineworkers must

step up the action and not let any talks be allowed to 'demobilise' or scale down the strike.

With dockers and miners picketing together, we must ensure that the ports are sealed. The TGWU must step up its campaign to get lorry drivers to black coal and ore. Other sections of workers must be called upon to show sympathy action. Every act of sympathy action by a worker will shorten the duration of the strike and bring us nearer to victory.

The union must take the

Continued on back page



The courts' class law

DAVE NELLIST MP for Coventry South East comments on the attempt through the courts to stop the NUM special conference discussing disciplinary procedures.

"Thatcher is a hypocrite. She condemns attacks on union rights in Poland, then allows similar things in Britain.

"The judge in this case,

Sir Robert Megarry is a public school-educated member of the ruling class. He is also 74 years old. But he has the nerve to tell miners who have their whole working lives to defend that they cannot deal with discipline in their own union. The Megarrys of the world don't need to worry about job security even in old age.

"The NUM have faced intimidation in this strike since day one. They have seen massive police build-ups to stop peaceful pickets discuss-

ing with working miners. The police have even introduced curfews for miners in some areas. Now miners could face the courts.

"This is class law in action, legislation invented by Tebbit and Prior, administered by judges like Lord Donaldson, a former Tory councillor and enforced by a police force who have received a 120% rise in five years to get them ready for the battles.

"I am sure workers will be ready to take action if any members of the NUM or any union property are threatened by the courts."

Militant

How Liverpool won

LIVERPOOL COUNCIL have won an overwhelming victory over the Tory Government. Without any cuts in services, while securing 2,000 extra jobs, while keeping their programme of house-building, they have forced the Tories to concede the £55m needed to work out a 'legal' budget.

The extreme right wing *Daily Express*, representing the class enemy of workers, blurted out their reproval of the Tories' concessions, describing the deal as "shoddy and cowardly".

The success of the council is a complete vindication of the stand taken by the council and the District Labour Party. It is a tribute to the magnificent campaign waged involving the council trade unions and the wider labour movement. Above all, it is a tribute to the fight put up by the workers of Liverpool.

The Tory Government are in a mess. The miners are slowly but surely grinding the Tories' noses in the dirt. The dockers have taken up the struggle.

In the face of massive opposition by the people of Liverpool, the Tories could not face the prospect of putting in commissioners to run the city. There would have been massive civil disobedience among the council workers and a general strike.

The only negative part of the deal, reluctantly accepted by Labour councillors, has been the decision to increase rates by 17 per cent after having committed themselves to a 9 per cent rise.

But the issue was thoroughly discussed and overwhelmingly agreed within the District Labour Party. There was a choice facing the council, to accept or not. But it is doubtful if there would have been the necessary support among workers for a massive campaign over the relatively small difference of 8 per cent.

In any case, the mass of Liverpool workers see the result as a striking victory. Ninety-five per cent of the council demands are conceded.

It is a lesson to all those Labour councils who accepted massive Tory cuts in the past and at the same time bumped up the rates, often by more than 17 per cent.

Liverpool's victory is also a salutary lesson for the Labour Party leadership. Neil Kinnock, and the Environment spokesman, John Cunningham and Jack Straw, shamefully refused to support the stand taken by the City council. They supported "humane cuts" and a 70 per cent rate rise rather than fight against the Tories. John Cunningham, in a disgraceful episode after the May elections, was asked point blank on TV if Liverpool's election triumph meant that the City should have more cash... and he bluntly refused to answer!

The policy of the Labour leadership was one of outright capitulation and they do not deserve the slightest credit for the victory achieved by the council. That must go to the Labour councillors, the Labour Party, the trade unions and the workers of Liverpool.

The Liverpool experience must now set the tone for the opposition of the Labour Party to the expenditure cuts of the Tory government. A policy of non-cooperation, of refusal to cut jobs and services must now become the official Labour policy for all Labour local authorities, and health authorities starved of funds by the Tories.

Liverpool council have won a decisive battle but not the war. Next year the Tories will be back again demanding more cuts. They will try to take back from Liverpool what they have given this year. They will demand cuts of every other council.

But the Tories can be stopped. Just as the Liverpool fight was given fresh heart and enthusiasm by the miners, so their victory will now hearten the miners.

If the Labour Party were to mobilise support among working people nationally in the same way that the District Labour Party did in Liverpool, the Tories would not last long.

It would not then be a question of winning a battle, but winning the war—driving the Tories from office, and returning a Labour Government committed to fundamental socialist change, giving the priority to the needs of the people and not the profits of the monopolies.

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All out to save docks

THERE WAS a real mood of anger and determination as all of Britain's dockers at registered ports struck this week. As one docker at the Immingham picket line told a *Militant* reporter: "This is solidarity with the miners—we should have been out from the first week of the dispute."

Although the strike was sparked off by the miners' strike, the dispute is not solely about that. But now we and the miners are out, two of the most traditionally militant unions, we should stay out to win. We will not have a better opportunity to defend our industry.

The employers have long wanted to scrap the Docks Labour Scheme. We expected a battle later on this year to save it. Now we are on strike, we should stay out until we go back on our terms.

The use of scab labour at Immingham, which sparked off the strike is just the latest attack upon dockers. It began last Tuesday (3 July) when ASLEF members refused to cross a miners'

picket line and transport iron ore from Immingham to the Scunthorpe steel works. So the Steel Corporation, together with the port employers, tore up the national agreement with the dockers and brought in scab labour to load lorries.

According to the *Financial Times*, (10 July) from last Friday till 6 o'clock Monday morning, they transported 27,000 tonnes of iron pellets to Scunthorpe; they claim this will supply the plant until September. Management may now try and patch up some compromise to restore the position at Immingham, but we can't just accept that as a satisfactory conclusion—not on their terms.

Attacks

If we go back now, we'll have another battle later on in the year. There have been a whole series of attacks trying to whittle away our strength and wear us down. In Hull we have had a eighteen month dispute over pay. Now they are asking for 250

voluntary redundancies, out of a workforce of 1,000; it's the same story in London and Liverpool.

They want the registered scheme destroyed then they can attack any port and sack who they like.

Although the numbers of dockers have been cut in recent years, we still have enormous power. The last docks strike in 1972 cut Britain's trade by a third. When the Tories tried to abolish the scheme in 1980, we threatened a national docks strike and Thatcher backed down.

In this dispute the NUR rail union have told their people not to cross our picket lines. Seamen have also promised full support. The major registered ports handle over 70% of the country's trade. The Tories can't afford to have both a dockers' and a miners' strike.

We must demand that the Tories give cast-iron, written guarantees that the Docks Labour Scheme will not be scrapped or attacked in any way.

We must extend this strike

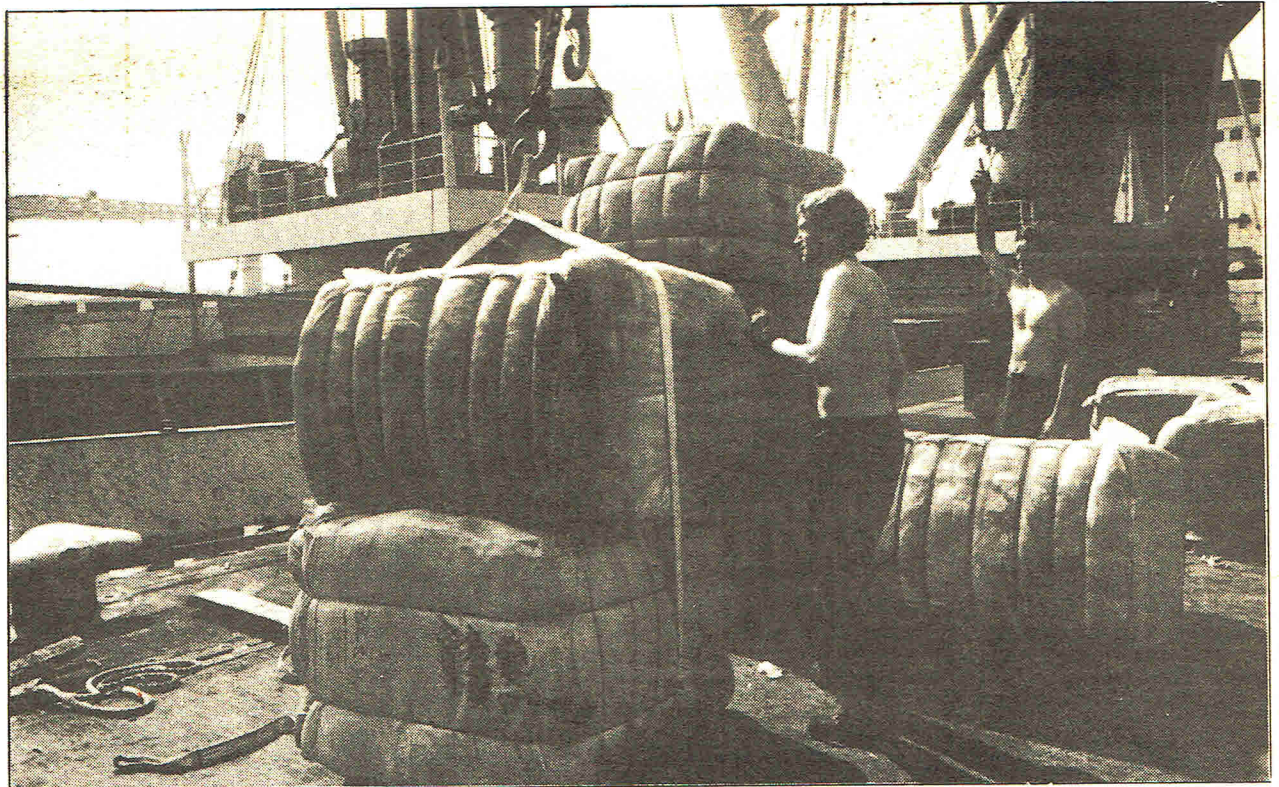
to cover the non-registered ports. The majority of dockers at Felixstowe, for instance, are in the TGWU and they want to join the national scheme. We must now insist that all the unregistered ports are brought within the scheme.

Include tugmen

Tugmen at registered ports are in the union, but not in the scheme. We must demand that they are included, so they can get the full benefits which apply to dockers. After all if a port is closed, their jobs will go as well.

Our demands must be clear. We are backing the miners, and fighting to save our industry. We must stop the Tories' plans, and extend the scheme to cover all ports and other workers. Now we are out let's fight on to win.

By Paul Spooner
(TGWU shop steward
Hull Docks, personal
capacity).



• Around the ports

ALL OVER the country the first day of the docks strike was solid. Not one ship moved in any major port without union permission. In many ports picket lines were hardly needed, support for the strike was so overwhelmingly. All of the other 150 non-registered ports little moved.

In GLASGOW all 98 dockers were out. In Swansea all the 138 came out, and the picket line was left in the hands of two 60 year olds.

On the South Coast there was also determined solidarity. At Southampton, a major container port, only passenger ships were moving.

Further along at Weymouth, there was not even that. Seamen, who are facing their own battle over the threat to privatise Sealink, gave their full support to the dockers and even blacked all ferries to the Channel Islands. They only agreed

to return in principle when it emerged that other ferries were operating. Even then because of a local dispute no ferries sailed for the Channel Islands on Tuesday.

Many seamen felt that the struggles over the mines and ports and Sealink should be linked together nationally in a movement to really shake the Tories. On 11 July the national executive of the seaman's union called for a ban of all freight traffic on Sealink from Friday 13 July.

In LIVERPOOL 14 ships were tied up as all the 3,000 registered dockers and white collar workers came out.

Len McCluskie (District Secretary Acts Trade Group, TGWU, Liverpool told us): "For a long period the government have made it clear they want to do away with the Docks Labour Scheme. It's a thorn in their side, because they

can't make people redundant. If the government destroy the Scheme then ports like Liverpool will be wiped out.

"That's why in Liverpool we're all out tugmen, dockgate men, maintenance, white collar—all sections are out. The action was swift and dramatic, and we want to extend the strike to the non-registered ports. Dockers here are very, very determined indeed."

The also see the fight as part of the miners' fight against the common Tory enemy.

Dockers have raised hundreds of pounds for the miners in their weekly collections. As Jim Scully, Secretary of the TGWU Docks, Branch told *Militant* in his personal capacity: "Now's the time to strike".

At TEESIDE it was the same story. Two years ago Teeside dockers won a 16-week battle over wages. They are confident

they can win this dispute. As Dave Jennings (TGWU Tees Port) said: "Thatcher is like Frank Bruno. She sorted out the lesser opposition, but now she's in the ring with the big boys she's getting a hammering." Dockers felt it was better to fight to save their jobs now. If the miners are defeated, the next attack will be on the Docks Labour Scheme. Over £2,000 had been handed over to the miners at dock meetings organised by local Militant supporters.

In LONDON all the dockers at Tilbury were out. Dockers there have been discussing the situation at Immingham for some time, and have held regular collections for the miners. The devastation which capitalism has wrecked can be clearly seen in London. Now there are only 3,200 registered dockers at Tilbury, compared to the tens of thousands who used to work at the London docks.

Miners' dispute

Police swoop to arrest young socialists

OVER 100 police descended on the pit village of Fitzwilliam, near Wakefield, on Monday night (9 July). In their attack on local youth they rooted out leaders of the Labour Party Young Socialists and Militant supporters.

Of the eight arrests most were Labour Party or YS members. After police talked of riot and assault charges, they were eventually charged with breach of the peace and had a curfew imposed on them—they have to stay indoors from 7 pm to 7 am—a direct attack on political activity.

From the start it was clear they were after Brendan Conway, picket captain and chairman of Fitzwilliam LPYS. Around 5 pm eight policemen (Fitzwilliam has only one policeman normally) came round for him. Brendan came to an upstairs window and was told he was under arrest. With no explanation for the arrest he refused to open up.

While the police were getting a warrant, the local community turned out and over 200 gathered around Brendan's house. At 7pm, looking for a break in the situation, all 200 went off to the police station at Hemsforth nearby. There the Inspector told Brendan's father that he had never heard of Brendan Conway.

False promises

At that stage Frank Clarke, President of South Kirby NUM, arrived. He negotiated with the Inspector, first to move away the crowds (a few windows had started going through). Then the Inspector came out and gave his word that Brendan would not be intimidated or hunted.

He went on to say that he

By young miners, Militant supporters in Fitzwilliam, names withheld because of police victimisation

was wanted for questioning and not arrest, and that he would get in touch with Frank Clarke so that they could come along together with an NUM solicitor to sit in on the questioning.

At this the crowd dispersed and there was no sign of trouble. But back in Fitzwilliam there was already massive patrolling of the estates by the police. They were driving past Brendan's house on the City estate, shouting out of the car windows: "Brendan Conway, we are going to get you, Brendan".

Despite this unbelievable provocation, the young miners still didn't respond. Several hours passed and some of the lads were having a last pint in the Fitzwilliam Hotel when all hell broke loose. Police stormed in wearing riot gear.



Kathleen Doody, 69 years old, 23 riot police threatened to smash her front door down—then called her an "old bastard".

The police said later they had had a telephone call, but the pub landlord has stated quite clearly there was no call and no trouble until the police arrived.

The cost was in broken heads. They went straight for Brendan, pinning him on the pool table. His dad, when he went to intervene, had a truncheon smashed over his hand and anyone

who stood up got a truncheon over the head. One frightened young woman tried to get out of the pub and the police smashed the door on her arm.

A policeman poured a drink on the floor, and when a lad said: "That's my beer" he was truncheoned right over the chest. Peter Doody (Brendan's cousin) was so badly beaten that he was taken to hospital for X-rays and with multiple bruises he's still in hospital at the time of writing.

Peter Hurst, who came out of the pub as the police ordered, had his hands out showing that he was going to give no resistance. But as he walked out he was beaten, truncheoned, chained to a lamp post and later fell unconscious for two hours.

Pat Doody and Gwynneth Hurst, their wives, were kept in the dark for hours as to their whereabouts.

Barricades

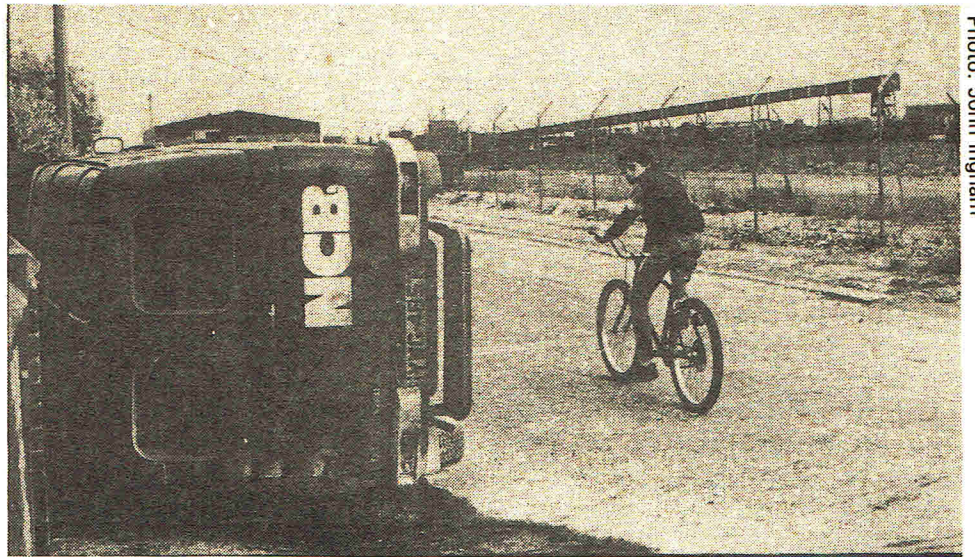
Following the events at the pub the police tried to surround the miners on open ground. But instead the lads headed towards the City estate and barricaded it off.

Police vans that passed got stoned but now, without surprise on the side, without safety in numbers, the police refused to come into the area. Vans were burned—no response, alarms set off—no response. The City estate had become a 'no-go' area.

The anger was then directed at NCB property and the security men guarding South Kinsley drift mine. This is because at nearby South Kirby pit, security men had a few days ago arrested, beaten up and humiliated two old men for picking unsaleable coal off the slag heaps.

At the pit in Fitzwilliam on Monday night the security men had to hide somewhere, while the windows in the pit-top went through. The police, only returned to the City end around 1.30 am, when people were already dispersing. They had been kept out.

As one young miner put it. "They had no charge on



A burnt-out NCB van the day after the police invasion.

Brendon at all. Why should eight people and a meat wagon come for him, when all they were supposed to be doing was questioning? That's what you have a community cop for. They should have learned from tonight that it's not going to be another Nottingham here. We're not going to allow them to close our village down, and make everyone walk around with identification. The youth just won't stand for it."

After being kept off the City estate, with access to the area barricaded off with overturned vans, the police eventually returned at 2.30 am.

23 police in riot gear went to Kathleen Doody's house—she's 69 years old—to arrest her son Dennis. Kathleen said out of her bedroom window that they were not allowed to come in to her house. Then the order came to smash the door in.

Police backed off

Mrs. Doody said: "Don't attempt to break my door down, or I'm straight onto the phone to my doctor and my solicitor." At that they backed off. Dennis then said that he would go voluntarily the following morning to the police station at Hemsforth (after doing that Dennis was arrested).

Mrs. Doody asked: "Why do you want to arrest my Dennis?" and the police shouted back: "Get back into bed, you old bastard". That's the respect that police have for people who have worked all their lives.

To young workers reading about Fitzwilliam all we can ask is that they ensure that the miners win. Help that fight by replacing our brothers now under curfew, by joining the LPYS and the Militant in the fight for socialism.

Round about 10 am the police arrived in riot gear. Contact was made between the police chief and our delegate inside. We were told that an injunction was on its way.

We then received a categorical assurance that the Area Council meeting would not go ahead.

We had another meeting, and our delegate conferred with the police chief outside. We told him we were willing to come out peacefully as long as the snatch squads made no arrests. They agreed and at 11 am the building was cleared.

By Adrian Bird
(Bentnck NUM)



Fitzwilliam Miners' Wives Support Group—the whole village is determined to win the dispute.

MP probes Coventry beating

SEVEN Warwickshire miners were arrested at a house in Keresley, near Coventry early Sunday morning (8 July). Six of them were strike committee members.

Eyewitnesses report that one of the miners, Dennis Evans, had his head repeatedly bashed against a car bonnet. He is now in hospital in Nuneaton with a suspect-

ed broken neck

Local Labour MP Dave Nellist arranged for photos of the car showing bloodstains and hair still on the bonnet, and for the removal of blood and hair for independent analysis. Only two of the seven were charged; the other five, including Dennis Evans were released with no charge.

Come to YS camp

THE SUMMER Camp is a must for young miners. This is probably the only chance you will have of a break until this dispute comes to a successful conclusion. There are certain to be young miners there from all over the country which will give us an excellent chance to discuss tactics in the dispute, police brutality and how we can attract more young miners to the ideas of the LPYS and the fight for socialism.

The camp is not all politics though; there is plenty of time during the day and at night for social events and participating in sports. At night there are discos, folk nights, club nights and films; during the day there is 5-a-side football, swimming, cricket, tennis, canoeing—in fact any sport you could name.

By Alex Shanks
(Monktonhall Colliery, SCEBTA)

Saturday 28 July – Saturday 4 August
at Bracelands Campsite, near Coleford,
Gloucestershire
(nearest rail station, Lydney)

Come and enjoy:

- ★ Political discussion.
- ★ Sport
- ★ Films
- ★ Discos
- ★ Club nights
- ★ Crèche

Cost is only £27 inclusive of camp fees, admission to films, discos and other events, sports equipment and facilities. Children under 3—free; 3–12 years—£13.50.

Contact your local LPYS branch or write to:
Andy Bevan, National Youth Officer, The Labour Party,
150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT.

Miners' conference — scabs blocked

THE NUM National Delegate Conference went ahead with its business on Wednesday 11 July despite attempted legal interference by Notts scabs.

Sixty of us striking Notts miners had occupied the Notts HQ and prevented the Notts Area Council meeting to mandate their delegates to the conference. The scabs went to the courts and a judge ruled that the conference could not discuss rules changes on national disciplinary procedures without the Notts Council meeting first taking place. Ray Chadburn, Notts Area President, explained that as they only received the judge's ruling at 12.45 pm

Tuesday, they had no time or resources to comply with it.

We had entered the building at 6 am, Monday 9 July, and intended to stay there until Wednesday when the national conference started.

We felt that an Area Council composed of scab union men should not be allowed in any way to participate in national decision-making at a time when they were going against national policy.

One hundred striking Notts miners formed a picket line outside. Ray Chadburn, Notts Area President, and Henry Richardson, Area General Secretary, refused

police permission to storm the building.

We barricaded ourselves in. At 7 am a summons was served for us to attend magistrates' court at 10 am the following day.

Fortification

We held a meeting inside and unanimously agreed to ignore the summons. We strengthened our fortifications and began mobilising pickets for the Tuesday morning.

That day more striking Notts miners joined us in the building and about 300 miners from Notts, Derby and Yorkshire formed a picket line outside the headquarters.

Photo: John Ingham

Photo: John Ingham

Miners' dispute

Support groups' vital role

THE EXPLOSIVE growth of women's support groups is one of the most outstanding features of the miners' strike. From a handful of such groups set up spontaneously at the start of the strike, there are now hundreds working all over the country, in mining communities and elsewhere. Women, mostly new to labour movement activity, are now playing a vital role in the dispute. On these pages we look at the effects of the strike on miners' families and their communities, and how they have responded.

Durham village fights for future

RAY PHYSICK spoke to Matt Thompson, Colin Campbell, Marjorie Thompson, Ann Allcroft and Ann Bingham, all from Herrington, Durham about the background to the strike and (below) how they're organising now.

ONE YEAR ago South Hetton pit closed. As a result Herrington pit was given a five year lease of work with possibly a further five on top. £5 million was spent on developing the Harvey seam.

When they had won the face the Board said that there was too much sulphur in the coal, which is nonsense because they took coal samples beforehand. Herrington was due to close in July.

We called in the national engineers from

the union and they say that there are twelve faces at this pit each with one year's work. The Coal Board have now offered us a take-it or leave-it high risk plan—they would develop two high-risk faces if we agree to one hundred job losses, plus 120 transfers to other pits.

This would leave 500 men at our pit but by deliberately going into the faulted areas, we would only have two years work. 500 men would then be on the dole.

We appealed six weeks before the strike began but the Coal Board would not give us a speedy answer for fear of inflaming the whole situation. Even before the strike we were preparing to take action. This is our Cortonwood. If we lose here where can we go?

The lodge committee is organising the picketing and over 100 in total are involved, about 20% of the workforce. Even those who are not picketing are in favour of the strike. In fact the whole village is behind us.

Before the strike we were not very interested in being involved, but now we are full time pickets. It's the only thing which we have time for. We would sooner lose one year's wages than be on the dole for ever.

We've never had nowt, never will have until we beat the Tories. The rich get richer while we the poor actually get poorer. If we pack

in now they'll murder us. The local MP has been very good, he's been with us. But a lot of people don't like Neil Kinnock sitting on the fence.

Changed attitude

We've always backed the Labour Party, no matter who's in charge, it's the only party for the working class. But we have more respect for someone who would go in the front line. We have now joined the Labour Party to make sure we get backing next time.

Our next step will be the power stations. When the lights go out down in London, people will really listen.

The women have been absolutely magnificent—they are a thorn in Maggie's side in the way they have backed the strike.

We keep our miners wives' committee going by organising raffles going round pubs, clubs and houses. The response has been great when we are going round, old men and women are saying: "Don't give in now." One old man came into the kitchens crying and he gave us a ten pound note.

Before the strike we were a load of cabbages, minding kids and just doing housework. Now there are not enough hours in the day to do things. We collect



On the London march for miners, 27 June.

Photo M. Carroll



Miners' rally at Amble, Northumberland last month.

food, cook or we clean. We get good help from the

pickets, sometimes they even do some of the cooking.

Quick off the mark in Yorkshire

THREE OF the founding members of the Tiveton Park Women's Action Group—Audrey Gilbert, Ann Bownes, Christine Plummer spoke to Rob Jones:

Our village is typical of many in the country. Towards the end of the last century, in the parish of Wales, South Yorkshire, a shaft was sunk, the pit opened, houses were built for the miners, and Tiveton Park was created.

We are a close knit community of about 4,000 people. We know that although the pit is supposed to be safe for the future, the situation will be terrible for the young in the area unless we get expansion of industry and a real demand for coal. Already unemployment in the district is 26.8%. That is why the community is supporting the miners' struggle. We started the women's

group in early April. It was the earliest in the Rotherham area to begin. It was done on the spur of the moment. Three of us got the NUM banner out on the street and got a collection going. In two days, 15 of us were out collecting.

We then called a meeting of all women in the village, whether miners' wives or not, who were willing to help. After it we formed a committee which meets regularly, but really everyone is involved.

Priorities

The basic need is to raise money to feed and clothe families. We have weekly prize bingo, jumble sales, cake stalls and events. We organised a party for the children, where for an outlay of £30 we fed 125 kids.

We are feeding the pickets with proper meals when they return from picketing, at least 3 days a week. We also have weekly food parcels for every NUM member whether

pickets or not, which is basic food at least.

Rotherham council have been a great help. They have made a social worker available to help and advise, while every school attender has a free school meal, and they're implementing a clothing grant.

But real problems are there. For instance the Yorkshire Electricity Board are putting pressure on for more payments. One woman got a £12 demand last week. We are demanding pre-pay meters to stop this and ensure there are no disconnections. The DHSS has been no help at all.

This is not because of the attitude of individuals who work for it, they can be quite sympathetic, but the hard faced central directives coming from the government. We have to organise the advice ourselves, for 740 men to get at least some of their rights.

The top priorities for us are to help the single lads and the under fives. That is the major problem. The

single lads get no state concessions at all, and their plight would be desperate without the help of the community. Also while school children get aid, for the under-fives there is nothing. We have a real need for little kiddies' clothing and shoes.

But we are not just concerned with fund raising and activities like that. We know the strike cannot be successful unless the families stick by the striking miner. As it is, morale is brilliant because we have stuck solid.

Keep together

Above all we regard ourselves as working within the NUM. We would not be here without them. We invite their representatives to our meetings, and we go to theirs. There is no division between us. In addition we are affiliated to and work with the Sheffield and Rotherham support groups. Above all, we have met people through the struggle everywhere, and got great

Jarrow appeal: get involved

What speaks louder than words—food, money, action! As a member of the relatively new Jarrow Miners' Families Support Group I find these words are a practical way of helping the families of striking miners.

I was told at our first meeting that the first week would be the hardest. How true that was. In that week we had to organise a public meeting; form a committee; canvas support from the local lodges, trade union branches and Labour Party members; and ask for money, or more important food, from the local shopkeepers. We've had a good response.

Planning ahead

We had our first disco last week and raised £67. We also had a collection in the local shopping centre and collected £73 in two hours.

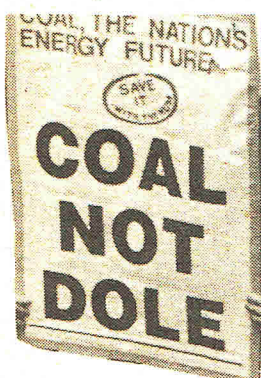
Although we hope for a quick victory in this dispute we are still planning ahead. For the future we are planning a garden party, social evenings and sponsored runners in the local 'fun run'.

To all women not involved in the support groups I would say it's time for you to take an active part. Form a group in your district, or offer your help to a group already formed. They need all the help you can give.

By Jean Pargeter
(Jarrow Miners' Families Support Group)

Around the country

BRIXTON DHSS staff donated a half-a-day's pay to the miners—£121 in total. This is in addition to weekly collections since the strike started. Staff disagree with the Tories' laws on supplementary benefit payments to strikers, and support the NUM to the full. (Eddie Woods reports)



This weekend MUSLIMS all over Bradford were celebrating Eid, the festival ending the Ramadan fast. After prayers at the town's Islamic Education Institute they gave generously to the families of striking miners. The collection was organised by Toller Ward Labour Party and raised £210.

The third issue of *Young Miner*, published by WAKEFIELD LPYS, is now available. Contents include "The truth about the stock piles", "South African mining", "Look back at 1926", and other articles by and for young miners. To order copies for your LPYS or NUM branch send 10p per copy and 30p postage to Richard Clarkson, 13 Kettlethorpe Road, Wakefield, West Yorkshire. Make cheques payable to Richard Clarkson.

Hundreds of people marched in sunshine through LLANELLI on Sunday 7 July in support of the miners. Miners from Cynheidre NUM were joined by Kent miners and their families as well as a noisy contingent of Young Socialists. (Fay Thorpe and Brian Lewis report)

Even in ARBROATH where the SNP took all the seats in the recent elections, there is strong support for the miners. Arbroath LPYS hold street collections every Saturday, and a public meeting on the dispute raised over £100.

CAMBRIDGE LPYS held a successful week of action for the miners. South Derbyshire miners came down and went around the factories in Cambridge, Huntingdon and St Neots. About £500 was raised. (Dave Marshall reports)

STOCKTON LPYS have raised over £2000 and several hundred pounds worth of food for the Easington Area Miners' Welfare fund from their market stall every Wednesday and Saturday.

The Liverpool LORRY + DRIVERS branch (TGWU 6/54) has called on their national leadership to reconvene the TGWU conference, to consider an all-out strike by the union in support of the miners.

A young miner speaking at a *Militant* meeting during the COHSE CONFERENCE got an unexpected donation from *Financial Times* reporters. He read out a letter from his pit manager to striking miners asking them to return to work and saying that their jobs would be safe. After the meeting the two 'astounded' reporters asked to see the letter, took notes and gave the miner a fiver. (Mick Griffiths reports)

Hard times - but families still defiant

THE FIRST few weeks were the hardest. No food parcels. Nothing. I remember going to see Chris Pingram's family and finding that all the kids had for breakfast was left-over Christmas cake. Our area, Warwickshire, is split; there are 300 out of 800 on strike, but there's no fund.

So now we've established a Support Group. There's about 12 of us regularly involved; more would like to be, but with 4-5 kids they find it difficult to go to meetings.



Brenda Arnold

I hadn't done anything like this before. Now I've been threatened twice by the police. First time was on the picket line at 5 in the morning. There were only three of us there: myself, my husband and another miner. They tried to pen us into a steel girder pen, so we couldn't talk to anyone. In the end they backed down.

The second time was in the Birmingham Bull Ring Shopping Centre. We got a

very good response from the public, especially from pensioners and blacks. I hadn't been to Birmingham for years. We had left to go to Tamworth so my husband could get a "secure job".

The police tried to hassle us at the Bull Ring—there were only five of us "begging": two wives, two miners and a child of fourteen.

My husband has been arrested. When police started to beat up one picket he called on the working miners to look, and got arrested for obstruction.

Food parcels

We're getting an excellent response. I've been round factories talking to shop stewards. At a meeting last Monday (18 June) twelve unemployed people gave £19. The food parcels we get are vital. I found that at this Conference (Liverpool Fight-back 23 June) I couldn't eat the big meal at lunchtime—my stomach just couldn't take it. I'm used to small meals now. But we'll win, no matter how long it goes on, no matter the cost. You can sell possessions and then buy them back. But you can't buy jobs back."

Brenda Arnold of the Birch Coppice Support Group, Warwickshire, spoke to Jim Chrystie.



Women's support group on the march in London—7 June.

Sick miner denied coal

A CANCER-stricken miner was recently refused essential fuel by the Coal Board. The coal is for taking daily hot baths—necessary because the risk of infection from his disease is very high.

The miner, Ben Chapman from Gedling Colliery, South Notts, has been on strike throughout the dispute and the Coal Board originally agreed that fuel should be supplied. But when they learned that Ben had been picketing it was a different story.

The area's industrial relations officer sent a letter to Ben saying that if he was fit enough to go picketing, he was fit enough to go without coal.

They did offer the use of the pit baths—4 o'clock in the morning! This was unacceptable to Ben as it would mean crossing the picket line, as well as leaving him liable for prosecution if any damage occurred in the car park for instance.

Following this disgraceful letter, pressure was applied on the Coal Board from NUM headquarters in Sheffield, Notts headquarters in Mansfield and an article in *The Miner*. Ben received a load of coal on 7 June for special medical purposes, and hopes these will continue.

By Lindsay Common (Gedling LPYS)

Miners' dispute



Women support their men—miners' day of action in Sheffield 21 May.

100 per cent behind my husband

ROSE PEARSON whose striker husband Derek works at Ashington Area Workshops spoke to *Militant*.

"It's hard to make ends meet. I'm getting dole which runs out in October plus family allowance but that doesn't go far. The worst thing is keeping the house warm. In the 1974 strike we did without coal but then there was only the two of us, now we have a 10 month old bairn to think about. You can only get sea coal which is rubbish, it doesn't burn very well and its price has trebled since the strike started.

"The electric is on meter which costs us £8 a week. The mortgage has been frozen but we will have to pay the money when the strike ends. We should be entitled to a rate rebate but they're not giving forms out to miners on strike.

Food spending halved

"We owe £70 water rates which we are supposed to pay at £9 a month. I don't know where that money is coming from. We're not even getting milk tokens. I'm now spending half as much on food as before the strike. But I'm 100% behind Derek and this strike."

Husband Derek had this to say on the redundancy payments being dangled in front of older miners: "No-one has the right to sell their job. One of the lads across the way, he's 55, stands to make over £35,000 but hasn't missed a day of picket duty. There's no way he'll sell his job. I know a lad from Consett who got £14,000 when it closed, he's on the dole penniless now.

"I'm fully behind the strike. We have to sit this one out. If we don't keep going now there will be nothing left in this area. There's dozens of pitmen who live round here. Where will they transfer to—Nottingham? More likely the dole."

Keep claiming benefit

MANY STRIKERS are still not receiving their full benefit entitlement. If a striker claims Supplementary Benefit and he gets something—even only a few pence or a few pounds a week—he should still keep on claiming. Because, in addition to what he gets in the hand, he will be having his rent credited for him if he is a council tenant.

Rates credited

If he is an owner-occupier and he gets Supplementary Benefit his rates will again be credited as if he had a 100% rebate. If he is a private tenant (such as those who live on NCB property) and he gets some Supplementary Benefit from DHSS then they should be sending a certificate to the local council which tells them that he will automatically qualify for a 100% rebate for rent which the council should then pay out in fortnightly Gios.

This is how the new Housing Benefit scheme system is supposed to work, but many

councils are already months behind with their normal claimants because of the government's staff cut-backs.

However, no striker on Supplementary Benefit should worry about rent because all Housing Benefit payments will be backdated when they are eventually paid out. There are no grounds for eviction because any arrears are technical and any application for possession would have to go to the County Court where it should be adjourned until the benefits were sorted out.

Strikers who are not getting Supplementary Benefit because they are either single men or because their wives or girlfriends are working are entitled to rebates on rent and rates. Many of them are on such low incomes now that they would probably get a 100% rebate. Also those wives who work over 30 hours should try claiming Family Income Supplement (FIS).

There is nothing in the regulations that mentions

strikers. The problem would be over the DHSS interpretation of whether the current situation is normal—but after ten weeks it can be argued that this is not just a temporary stoppage. The DHSS also has the power to make short-term awards for four weeks at a time (FIS is usually paid for 12 months).

Payments lagging

In North Staffs the DHSS is about four weeks behind with payments to strikers and the DHSS has refused access to the special strike centre in Longton to NUM officials such as George Cairns. CPSA members should raise similar problems with DHSS management immediately. For further advice striking miners should contact their local Welfare Rights Group, Unemployed Centre, or similar organisation.

By Nigel Wheatley (ASTMS and Walsall Welfare Rights Group)

Imprisoned for self-defence



Asian youth are increasingly being arrested and charged when they have defended themselves. Above, the Newham 8 campaign in London last year. Photo: Militant

A WEEK ago Amrit Singh of Derby was sentenced to nine months in prison for assault and causing an affray. Two of his brothers, a cousin and a friend were also sentenced.

Amrit is appealing and his family are fighting the sentence which even his probation officer couldn't believe; it is his first offence.

Pargan Singh asked Militant to print the truth about the case and explain how it came about.

"I moved into my shop in Kilburn on 12 March. Ever since I have had trouble. My family has suffered racial abuse, some youths from the next village beat up my three year old son. A few weeks after that someone spat at my eight year old daughter. A woman across the road came into the shop one day and said: 'We'll do anything to get you out of this village.'"

Wife attacked

"On August 5 two lads came into the shop while I was in Derby and attacked my wife. They threw some things off the shelf at her, but a Labour Party member came in and persuaded them to go.

"They came back about

7pm. They were swearing and started asking me: 'What are you doing here? We only want whites here, you are rich give us some free beer.' I said: 'I'm not—if you want free beer go and see Maggie Thatcher.'"

"They went but about 8pm came back with two more, one of them broke my scales. They went to get another gang, but they ran off when a police officer came and chased them.

"The other lad came back with about 14 youths, they were swearing and shouting 'Pakies out'.

"By then my brothers had arrived. The lad who broke the scales grabbed one of them, Sergit, so Amrit hit him—they ran off.

"The police came back with some other officers and my nephew, who is a cadet, told them what happened. At midnight they arrested Amrit. He didn't even take his shoes, because they told him he'd only be five minutes. They said the same to my other brother when he came back off nightshift. They were both handcuffed even though they went willingly.

"When my cousin and a friend went to the station,

they were handcuffed too. The police told them unless they admit the offence they would stay here. My brothers said they only went to defend me, but the police said they were looking for a fight.

"Two of the skinheads involved were fined £25 for assault. Yet my brothers were tried at the Crown Court. The judge told my wife in the witness box he wasn't interested in their case, only when my brother arrived at the shop.

'Guilty'

"Amrit's wife is in hospital expecting a baby—she nearly had a miscarriage. The barrister told the judge that the doctor said her life was in danger, but he wouldn't take that into consideration.

"In the summing up for the jury the judge said that nothing less than 'guilty' would please him."

Derby North LPYS and Margaret Beckett, Derby South MP, have already taken up Amrit's case. We cannot allow racial attacks to go virtually unpunished while Asian workers are imprisoned for defending themselves.

By Chris Ridge

Support grows for Asian youth conference

THE ASIAN Youth conference this weekend in Bradford promises to be a huge success with hundreds expected to attend.

The conference, called by the LPYS, has the support of the Bangladeshi Youth Organisation, the Indian Workers Association, the Pakistani Peoples Party, Kashmiri Workers Association, supporters of the Pakistani Marxist Journal

Great support

The Struggle, Race Today, Bradford University

and College Student Unions, the Labour group on the council and various Labour and trade union branches. Locally there has been great support as well as financial assistance.

The first debate will be on the fight against deportations, police harassment and the problems faced by Asian women. Another major discussion will be on race and education, prompted by recent events in Bradford's schools and the racist outpourings of local headmaster Roy Honeyford (see last week's Militant). The conference will be taking

Asian youth conference, Saturday July 14, Council Chambers, Bradford City Hall starts 10am

up Honeyford's arguments—he had been invited to take part in a debate but he has not even replied to our letter.

Other discussions include blacks and the Labour Party and the crisis in the Indian sub-continent, including the Punjab.

Social event

In the evening a social will be held at the Queen's Hall with a dance group and Indian pop music.

● Please note, the conference will be held at Bradford City Hall, not Queen's Hall (the venue of the social) as reported last week.

By Anil Kumar (Bradford North LPYS)

Organise to stop racial attacks

THE OCEAN estate area of Stepney Green in London's East End had a bad reputation for racist attacks during the heyday of the National Front in the late '70s. Now racial violence has begun to re-emerge.

Asian workers bear the brunt of the housing crisis in this area. Thirty percent of the homeless in Tower Hamlets (the borough which covers Stepney) are Bangladeshi workers. However, the experience of the Ocean estate has shown that clumsy positive discrimination policies implemented from above with no real campaign of explanation, can play into the hands of the reactionaries. The GLC has allocated a row of new houses to Asian families—the NF have jumped in with their racist propaganda claiming 'immigrants are getting preferential treatment' etc.

At first Asian workers were insulted in the street and racist graffiti put up opposite their homes. Then came threatening letters. Now Asian workers are being attacked.

Racist gangs

Crowds of up to 40 youths have gathered outside Asian homes chanting abuse, attempting to break down the doors and stopping people leaving their homes. One young Asian has been severely beaten and an Asian woman hit by a brick thrown through her window.

The response of the police has been pathetic. Residents have called the police with crowds of racist thugs surrounding their homes, yet no help has arrived for forty minutes or more. On one occasion the police claimed



Asian workers demonstrate against the re-emergence of racist violence in Brick Lane in London's East End, last year.

they were "too busy" to send anyone at all.

On another occasion the police have insulted Asian families and even threatened to arrest one man who they said was wasting their time by calling for help.

When the police have sent people it hasn't really helped. The thugs just wait for the police to go, or, increasingly, move to the Teviot Street estate down the road and terrorise people there.

Conclusions

The residents of the estates have drawn clear conclusions from their experiences and have begun to organise their own defence. A committee has been organised with

Grays—nazis driven out

AT A day's notice, an effective counter-demonstration was organised against a National Front march in Grays, South Essex on 30 June.

The NF mustered only 50, mainly brought in from London. On the other hand, at only a day's notice, LPYS members from the region joined local Militant supporters for the counter-demo—as the NF march began the counter-demo swelled to over a hundred by

local youth, older Sikhs and, significantly, skinheads. The NF march was shadowed and their racist slogans shouted down. It only completed its route by police wading through the bodies clearing its path.

Final blow

The final blow to the NF came when the counter-demonstrators linked arms across the entrance of Grays

Park, the intended venue for the NF rally, blocking their path. Despite the police's attitude towards the NF—the only arrest of the day was a 14 year old anti-racist charged with possessing an offensive weapon (a stick!)—the NF were ingloriously marched back to Grays rail station, put on a train and sent home, with a good riddance from the workers and youth of Grays.

Stop Maidstone NF march

LABOUR PARTY Young Socialists and Militant supporters in Kent are urging anti-racists to mobilise for a counter-demonstration against the NF in Maidstone.

14 June

The National Front intend to march through the town on Saturday 14 June. Maidstone LPYS have called a counter-demonstration assembling at 11.30am at

Maidstone County Hall. Despite the NF's blatant attempt to whip up racialism, titling their march "Keep Maidstone White", the police have appeared more interested in trying to deter the counter-demonstration. LPYS branches in Kent have been building support for the counter-demo especially amongst black and Asian communities in Chatham and Gravesend. Approaches

have also been made to the Kent NUM for support.

It is crucial the NF are met with a massive counter-mobilisation. The role of the fascists in the NF can clearly be seen—this area is at the centre of one of the most important industrial struggles for years. Now the fascists are trying to sow divisions amongst the workers of Kent along race lines, at a time when unity is vital to put maximum support behind the miners in their battle against the Tory government.

Photo: Militant

us?



about



what

Photo: Militant



The riots of 1981 swept right across Merseyside. A blood spattered youth arrested by police on the Woodchurch estate.

TOXTETH, LIVERPOOL 8, attracted widespread attention in July 1981. Amidst high unemployment, bad housing, poor facilities, and police harassment the youth, both black and white, took to the streets to confront the police. Those youth were desperate, keeping up the fight even when the police started using much harsher methods of combatting the so-called 'rioters'—using CS gas, batons, riot shields and helmets, coupled with brutal manoeuvres of driving vans directly at the youth on the streets. This eventually saw the death of one 18 year old, David Moore.

Today the youth look back on the events of three years ago and see what has been achieved for the area, and how they see the future. Interviews by Emeka Onuara and Elaine Etin, members of the Labour Party Young Socialists.

SUE SCOTT, 22, moved into Liverpool 8 from Seaforth on the other side of the city two years ago. She said: "It's not easy to get accommodation in this area. I haven't had a permanent place to live in since I have been here. Me and a friend lived in a basement for four

Home problem

years. I have had to move five times, living with other people who themselves have been waiting for accommodation.

"I had a job in Seaforth but when I moved here it was too far to travel so I gave it up. I didn't get any dole for six weeks, because I had packed my job in. I explained about the

distance but they didn't take any notice.

Friends here

"I had to live off other people who were more or less in the same boat. Things are bad in Seaforth, but I had a job and would have had no problem getting a flat. But I like the people here and have made lots of friends. You have to live here to understand the problems of black people.

"I have had my things robbed from the places I have lived in five times, but I am not angry with the youth that have done it. You can see there is nothing for them to do."

Life in Liverpool 8

THE ONLY real development in the area has been a Sports Centre built by the council. We went there to talk to Granville Lee, 15, Nnandi Ofoene, 16, and Patrick Graham. They all agreed that the sports centre was good, but felt there was a need for more centres like it.

Patrick said: "It's not enough to satisfy a whole community. Many people don't get a chance to use the place because it's always booked, it closes around 10pm then there's nothing to do."

We asked them how they felt the government had helped. They held deep resentment to

Money spent on Falklands

Micheal Heseltine (the so-called Minister for Merseyside before he went to Defence).

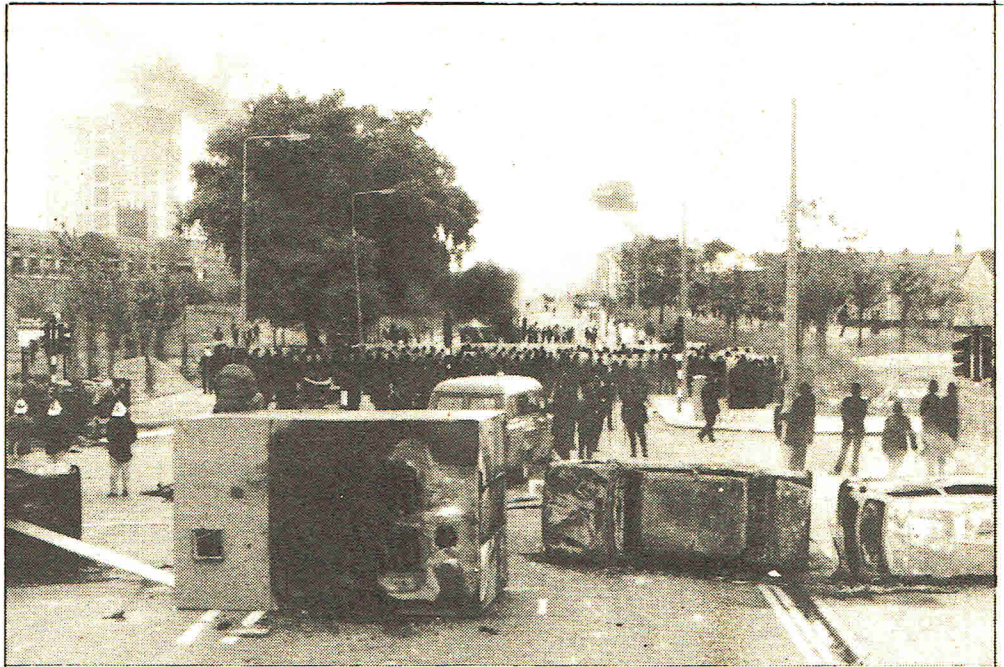
All the Tories did, they said, was plant trees as the 'solution' to all the area's problems, while

Heseltine entertained big businessmen.

They explained the hypocrisy of the Thatcher government over the Falklands. Patrick said: "They are paying thousands of pounds a day to keep an army in the Falklands, which is thousands of miles away. That money could be spent on Liverpool 8, it would last 10 years at least. All Margaret Thatcher wanted was propaganda. How many people died over that and for what?"

"She thinks she's cool with Ronald Reagan. She's like a little kid who goes up to another kid because that kid has got sweets and they want some. Ronald Reagan doesn't need Margaret Thatcher, he just used Britain. All those people care about is making bombs and profit, they don't care about Liverpool 8."

Patrick said the press and television since the riots had given people in other areas a



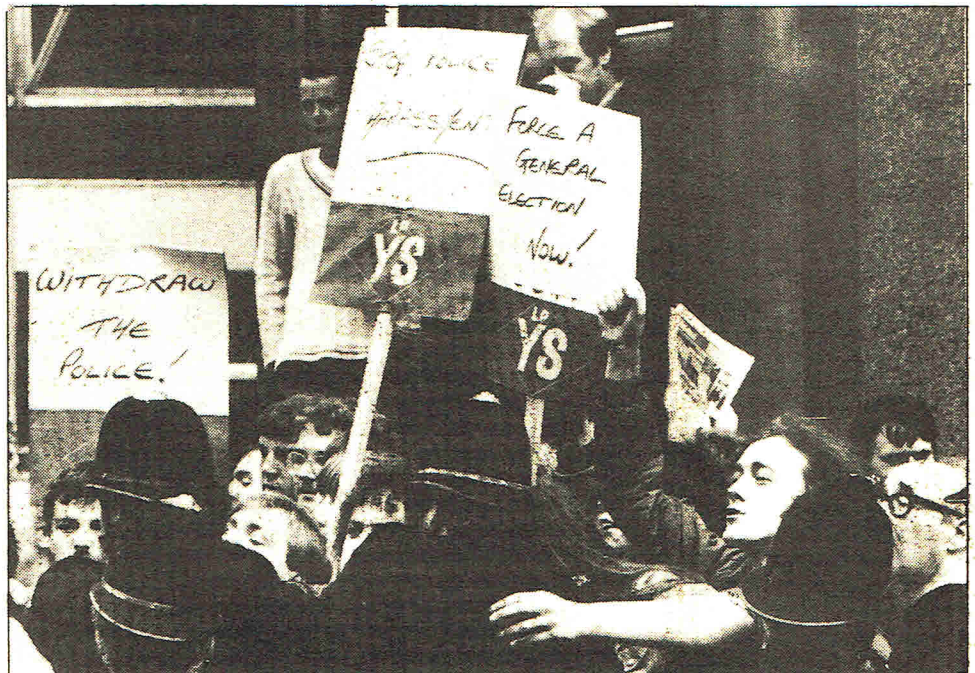
The riots in Toxteth, Liverpool 8, three years ago.

Photo: Militant

Toxteth: three years on

AFTER THE riots the Tories cried crocodile tears over the mass unemployment in the area. All they could come up with, however, was a Garden Festival. Yet mass unemployment remains in Toxteth. 46% of 16-19 year olds are still unemployed, with unemployment generally running at 33.5%. Neither has Heseltine's visits with processions of businessmen brought any new-found wealth for Toxteth. 77% of Toxteth households do not own a car—in some areas this figure is 92%.

KATRINA AMECHI, 22: "I can't see what Liverpool 8 has gained in real terms since the riots. Police still harass youth and the housing and job situation has got worse. If there aren't any jobs for whites, what chance have black people got?"



Following the riots, Thatcher made a hurried visit to Liverpool. Young Socialists in Liverpool were out in strength to 'greet' her.

bad impression of Liverpool 8 and of the people that live there. "They are not bothered about what the white people are doing, just the black people. But there are white people in Liverpool 8. The riots were people against the police, both black and white."

Jobs needed

We talked about solutions to the problems of Liverpool 8. Patrick said: "I don't disagree with positive discrimination, and I don't agree with it. But what I think is that it's not just qualifications that come into it, it's who's best fit for the job, who is most keen and willing to work hard and talk to the person to see how they feel. Not because they are white or they are black, because in a way that means a person who has just given a black a job is wrong—because black people need jobs, I know that, but so do whites."

DESPITE ITS meagre resources, the Labour controlled Liverpool City Council has attempted measures to alleviate the problems faced by workers in Liverpool 8, both black and white.

A significant proportion of the council's housing programme is designated to Liverpool 8. While the council would admit that there are far from adequate facilities in the area, the council is committed to building more sports centres and various projects throughout Merseyside.

Projects

But as deputy leader of the council Derek Hatton told us: "When it comes to all the projects we planned our hands are tied because of the Tory government's refusal to give us the money this city so desperately needs. It all comes back to the central issue of the fight the labour

movement of this city are waging against the Tory government."

The labour movement must have a particular drive towards recruiting black and Asian workers and youth but this can only be done by the movement demonstrating that it is serious in its commitment to the whole of the working class, both black and white, and that it is prepared to fight to change society—it must show the same resolve as Liverpool City Council in its fight against Tory government legislation, and that of the miners in their fight against closures.

We in the Labour Party Young Socialists have taken a lead in this move, and will be holding a special public meeting in Liverpool 8 to discuss the particular problems faced by black workers here and how they can be overcome.

The Torie police state?

By Lynn Walsh



Police anti-terrorist uniform and equipment, as shown at the Aldershot Army equipment exhibition a month ago. According to the exhibitors, all this equipment has been issued in Britain, with the exception of the Browning automatic pistol with the silencer. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

"A CIVIL war without bullets!" This is how one Fleet Street commentator described the strike right at the start. It was an apt phrase for the class battle in the coalfields which is having massive repercussions throughout British society.

The military-style deployment of the police, on a scale unprecedented in post-war industrial disputes, highlights moves by Thatcher which suggest a tendency towards parliamentary bonapartism, where behind the facade of parliamentary accountability the Prime Minister, through her control of the state machine, concentrates more and more power into her own hands.

In last week's centre-page articles we showed how Thatcher has attempted to claim almost presidential authority over the Tory party and within the cabinet. At the same time, the Prime Minister's office has been asserting more and more direct control over the civil service machine, while attempting to undermine any element of accountability through the suppression of information and propagandist news management.

But do these incipient elements of parliamentary bonapartism mean the ruling class is moving, under Thatcher, towards a military-police dictatorship? This is the question taken up in this week's article.

The government's deployment of the police against the miners goes much further than in any other industrial conflict since the 1920s and 1930s. The myth of police neutrality and local accountability has been shattered.

The para-military operations are centrally controlled from Scotland Yard—ultimately from the Home Office and the Prime Minister's office itself. The police are encouraged to make up the law as they go along, far exceeding existing legal powers and creatively inventing new offences. Predictably, they are being backed up by the courts.

Does this not show a significant reinforcement of the coercive powers of the state? Undoubtedly, it demonstrates that Thatcher is ruthless in her determination to use the full weight of the state apparatus to enforce her policies. The labour leaders, who have ignored the systematic preparations for such police operations since Saltley Gates in 1972, should be arousing opposition to this development and warning of the dangers posed before the labour movement.

At the same time, it would be wrong to exaggerate the power in the bosses' hands. Thatcher has been able to use the police because of the particular conditions under which the miners are fighting. The Tories' tactics are possible only because of the division amongst some miners, with Notts miners and other areas still working, and because while the miners have the overwhelming sympathy of the working class, the NUM

remains relatively isolated in relation to the official leadership of the TUC and the key trade unions, who have miserably failed to mobilise decisive industrial support for the miners.

If the Government and the bosses faced co-ordinated action, with miners, transport workers, and steel workers united around a fighting programme for defending their jobs, they would not be able to break the strike with the police. Police forces are already severely stretched (and the staggering bills have yet to be totted up). They would not have the resources to withstand a united movement even of the Triple Alliance, let alone wider action by trade unions. Action of general strike proportions would render the police impotent and leave the state suspended in mid air.

Police intervention

Police intervention against pickets also poses other dangers for capitalists in the longer run. Their brutal tactics have destroyed for ever the old illusions of miners, and many other workers too. "Before, we believed that the police's job was to fight crime, now we know their job is to defend the bosses and enforce Tory policy!" This is the reaction of thousands who have experienced the police charging in to picket-lines, or seen it on television.

"Every tired young constable flourishing a truncheon for television abets his (Scargill's) cause," warned *The Guardian* (20 June). "Wise ministers—and wise police chiefs are

horrified at the damage to the *consent* and the practical relationships on which the future law and the future order depends. Throughout much of blasted Britain... there is a tinderbox feeling".

Later *The Guardian* (30 June) reported the comments of "a highly respectable miner approaching middle age": "Before this strike started, I had a relative respect for the law. But not after the way I've seen 'em perform. If I saw one bleeding to death, I'm afraid he'd die". A fellow miner about the same age, said: "I don't think there's any picket that's been on these lines as'll ever have respect for the police again. I've no respect for 'em and I'll tell everybody in my family to have no respect for 'em whether it's a local bobby or anybody. If there were a van load of police out there afire I'd stand here and let it burn".

Although the modern state has many functions, it still ultimately comes down to "armed bodies of men" to defend capitalist property and power. The police are not (as yet) being sent into industrial battles with arms, but they are nevertheless being deployed like an army to break the miners' strike. Resort to brute force, however, reflects the underlying isolation and social weakness of the ruling class. Strong-arm methods betray the fact that they can no longer rely on unthinking deference to established authority, or unquestioning acceptance of the bosses' rules.

The economic crisis and the Tories' monetarist policies are

destroying the relative prosperity of workers and reforms summed up in the "welfare state"—the dual basis of the "social peace" and political calm which prevailed during the long post-war boom. There was no need for Thatcher to tell journalists, as she did recently that her government has broken with the "debilitating consensus of a paternalistic state and a dependent people" (her description of Keynesian economic policies and the "welfare state").

Consensus politics

The old "consensus", which former Tory leaders like Harold Macmillan previously shared with right wing Labour leaders, is being battered to pieces by the police at the pits and power stations.

These battles have undoubtedly produced tensions within police ranks. Some sections, like those from the Met, are notorious for callously wading in. Others, however, are clearly troubled by the way they are being used. Fear of a reaction against Tory orders was reflected in the recent complaint from Leslie Curtis, Chairman of the Police Federation: "The police are in an impossible position because the employers have chosen not to seek the right of civil redress from the courts."

The call for the NCB, BSC, British Rail, and other employers affected by picketing to take the NUM and other unions to the courts has been taken up by police chiefs, and also by the rabidly right wing Institute of

Directors, whose spokesmen are calling for both civil and criminal action taken against the NUM, against Scargill in particular. Behind the scenes, however, the Tory government, despite the fact that it put new anti-trade union laws onto the statute book, has been urging McGregor and the rest to refrain from legal action against the NUM. This in itself points to the underlying weakness of the government's position.

They have been able to use the police because of the relative isolation of the NUM within the official trade union movement. But the more intelligent representatives of big business understand that moves to sequester NUM funds or jail its national or local leaders would provoke an explosion.

"The government and the Coal Board... remain constrained by their vision of the *consequences* of such (legal) action," said the *Financial Times* (20 June). "This vision... assumes that legal action resulting in the sequestration of NUM funds or the mass arrests of pickets, or the imprisonment of Mr Scargill and other NUM leaders would fan the flames of civil disobedience still further and drag in other unions, perhaps the TUC itself, to what would end up as a general strike."

The serious bosses' press recognises that even miners who at present are working could be drawn into the strike, as a result of legal attacks on the NUM.

Even the ultra-Tory *Daily Mail* (20 June) understands enough to warn



Miners outside the NUM headquarters in Sheffield at the last special conference.

Photo: Jacob Sutton

The weakness of dictatorship

But if the police are not enough to defeat the miners, might not Thatcher bring in the army—and move towards a bonapartist state using totalitarian methods? Aren't Thatcher's tactics just the first steps towards a military-police dictatorship? Such questions are undoubtedly being raised within the labour movement.

After all, under recent Labour governments there have been at least three plots to prepare for military coups. They are warnings—as *Militant* has explained—of the way the ruling class could move in the future. At the moment, however, such plots are entirely premature—and represent the reactionary fantasies of a few gin-sodden generals and political mavericks. At this stage, there is no likelihood of the capitalist class turning towards openly totalitarian methods in advanced capitalist countries. It is ruled out by the enormous power of the working class, which weighs the balance of forces overwhelmingly against the capitalists.

Even before contemplating the consequences of taking on the working class in an all-out struggle, the strategists of capital are held back by

a painful awareness of the conspicuous failure of recent or contemporary bonapartist regimes, or in other words military-police dictatorships, to solve the capitalists' problems. In Europe, dictatorships in Spain, Portugal and Greece crumbled and fell in the recent period, leaving a legacy of insoluble economic crisis—and strengthened workers' movements which have instinctively striven to find a path to a fundamental socialist change of society.

Pinochet's failure

In Chile, the capitalist experts have been forced to recognise that Pinochet's monetarist "experiment", carried out under "ideal" totalitarian conditions, has been a disastrous failure. In 1973 the serious capitalist press throughout the world applauded Pinochet's bloody overthrow of the Allende government and the murder of thousands of rank-and-file workers' leaders. Within the framework of a strong state, they reasoned, Pinochet would be able to apply the necessary monetarist solutions—without opposition from trade unions.

However, after ten years of dictatorship the experts have been forced to admit that not only has Pinochet been a political disaster, but his economic advisors, "the Chicago Boys", have "turned out to be bad economists".

"When the outside world was singing paeans of praise about the Chilean model, the country was living in an orgy of speculation as it was cutting back its industry and agriculture". This admission, under the headline "*The Chicago Boys were all wrong in Chile*", comes from the *Wall Street Journal* (10 February, 1984), the mouthpiece of American finance capital. "Pinochet," the article is forced to conclude, "has been a political, social and economic abomination".

It is not just monetarism which has proved itself bankrupt in Chile, but dictatorship itself. Today Pinochet's tottering regime faces the imminent prospect of overthrow through the mass action of the working class. A new generation of workers is on the move, and it is clear that Pinochet has completely failed to achieve his boldly proclaimed original aim of exorcising the

"spectre of Marxism".

Ultimately, the ruling class in Britain, as elsewhere will turn towards totalitarianism if it has no other way out. But it could impose a dictatorship in Britain only after a whole series of massive defeats for the working class. The organisations of the workers and their fighting capacity would have to be completely smashed. If Thatcher were to move towards establishing a bonapartist regime now, relying primarily on the police and the army to maintain her government's position, it would provoke a massive reaction from the workers.

It would provoke a general strike of unprecedented scope, paralysing big business and the state. The working class would not sit on its hands and passively allow the capitalists to destroy the democratic rights won through decades of struggle. A general strike, moreover, would inevitably pose the question of power, and the active workers would understand that such a crisis could be resolved only through giving the movement fundamental socialist aims.

against any attempt to enforce the laws against secondary picketing: Those who clamour for Arthur Scargill and the Executive of the NUM to be brought to court and unilaterally fined for flagrant contempt of the Tory industrial relations laws ignore one vital point: it is as likely to stoke up as to dampen down the violence. Imagine the scenes when those, seeking to execute the orders of the courts by seizing the funds of the NUM try to enter Mr Scargill's HQ in Sheffield to look at the books. The police would have to smash their way through serried ranks of miners massed around the NUM buildings. It could make a greave look like a picnic."

Thatcher's mistake

In reality, Thatcher made a big mistake. She calculated that after a number of set-backs for the unions she could inflict a decisive defeat on the miners, opening the door to further attacks on the trade unions generally. The use of the police was not seen as a long term strategy, which would involve an immense burden, but as a lightning tactic to inflict a rapid defeat on miners Thatcher thought to be fatally divided and isolated. But she failed to take account of the class determination of the miners and their marvellous tenacity in struggle.

Instead of a glorious "industrial walklands", the queen of the South Atlantic faces a long war of attrition. The longer the strike goes on now, the worse things could become for Thatcher. The miners on strike have passed through the "pain barrier". They are dug in for a long struggle necessary. And winter is coming, when the strike will begin to have a rippling effect on coal stocks and power supplies. Significantly many of the Tory papers and business spokesmen who previously egged her on are now urging her, at least behind the scenes, to try to find a way out before it is too late. This points out not the strength of the Tories and big business but their weakness, despite their control of the state.

Mobilise the labour movement

It is the strength of the working class which stands in the way of capitalist dictatorship in Britain and throughout the advanced capitalist countries. And it is the enormous potential power of the workers' organisations that is the real stumbling block for Thatcher.

The Tory Government managed to inflict a number of tactical defeats on the unions. This emboldened Thatcher to take on the miners. But her failure to score a quick victory has brought her face to face with the strength of the class.

Strength of unions

In the last few days the Tory press has been crowing about the decline in trade union membership. But fewer have left the unions than have been thrown out of their jobs by the crisis. There are still over 10 million workers organised in unions, and key sections will fight tenaciously to defend their organisations and rights. Even during the recession, more workers have been joining the unions, notably women workers.

During the teachers' action on pay, which has undoubtedly been boosted by the miners' strike, the NUT's membership has increased by about 10%.

Thatcher felt able to take on the miners only after imposing a series of defeats of other workers, like ASLEF, the NGA, and Civil Service trade unionists at GCHQ. But she succeeded only because of the complete incapacity of the official trade union leadership to organise an effective struggle.

The train drivers showed no lack of willingness to struggle, but they were undermined by the TUC leaders. The banning of unions at GCHQ provoked a wave of anger and indignation, even among some Tory trade unionists. There was wide support for the national protest action. But this was nothing to the movement that could have been organised on this issue if the TUC and trade union leadership had given a real lead.

Furthermore, to clear the ground for a conflict with the miners, Thatcher settled with other sections, like the water workers and the

railwaymen in an effort to isolate the miners.

However, Thatcher not only underestimated the class combativity of the miners but she failed to anticipate the effect that a determined fight in the pits would have on other sections of workers. The miners' battle has lifted the mood of many other sections of workers. Some, particularly the railway workers, have taken sympathetic action. Hundreds of thousands have come out on the 'Days of Action' and even more have expressed their sympathy through collections of money and food. Unfortunately, the enormous latent support for the miners has not been mobilised by a bold and decisive lead from the TUC and key trade union leaders.

Workers' determination

In spite of this, the strategists of capital have been given a massive political jolt. They have been forced to recognise the deeply rooted loyalty of millions of trade unionists for

their organisations, their instinctive feeling of class solidarity, and their unbreakable determination to defend fundamental democratic and trade union rights.

A quick victory against the miners would undoubtedly have strengthened Thatcher's position. It would have then been possible, at least for the time being, for Thatcher to inflict defeats on other sections of workers, opening the door to even more savage cuts in living standards.

Instead, the miners' magnificent resistance to the bosses' offensive has changed the whole situation in Britain. It has shaken the confidence of big business. It has widened the splits within the Tory Party and begun to open up the cracks within Thatcher's own cabinet.

It has become clear to the active workers that the Tory government could be defeated. But what is needed is a socialist alternative and initiative from the top to mobilise the movement's immense resources. The situation nationally is crying out for Liverpool council's answer: Socialist policies, bold leadership, and a fighting campaign.

Brazil, Bolivia, Striking back at Brazil's dictators

JOSÉ DA Silva, 35, had been looking for work for a long time; like millions of Brazilian families, his were slowly dying of hunger.

A few weeks ago, having suffered enough and not seeing a way out, he killed his mother, wife and children then stabbed himself with a knife through his chest. These stories are so frequent they hardly get a mention in the Brazilian papers.

For twenty years Brazilians have lived under a military dictatorship. As usual they took power with the excuse that a coup was necessary to re-establish order and resolve economic problems with a firm hand. As usual they left Brazil in a condition a thousand times worse.

It's difficult to imagine the conditions in which Brazilian workers and peasants now live. In the North East, a region five times the size of Italy, with a population of 35 million, there has been a drought for the past five years. Of every 1,000 children born here 160 die within hours and 230 before they reach ten years old. Sixty per cent of children are anaemic.

Workers move in- to action

Pollution also results in a high level of miscarriages and infant deaths. In Cubatano, Sao Paulo province, one in every 250 children born lacks all or part of the brain.

It is common to see Brazilians fainting in the street from hunger. The situation in the North-East is comparable to that of Biafra a decade ago. Conditions have given rise to a wave of storming and looting of supermarkets, which even the courts and government accept as a result of hunger.

When told by a child that his father was on the minimum wage the president—Figueiredo—callously replied, "so why doesn't he shoot himself?" The government would like to eliminate poverty by

eliminating the poor, but most of the poor have other ideas.

Despair and misery have resulted in a huge increase in robberies and murders. In Sao Paulo 74% of deaths of people between 15 and 29 are from violence: 32% are murdered. This is without counting deaths from police or military action. In 1982 the police killed 400 "delinquents", 42 of them were under 18 and 128 (32%) black. The black population of Sao Paulo is only 10%.

In the last few months though, the social discontent has expressed itself in a strike wave and massive campaign by opposition parties for direct presidential elections. On 20 June 40,000 steel workers at the CSN plant went on strike for the first time since the plant was set up 50 years ago. They are demanding a wage adjustment that violates the strict limits of the government-IMF wages law.



President Figueiredo.

This law has led to a dramatic fall in the real value of wages during the past year. In dozens of manufacturing companies with strong unions strikes have resulted in higher increases. Stoppages and sit-ins are also growing in the public service. Doctors are on strike in several capital cities as are all the federal university teachers. 5,000 clerks staged a one-hour sit-in at the Banco do Brasil headquarters, for a wage increase higher than is allowed in the IMF agreement. 8,500 General Motors Workers have begun a go-slow. 4,500 occupied the COSIPA steel plant, the biggest in Brazil, and only riot police intervention dislodged them.

In the first two weeks of May there was a strike wave

by agricultural labourers. In Guariba 4,000 occupied the town, looted the supermarket and set fire to cars after rejecting wages and conditions imposed by the big sugar cane producers. They also set fire to the offices of SABESP, the state water corporation which wanted to raise water rates by 1,000%

Demand for elections

Only a brutal intervention by police ordered by the "democratic" PMDB provincial government succeeded in quelling the workers, resulting in one death, fourteen shot and sixteen other injuries. But now the strike has spread to include all agricultural labourers in the municipality.

Orange pickers also faced police violence after setting fire to the lorries of the "slavedrivers" who hired them in protest at low wages. This action will also probably spread to the other 140,000 labourers in the region.

The tendency then is for protests to spread despite lack of direction from the union leaders. At present everybody knows the real "leader's" name:—hunger! The low living standards in Brazil are due to the concentration of wealth in fewer and fewer hands. For example, in 1973 5% of the landowners took 23.7% of agricultural income, in 1983 they took 44.2%.

Profits per head of population are 2,100 US dollars but the minimum wage is only 550 US dollars and the IMF have imposed an incomes policy which pegs wage increases at a maximum of 80% of the inflation rate. In the past four years the prices of basic goods have risen by 3,000%.

In some areas malnutrition is so bad that people are reaching adulthood with the stature of pygmies. For the bosses of course the crisis is different: at the Rio carnival they were squabbling over the hiring of stands at a cost of 15,000 US dollars or 27 years of minimum wage!

The other struggle is on the political front with the demand for direct presiden-

tial elections. The military began a long process of democratisation five years ago, due to last until 1990, but they are now feeling the earth move beneath them.

All Brazil took part in the direct elections campaign. Children's T-shirts, swimming costumes, and pop songs carried the message. Some football teams wore yellow armbands—the colour symbolising the campaign.

On 10 April one million demonstrated in Rio calling for the head of Netto, the planning minister. The metal worker leader of the Workers' Party—"Lula"—attacked the government, the military and the IMF. In Sao Paulo 1¼ million demonstrated on 16 April—the largest demonstration ever in Brazil.

Government isolated

The government is more and more isolated and divided. Figueiredo is now talking of direct elections in 1986 instead of 1988. Only the Workers' Party still insists on direct elections now. But not even the PT (Workers' Party) has a socialist programme. The young Brazilian working-class has taken to the road of struggle and is debating the way forward. They have nothing to lose—but only the ideas of Marxism can provide them with the correct tactics and strategy.

Revolution in Brazil would change half Latin America and give an enormous impetus to the revolution now unfolding from Central America to Tierra Del Fuego. The working-class must give the peasantry a revolutionary lead in action and develop a leadership capable of living up to its historical tasks of transforming Brazil from a concentration camp into a socialist society.

Alejandro Mendoza
(Buenos Aires)



Looting of shops has become commonplace, but workers are turning to more long term solutions to poverty and hunger.

IN THE past forty years, particularly in the 1970's Brazil underwent tremendous industrialisation—the so-called Brazilian miracle. But the economy is parsing from one crisis to another. Brazil has the largest foreign debt in the world: \$100,000m. Each year, she pays \$12,500m in interest charges alone. Inflation is running at 230%, second only to Argentina, though basic foodstuffs are increasing by 300%, and wages only by 140%. In 1983 the GNP

shrank by 3.9% and imports decreased by \$4,000m due to collapse of the internal market, resulting in shortages and further price rises. In 1964 forty kilograms of meat were eaten per person, in 1979 20.4 kilograms and in 1983 15.2kgs. Most meat is for export, but at reduced prices—2044 dollars per ton in 1982, 1155 dollars per ton in 1983. Each year the countries exporting raw materials and food have to sell more products for less money.

Bolivian army—a warning to the workers

THE PRESIDENT of the popular front government of Bolivia, Hernan Siles, was kidnapped for 10 hours on 30 June by 60 members of the presidential guard.

According to the *Guardian* "the kidnapping appeared to form part of a coup plot involving middle ranking army and police officers, linked to the booming illegal cocaine trade".

Clearly the reference to the cocaine "industry" is a smokescreen. The army chiefs who have rushed to condemn the coup attempt did so because they feared the attempt was premature. The time was not right. Failure to condemn the coup would also make it difficult for these guardians of the capitalist order to remain at their posts.

General Strike

The workers response was rapid. A general strike, the seventh in eight months, which was due to start on 2 July against the continuing austerity programme of Siles' government, was postponed in favour of a march of about 100,000 in support of Siles and his government. The demonstrators, including Bolivian mineworkers were shouting "coup plotters to the firing squad"! The general strike started later in the week and forced the government to suspend foreign debt payments to commercial banks.

On his release by his captors, Siles claimed that the coup failure "had shown that support for the democratic process is unanimous". This is incredible considering that Siles himself was originally elected

in 1980 but was prevented from taking office for nearly two years by a pre-emptive coup by the army! What is more, in the ten days leading to this attempt there had been a mutiny at the officer training school in Cochabamba demanding the sacking of the "loyalist" General Sejas, a supporter of the president.

President Siles now seeks to reassure the working class they have nothing to fear. Siles is a "left-wing" capitalist, a Kerensky-type figure, who will eventually be "forced" to take repressive measures against the working class.

From this it is quite clear why Trotsky referred to a popular front government as a "strike breaking conspiracy". The participation of the Bolivian Communist Party in the government provides the regime with a left cover behind which to prepare a bloody reckoning with the workers.

The leaders of the Bolivian confederation of workers (COB) must rely on the working class alone and not on the "democratic" declarations of the army chiefs. The crisis of Bolivian society is reflected within the army, and a class appeal to the rank and file could completely neutralize army coup attempts.

The impatience of a section of the Bolivian ruling class has provided one benefit in that it has given a clear warning to the workers. The state machine will be used against the workers when the time is right, only on that occasion the injuries would not be merely the cracked ribs of President Siles but the lives of thousands of Bolivian workers and peasants.

By Mike Waddington



The military academy on parade in North East Brazil. The military tops are more and more isolated from the population.

USA

MacGregor's dream-Miners nightmare

"I HOPE to see miners in this country producing as they are in the United States—and as well rewarded", said Ian MacGregor about his experience in the American coal industry.

"American mining companies are able to pay dividends to their shareholders, high wages to their workers and still produce cheap coal" the NCB boss went on. "There is no reason why it shouldn't happen here". How true is the image of American workers fostered by MacGregor and his media friends?

Dale Lockhart, a Pennsylvania miner described the problems.

"Our contract is about to expire. Richard Trumbo says we will not take any backward steps. There is a growing movement in this country to bust unions. It began with steel two years ago, where workers give back to the companies over \$3 an hour, a few paid holidays and some sick leave.

Strike fund

"They were told these concessions would help keep their jobs because the industry was in trouble. Guess

By John Chapman
(Houghton Main NUM)

what? It didn't. About half lost their jobs with no hope of ever returning. What ruined the industry was poor management, not high pay. The bosses ask for concessions everywhere you look, in food markets, bus companies, store clerks. Now it's our turn. I hope and pray miners stick together".

Competition between the coal companies worsens the problems. Nevertheless the UMWA, under new management, is determined to resist attacks. For the first time in their long history they are levying all working members 2½% of gross earnings for a selective strike fund.

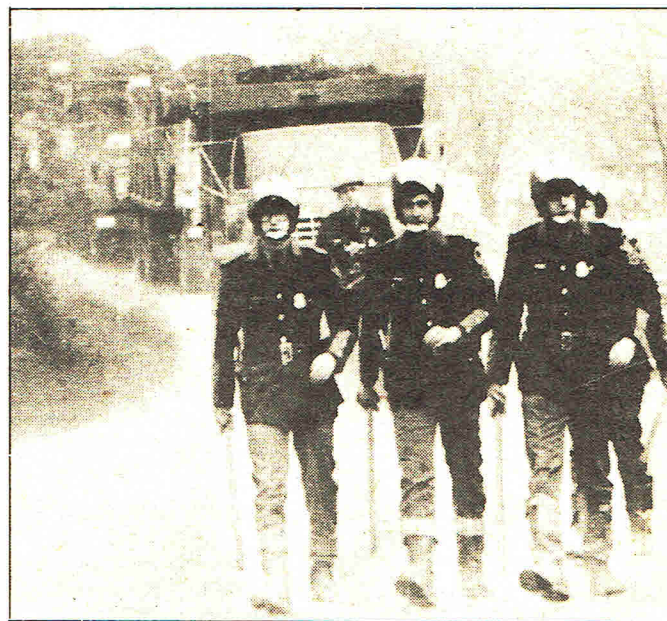
Unemployment hits hard at mining areas. In West Virginia last year the rate was about twice the national average, and in some small mining towns 80% of workers are unemployed. This is in a country where

THE US coal industry produces about 750 million tons a year; over half comes from the highly productive strip mines—and over 40% from non-union labour. As in Britain, coal was seen as the fuel of the future after the oil price war of the early '70s.

However, this promising future was soon threatened, first by nuclear power. After the disaster at Three Mile Island that threat dimmed but deepening recession and the collapse of America's steel industry brought further problems for both domestic and export markets. Faced with falling demand for their

product, US mining companies simply left coal in the ground and waited for things to improve. The results of this are short time working, mine closures and lay offs.

It is not uncommon for coal companies to own both union and non-union mines. Then it is the organised pits which face the axe first. There are at present between 35,000 and 40,000 members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) unemployed. As more union men lose their jobs, the union whose contract comes up in October, finds its bargaining power lessened.



Police move against striking miners in Virginia in 1978.

benefits are minimal and usually take the degrading form of food stamps.

Fred Tubbs from Utah returned home after his Christmas vacation to find the Little Dove mine closed. A fire originating from a diesel-powered tractor meant that much of the mine had to be sealed off.

Destitution

Fred is married with five children living at home. After five weeks he got his first unemployment cheque for \$166, from which state and federal taxes have to be paid. He and his wife also clean the local bank, earning

\$200 a month. From the \$864 less tax they get each month, he has had to pay \$688 for his house and utilities.

Unemployment pay lasts a year, when he is penalised for another three months then stop completely. On top of this comes \$10 food stamps a week for every child living at home. Many miners have now run out of benefit and face destitution.

UMWA District 12 is distributing food to 5,000 laid off members. Working and retired miners have voluntary check offs and workplace collections to help out, but attempts by the union to get legislation on

health care benefits and mortgage foreclosure relief for the unemployed failed in the Senate.

International links

Many working miners are on short time. The AMAX corporation (where MacGregor was chief executive) put some non-union members on short time. Something, said Jim Colburn from Wyoming "the scabs always told me only happened to union miners". Market forces are starting to chop down on safety as well as wages, holidays, etc.

An important lesson from America is that there must be

no return to private enterprise in Britain's pits; instead we need democratic workers' control and management. No return either to non-union or company union labour. Another lesson is the wrongness of import controls as a solution to our problems. The only sufferers would be American and other miners whose capitalist governments would soon retaliate and hurt British miners.

We must build links between organised labour worldwide and fight the real enemy, capitalism, which relies on MacGregor-type intimidation tactics to solve its crisis in America, Britain and across the world.

Car workers "Restore and more"

THE MINEWORKERS union is not the only union whose contract comes up this year. Official talks for the United Auto Workers open up on 23 July; their present contract expires on 15 September.

There have been three years of givebacks from the workers to the employers and no wage increases, during which time General Motors and Ford have been wallowing in profits. The rank and file are now in a strong bargaining position.

General Motors pulled in over \$3.75 billion profit in 1983 and an incredible \$3 billion in the first three months of this year, double its performance in the comparable period last year. Ford has quadrupled its profit for the comparable quarter. At this rate the US auto industry looks set to double its 1983 record \$6.5 billion profit.

Militant mood

The Detroit auto executives put the proverbial hogs swilling at the food trough to shame. These are some of the people UAW negotiators will meet face to face at the bargaining table. Roger Smith, GM chairman, gave himself a cool \$1.5 billion but made up for it with nearly \$6 billion in stock option profits.

The car chiefs credit their "sound management" for their windfall but American

From Betty Traun in
New York

workers are no nincompoops. They know the profits come from the labour of themselves and their fellow autoworkers in other countries, from the concessions wrung out of their hides by threats and lies, from the rip-off prices American car buyers pay. They know they come from juicy military contracts and fat tax rebates handed to the auto companies by Reagan.

For years the Big Three, GM, Ford and Chrysler used the "threat of foreign imports" to squeeze concessions from auto workers. They had to be "competitive". Now their lies have burst like a bubble as workers learn how "foreign" this threat is. The overwhelming majority of imported autos and spare parts come to the USA from plants and factories wholly owned by the American giants themselves or in which they have substantial investments or even controlling interests.

The UAW President Owen Bieber makes it clear he opposes making further concessions to the bosses but the Wall Street Journal of 31 May quotes Bieber as saying

that if the UAW went in for a big wage boost in place of job security "we would be suckers".

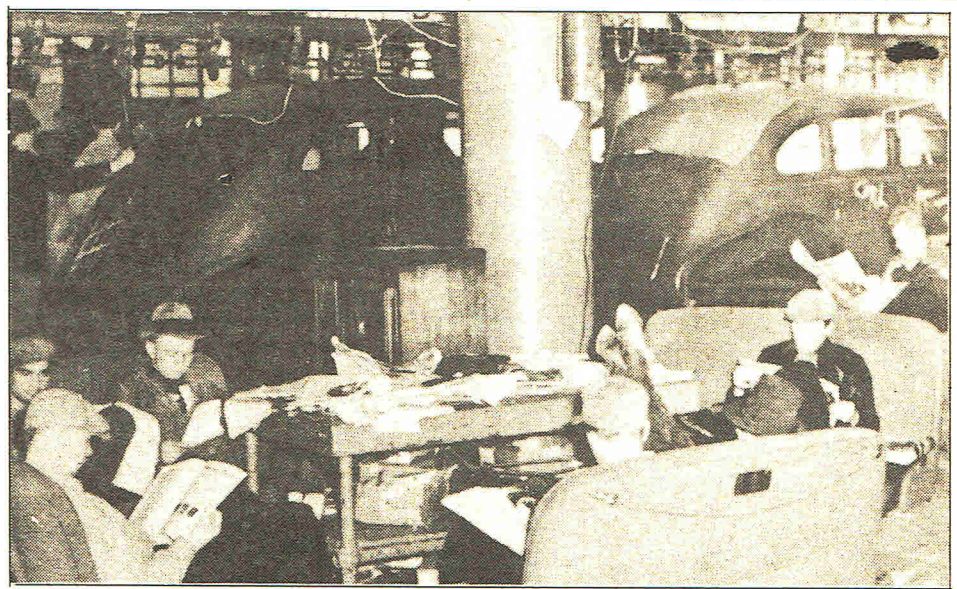
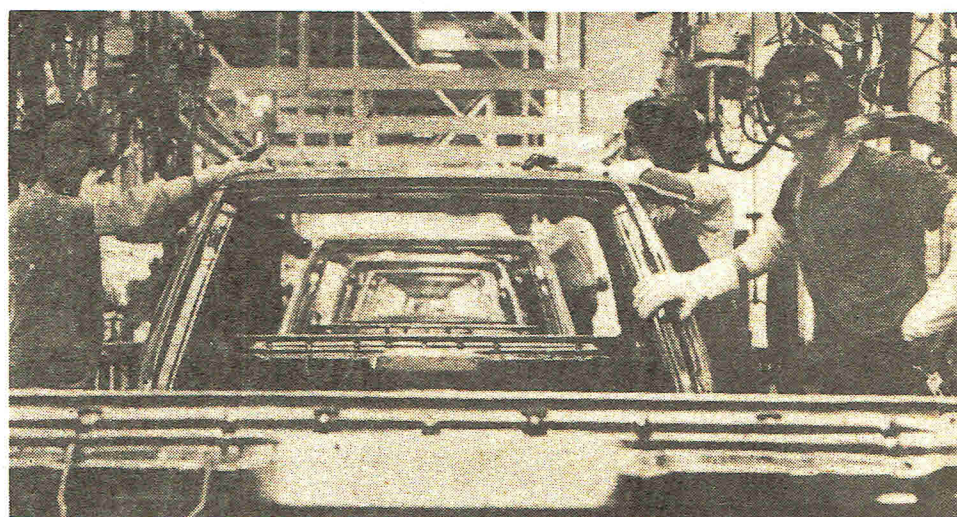
The boom in the US economy and the enormous profits mean that for the time being the corporate giants can not plead poverty; the rank and file have a widespread slogan "Restore and more". They want what they have given away—and extra. They want job security and a wage rise.

This militancy has had big repercussions. In recent elections in union locals (branches) an unprecedented number of local union presidents were voted out of office; most of them were identified one way or another with the wave of concessions they endorsed, which began with the Chrysler debacle of 1979.

Shorter hours

While the UAW demands an end to arbitrary plant closures, the car companies invest huge sums in low wage countries abroad. The time will come when workers demand these threatened plants are taken over for the production of socially necessary goods such as subway and railroad cars, trucks etc as well as autos.

The struggle for the 35 hour week which has been sweeping Europe will be repeated this side of the Atlantic, with the demand for no loss of pay. 200,000 UAW workers are out of



work yet the Labor Research Association reckon that 45,000 jobs could be created if basic pay was good enough to abolish overtime. If substantial contract

gains are made in the next few months by miners, postal workers, construction and other workers, the confidence of the workers will be boosted in the period

before the presidential elections on 6 November when Reagan's own contract comes up!

Top: US car workers today. Below: Sit down auto worker strikers in Michigan in the '30s.

Letters

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

SOLIDARITY!

Dear Comrades,

After 17 weeks of strike two men summed up the struggle for me. The two, ironically from the Notts area, one 58 and retired, the other in his early 20's with a wife and child.

The retired miner I met in a pub whilst picketing Avenue Coking Works in N. Derbyshire. After chatting for a bit I asked what his badges were, as they had been blacked out. He told me they were Notts NUM badges but he was too ashamed to wear them. He pointed out an old black coin around his neck, which on closer inspection turned out to be an India House one penny. These coins were to be spent in a coal owners' "tally shop" which means a man was paid with owners' money which had to be spent in the owners' shop at grossly inflated prices.

The coin was struck in 1796, and the man remark-

ed that's where the working class would go back to if the miners lost this fight. He also stated that the scabs of today are the unemployed of tomorrow.

The other man I met in a Notts strike centre. These people gave us food to keep us going with great sacrifice to themselves, in the way of constant police harassment and financial dilemma. The miner said he had only 75 odd mates left in the industry—"the local strikers". He then said they were the best comrades in the world and could rely on them until the end.

The point the men make is, that if we stick together there is no way Thatcher, her class, her courts, police, money, blackmail and media propaganda can beat the miners or the working class.

Yours fraternally
Ian Llewellyn
Cokemans Area NUM
South Wales

Leaders?

Dear Comrades,

What a pity Kinnock does not act like Arthur, and act like an opposition. What's happened to the TUC's so-called leaders? Murraymint, the too slow to hurry mint? Basnett? Daffy Duffy? Clive

Jenkins? Chapple? They are like the statue of Buddha with the weeds growing around them. Are they all on holiday? After thirteen weeks of the miners' strike, there hasn't been a word or act of encouragement on their behalf. They are not just 'on their knees' they are

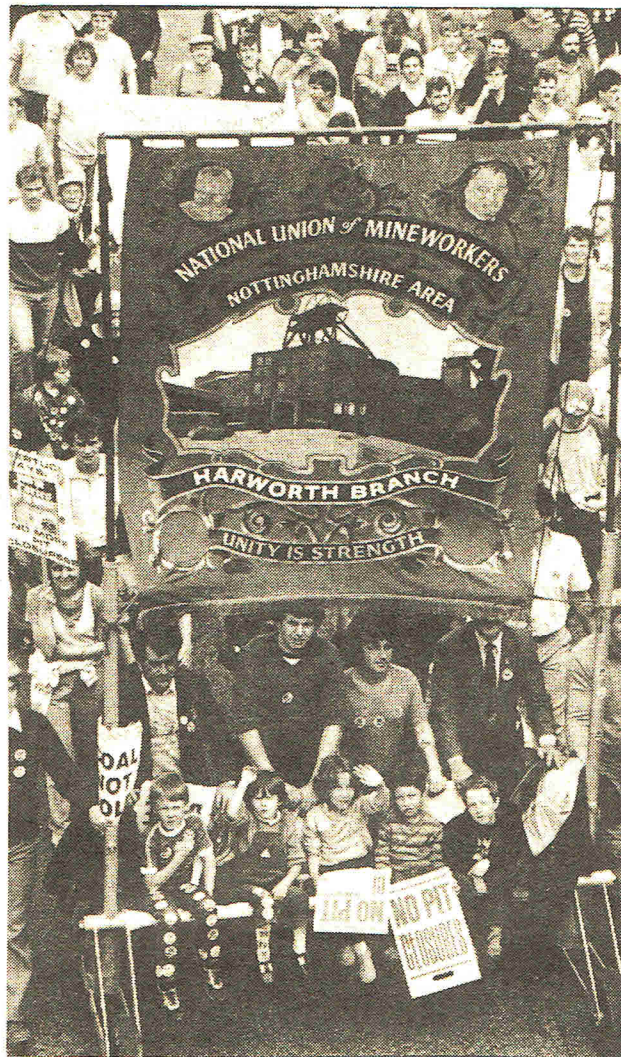


Photo: Mark Pinder

Nottinghamshire miners on strike

flat on their backs.

Tell Arthur Scargill and the miners that they are bound to win because they have the determination that will beat Thatcher and Co. Those union leaders who are boycotting the miners struggle will regret it for the rest of their lives; because more,

much more, will be at stake when the miners win. A new Labour party for instance, where the miners will be the power.

A handshake in thought,
E Edwards
Crediton
Devon

Lessons of Northern Ireland

Dear Comrades,

Over the course of the past three months the British working class have seen at first-hand the true role of the police and the courts in a capitalist society.

The police force, as an institution, (whatever the views of individual policemen) is there to protect private property, to protect profit and to enforce anti-working class laws. It has been used in an attempt to break the miners' strike by rendering picketing ineffective. Pickets are being arrested and charged in a

more than obvious attempt to remove the activists from the front-line.

In Northern Ireland fifteen years ago, movement for change was met by force and then there arose the terrorist campaign which continues until the present day.

Neither violence on the picket line nor violence in Northern Ireland will solve anything. The answer lies in mass working class action to render Tory laws ineffective and ultimately to sweep away the system which is primarily responsible for the violence.

Yours fraternally
Ciaran Mulholland
South Belfast Young Socialists

Close shave

Dear Comrades

We were traveling by coach down to the South East TUC march in support of the miners. Two miles out of Rugeley we came upon a heavily loaded coal lorry. As our coach was halfway through the process of overtaking he started to speed up, forcing us to stay alongside for at least half a mile.

During this period a wide variety of fruity language and gestures were directed at the scab driver. The oldest

miner on the coach practically bit through the window.

Then all our hearts skipped a beat when two NCB scab lorries came over the brow of the hill straight towards us. The coach driver just managed to edge us past the lorry we were trying to overtake with only a few feet to spare.

There was a mood of exhilarating relief after this episode. But it put us in fighting spirit for when we got to London for the march.

Yours fraternally
Brian Debus

Press prostitutes

Dear Militant,

The *Express*, the *Mail* and the *Sun* in their coverage of the miner's strike have reached unimaginable levels of distortion and malevolence.

These scurrilous rags no longer maintain even the pretence of honest reporting or independent comment. They are nothing more than Tory propaganda sheets.

How the hacks who live off these three rags can so prostitute their profession is beyond my understanding. They have reached such an all-time low that their credibility, never great, can only survive among bigots.

That the miners will win their fight I have no doubt. They are no chickens to be

chased into submission. But if the unimaginable occurred, and the miners yielded their jobs, within six months the *Express*, the *Mail* and the *Sun* would be calling redundant miners parasites, layabouts and scroungers. I should know. I have been unemployed for two years.

The very same hacks who are now attacking miners for defending their right to work persistently slander the unemployed for not being able to obtain work.

If someone who has lost the right to work is a parasite and scrounger, what is someone who is fighting desperately to defend his job? Ask the next *Express* hack you meet. You will find him writing about the strike from the security and immediacy of a Fleet Street winebar.

Yours sincerely
Eddie Penn, Lincoln

Pickers

Dear Comrades

This government has reached an all time low (even by their standards).

The taxman has now turned his attention on the poorest section of society—the raspberry pickers. They 'enjoy' a four or five week season every year for slave wages, under slave conditions in all weathers, along with a fourteen or fifteen hour day.

But now the 'poor' farmers must forward the names, addresses and earnings of all their pickers. Not to worry, here comes a knight in shining armour in the shape of Peter Fraser MP, Tory solicitor general

of Scotland, who slammed the move. He said: "It will only cause alarm and anxiety". Well, I'm just wondering who will be alarmed and anxious—will it be Peter Fraser's constituents who in Angus East are nearly all rich farmers and landlords (who may find their own tax returns under scrutiny)? Or will it be the downtrodden workers trying quite literally to scrape a living?

I would like to believe Peter Fraser was thinking about the workers in this latest attack, but as the Tories themselves are fond of saying, their record speaks for itself.

Yours fraternally
Thomas Kerr
Govan CLP

Tory propaganda

Dear Comrades,

The Tories don't try propaganda tactics on our infants do they?

Recently I came into the room where my three year old son was watching a children's television programme called *Pigeon Street*. The scene was a school dining hall after the dinner money had just gone up. Half the children couldn't afford the increase so they were put in a corner with their sandwiches. Consequently, with only the privileged few eating hot substantial meals, half the kitchen staff were made

redundant.

Undaunted and with heads held high, the school kitchen staff opened up a "back street cafe", or soup kitchen, for our poor underprivileged school children, with cheap second rate meals.

So there we have it. Everybody is happy, we now have a clear and distinct two-tier class system. Even the poor can eat something and the sacked kitchen staff have shown how easy it is to make something of your redundancy money.

If this filthy rubbish isn't Tory propaganda to poison the minds of our little children then what is?

Yours fraternally
Dave Buckney
Wigan

Barnsley—reject enquiry move

ATTEMPTS AT a witch-hunt have broken out in the 'socialist republic of South Yorkshire', initiated by South Yorkshire county councillor Jack Brown.

At Mr Brown's ward in Barnsley, two *Militant* supporters were removed from positions and a witch-hunting resolution forwarded to the District Labour Party.

Militant supporters Bled-dyn and Barbara Harris, who did not receive notice of the meeting, were replaced as delegates to the DLP and to the constituency's General Committee, on attendance qualifications (even though this did not apply to Bled-dyn's record of attendance to the GC, but he was replaced anyway). Besides the fact

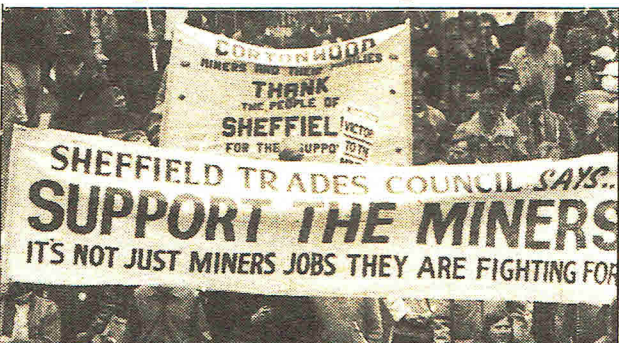


Photo: Militant

South Yorkshire is at the centre of the miners' struggle. A witch-hunt would be disastrous.

that this ruling has very rarely been used before, it did not take into account that the couple have a young baby and Barbara is expecting another.

In passing Jack Brown made the ludicrous accusation that Barbara had attempted to get a permit for the LPYS to collect in Barnsley Town Centre for the miners, using the name of

the ward. Why the LPYS would want the ward to get credit for the £438 that they raised for the NUM on that occasion was not explained.

Also the ward has sent the following resolution to the DLP: "This DLP initiates an enquiry into the activities of the *Militant* Tendency in the Barnsley district".

It is sad that this resolution should be passed by a

ward that until now has had a proud record in opposing witch-hunts. Ward policy was forgotten on this occasion. Jack Brown himself knows about expulsions. He was expelled when he stood against an official Labour candidate in the 1965 local elections. Locally, Mr Brown has a reputation as a 'maverik left-winger'.

At the GC, however, at which Jack Brown did not attend, the delegates reaffirmed Bled-dyn as Youth Officer until the next AGM, and donated £50 to the LPYS to enable young striking miners to attend LPYS summer camp. Clearly there is no mood for a witch-hunt amongst the activists, and it is hoped that the resolution to the DLP will be treated with the contempt it deserves.

By a *Militant* Reporter

Build a mass LPYS

Dear Comrades,

I recently attended a ward meeting where the guest speaker was Austin Mitchell. I am sure comrades will know what a friend Mr Mitchell is to the working class.

He gave a long speech on the subject of Thatcherism. To combat Thatcherism he said, the Labour Party should not worry about which policies to adopt, but should first get into government by any means—even going into a coalition with the SDP and the Liberals—more good friends of the working class. After we have got into power, the Labour Party can worry about those unimportant items, such as policies.

Mr Mitchell's lack of understanding regarding the working class was only matched by his utter contempt for the LPYS. I asked him,

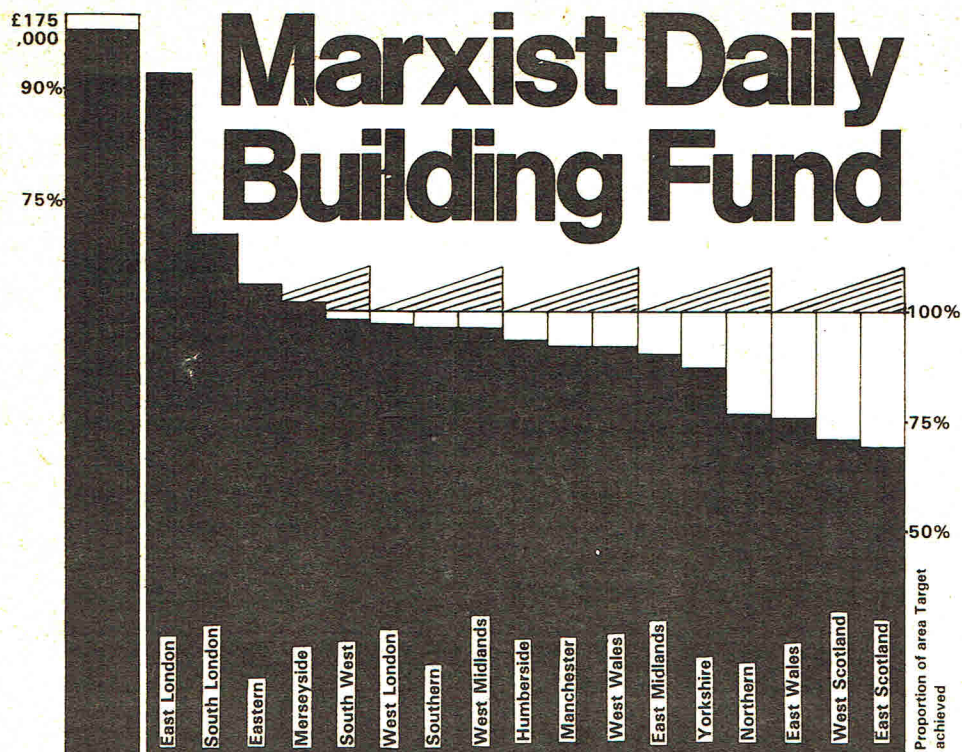
in the light of Thatcher's attacks on working class youth, was it right for the Labour Party to cut the amount of money given to the LPYS?

He said that the policies of the LPYS were wrong, that we were disillusioning working class youth and once we were getting new members we were losing them within a year.

Mr Mitchell was backed up by a Fabian headmaster who said that he could not understand the LPYS *Youth Charter*. But this is typical from a section of the labour movement which has no grasp of the problems facing the working class.

I appeal on all comrades to build a mass LPYS and to show Mitchell and his right-wing friend a mass youth movement dedicated to the destruction of this rotten capitalist system.

Yours fraternally
Keith Hewison
Grimsby LPYS



WE ARE almost there! Another bumper week has taken the total to a magnificent £170,982. There can be no doubt about us raising the remaining £4,018 with the level of commitment shown by you, our readers, so far.

What we need now is one almighty push to reach that ever nearing goal of £175,000. Look at what we received this week. It shows the depth and breadth of our support. A supporter in Southern Africa has sent us £603. By developing a Marxist daily paper we will be able to give even more coverage of the workers' struggles in Southern Africa thus repaying their help to us in our campaign.

PK Durrant, Chesterfield, has sent us £250 and we have been sent £200 by a comrade in Littlehampton. He originally promised £100 and then became ill and unable to pay but now he is back at work and has sent in twice as much. These donations show that there are still readers prepared to give huge amounts to the fund.

Make sure you have asked all your mates for a contribution. See if there are any prepared to match these amounts. Any donation will be invaluable. Large or small they all add up to an investment for the working class.

Many readers have now given a week's wages to the fund. Peter Barr, for example, from Hetton, Wearside, has sent in £60. If you have

not yet donated then consider doing the same. In this way we can very quickly reach the target.

Other contributors this week include Janice Maguire, Manchester, £509; J Newman, Withington LPYS, £50; Havant YS, £18.87 raised at Tolpuddle; T Gibbons, Teeside, £40; Lesley Hughes, Birmingham, £50.

In every field the ideas of Marxism are gaining strength. Soon the whole labour movement will be so much better armed with a daily paper expressing those ideas. That achievement will be the success of *Militant* supporters everywhere. Keep up the good work.

ADS

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

"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.

MIKE Sutton is planning a parachute jump in October for the Fighting Fund and would like sponsors. Contact him at 10 Rodney Court, Southampton.

GREATER Manchester Womens Day School, 'Women and the fight for Socialism'. Saturday 21 July, 10.30 pm-4.30 pm 3rd floor Sidney Building, Manchester Poly Students Union, Oxford Road.

TWO *Militant* supporters need rented accommodation from July. South London preferred. Temporary or permanent. Contact Andrea or Neil on (01) 968 9674.

YOUNG MINER: issue number 3, out now. Available from Wakfield LPYS, 16 Vicarage Street, Wakefield. 10 copies, 1.00 + 30p p&p. Cheques payable to R. Clarkson. Articles about: Power station stocks, South African miners, Sandinista supports NUM. Look back at 1926. A must for all 'YS branches.

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

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

"SUPPORT the miners" Maidstone CLP Public Meeting on Friday 13 July at 8 pm at Shepway Sausage Hut. Speakers: Richard Richardson (Kent NUM), Andrew Gilberston (Southern Region LPYS), Women Support Group speaker.

FOR SALE £80 ONO (£180 new) stereo including tape, Dolby V/G/C Hitachi.

Decca-Vision portable B&W TV. £30 ONO. Money to *Militant*. Ring Mark or Jane for address 01-552 3204.

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.

Militant

Meetings

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

NEWCASTLE *Militant* Readers Meeting "Britain in Crisis". Speakers Pat Wall and a miner. Sunday 22 July 7.30 pm, Bridge Hotel, Newcastle.

NEWCASTLE East discussion groups, Wednesday nights. Phone Charlotte Hann 2761736. Sunday afternoon phone Gavin Dudley 2652906

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).

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

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

DURHAM RALLY *Militant* Readers' Meeting 1 pm: LPYS tent on racecourse. Speakers: Dave Cotterill and a South Wales miner. Extra papers available from the *Militant* bookstall on racecourse to the right of platform.

Militant Summer Draw

THE DRAW for the *Militant* Summer Raffle was made in London on Saturday 7 July. The following are the lucky tickets. All prize winners should contact Militant, 1 Mentmore, Terrace, London. E8 3PN enclosing the winning ticket.

PRIZE	WINNER	NUMBER
1st £500 holiday	M Sutton, Flat 1, 10 Queens Road, Rock Ferry, Merseyside.	068801
2nd video worth £300	EM James Tel 087 255 2282	048976
3rd Camera worth £100	Dave Kilby Luton 421049	006219
4th £20 worth socialist books	Burton, Isle of Wight	069905
	Mr Arnold, 28 Rudwell Court, Nottingham	043946
	Jane McEwan, Yapton 551155	061074
	Alan Jackson, Arnprior Kippen	003819
	J McCartney, 87 Belrock St, Glasgow	032059

FIIGHTING FUND this week £4,028

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 7 July
Eastern	1762		2700
East Midlands	1428		3050
Humberside	1098		1700
London East	1660		3500
London West	1021		2100
London South	1736		2850
Manchester & Lancs	1720		3700
Merseyside	1747		4800
Northern	1406		4050
Scotland East	906		2450
Scotland West	1324		3300
Southern	2109		4400
South West	871		2050
Wales East	717		2100
Wales West	688		1950
West Midlands	2066		3800
Yorkshire	1897		4500
Others	11725		12000
Total received	35881		65000

NO OTHER group of people could match supporters and readers of *Militant* in raising money. Over the last week comrades all over the country have been pulling out the stops to raise as much cash as possible.

The final end of quarter figures will appear in next week's issue but it looks like being the most successful quarter's fund raising ever. As at last Saturday we had reached the sum of £35,881, a massive total considering all the additional expenses our readers incur through being active socialists and organising help for the miners.

In the midst of all this activity our readers have remembered the most important thing—the need to support and improve the *Mili-*

tant. To do that we need every single pound and penny you can send.

Every area has been busy organising events to finance our work and to have a good time in the process. Parties and socials have generated thousands of pounds in the course of the last three months. A party in Crookston last week raised £84.

Supporters in Hull have been extra busy. In the last week they have raised £43.50 from LP members, £69.93 from a bazaar on top of selling a total of £221 worth of raffle tickets. Nationally the Summer Draw has been a great success with the winning tickets drawn at a social in East London which raised £

With the end of one quarter the emphasis shifts immediately to the next one. With all the developments

taking place at the moment there can be no let up in the drive to raise money. Plans should be laid now for the next three months to continue our successful Fighting Fund campaign. Don't leave anything to the last minute. Prepare now and give us an even bigger total for the third quarter.

Get out with those collecting tins, appeal sheets, badges, posters and all the rest.

Those who contributed this week include: S Miller, CPSA P&T, Coventry £30. N Lovell, Leeds, £25. C Haslam, East Ham, £10. Littlehampton LPYS, £30. V Connolly, Chorley and Willenhall LP, £5. P Briham, Crookston LPYS, £1. T Dunk, Borehamwood, £2. Reader's Meeting, Eastern Region LPYS Conference, £99. Reader's Meeting, COHSE Conference, £340.

SELLING *Militant*



THE FURORE in Parliament, with questions being asked in "The House" (see *Militant* 6 July), has highlighted the growing numbers of miners now selling *Militant*.

As well as our existing orders in the mining areas we've started sending new orders to Coalville (Leics), Fitzwilliam (Yorks), and Clipstone and Worksop (Notts) to new groups of miners who have become *Militant* sellers.

In fact on demos not only have miners sought out our paper and bought copies but they've paid for bulk orders to take back to sell in their own areas. At a recent Arthur Scargill meeting in Bolsover 50 papers were sold by our miner sellers.

All comrades on the recent South East TUC demo should be congratulated on

their efforts. It was probably the biggest turnout of *Militant* sellers for a mid week regional event and at least 500 copies were sold as well as many badges and pamphlets. Good sales were also reported from miners' events in Dover and Coventry. Now for the Durham rally on 14 July!

Miners support

Last week support for the miners silenced the *Sun*. Not only miners but more and more workers in general are realising the importance of a Marxist paper. *Militant* has gained great respect during the dispute not only for our coverage and support but also because we have taken the miners seriously and not attempted to give our paper away or sell it at a cut rate to strikers.

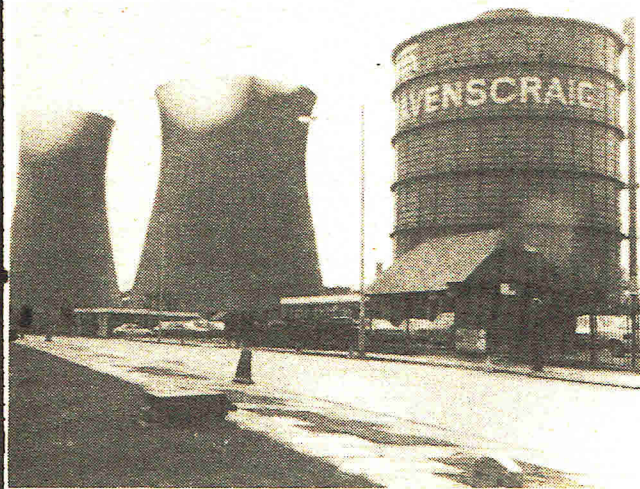
Indeed many miners have pledged big sums to our Building Fund and are at the present time making weekly donations to our fighting fund despite their present hardships! Many thanks for this tremendous example.

So cause a few more upsets in 'the mother of parliaments'. Then later, instead of miners selling outside we shall have Marxist miners fighting for socialism inside. Why not become a *Militant* seller? Orders (minimum of 5) are post free, sale or return.

With the events in Liverpool, the witch hunt against our supporters, and the miners' strike, we need you but you need *Militant*! For details of selling *Militant* contact Militant Circulation, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London. E8 3PN or phone 01-986 3828.

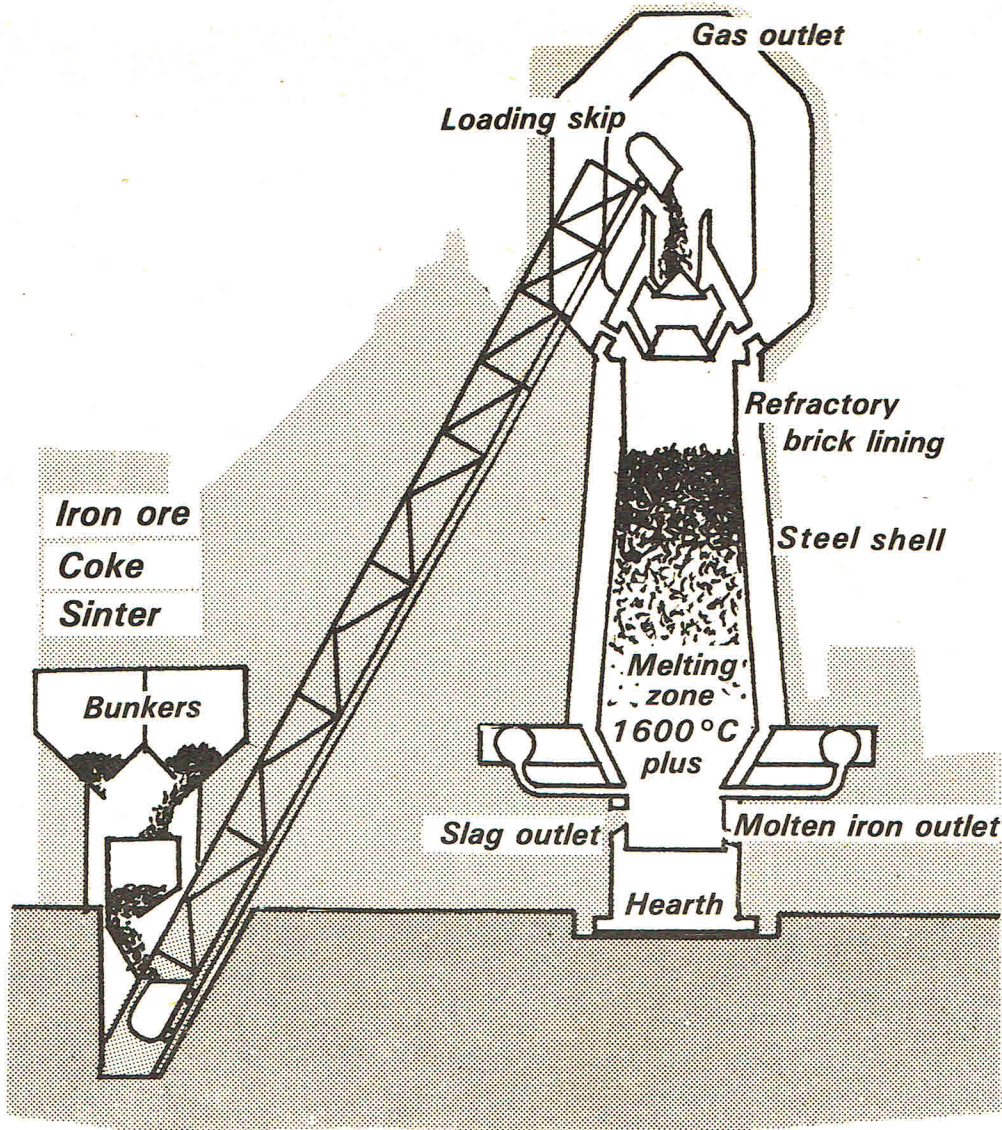
Steel feature

British Steel lie about job threat



Ravenscraig, Motherwell.

THE BLAST furnace is a vessel with a circular section which tapers towards the top. Iron ore is inserted at the top along with coke and limestone. The mixture falls against a jet of hot air which is blown in at the bottom. The coke is ignited by the air. When the temperature reaches about 1600° Centigrade, pure molten iron is produced along with slag, which is drawn off separately. The furnace is lined with brick which can withstand very high temperatures, although its other properties are poor. In particular it is very brittle and cannot withstand high stresses without cracking. Rapid fluctuations in temperature can generate high stresses and lead to damage, as can chemical attack over a longer period. Because of these factors, the entire lining has to be replaced every five to eight years and the furnace taken out of operation. Minor damage occurs frequently and is repaired with little disruption of production. It is quite possible that some damage will occur to the furnace lining due to erratic production but it is very unlikely to be irreparable as has been claimed. This is borne out by the experience at Scunthorpe.



BRITISH STEEL Corporation chairman, Bob Haslam, has claimed in the press that if steelworkers join the miners' struggle irreparable damage could be caused to the steelmaking plant. The Tory minister, Edwards, was quick to jump on the bandwagon, saying that the miners' action was putting plants at risk.

Most steelworkers will be wary of believing the claims of Tories or their fellow thinkers in the BSC top management. Unfortunately Bill Sirs, leader of the ISTC, has echoed these comments, saying that production must be maintained at 50% to avoid irreparable damage to equipment.

ISTC members and other workers want to know the true picture. PETE DICKINSON explains the issues and charges BSC with distorting the truth for political ends.

Llanwern, Newport.

BSC SAY that shortages of coke and iron ore force managers to operate blast furnaces erratically or intermittently. This in turn, causes "thermal cycling" which can damage the wall of the vessel containing the iron ore and coke. They say two furnaces at Scunthorpe have been damaged because of this. But they have had to admit, significantly, that one is already back in operation.

Dangers

The dangers from erratic or intermittent production are greater than from closing the furnaces down completely and banking them up. This involves keeping them charged with coke and ore but not making any significant quantity of iron. BSC claim that this operation can also lead to permanent damage and say that five furnaces were destroyed after the 1980 strike. The fact that these plants were earmarked for closure before the strike was obviously a coincidence!

At the time of the strike, BSC made great play of the dangers to the blast furnace at Redcar. This is the biggest and most modern furnace in the country and was opened two months before the strike. After the strike, however, there was no indication that it had suffered any serious damage. There were also no reports in the

trade press or the technical literature of damage to any other furnace.

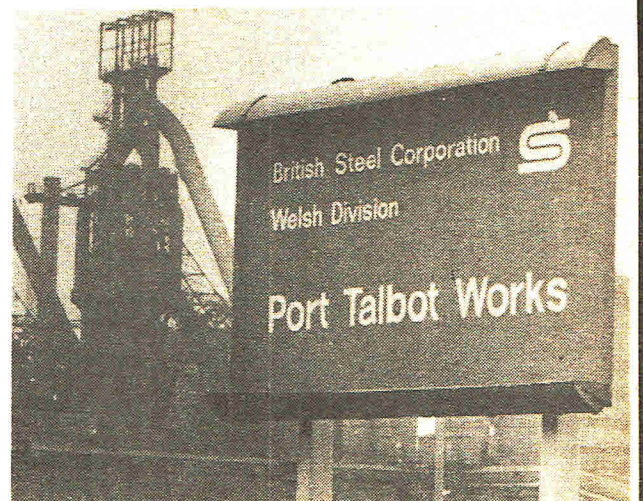
It is quite possible that some damage was caused, but it is inconceivable that any major or irreparable harm to a large blast furnace would have gone completely unreported.

BSC say that since 1980 new operating techniques have made the furnaces more vulnerable when banked down, yet the equipment used today is the same as existed during the 1980 strike and any changes in operating methods can only have been minor.

The truth is that the Tories and BSC management are using the largely bogus threat of permanent damage to the blast furnaces to try to split miners and the steelworkers. BSC will attempt to close further capacity in the steel industry regardless of the outcome of the present dispute because they see no future for steelmaking in Britain as the crisis of capitalism deepens.

United action

The united action of miners, transport workers and steelworkers against the Tories could bring the miners' strike to a speedy and successful conclusion and give the steelworkers' fight to save their industry an enormous boost.



Port Talbot, near Swansea.

Support is there

THE propaganda of the BSC management and the press served to confuse steel workers and caused fear over jobs.

This was not so much that steelworkers trust or believe management but because the steel unions have not defended the miners and have even deserted steel workers who have taken up the miners' fight.

Steel workers who have been raising money and support for the miners have been threatened with disciplinary action, yet their unions have done nothing to defend their members. The unions' leaderships have just followed British Steel by the shirt tails—even when the BSC have tried to provoke escalation of the dispute.

Scunthorpe is one of the steelworks which receives all its coal and ore by rail. This

has been stopped by the rail unions refusal to move coal or to cross pickets on railway lines from the Immingham oil terminal.

Convoys

Coal is now being brought in from wharves on the river Trent, in massive convoys. The stopping of the iron ore could be the biggest blow to British steel.

The lorry companies local-

ly have been taking drivers on part time, to move coal in this area, without HGV licences. A friend of mine (without an HGV licence) was offered such a job—he told them to eff off when he realised it would be scabbing. These convoys, with some unqualified drivers clearly breaking the law, receive massive police protection of course.

The TV and press have tried to show that the steel

towns are solidly against the miners, but Scunthorpe clearly remembers the devastation MacGregor brought on the steel industry and are helping miners in the steel strike. Many workers are giving food and money to the miners. A bus from Scunthorpe took food and supporters to the Notts strikers last Sunday and has been delivering food to Yorkshire miners for months.

LPYS meeting

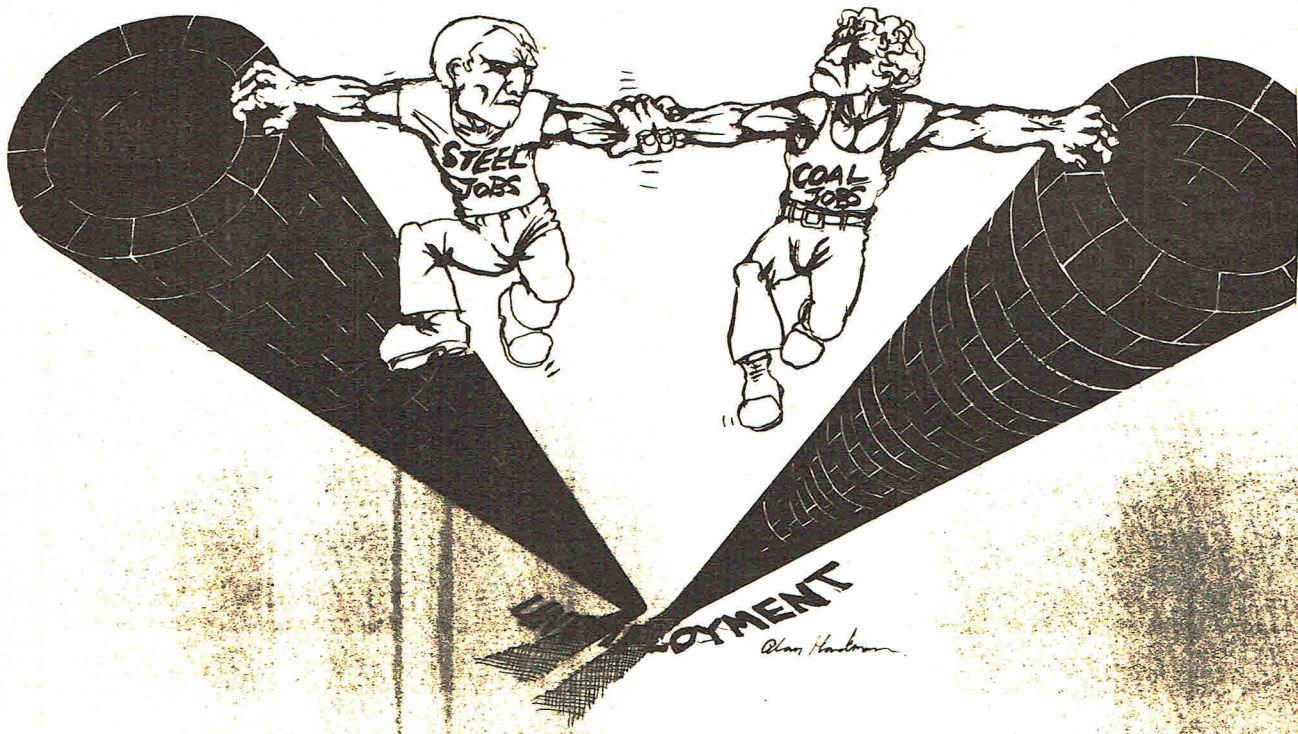
The mood and support amongst many workers in Scunthorpe was recently shown by an unemployed welder who came to a LPYS

public meeting in support of the miners after receiving a leaflet in the high street. After hearing the miner who spoke he stood up and told the meeting: "I have been offered two jobs which will start when the miners' strike finishes, but I am willing to wait as long as it takes if it means the miners winning an all-out victory".

The workers of Scunthorpe haven't been fooled by the propaganda and if a lead was shown by the steel unions it would find tremendous support for the miners.

By Bill McCoid
(Unemployed steel worker, Scunthorpe)

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS



Women's Hospital - support needed



Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (IFL)

THE OCCUPATION of the South London Women's Hospital (above) in Clapham continues. With closure now threatened for August 7 the District Health Authority hoped to start moving equipment from the building to nearby hospitals, employing a non union contractor for the job. However, the NUPE branch at St Georges hospital have said they will

not accept the equipment. Other hospitals must follow this lead along with solidarity action and a round the clock picket on the Women's Hospital if the closure is to be stopped.

Workers occupying the hospital have had their spirits raised by visits from striking miners and local trade unionists.

Defend Hammersmith Hospital

HEALTH WORKERS will be taking action in support of striking ancillary workers at Hammersmith Hospital in West London on 18 July. Over a hundred workers at the hospital have been on strike since 13 June. Their struggle is against the threat of privatisation.

If the privatisation proposal went through it would mean a cut in the cleaning budget by 44%—already due to earlier cuts non-patient areas such as kitchens, store rooms etc are inadequately cleaned.

One of the pickets, David Harrison said: "Our demand is to get rid of all privatisation. A private firm can pro-

ve cheaper in the first year, but later they can raise their prices. The workers for the private firm involved with Hammersmith get nothing out of the profits the firm is making".

Growing support

He added the strikers were getting support from the nurses and doctors. Even the patients are signing petitions in support. At present the cleaning is being carried out by scabs and 'volunteers'. Other members of the staff are asked to leave their ordinary duties to do the cleaning.

As David pointed out:

"More hospital workers will face the same threat from privatisation as us. If we win they can look at us and say 'they won in Hammersmith so why can't we win'"

On Wednesday 18 July the authorities will make a decision on privatisation. Both NUPE and COHSE have declared that a day of action in support of Hammersmith hospital. A mass picket is being held at the hospital with coaches bringing health workers from all over the country. The organisers expect thousands to attend. Speakers will include Ken Livingstone and local Labour MP Clive Soley. Show your support with the

workers in Hammersmith Hospital—join the mass picket on 18 July.

By Sigbritt Herbert
(Hammersmith North LP)

GLC Shop Stewards' Conference
Open to all stewards in GLC, Fire Brigade and ILEA.
Wednesday 18 July,
Council Chamber,
County Hall.

The Standard, 22 June.

'Daft' strike - the real story

I WOULD like to put the workers' point of view about what the *Evening Standard* called the "daft strike" on Southern Region BR on June 22. They presented the management's case, who tried to make out they were bewildered by the strike and that it was over a trivial matter.

The strike came about because management wanted us to use a sub-standard PN (Physical Need or mess room) point at West Croydon after it had been blocked.

Here is a list of items wrong with the room:-
—Vermin
—Lack of adequate hot water facilities for tea, etc.

—Vagrants using room as 'doss house' and toilet.
—Blocked drains
—Lack of security

This room was first brought to the management's attention in July 1983 when we were given promises that the room would be brought up to standard. Then in May 1984 the room was blocked and our trains were covered while we went to Selhurst for our PN.

On Wednesday 13 June, a letter was put up by management stating that anyone not having their PN at the West Croydon PN room would be disciplined. Still the room was blocked. Then on 19 June a guard was sent a letter about a train cancellation



which was wholly attributed to the PN point.

The guards' Local Departmental Committee gave management three days to withdraw the letter but they refused, and when they were told that industrial action was going to be taken on 22 June, they said "do what you like."

Still blocked

As for press reports that strike leaders were not available for talks, we were on the picket line from 3.30 am until 6 pm and would have been willing to

hold talks provided all our men were paid for the day.

Since the strike the room has been made more secure, a water heater has been fitted and the general state of the room improved. But as we are still waiting on Rentokill to come in, the room is still blocked.

No more letters have been sent, and I would also like to thank management for bringing the guards' and drivers' LDC closer together through this dispute.

By CR Collins
(Driver, Streatham Hill)

Printers' right of reply victory

ON THURSDAY 5 July, composers at the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, members of the print union, National Graphical Association (NGA) were given work to set up the Coal Board, purporting to be letters to the NCB from families of striking Yorkshire miners.

The "letters" all had the same message, anti-strike, calling for a ballot. No names or addresses were given for any of these letters. Two of the compositors were

chapel (union branch) of-ficers and refused to set the material before consulting the Leeds branch and NGA Head Office. Their instruction was to seek the right of reply on an equal basis.

Surprisingly the paper agreed. On Thursday the NCB material appeared, with an editorial comment asking for opposing views. As that action by the comps had been done in half an hour, with no time to consult members, the full chapel was

informed of what had gone on and expressed their support.

A well planned reply in favour of the miners appeared in the next day's issue in consultation with the NUM. This is the first success in getting a right of reply in a provincial paper.

By Ray Burrows
(Leeds NGA, personal capacity)

Immingham yard battle

DOCKYARD WORKERS are picketing work places of the Richardson Westgarth company—the parent company of the former Humber Graving Dock shipyard in a campaign to get redundancy money owed to them.

In February this year 550 workers at the Humber Graving Dock in Immingham were made redundant at three days notice (despite an unfinished £25 million order on the site). Yet they received no redundancy pay.

The yard was re-opened a week later by a new company called the Humber Ship Repairers Ltd. Negotiations for the money began with the old management who were subcontracting work out to Humber Ship Repairers.

A deal was agreed but so far the men have only received 15% of the money owed.

Then Richard Westgarth top management sent out at the end of June letters asking the workers to declare how much they received in pay or dole in the 12 weeks following them being made redundant, as they wanted to deduct this from the agreed payments!

Pickets

The workers have begun a campaign to win the payments in full—they have picketed the company's sites in Humber-side and their head office in Victoria, London. At Victoria the police have gone even further than Tebbit—the police are only allowing two pickets. The workers are further campaigning with visits to Parliament and the TUC, and have asked the *Daily Mirror* and the *Militant* to publicise their case.

BLOC

BROAD LEFT ORGANISING COMMITTEE

LOBBY THE TUC

Monday September 3rd 1984
8.30 am onwards at Conference
Centre Brighton

- * Full support for the miners.
- * Defend unions against Tory anti-union laws.
- * For a fighting, democratic, socialist leadership in the trade unions.

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I would like to donate
£ . . . p each week
/month to the fighting fund.

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Liverpool smash Tory plans

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THE LIVERPOOL labour movement have hailed the council's financial deal with the Tory government as a magnificent victory for the working class in the city.

On the day before the council budget meeting, a mass meeting of 500 local authority shop stewards overwhelmingly supported the deal.

Typical of the mood was the comment of Peter Leonard, a GMBATU convenor for 14 years, who described Patrick Jenkin's offer as "a bloody wonderful victory". At the same meeting a speaker from the NUM Bersham colliery congratulated the council, saying he "wished everywhere was like Liverpool."

Tory u-turn

On the night before, the District Labour Party agreed with only seven out of about 400 voting against.

The negotiations resulted in the biggest U-turn since they backed down from the miners in 1981. The deal effectively means that the council have their millions extra to spend "legally", without in any way cutting back on the policies launched on jobs, houses and services.

When Labour took control of Liverpool City Council in May 1983 they were faced with a Liberal budget which meant either 5,000 jobs to go with cuts in services or a 200% rate increase to carry out Labour's election promises, or a 100% rate increase just to stand still.

"A victory for the workers"

TERRY FIELDS Labour MP for Liverpool Broadgreen, who has given tremendous backing to Liverpool council's fight since the beginning welcomes the victory.

"It is a real vindication of the stand collectively taken by councillors, the District Labour Party, the joint shop stewards' committees, com-

By Josie Aitman

But the Liverpool Labour Party was determined to carry out its election manifesto of creating jobs, and improving services, with no massive rate rise to compensate for Tory cuts.

A tremendous campaign was waged, involving dozens of workplace and estate meetings and two massive demonstrations. It won overwhelming support from the local authority workers and trade unionists generally. There was a record response to the local general strike in Liverpool on 29 March and brilliant election results in May 1984.

Patrick Jenkin and the Tories promised then that "not one extra penny" would be made available for Liverpool. If an "illegal" budget were implemented, he said, commissioners would be sent in. Labour councillors were threatened with suspension and surcharge. Liverpool would be made bankrupt and the working class of Liverpool crushed.

Jobs saved

Yet last Monday, Patrick Jenkin offered Liverpool Labour council the equivalent of £55 million in extra finance, including extra money for housing, various grants and dropping of penalties. As the Liverpool *Daily Post* pointed out,

community groups and local people generally.

Confidence

"The victory didn't come overnight, it had to be built for, it shows how right it was to have confidence in the working class. We knew people would understand the position if it was thoroughly explained and we knew

they would now be able to go ahead to spend £250 million—well over the government's £216 target—without incurring any penalties.

This means that the thousand jobs taken on through the Manpower Services Commission's 12 month scheme will be made permanent (on trade union rates of pay). Services will continue to expand, houses will continue to be built, with a rate rise now of 17%.

It was made clear at the DLP meeting that the original 9% rate increase would have been preferred, but on the basis of the Tories conceding millions of pounds to safeguard jobs and services a 17% rate rise still represents only a fraction of the increase urged by the Tories, Liberals and the right wing Labour Party leadership.

Mass campaign

This represents a 95% victory for the working class of Liverpool—a magnificent vindication of their campaign to save jobs and services. The rate rise will mean something like 50p per week extra for most families.

No other local authority in the country has matched what Liverpool has achieved. In other cities, even Labour-controlled ones like Wakefield, Newcastle, Blackburn, rates have risen and there have been cuts and redundancies.

The Liverpool campaign has destroyed the myth that Thatcher and the Tories cannot be beaten. As Derek Hatton pointed out at the DLP meeting "twelve months ago Liverpool was

they'd be prepared to fight.

"It refutes the attitude of some Labour leaders nationally who were prepared to put forward the idea of even 120% rate rises in the interest of so-called 'legality'.

"If the working class stand together, as they should do with the miners, this government could be on its last legs".



On the 29 March day of action. The campaign reached all sections of the population.

accused of deliberately going out on its own. Yet at the recent Sheffield conference of the Labour Party, one Labour Group after another congratulated the stand taken by Liverpool Labour Council".

of the Labour Group in Glasgow. "Liverpool has given Thatcher and Jenkin a bloody nose" she said, "We will go back to Glasgow and advocate exactly the same thing".

Tony Mulhearn, president



With the Tory legislation next year every Labour council will be faced with the same options as Liverpool Labour council. Jean McFaddon, Leader of Glasgow City Council, who was in Liverpool, also addressed the DLP meeting, bringing the congratulations

of the District Party and newly elected councillor summed up the mood in Liverpool this week—"The campaign will continue" he said, "as long as the Tories are in office. As long as there are cuts Thatcher will see Liverpool as the thorn in her side".

£40,000 for socialism

A MAGNIFICENT £40,942 was the final total for this quarter—an improvement on the record of £33,414 raised at the same time last year. Thanks to all our many supporters for making this possible especially the miners who have shown tremendous sacrifice in donating to *Militant* for a more frequent paper. That sacrifice will now be transferred into action and will mean another nail in the coffin of the Tories.

But the fight doesn't end here—we must not only continue the battle but ensure a new strength to fight for the future. Keep up the commitment—only your willingness to take us forward will ensure we succeed.

SUPPORT MINERS

Continued from page one

initiative to call a conference of all the industrial unions which have given backing, in order to map out a strategy including a national one-day strike, a national 'Day of Action', in other words a

strategy for victory.

This strike will have been a landmark in the development of the National Union of Mineworkers and in the labour movement as a whole. With all the other problems assailing the Tories at the present time, we can have them reeling.

But for many miners it has raised more fundamental

issues. After the strike MacGregor will remain, or at least one of his cronies. The strike has convinced many miners that the only guarantee in the long run for their living standards is fundamental socialist change, a socialist energy policy, and democratic workers' control and management of the NCB.