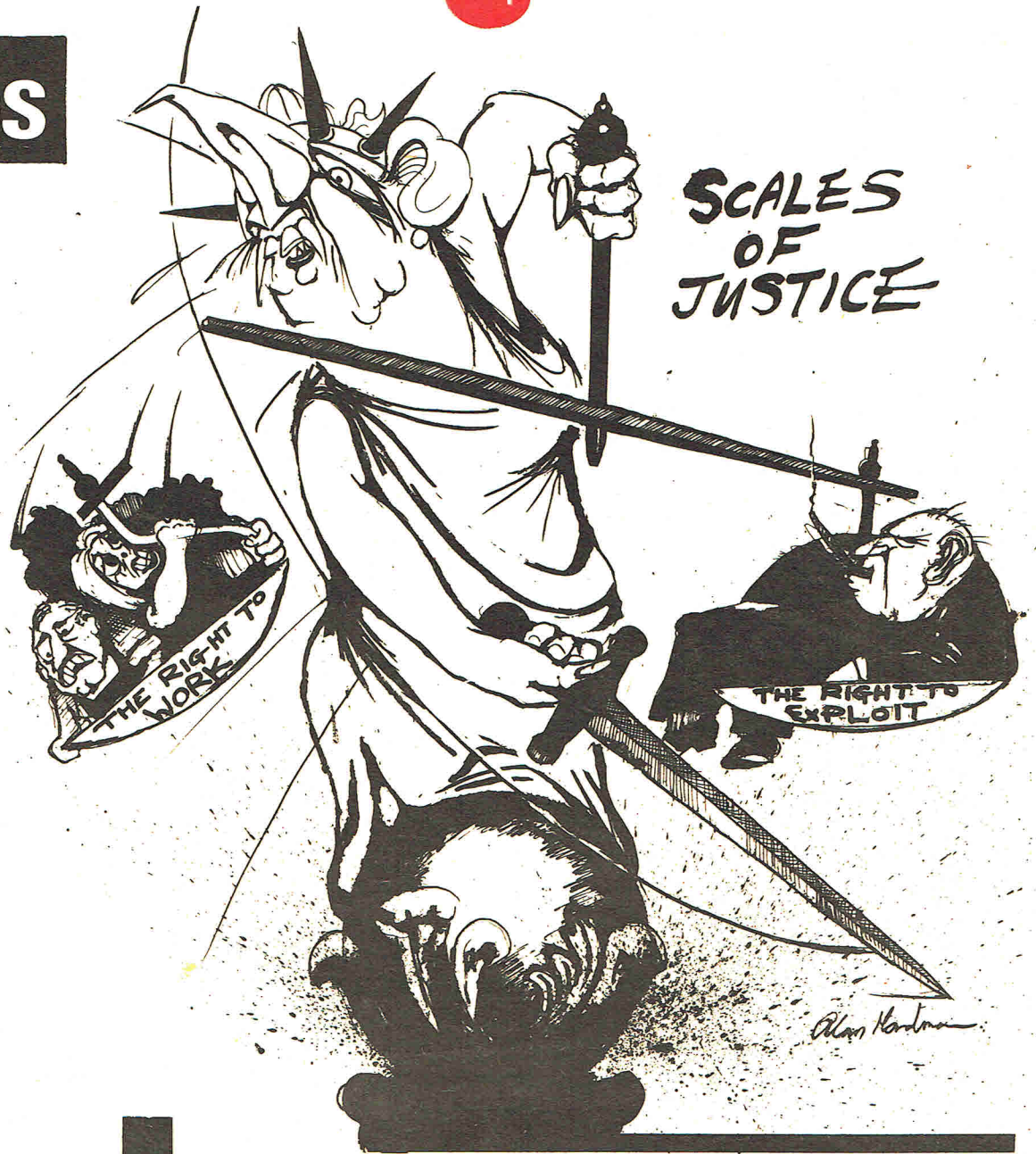




Unite to beat Tories

We will never surrender



On the spot reports
from South Wales,
as miners take on
the Tories—page 2

THE FULL weight of Tory law has been brought down on the South Wales NUM. The Welsh miners must not be left to fight alone.

The ruling class judge Mr Justice Park told the union to pay a £50,000 fine after the millionaire lorry owners Richard Read and George Read got an injunction barring the NUM from "interfering" with their scab lorries. The union has refused to pay and now faces seizure of its assets.

The rest of the labour movement must not let the Welsh miners down. The Tories are determined to "get" the trade unions, particularly the NUM as we have had the guts to stand up to Tory attacks on jobs and to defy capitalist priorities.

Threat to all workers

Thatcher has called us the "enemy within" and Lawson, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has said that the cost of the miners' strike was a "worthwhile investment", worthwhile that is to

By Stan Pearce
(Wearmouth Colliery NUM)

smash our union. But the Tories should take note, we are even more determined than they are, as the mood of the miners at Pontypridd shows.

If the Tories come for our assets or our leaders they must be met with the full force of the labour movement as Emlyn Williams, the South Wales miners' leader has made clear. We must not be left in the lurch by the TUC leaders like the NGA were over the *Stockport Messenger* dispute.

Tory laws are designed to support the rich, the exploiters against the workers who are fighting for jobs. That is a threat to all trade unionists, we must organise to fight it together, and to ensure a victory in our fight for jobs.

See editorial, page 2

Welsh miners defy bosses' law



THE SOUTH Wales miners' headquarters in Pontypridd was transformed into a fortress on Wednesday, 1 August—the day the Tories imposed fines on the South Wales NUM. Hundreds of miners packed into the union offices and crowded the building's landings.

The office block itself was festooned with banners and placards. A giant red-lettered poster on the front door spelled out the miners' message to the Tories—'No surrender!'

Mass resistance

From the window, President of the South Wales miners Emlyn Williams thundered out a warning to

the Tory government. If they go ahead with their threatened sequestration of NUM funds he said, to massive applause, the Labour movement must respond with mass resistance.

Despite the short notice, 5,000 workers and miners rallied to the defence of the South Wales NUM, massing on the pavement outside the HQ. When the 300 strong LPYS contingent arrived—made up of Young Socialists

from the annual YS summer camp at the Forest of Dean—there was a storm of applause from the miners.

NUM members spilled off the pavement blocking off the roads, to greet the LPYS as it noisily marched in behind its 'Give youth a future—save the pits' banner. The police virtually withdrew as the ranks of the demonstration grew.

'Militant' special

Impromptu marches around Pontypridd were held with little interference from the police. Hundreds of copies of the special

Welsh miners' edition of *Militant* were sold; in the town's cafes and pubs, groups of workers huddled around reading the paper.

The Tories will be shaken by the size of the demonstration and the speed with which it was organised. As a member of Bold NUM (in Lancashire) told *Militant*, after spending all day occupying the union HQ: "The march has shown our strength. It will have shaken the Tories—they'll be wobbling."

By Dave Campbell

More reports—page 2

Militant

Prepare now for 24-hour general strike

THE DECISION to fine the South Wales NUM £50,000 is a warning to all trade unionists. *The Times*, that rabid journal of big business, has not just talked of grabbing the £2.8 millions of the South Wales NUM. It has also raised the spectre of jailing South Wales miners' leaders for standing by union policy.

The attitude of the labour movement must be: let them try! Not a penny must be given. If the Tories come for the miners' funds, or the miners' leaders, they must meet the trade union movement mobilised in action. The lessons of the NGA dispute are clear: here the leadership hesitated—to pay or not to pay the fine. But this only emboldened the ruling class to firm-up their attack resulting in a defeat for the print workers.

To their credit the South Wales NUM have refused to pay the fine. They have said they will not obey anti-trade union laws. Their stance must be matched by the whole trade union movement. *Militant* has consistently warned trade unionists that a maverick employer may take the NUM to court, and that such a movement may make its own momentum—even resulting in a general strike.

Now that such a situation has arisen the response of the wider trade union movement has to be firm and resolute. Solidarity action is now the key but the lead has to come from the mineworkers' union. The NUM should name the day for a 24-hour general strike. A meeting of other left union leaders should be held immediately to plan such action.

Arthur Scargill's call for total physical support must be put into practice. Miners in all areas should lead the way, calling union activists to local meetings where all the issues of this battle could be explained thoroughly. This would prepare the way for mass meetings in all workplaces and, if necessary, for bringing out workers from below.

There is only one alternative to vicious anti-working class laws; that is a mobilised working class armed with a class programme of its own. Once the miners and the left trade union leaders have prepared the way for a 24-hour general strike the TUC would be under enormous pressure to give its support. Also faced with an aroused trade union movement, the bosses and the government could be forced to back-off.

Despite this being the holiday period the movement can defeat this attack. Such resolute action would also ensure that the miners' strike ends in complete victory.

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Mass rally defends South Wales NUM



Above: The LPYS contingent at the Pontypridd demonstration. Below: Miners and their supporters defend the South Wales NUM headquarters.

Photos: Jacob Sutton (Gamma)



Bosses' bonanza

RICHARD and George Read, the two lorry owners who brought the case against the South Wales miners, are not short of a penny or two. Richard Read is an actual millionaire, owning a fleet of lorries and a 220 acre farm.

His Rolls Royce has a personalised number plate, RRT 1, and like his nephew, George Read (also the owner of a Rolls) lives in the Forest of Dean.

Tory councillor

George Read is a Tory councillor in that area. A Labour Councillor described him as "anti-union". The Reads intend to take the issue back to the court "as often as it takes".

Previous court cases show that employers like them can

get large sums from the legal system. Shah, boss of the *Stockport Messenger* was awarded £125,000 damages this week. Even George Ward, head of the Grunwick photo processing firm, where the mainly Asian women workers struck for union rights in 1976-77, is still gaining financially.

Grunwick

Last year Ward won a court case stopping the commercial radio station London Broadcasting saying that he was anti-union and paid his staff badly. He has now reportedly got an apology and a further substantial sum when a visitor on an LBC programme repeated the allegations.

"THE SOUTH Wales Miners' Federation was formed in 1898 on this spot. We will live forever on this spot. Let them come and take us, we'll show them what we're made of."

Cheers greeted the fighting speech of South Wales miners' president **Emlyn Williams** at the rally outside the HQ in Pontypridd. He called on the "TUC barons" to "put their muscle where their mouth is" and give support, warning there must be no repeat of the betrayal of 1926.

The miners were solid, as vice president **Terry Thomas** pointed out: "All last week the press have been skulking up and down the valleys trying to find people to break our ranks. This rally shows us no one will break our ranks".

Many speakers expressed solidarity with the miners. An NUR speaker told the miners: "We have been with you since day one and we'll be with you until the last day."

Solidarity

A lorry driver who has been laid off since refusing to carry coal, was cheered when he appealed to other drivers for support: "Your licence qualifies you to earn a living, not to take away somebody else's".

US Trade unionist **Marge Clouser** expressed the solidarity of American workers with the miners.

The seriousness of the situation was expressed by **Ian Isaac**, executive member

of the South Wales NUM: "The eyes of the labour movement of Britain are on us and on the South Wales executive. The Tories are not going to take our ability to serve our members away".

Many speakers, including a member of the **Kent NUM** and Labour Party National Youth Officer **Andy Bevan**, called for the movement to respond to the Tory threat with a 24-hour general strike.

Strike call

This was spelt out by **Brian Ingham**, who addressed the rally on behalf of the *Militant* Editorial Board: "If the South Wales miners give a lead, the workers throughout Britain will respond. We have no faith in the TUC leadership but nevertheless we should ask them to get off their knees. If the miners were to set a date for a 24-hour general strike this week or next then the TUC would not be able to stand in their way".

The need to prepare for this move at rank and file level was pointed out by a Scottish miner. **Joe Owen** told the rally it was a "privilege to address the SAS of the movement" and said: "Not for long will we allow Thatcher, MacGregor and that small group of parasites to hold us to ransom. When we go back to our areas we should hold factory meetings and get the commitment of support from workers if the bosses move against our assets."

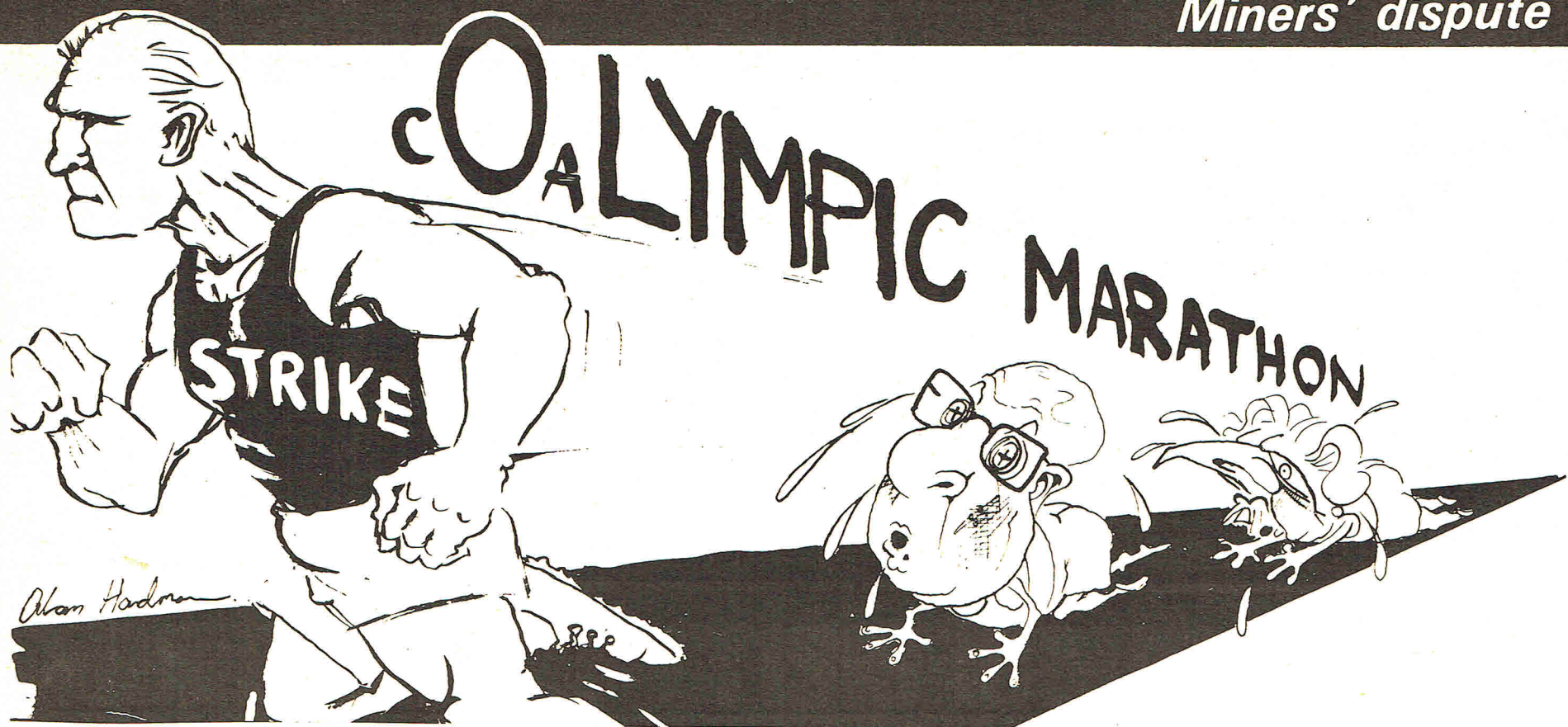
By Dave Campbell

Independent judge?

THE RIGHT Honourable Sir Hugh James Park, who ordered the seizure of the miners' funds, is a typical judge. Born seventy-four years ago and educated at **Blundell's public school** (where he is still a governor) and **Cambridge University**, his sole experience of life outside the courts is when he was a Squadron Leader dur-

ing the Second World War. Although in any 'normal' job he would have been retired years ago, Park like **MacGregor**, continues to lay down the law to the miners. And when Park finds it too tiring, he can relax at the **Athenaeum Club in London** or his country home at **Gorran Haven in Cornwall**.

Miners' dispute



Many steelworkers are seeing the need to back the miners. If the NUM is defeated then Thatcher will renew her attack on the steel industry. Here, two Port Talbot steelworkers speak of their frustration and the changing mood in their works.

"There is a hard core of us ready to have a go and the rest are just wavering, waiting to be given some sort of lead."

BILL SIRTS and the rest of the leaders of the steel unions have given the impression that their members are not prepared to support the miners in their struggle to save jobs. Because of the bankrupt leadership over the past years our industry has been decimated.

The men are naturally concerned about the government's threat to close one of the large steel plants. But even if they shut Llanwern or Ravenscraig it does not mean security at Port Talbot. There is a real possibility that with the new Concast (continuous casting) and the construction of the new hot mill, Port Talbot could end up being privatised by the Tories. That would mean it being handed over on a plate to big business after millions of pounds of public investment.

What is killing me is not just that we are scabbing on the miners but with these coal and iron ore convoys breaking picket lines every day we are also scabbing on the railwaymen who were the first to support us during the

1980 steel strike. These cowboy lorry drivers should not be allowed into the plant and the lads are frustrated at what is happening. There is a hard core of us ready to have a go and the rest are just wavering, waiting to be given some sort of lead.

Day of action

When the Wales TUC called a day of action in support of the miners we resolved to call a 24 hour stoppage, but then we were inundated with circulars from our union leadership and BSC management explaining that the day of action need not necessarily mean a 24 hour stoppage. Instead we could take an hour off at the end of the shift or have a days overtime ban or just have a collection for the miners. Anything but a full stoppage. Despite this attempt to dampen support, on the day many came out on strike and marched alongside the miners in the demonstration held in Cardiff.

It's little wonder that our

members are afraid they would be isolated if they took action as happened in the 11 week electricians strike at Port Talbot in 1977. The steel unions nationally should be out campaigning in all the BSC plants for solidarity action in support of the miners, not writing articles in the Tory press sabotaging the miners' strike. If there was an ounce of leadership amongst Sirs and company we would now be out and the miners would secure a rapid victory.

At a site meeting it was agreed that the £1 per week levy for the miners strike fund would be made compulsory and back-dated to day one of the miners strike.

There are a number of us who want to be out there on the picket lines with our brothers in the NUM but our main aim at the moment is convincing the membership that despite our leadership we must come out in solidarity with the miners. It comes down to the choice of joining them on the picket line or on the dole queue. The miners are fighting for our jobs as well as their own—our place is alongside them.

By a Port Talbot steelworker

Steel-mood changing but lead needed



Maesteg miners' wives support group picket Port Talbot BSC.

Photo: Paul Davies

"There are still a lot of good trade unionists in the steelworks and they need to be pushed, brought out more."

AT THE beginning of the strike, no-one really wanted to know. But gradually as the strike's going on, the mood is changing and there is a lot more support for the miners. There's a levy every week now of £1 for every electrician and the ISTC and NUB have a levy as well.

Now it is gradually beginning to sink in that it is not just a fight for the miners, but a political fight to keep their jobs. If the miners lose they are going to rip hell into the steelworks.

A lot of steelworkers are opposed to the violence on the picket line, yet they are looking back to when they were out on strike and doing exactly the same thing, more or less, they were fighting on the picket lines.

They can see why the

miners are having to struggle on the picket lines when lorries are going past and flashing pay packets to the miners, and union cards and things like this, which I've seen them doing myself.

Everyone I know in the works hates the cowboy lorry divers—they won't have anything to do with them. You get lorry drivers going on TV saying they're doing it for the steelworkers—well they've got nothing to do with the steelworkers. The lorry drivers are only after their money.

No-one in the works like the police actions. The police were having free dinner in the works canteen at one time, but the canteen ladies threatened to strike. They wouldn't serve the police and

they wouldn't serve anybody if the police kept going in there for free food.

It's not like one steel union any more, it's Port Talbot steel union, Llanwern steel union etc. There is no unity nationally among steelworkers any more.

I think the most immediate step is convening a conference of representatives from rank and file level with the executives from all the trade unions involved, at regional and national level, with the miners involved as well.

We have had a lot of meetings over the last two or three years but they have been limited to the leadership. The only way it will change is if the rank and file is involved.

There are still a lot of good trade unionists in the steelworks and they need to be pushed, brought out more.

By a Port Talbot steelworker



Two thousand miners, their wives and supporters marched through Abertillery on 27 July to hear Arthur Scargill speak. South Wales communities know that no job is safe in any industry if the miners lose this crucial battle.

Photo: Martin Shaleshaft (IFL)

Miners' dispute

Point of Ayr-strikers defiant

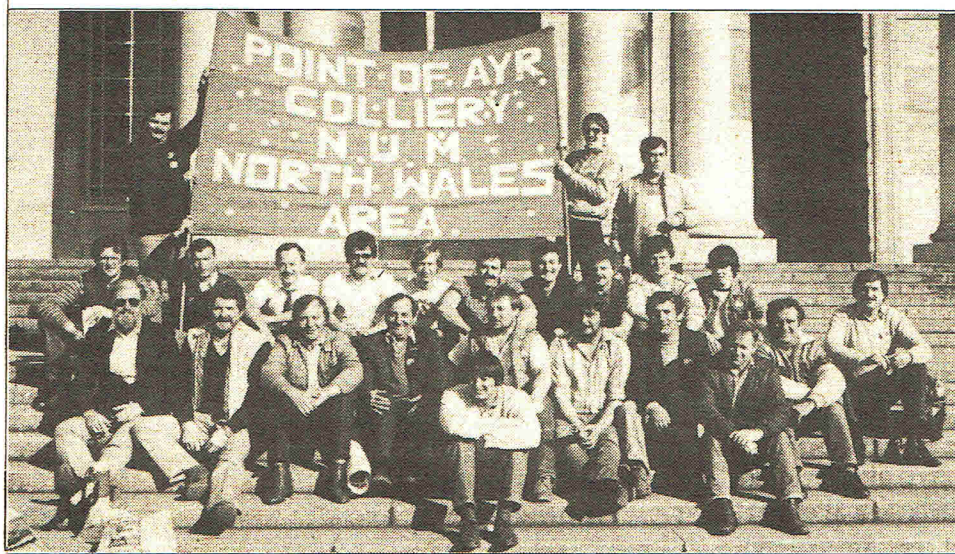
John Mannion and Johnny Wrexham at the Point of Ayr NUM strike centre in Rhyl, describe the position of striking miners in this isolated area:

Out of about 650 workers, about 110 are still on strike. All of us who are out are determined to stick it out until we have won. The history of Point of Ayr speaks for itself. It was the last pit to leave the Spencer union and has always been ready to settle for anything the bosses offer.

Defeatism

They have been conditioned by defeatism and have become alienated from the rest of the coalfields. They are clutching at straws and realising their isolation, they first tried to lean on Lancashire and go in with them, and now are pushing to be included in the Notts area. They want to form their own union called "Democrat '84"

But what future would that union have? They were



Point of Ayr strikers at the Welsh rally 28 April—still out despite huge pressure

Photo: Dave Sinclair

the last to come out in the 1974 strike—every pit came out on the Friday, but these men didn't come out until the Wednesday, and then only after a mass picket had been sent up from South Wales.

They live in a world of their own, a dream world. There is a phrase in today's local paper which describes

people who have "lost touch with the reality of our times" and that sums them up.

No overtime ban

Every other area upheld the overtime ban, not these men at Point of Ayr, and they are now working through the holidays to

move the stocks. They are prepared to take the good things but are not prepared to fight for them.

The strike is as solid as it was on the first day, in fact more solid. The more they abuse Scargill, the more we'll stand behind him. When Thatcher compares Scargill to Galtieri she should remember what that

shallow victory in the Falklands cost us and is still costing us.

This is a Tory area, so the local support has been disgusting, with the exception of a few individuals and factories. We'd especially like to thank NUPE who have lent us a room in their office to use as a strike centre, and the staff in the office have been tremendous.

Lifeline

The real lifeline of support has been from Birkenhead, Liverpool and Ellesmere Port. The print unions in Liverpool have adopted our pit and sent food and money. The unemployed in Birkenhead and Ellesmere Port hold regular collections for us.

We especially appreciate the LPYS and Trades council members from Ellesmere Port who bring a food collection up every Sunday.

Also we've had tremen-

dous co-operation from the Agecroft Strike committee who have allowed us to collect in their area although they have problems of their own.

I think that this strike has made people more politically aware. Personally I am ready to join the Labour Party and be an active member. I still am, although the attitude of Kinnock to the dispute has cast doubts in my mind. That hasn't completely put me off but I haven't got the 100% confidence in him that I had when he was elected leader of the Labour Party.

Fight now

If we don't fight now we won't have a chance to fight in the future. Thatcher knows that when she wants to close the next pit in Wales she can pick on Point of Ayr and if we don't fight now, where will the backing come from then?

Bersham strike still solid

Keith Hett of Bersham NUM explains how his pit is handling the dispute:

Bersham has got better support now than we had in the beginning. We realise that we've been out so long now we can't go back until total victory.

The local leadership is sort of middle of the road. Locally, they are doing their own jobs, they are not really in-

involved in the strike committee, they are doing their own normal work.

Activists

What we call the strike committee have become the activists and they are running the show. That's not to say that the Lodge committee aren't involved—the officials are carrying on with their own work, which takes

a lot of their own time, so they are out of the way a lot.

I have been co-ordinating with Liverpool, meeting trade unions, speaking at meetings, and raising cash.

Once we make the contacts we have regular levies so the job becomes easier as the weeks go by. Other people have got their own jobs such as packing up food parcels, delivering food parcels and all this kind of



A Welsh message for MacGregor

Photo: Dave Sinclair

thing. The local support from non-miners is not bad, not as bad as I thought it would be. When we do street collections for instance, our own lads moan, but I think we get about 50% support—in an area like this I'm pleased with it really.

Labour Party

There's Labour party activists on the support group who play a good role. The Labour party itself is a bit lacking. The national leadership hasn't been involved and they haven't come out as much as they should and this also applies to the whole of the trade union movement—that's a disgrace. In our local branch at Gwersyllt again they surprised me because they come out 100%. It's there at the grass roots, it's the leadership that's lacking all the time.

The role of the Liverpool labour movement has been tremendous. The *Militant* tendency is the best thing. They have proved, haven't they, that if you do carry out your policies, if you go to the people you can win. You can fight the left-wing bogey and

beat it if they see that you are true.

The support we have had off Liverpool has been tremendous. The victory of the Liverpool City Council has given us a lot of encouragement.

We've had help from Ford's, Vauxhall's—big car plants—the dockers and others. My disappointment is locally. We have had good support off the T&G at BICC and a lot of encouragement off them, but there's not many others. The railway lads have done well, and the Fire Brigade.

Militant

Locally, the *Militants* were the first on the streets with the collection boxes in support of the miners, and that's something I always remember. I always point out that Barry Robinson (a local *Militant* supporter) was the first to be arrested for collecting, and I always make a point of this on the YS's behalf.

We're not going back without total victory and everything—, 1983 wage claim, no closures, no

job losses and to be able to dictate the lot, the way Thatcher has dictated to unions that haven't stood up to her.

I have got a serious message for non-striking miners. If we lose this you are going to lose all your trade union rights. You are going to lose the right to negotiate your hours of work, the wages, the conditions—what days you work, and what days you don't, what time you start and finish.

Your pensions will go, because you know, this is what Thatcher's after, she doesn't want working people to have pensions.

You are going to lose everything that the union has won particularly since the last war where we have won a lot of things. You will not have the right to open your mouth and answer back.

It's time they started thinking along these lines. What is in it for them if we lose?—they lose.

Reports by Dave Clarke, Barry Robinson and Stuart White.

Gresford disaster

FIFTY YEARS ago, on 28th September 1934, 265 miners lost their lives in a massive explosion at Gresford Colliery, North Wales.

The men were entombed behind a solid wall of flame, and only six men survived the blast.

Some of the bodies were recovered but were charred beyond recognition. Only the body of a 14 year old pit boy was positively identified.

Explosion

On the Tuesday after the disaster another explosion scattered hundreds of heavy bags of sand and tons of timber used to seal the shaft. A man working near the shaft was killed.

At the court of inquiry into the disaster the Chief Inspector of Mines noted that:

1. The assistant surveyor said that on the instructions of the manager he had not made any air measurements for gas since June. The figures in his notebook for July and August were concocted because the manager had told him to do so a day or two after the disaster.
2. After a fall on the 24 May the ventilation was inadequate.
3. Shotfiring was carried on with little regard for the regulations of the Explosives in Coal Mines Order.
4. Men worked longer hours than were permitted by the Coal Mines Regulation Act 1908, generally known as the Eight Hours Act.

The Chief Inspector of Mines also criticised the entire ventilation system at the mine, and suggested that the money to ensure safe work-

ing had been begrudged.

The company and manager were prosecuted on charges arising from the Chief Inspector's report. They were found guilty and fined £140 with £350 costs—less than £2 for every life lost.

Carnage

The conditions of private ownership which led to the disaster at Gresford must never be allowed to return to British coal mining. The carnage in the South African pits demonstrates that private owners' priorities have not changed over the decades.

By Dave Clark
(North Wales Miners Support Committee, personal capacity)

Pit closures - economics of the madhouse

When talks between the miners and the National Coal Board broke down, Arthur Scargill said: "This strike has been forced to continue over one word—beneficial". Who benefits from closing down pits?

At first sight the Coal Board's claim that "uneconomic" pits should close seems reasonable. Last year the NCB made a loss and had to ask the government for a £630 million handout. You would expect MacGregor to welcome the strike—the longer the better—to clear all the coal stocks.

But then we hear an official announcement that the strike has cost the NCB £600

million so far. As the NUM has pointed out, the total cost to society is very much more. What is the real situation?

Balance sheet

In the first place, one third of the government subsidy is money spent not to keep the pits going but to close them down. £122 million goes to cover the "social cost" of pit closures and £105 million to help cover redundancy

By Mick Brooks

payments. Since Maggie Thatcher is so anxious to save money we can save her £227 million right away—by fighting the closure programme!

But the flow of money is not all one way. The NCB paid the government £360 million in interest on loans of £3,600 million. A write-off of debt charges—money which reaches such undeserving hands as the old private coal owners—could save £2 million a pit.

The National Coal Board is losing £30 million a week through the strike—they save £30 million in wages but lose £60 million in lost production. So each miner makes £1 for the NCB for every £1 he is paid in wages.

That is not the end of the matter. The Central Electricity Generating Board is losing £20 million a week by its politically motivated decision to burn oil instead of coal. Steel is losing £8m a week in lost production. Rail is losing £5m a week in coal freight. The DHSS is losing £1m a week in payments to miners' families, despite attempting to cheat them out of their entitlements. The exchequer is losing £4 million a week in taxes.

Capitalist logic

The real cost of the strike, £70 million a week, drives home the lesson that coal mining is not a drain but a wealth creating sector of the economy that would be disastrous to chop.

The NCB, like capitalist management, say what is good for them is good for the country. The whole fault of a capitalist economy is that individual managers or owners take decisions which are in their own or their firms' interests but not in the interests of society.



Monktonhall miners lobby Scottish delegate meeting last year during a strike at their own pit

Photo: Rick Matthews (IFL)

In articles in the *Guardian* (28 May) and *Militant* (issue 705) Andrew Glyn calculated that the sacking of 40,000 miners in the so called "uneconomic" pits would increase the dole queues by 75,000 because of its knock-on effect on other industries such as mining supplies. This will not be billed to the NCB but will cost society £245 million in lost taxation and increased welfare payments. The coal which would be mined if they were kept at work is worth £475 million—nearly twice as much!

Energy question

Capitalists, including the state capitalist coal board, take short term profit and loss decisions by looking at a balance sheet. This method of decision making is hopeless in the face of capitalist anarchy in world energy markets.

We are supposed to have a glut of energy sources like coal and oil at present. Programmes for building power stations have to be planned for energy requirements fifty years hence and based on projected coal and oil prices fifty years hence. But it is impossible to see what the price of oil will be even a few days into the future—as the fourfold increase of oil prices in 1973 showed. In an anarchic capitalist system nobody actually knows what oil or coal reserves exist.

To take one instance: three months ago Socal took over Gulf Oil for \$13.4bn, the world's biggest ever takeover. The main reason was to buy into Gulf's two billion barrels of oil reserves. While oil prices are depressed so are the share prices of oil companies. It is cheaper to buy other people's reserves than to look



Keeping miners at work is far more 'economic' than putting them on the dole.

Photo: Militant

for your own. So the big oil companies eat each other. This 'shrinking' of known oil reserves will prepare the way for another oil price hike in a few years time.

Plan needed

What is needed is a real plan for coal and energy in general. Short-sighted decisions to close pits can cost a fortune to unmake. Thorne colliery was closed in 1956. It will cost £200 million to reopen and no coal can be produced till 1990 at the earliest. Pits can move from profit to loss within a year, just like Cortonwood did—and they can move into the black just as quickly as energy requirements change.

Apologists for the Tories say that coal can be brought from abroad cheaper. Appalachian coal is said to be cheaper than British coal. However the coal is not to be burned in the Appalachians but over here, and transport

represents a huge extra expense (as Bob MacKee points out in issue 710).

What is true is that in a capitalist crisis of over-production other countries subsidise the export of their coal. Britain's subsidies are only £3.19 per ton compared with £17.72 in France, £16.47 in Belgium and £6.85 in West Germany. This shows that other capitalist governments are not as stupid as the Tories. They are prepared to subsidise coal exports to Britain in the short term so as to destroy the British coal industry. Then they can make a killing.

Energy is the foundation of any modern industrial society. A plan of expanded production for coal is needed, but to get the real benefits we need to plan all production for use, not individual profit.

Objectives and relations with Government

NCB objectives
The Secretary of State for Energy, in a written answer to a Parliamentary Question on March 18 1983, announced that he had settled objectives for the National Coal Board with the Chairman in the following terms:

- 1 Although coal is one of the United Kingdom's major natural resources, in the Government's view the justification for coal production, like that for any other business, lies in the ability of those engaged in it to earn a satisfactory return on capital while competing in the market place. The basic objective for the National Coal Board therefore must be to earn a satisfactory return on its assets in real terms after payment of social grants. This return will be quantified in due course.
- 2 The NCB should aim at that share of the market which they can profitably sustain in competition with other fuels. The Board should not plan on any continuing tranche of sales which will not be profitable. The Board should bring its productive capacity into line with its continuing share of the market.

Tory objectives for the Coal Board illustrate Mick Brooks' argument that the irrationality of pit closures from society's point of view is rooted in the anarchic competition of capitalist production for profit.

Tories ignore energy experts

SINCE MY recent article on the future of British coal (*Militant* 710), some new reports have been published that support the general conclusions reached there.

Those conclusions were: The future demand for coal both worldwide and in the UK is expanding and can easily accommodate increased rather than reduced production in British coalfields; the price of British coal is competitive with other coal-producing areas; production is being cut and pits

closed in the UK for reasons that have little to do with the need for coal or the so-called inefficiency of British coalminers.

Coal demand

A recent report by the International Energy Agency called "Coal prospects and Policies in IEA countries—1983 review" confirms that coal will take a rising share of energy use for the rest of this century—from 25% in 1982 to 30% in the year 2,000. The review does say that there will be a smaller increase in demand

up to 1990 than previously thought. Why? Because the stagnation and decline in world capitalist industry has led to a falling-off of demand for energy and for industrial use of coal.

It is the collapse of the private profit system not the reduction in the need for coal that has reduced expectations of future demand. Nevertheless, the IEA still predicts a 60% increase in coal requirements by the end of the century.

The IEA report also confirms that "the majority of the NCB's present production appears to be com-

petitive with coal produced elsewhere when transport costs to the UK are included" (p139). The recent collapse of coal prices is due to the world recession and has created a temporary surplus of coal in world markets from whatever source.

Electricity sources

A new report by the Policy Studies Institute and the Royal Institute of International Affairs concludes that such is the demand for energy by the end of the century the UK will have to import 40% of its needs

unless coal production is increased to match demand.

The government has tried to argue that energy needs can be met by shifting to nuclear power but this new report makes it clear that even the government plans will not be enough and "substantial construction of coal-fired generating plant would be needed" to provide enough electricity for national requirements.

On a world scale the same situation applies, according to a new IEA survey of "Energy Policies and Programmes". The IEA argues that the demand for oil will

decline as will that for natural gas, while total energy requirements will rise by one-third. Also electricity demand will continue to outstrip economic growth. All these factors add up to increased demand of coal.

Political decision

The real reasons for the attempted cutback in coal production lie firstly with the failure of the private profit system worldwide and in Britain to maintain production levels to meet the needs of the world's population. But they also lie with the aim of the Thatcher government to reduce reliance on coal despite all the advice of international energy authorities.

By Bob McKee

YS summer camp backs miners

THE STRUGGLE of the miners was the central issue at this year's annual LPYS summer camp in the Forest of Dean. Of the 650 young workers present, over a hundred were miners and their families.

The first event of the camp was a Saturday night rally in support of the miners. When the two speakers, Scottish miner Joe Owens and South Wales NUM executive member Ian Isaac took the platform they received a standing ovation.

Joe explained how the strike had exposed the gulf between the classes within society. He attacked the hypocrisy of the police in using thousands of officers to harass

Hypocrisy

workers fighting for their livelihoods, yet deploying a couple of hundred to catch the so-called 'Fox' who has been terrorising working people in the Bedfordshire area.

Ian Isaac condemned the economic madness of the Tories. They speak of 'uneconomic' pits, yet they have developed uneconomic oil fields in the North Sea in an attempt to break the miners, which proved far more expensive than developing the mining industry.

By Heather Rawling

The solidarity of the LPYS with the NUM went further than just holding a meeting. On Tuesday, July 31, a delegation made up of Welsh miners, one miner from each coalfield and members of the LPYS National Committee went with Labour Party National Youth officer Andy Bevan to meet South Wales miners' president Emlyn Williams. They expressed their support for the miners' fight against the courts.

Emlyn said he knew the LPYS would be the first to offer support and he was pleased to receive it. He told them: "We will not pay the fine nor will we appeal against it as would be a waste of time."

He said that the six lodges threatened with closure would lead the march on Wednesday.

The next day the camp mobilised over 300 Young Socialists to join the mass demonstration held on Wednesday August 1.

Oppose the witch-hunt

THE LABOUR Steering Committee Against the Witch-hunt called a meeting on the Sunday night of the camp to express disgust at the right wing's latest attempts to launch a purge against *Militant* supporters and the Young Socialists.

Speaker Jeremy Birch said that while *Militant* supporters and the LPYS had been in the forefront of raising money and food for the miners, the right wing in the Labour Party were moving behind their backs to kick them out of the party. He pointed out that the people who were attacking the miners and their communities—the bosses and the Tories—were the same people who were cheering on the right wing in their attacks on the left.

Kay Smith from Blackburn and Brychan Davies from the Rhondda described the undemocratic nature of their expulsion from the Labour Party. Brychan explained that his only 'crime' was to sell a *Militant* at a Labour Party meeting. During the debate,

many miners expressed their anger at the renewed witch-hunt.



Shareen Blackhall who spoke on behalf of the LPYS at the debate on women (see report).

Photo: Militant



Ian Isaac, executive member of the South Wales NUM who addressed the miners' rally at camp.

Photo: D. Pearson

'Women and the fight for socialism'

ONE OF the best meetings at the summer camp was on 'Women and the fight for socialism'. Two miners' wives joined Shareen Blackhall of the LPYS on the platform to lead the discussion.

From the floor women explained that it was from their experiences that the need for socialism became evident.

Mandy Beckingham explained how, after witnessing the oppression of her mother, she had believed that men as a whole, regardless of class issues, were to

blame. She voted Tory in 1979 believing that a woman prime minister would help the situation faced by women. But within three months Mandy had joined the LPYS; she had seen that it was the capitalist system that was to blame for the oppression of women. As she bluntly put it: "Thatcher has done more harm for women's equality than years of Benny Hill on television!"

The meeting pointed out that the LPYS demands for a minimum wage and the shorter working week were

the sort of demands that would build support for socialism amongst women workers.

The seriousness with which the LPYS took the issue of getting women involved in the labour movement was clearly seen from the excellent creche facilities available at the camp. For the very young there was marvellous service, while the 7 to 12 year olds were organised into the 'Young Pioneers', with many trips and outings arranged for them.

Stamp out race attacks

THE RECENT murderous attack on a black ticket collector at Seven Kings Station, in East London is probably the worst racial attack seen in the area for years. But it is by no means an isolated example.

By Mark Avis
(Newham NW LPYS)

Over the past few weeks in the London Borough of Newham, there has been a frightening increase in racial attacks.

There have been three such attacks outside a local wine bar, several attacks in the Manor Park area and a petrol bomb attack on a local mosque.

Racial incidents

The attitude of the police and the local paper to these attacks has to be seen to be believed. The police implied that the Mosque incident was due to "conflicts in the Asian Community". The *Newham Recorder* reports what are clearly racial incidents as merely "criminal".

But black people in the borough, notably the young Asians, have not been prepared to just accept the situation. The Newham Eight were charged with "conspiracy" for fighting back against racial and



Local youth demonstrate in support of the Newham 8 last year.

Photo: Militant

police harassment. A massive campaign ensured a victory in that case.

Now the "Newham Seven"—so called in order to show that it is a continuation of the factors which led to the Newham 8 Defence Campaign—are up for trial.

The seven were arrested after an incident on April 7. Earlier on that day three racists travelled around in a car carrying out attacks—in one incident beating up a disabled Asian boy with a hammer.

Resistance

They later attacked some young Asians outside a local pub, but were met with resistance by those and other

Asian lads who were in a nearby Hamburger bar.

Predictably, the police arrived and arrests were made. The seven have been charged with "conspiracy" and "causing an affray." Amazingly they were kept on remand for an average of five weeks, while the police were "preparing a case".

The police (this time) also arrested two racists. But don't be fooled, this isn't "even-handedness" by the police, it's a subtle attempt to portray the incident as "gang-warfare" and not a racial incident. They were let straight out on bail.

The increase in attacks, the fact they have been pre-planned is undoubtedly linked to the fact that since the

falling away of support for the fascists they are now hitting out wildly in deadly, vicious attacks on lone Asian workers and youth. Since the late 1970s, the fascists have split and factionalised as the minimal support they had fell away. Some have collapsed into the Tory Party as the recent *Panorama* programme illustrated, while the hard-line Nazis are regrouping and looking towards the terrorist atrocities of their counterparts in Europe. In Newham, the NF are attempting to re-organise.

No trust

Despite these events, and despite the fact that local

Indian crisis meeting

OUR LPYS branch in Leicester called a meeting on the current crisis in India. We had planned for an attendance of around 25, so you can imagine our astonishment when over 100 Sikhs turned up from all over the county.

Our guest speaker was Anil Singh of Bradford South LPYS, who stressed the importance of socialist perspectives when taking up the question of India and in particular the current issue of the Punjab. He explained that Mrs Gandhi and international capitalism were responsible for the horrors unleashed by communalism.

There was intense discussion and indeed heckling of various speakers. Gandhi was attacked as well as the two Communist Parties of

India who had backed Gandhi's military intervention in Amritsar.

But the lively debate served as a testament to the necessity of the LPYS intervening on this subject so that all the issues could be discussed. As one Sikh explained afterwards, he appreciated the fact that the LPYS was the only serious youth movement that took real interest in the situation in India.

It is hoped that from this meeting the LPYS will be able to show the need for workers unity around socialist policies, between Sikhs and non-Sikhs, against Indian capitalism.

By Sat Dhadli
(Leicester East LPYS)

people, especially but not only black people and Asians, have no trust in the police to protect them, the local Labour Council has begun to set up a "Police Consultative Committee" which, despite the illusions of some councillors, will be nothing but a "rubber-stamp" on the activities of the police in the Borough. The council already has a "police sub-committee" which, although far from perfect, at least has enabled local anti-racist groups such as the Newham Monitoring Project to push for an independent public inquiry into the Newham Eight case.

There has been a much greater desire among the ranks of the local Labour

Parties to see the racists stopped and police harassment checked. As such the three LPYS branches in Newham will be giving full support to the Newham 7 Defence Campaign.

Brutality

In the miners' strike we have seen the sort of police brutality that black and Asian communities have suffered for years.

For more information, speakers, and to send donations, write to: Newham 7, Box 273, Forest Gate, London E7

Strategy to counter rate-capping

THE GOVERNMENT unveiled rate-capping proposals last Tuesday, 24 July, in its latest attempt to cut local authority spending. Eighteen authorities appeared on the hit list, eleven of them in London.

Since the Tories came to power in 1979 they have consistently cut the rate support grant which has meant that local authorities have basically three choices, or a combination of three, before them: that is cuts in jobs and/or services, "humane" or otherwise; rate increases; or to demand a restoration of the rate support grant by making a stand and defeating the Tories. Only one authority has so far chosen the latter. The victory in Liverpool and the recent decisions of Labour's Local Government conference are a vindication of the consistent position put by *Militant* supporters.

By Theresa Wrack
(London Labour Party
Exec, personal capacity)

Council strategy has to be viewed from the effect that it will have on the mass movement and must be based on building the confidence and unity of the working class. We have to begin by laying down the basic principles of no cuts in services, no rent increases or rate rises above the rate of inflation, and no reduction in staffing levels. Included in this must be complete opposition to councils keeping vacancies unfilled.



The success of Liverpool council's stand against the Tories has many lessons for the battle against rate-capping—not least the mass mobilisations the council was able to rely on at crucial points in the struggle.

The most effective way to do this is by presenting a budget, including a proposed rate, and publicly demanding that the government make up the short-fall to balance the books—as Liverpool did. If councils just don't fix a rate then they will be portrayed as refusing to set a rate because the government will not let them put through a high increase. Remember, many councils artificially held down the rate in the run-up to last year's General Election after a series of quite large rate increases.

Some councillors are claiming that Liverpool's strategy was one of not mak-

ing a rate. Liverpool's stand however was built around a positive campaign to build a mass movement in defence of jobs and services. The 'no rate' option lends itself to a passive, bureaucratic interpretation, which does not involve local authority workers, trade unionists and the wider community in action around a fighting programme to defend the council.

Mass pressure on councillors

It is vital the movement is built through a convincing strategy that compels coun-

cillors to make the stand necessary to defend those jobs and services. Mass pressure has to be put on those councillors to keep them in line. There are no excuses left, the only course is to stand and fight.

Workers up and down the country are prepared to defend jobs and services and to deal an almighty blow to the Tories. A united front of all rate-capped councils is a strategy which must be supported. Failure to build that front, however, cannot be used as an excuse for any single council backing out of the struggle claiming lack of support. If necessary a single council may have to begin

the struggle, like Liverpool, and appeal over the heads of the other councils to the rank and file for support.

The Tories must be beaten, Liverpool has shown it is possible. *The Times* pointed out on 11 July: "By exempting Liverpool from the consequences of spending above its target the government subverts its whole government financial policy of the past 4 years. It issues an open invitation to councils to say the caps don't fit and they won't wear them."

Councils around the country should accept that invitation with vigour and determination.



Democracy day demonstration in London last March. Abolition of the Met councils and GLC and rate-capping are two sides of the same Tory coin.

We have argued against rate rises to pay for Tory cuts, pointing out it is workers who pay and that Labour councils making the cuts and increasing the rates will only alienate support.

We also pointed out that the Tories would eventually act against strategies of indefinite rate rises, especially as the CBI was pointing to the percentage of its profits being paid in rates—19% in 1969 compared to 50% in 1980.

Out-maneuvring the Tories through loop-holes in the law can only be a very partial strategy because they have the necessary majority in the Commons and the House of Lords to block such moves.

Mass movement

Liverpool has proved that the way to defeat the Tories is by building a mass movement and the preparedness of councillors to struggle. We cannot support the idea that councillors will only enter into struggle if they have a guarantee that they will not suffer—look at the miners.

The recent Labour Party Local Government conference came out in support of the position which *Militant* has consistently argued to be the only way to combat Tory attacks, but unfortunately only after many Labour Councils have been boxed in by successive Tory measures.

The same conference gave support to the "no rates option" as the strategy to fight the Tories. In many ways this is a step forward, as at least it implies these councils are prepared to make a stand. However, how council employees and the wider public see the council's position is vital.

The Tories will present rate-capping as an attack on high rates. Labour councils therefore cannot be seen to be campaigning for the right to increase rates by as much as they want. Rather Labour councils should turn the Tories' attack around, saying they will put up the rates no more than the rate of inflation and maintain jobs and services and this can be done by the government restoring the rate support grant.

Jack Straw and Liverpool

The article (reprinted below) from the *Lancashire Evening Telegraph* refers to the 'key role' of Jack Straw MP in Liverpool City Council's struggle with the government. Jack Straw, well known for his witch-hunting of *Militant* supporters in his Blackburn constituency was reported to be 'delighted' with his victory. The letter (below right) by Derek Hatton (Deputy Leader, Liverpool City Council) to the newspaper sets the record straight.

"A DELIGHTED Mr Jack Straw was today able to claim victory in his fight to prevent a major clash between the government and Liverpool City Council.

He spoke out after a compromise solution involving the government offering the city an extra £20 million to end its rates rebellion.

The Blackburn MP played a key role in delicate talks between city councillors and officials, Department of Environment officials, and Environment Secretary Patrick Jenkin.

It was widely believed today that without Mr Straw's intervention there would have been a confrontation between the council and Mr Jenkin leading commissioners being sent into run the city.

Mr Straw, who has had his own problems with the expulsion of *Militant* Tendency from Blackburn Labour Party, said discussions with *Militant* Tendency city leaders had been "fraternal".

Mr Straw was acting in his capacity as a Labour spokesman on local government under Shadow Environment Secretary John Cunningham."

(From *Lancashire Evening Telegraph* 10/7/84)

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 88
MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS
LIVERPOOL, L69 2DH

The editor,
Lancashire Evening Telegraph,
New Telegraph House,
High Street,
Blackburn,
LANCS BB1 1HT

Dear Sir,

My attention has been drawn to your article in the edition of the *Lancashire Evening Telegraph* dated Tuesday, 10th July, 1984 entitled "MP's key role in rates row solution."

Knowing Jack Straw as I do, I am sure he has not sought to claim that our victory in Liverpool was due to him. I recall that in March 1984 Jack was telling us to raise the rates by 60%, an option which would still have meant job losses and cuts in services.

We rejected that advice and continued our campaign which was successful in securing the extra resources we needed. The Tory government only gave in because they knew that we had massive active support of the majority of the working class in Liverpool.

It is worth noting that in Liverpool over 40,000 more workers voted Labour in May 1984 than did so two years previously. This is no accident. It is because we have campaigned on socialist policies and implemented them.

So successful has our campaign been that Sir Trevor Jones, the Leader of the Opposition Liberal Group on Liverpool Council has demanded that Neil Kinnock expel *Militant* supporters from the Liverpool Labour Party. Sir Trevor knows that his only hope of regaining power in Liverpool rests on a Labour Party without *Militant* supporters, such as the attraction of the ideas and supporters of *Militant* to ordinary working people.

The biggest contribution that Jack and others can make in the fight against the Tories is to stop expelling young people from the Labour Party and get on with the job of building a national campaign against the Tories based on the policies successfully pursued by Liverpool

Yours sincerely

Derek Hatton
Deputy Leader

From boom to crisis

By means of appropriately reinforcing monetary and fiscal policies, our mixed enterprise system (Capitalism) can avoid the excess of boom and slump and can look forward to healthy progressive growth."

(Paul Samuelson, Nobel Prize for Economics, 1958)

"Whatever the exact date, it is absolutely certain that the unprecedented post war boom must be followed by a period of catastrophic downswing."

(Ted Grant, Political Editor *Militant*, *Will There Be a Slump?*, 1961)

"... the present upturn should reach a peak next year from which time the movement will be downwards. Given the incompleteness of the European recovery—with unemployment likely to remain above 12% in some countries—any further business deterioration would justify the word slump rather than recession."

(Samuel Brittan, *Financial Times*, 11 June 1984)

THE 25 YEARS of capitalist economic upswing from 1950 to 1975 was the greatest expansion of industry, technique and science in world history. The explosive economic growth in this period resulted in the expansion of world trade by an astronomical 400% and world industrial production by 300%. It allowed capitalism partially to overcome its internal contradictions and provide the material basis for a rise in living standards in the West.

Lease of life for capitalism

The colonial world did not share in this wealth. Due to the increasingly unfavourable terms of trade with the advanced industrial countries, they experienced economic convulsions and falling standards in this period giving further impetus to the colonial revolution. But, nevertheless, on a global scale, capitalism experienced a further lease of life.

After the second world war two real victors emerged on a world scale: Russian Stalinism and American imperialism. US capitalism, untouched by war destruction, emerged even more strengthened finally displacing Britain as the main capitalist superpower.

At this time America accounted for more than half of the world's total production. Three quarters of world trade was invoiced in dollars and two thirds of the world's gold held in Fort Knox.

As a result of this strength US imperialism imposed on its capitalist counterparts the Bretton Woods Agreement, establishing the dollar instead of gold as the medium of exchange in world trade. Gold was to be bought through dollars at the fixed rate of £35 per ounce. Thus the European post-war recovery took place under the patronage of American capitalism, which used its economic strength to shore up—unlike the Versailles Treaty following the 1914-18 war—the system against the spectre of revolution.

The reasons for the golden age

The post war boom was ushered in by the rebuilding of war-torn industry by US "Marshall Aid" finance, the development of new industries, state expenditure, injections of fictitious capital (see explanation below) and increased trade and markets. All of this provided massive scope for investment, the key to economic growth. Between 25% and 35% of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) was ploughed back into rebuilding plant and industry, resulting in a dramatic increase in the productivity of labour.

This expansion/upswing, in turn brought about the "liberalisation" of world trade which provided a gigantic impetus to growth. The development of world trade (growing at 12½% per year) in turn brought tariff barriers between different countries crashing down.

The intensified international division of labour gave a further boost to the upswing of the world economy, and greatly increased the inter-dependence of the national economies. An integrated world economy and a world market were established on a far higher level and scale than ever before.

All these factors dialectically interacted to provide the biggest explosion of economic development ever experienced by mankind. The fundamental contradictions of capitalism—the existence of the nation state and private property as fetters on the productive forces—were partially overcome. The creation of the EEC and the smaller European Free Trade Association EFTA were a limited recognition of that tendency.

Internationally the strategists of capital abandoned the economic "theories" of the pre-war period, of balanced budgets. They adopted the new "Keynesianism"—deficit financing—as the panacea for capitalist economic development.

From Keynes to Friedman

The policies of Keynesianism were used by the state as a license to print money which was worthless as it was not backed by any gold or production. It eventually resulted in a chronic inflationary disease. Where one dollar, Franc, or pound sterling is replaced by two pieces of paper—which has meant no increase in real wealth whatsoever—prices will inevitably double. The value of the currency would have been reduced by half, so prices would have to rise to reflect real values.

Billions of worthless dollars (fictitious capital) were used to buy large chunks of European industry and pay off debts. Today, there are at least 1,000 billion "Euro-dollars" slushing around the world economy.

The international explosion of inflation during the 1970's brought back the spectre of hyper-inflation as in Germany in 1923 where the currency became worthless. In absolute panic and fear, the capitalists internationally abandoned their "saviour" Keynes, and moved back to the "orthodox" economic dogma of sound currencies—Friedmanism or monetarism as it is variously known.

In the post war period, American imperialism took over from the British the role of the world's policeman: the chief agency for counter-revolution. With the



US workers demonstrate in 1945; at the beginning of the upswing. Workers gained immeasurably in strength and organisation in the boom years.

heightened development of the colonial revolution, particularly in South East Asia, this policing function meant an enormous drain on the US economy and its gold reserves.

This was a significant factor in the decline of the American and hence the world economy as successive US governments reverted to the printing press to plug their balance of payments deficits; the dollar progressively shrank in real value. By 1971 the monetary system broke down.

The US ran its first deficit since before the Civil War and the rest of the world was not prepared to hold on to worthless dollars—there was not enough gold in Fort Knox to cover them. In the 1960s world dollar reserves grew by 2 to 3% per year, but in 1971 the reserves jumped to 43% as dollars were cashed in for other currencies!

The return of slump and boom

As a result the American President, Nixon, imposed a surcharge on all imports into the US and devalued the dollar. By 1973 the convertibility of the dollar into gold was suspended and the Bretton Woods agreement abolished.

The change of economic policy internationally and the adoption of monetarism coincided with the first simultaneous economic recession in the capitalist world since the pre-war period. The 1974-75 slump ... resulted in a 10% fall in industrial production in the main capitalist countries of the OECD. On an international scale world trade only declined by ½%, but resulted in

the return of mass unemployment and the opening up of a new economic decline of capitalism.

It drastically shook the confidence of the capitalist class as it provoked revolutionary upheavals, particularly in Southern Europe (Greece, Spain, Italy, Portugal) and gave an impetus to the colonial revolution (Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Cambodia).

THE QUADRUPLING of oil prices in late 1973, did not cause the recession, as the apologists for capitalism suggest, but added to and intensified the accumulation of contradictions that came to a head at that time: the fall in the rate of profit, fall in absolute profits, fall in investment, fall in growth rates, leading to chronic excess capacity (an expression of over-production).

Marx explained over a century ago that "the ultimate reason for all real crisis always remains the poverty and restricted consumption of the masses..."

However, despite the permanent restricted consumption of the masses, capitalism does not face a permanent crisis of over production due to the relation between what Marx called Department 1 (production of capital goods) and Department 2 (production of consumer goods) of capitalist production.

The workers and capitalists of both Departments consume consumer goods produced in Department 2. The capitalists of both Departments consume capital goods for Department 1. The surplus value extracted from the labour of the working class in the process is then reinvested into increased amounts of capital goods

for capital construction and the growth of production.

The crisis is manifested most noticeably at present in the capitalists' failure to invest adequately. This inevitably gives rise in the long term, to over production in the capital goods sector and then in the consumer sector. Investment has been falling for a number of years, with the growth of excess capacity, a falling rate of profit and a shrinking market.

Destroying means of production

The failure to invest the surplus extracted from the labour of the working class reflects the absolute blind alley capitalism has entered. It means that the capitalist class has lost its historical justification. It is failing to develop production and take society forward. Once a system reaches such an impasse, a revolutionary transformation of society is posed on the order of the day.

The productive forces have outgrown the strait-jacket of capitalism. The material basis for a classless society of superabundance has been created by capitalism, but in its quest for profits, it is forced to destroy the means of production in convulsive slumps and crisis.

Not only in the EEC, but in America "warehouses, grain stores and caves are filled with grain, milk, butter and cheese, and more than a third of all farmland has been taken out of production in an effort to reduce the brimming food stocks of the world's most abundant country." Yet 32 million of



Photo: Militant

The post-war boom missed out on the colonial and ex-colonial world. Even in the slightly better off areas like Sri Lanka this is the level of much local industry.

the US population of 233 million are "graded as below the poverty line and the mayors say soup kitchens are not keeping pace with the hungry." (*The Times*, 25 July 1983)

The capitalists are not interested in simply producing commodities. Their sole motive for investment and production is making profits which come from the unpaid labour of the working class. Nothing will be produced unless a profit can be made from it. That is why factories are closed and workers made unemployed—not because things are not needed by society, but the lack of "effective" demand (ie backed up by cash payment) to use the terminology of capitalist economists.

Unlike the previous crisis of 1920/21 and 1929/32, which resulted in a massive fall in prices, the 1974/75 recession saw only a fall in the *rate* of inflation. Such was the amount of fictitious capital existing in the world economy, and the existence of international monopolies keeping up prices, the capitalist economists were to describe this new unique situation in capitalism not as "stagflation" (as they had said previously) but "slumpflation"!

Making the problems worse

The protracted world upswing had finally come to a decisive end. A new epoch of short booms and deeper slumps had arisen, (in 2/3 year cycles) with capitalism entering another impasse similar to the inter-war period. Permanent mass unemployment had returned to all major industrial countries, estimated at 17 million officially in the OECD countries during the winter of 1975/76.

The recovery of 1976/77 was feeble and reflected not just a temporary setback but an organic crisis of the capitalist system. This organic crisis manifests itself in the fact that the system in a boom can only use 80% of productive capacity and in a slump only 70% of capacity. Capitalism has become an absolute fetter on development.

Nevertheless the very seeds of recovery are present in capitalist slump, resulting in the system's continuous boom/slump cycle. The crisis destroys a certain proportion of the unused productive forces through bankruptcies and factory closures bringing about a concentration of the most profitable capital, thereby laying a new basis for an increase in the exploitation of the working class and a recovery in the rate of profit.

However, no recovery can be sustained without massive investment and a big increase in the productivity of labour.

The "boom" of 1976/79 was quickly followed by another slump resulting in the volume of world trade falling by 1% in 1981 and 2%

in 1982. In Britain, industrial production fell by a greater amount than in 1929/33. The new policy of monetarism advocated and implemented by Thatcher and Reagan, far from solving capitalism's problems, only served to exacerbate them!

In Britain, Thatcher's policies slashed the market and turned the recession into a depression with 20% of manufacturing industry driven to the wall and unemployment climbing officially to over 3 million. Once again this classic crisis of over-production expressed itself in the form of drastic over-capacity.

The domination of the world economy by huge monopolies—500 dominate about 80% to 90% of world trade—enables them to calculate the likely demand and cut back on capacity to prevent a massive over-production of commodities.

a fall in tariff barriers. The increase in protectionism on the other hand (which is inevitable) will further drastically contract world trade. In the 1930's tariff walls resulted in trade war and world trade contracted by 60%.

Protectionist policies

With the rise of Japan, Germany, and other major competitors and the over-valued dollar resulting in a flood of imports into the US, pressure has mounted for protectionist measures there and more than 100 pieces of legislation are pending in Congress.

Already America has clashed with the EEC over agricultural imports and US energy subsidies. In 1980 Carter imposed price restrictions on European steel and 2 years later directly limited steel imports. As a result, the EEC, Japan, Mex-

output in 1980 was 5.59 vehicles per man year, in 1981 it was 7.45 and in 1983 it was 14.2. **Yet this has come about not by massive investment but by employment falling faster than output.**

According to the Department of Trade, investment in manufacturing will increase this year by 12%. A smaller increase of about 6% is projected by 1985. Yet even if this materialises, the volume of manufacturing investment in 1985 will still be about 25% lower than 1979!

This is at a time when the big monopolies internationally are making record profits: Courtaulds, the world's largest textile concern pushed up its pre-tax profits by 86% in 1983/84; Volvo, Scandinavia's largest industrial corporation, increased its profits by 154% in the first quarter of 1984; Reed International's pre-tax profit rose by 58%; Lonrho profits rose

wealth. But as a *Financial Times* editorial explained gloomily, "the dispiriting reality is that this sort of growth does not look a remote possibility for Europe".

Paradoxically one of the reasons for this is the high US interest rates, which have increased four times this year, dragging the European rates up behind it. As a result capital has been drawn away from much needed investment in European industry to finance the US budget deficit! American capitalism has therefore placed Europe "on rations", to use Trotsky's words, and put the colonial world "on starvation rations". For every one percent increase in US interest rates the debtor countries are forced to pay an extra \$3.5 billion per year. They are being ground into the dirt.

The new slump on the horizon will be on deeper scale than 1979/82. The reserve army of unemployed will grow enormously as the capitalists once again attempt to put the full burden of the crisis onto the shoulders of the working class. Even a crash on the lines of 1929 cannot be ruled out, but will more likely develop in the early 1990s.

The crisis—far from cowering the working class—will this time undermine completely any illusions of lasting capitalist recovery and compel the working class onto the offensive. The massive strike waves—a symptom of the pre-revolutionary crisis that exists—in Italy, Spain and Greece, will affect all capitalist powers.

It will open up the most revolutionary epoch in world history. Capitalism is in an absolute impasse. Such an insoluble crisis will force the bourgeois to look in the longer terms to totalitarian methods, as in the 1930s to solve its problems. The labour movement must be warned!

The overthrow of Stalinism in the East will bring about real workers' democracy. The overthrow of capitalism in the West will mean the international planning of human resources according to needs and end the horrific nightmare of capitalist crisis.

With the enormous strides forward of science and the development of computers and micro-processors, the face of the planet could be transformed in a decade or so. The task is to rearm the labour movement internationally with a Marxist method and a clear programme.

The only alternative capitalism can offer is a degeneration into barbarism and eventual nuclear annihilation.

The urgent need is to prevent such a catastrophe by carrying through the socialist transformation of society, rendering capitalism an obsolete stage in the history of mankind.

By Rob Sewell



The strikes by engineering and print workers in West Germany show the clashes on their way.

Nevertheless the effects are the same: productive potential is cut back drastically. The productive forces are destroyed systematically in a Luddite fashion: steel plants, car factories, shipyards, coal mines, manufacturing industries are closed down to cut back the capacity. In the OECD countries, only 69% of steel capacity was used in 1980/81. In Europe it fell to 58% in 1982.

There are 40 million unemployed in the major capitalist countries alone. As *Business Week* explained: "If the US has to invest approximately 20% of its GNP in new capacity, there would not be enough warehouses to store all the unsold merchandise..."

Over the past 15 years and more, growing rivalries on world markets have resulted in protectionist measures being introduced. The danger for capitalism is that the boom itself was made possible by

ico, South Africa, and Brazil have all agreed voluntarily to limit their exports to the US for fear of complete restriction.

Nevertheless, a trade war is on the agenda in the next period, as each capitalist power attempts to solve its problems at the others' expense in a shrinking world market. Such a trade war would put into the shade the collapse of world trade in the early 1930's, that led to a decade of unparalleled revolution and a counter-revolution.

THE RECOVERY underway in 1983-84 is mainly sustained on a "consumer boom", expansion of service industries and credit. Investment has lagged behind due to the massive excess capacity which exists, the low rate of profit, and the high rate of interest charged for loans.

In Britain, as elsewhere, productivity of labour has increased enormously. In BL cars for example,

to £113.2 million (1983) from £75.1 million (1982). And so on.

Yet despite this, the capitalist economists are already predicting a new slump in 1985. The recovery is so weak that it is termed a "growth recession"! Unlike in previous booms, production increases, but unemployment fails to decline. And the reason? Capitalism, in an absolute impasse, is unable to use the manpower available for profitable ends.

"Unemployment remains high partly because companies, big and small, are as yet reluctant to reverse the job cutting policies that have served them, if not the country, so well." (*Financial Times*, 9 June, 1984).

Despite the US economy, the mightiest capitalist economy, growing by around 6% this year, it is mainly through the growth of service industries and not manufacturing production, the basis for real

USA

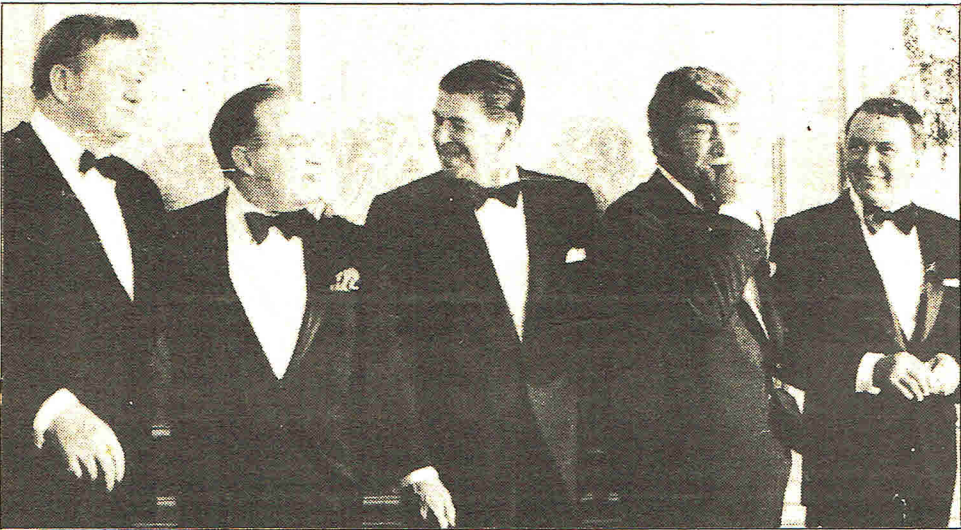
The real voice of the workers

ORGANISED LABOUR once again staged a massive show of strength here in San Francisco on 15 July. Some 200,000 union members marched and listened to speeches denouncing Reagan and his "policies for the rich".

The march officially commemorated the 50th Anniversary of the San Francisco General Strike but its real purpose was a send-off to Walter Mondale's presidential campaign.

The holiday mood of the marchers combined with an intense bitterness and hatred of Reagan, with such popular chants as "Ronald Reagan, he's no good; send him back to Hollywood" and the popularity of badges like the one with a crossed out picture of Reagan and the slogan "No Bozos".

While some pro-Mondale slogans were seen, the vast majority were simply anti-Reagan and with a few notable exceptions the parade missed the basic issues working people are facing.



Reagan in pre-President days with John Wayne, Bob Hope, Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra. For US politicians, there's no business like big business.

One exception was a fantastic float prepared by the "Rank and File Against the Two Gate" a group of construction workers whose actions have been covered in previous issue of *Militant*. Two gate jobs (one for union, one for non-union), popularly dubbed "two gaters" have become symbolized by a two headed "gator" or alligator. This "two gater's" two heads moved, its jaws opened and closed, its eyes blinked and breathed "smoke" out its nostrils with a roaring sound. Carpenters, painters, ironworkers and electricians together showed their imagination and humour!

Strikes in San Francisco

The float was financed by the selling of "two gater buttons"—eagerly bought by the other union members, but shunned by delegates to the Democratic convention.

As a backdrop, an increasingly bitter strike continues against two of San Francisco's more stylish department stores—Macy's and Emporium-Capwells. While Emporium made \$76.4 million, both stores were demanding the virtual

By John Reimann
(Carpenters' Local 36,
Oakland,
personal capacity)

elimination of health benefits, which would amount to roughly a \$3500 cut in pay for each worker per year. Pickets have been maintained in front of both stores—successful enough to force the stores to obtain an injunction from a friendly judge which severely limits the pickets.

"We'll remember come November"

Predictably, no prominent Democrats has come out in support of the strikers. Mayor Feinstein has called on the workers to accept some form of cutbacks. And

labour party, there is not much that can be done—except learn the lessons and organise.

San Francisco's streets are clean for the convention. The homeless, the scavengers, those forced to sleep in doorways, have either been locked up or run out of town—at least until the convention ends. Mondale has apparently made a real success by selecting Geraldine Ferraro as his running mate. Lost in all the hoopla over the fact of her sex has been her role as chair of the Democratic Platform Committee, where she has successfully manoeuvred to avoid the Democratic Platform making any specific commitments on any issues.

The reason is easy to see, when, for example, the *Wall Street Journal* is predicting that no matter who gets elected, the new president will have to "cut Social Security and Medicare next year in order to trim the huge federal deficit."

The real financing for the Democrats is revealed in a

Mondale, Ferraro, and Jackson have totally ignored the issue. Jackson spoke at a rally opposite Macy's on 14 July. Earlier in the campaign Jackson joined a strike picket line in New Jersey, but now he failed to even mention the Macy's strike, a reflection of the pressure the Democratic establishment is putting on Jackson (with increasing success) to toe the line.

While some Democratic delegates are not crossing the line a surprising number are going in. No open, general campaign has been launched at the convention to keep all delegates out (which would have to include observers from the convention at all Macy's and Emporium entrances), much less to get any delegates to join the picket line.

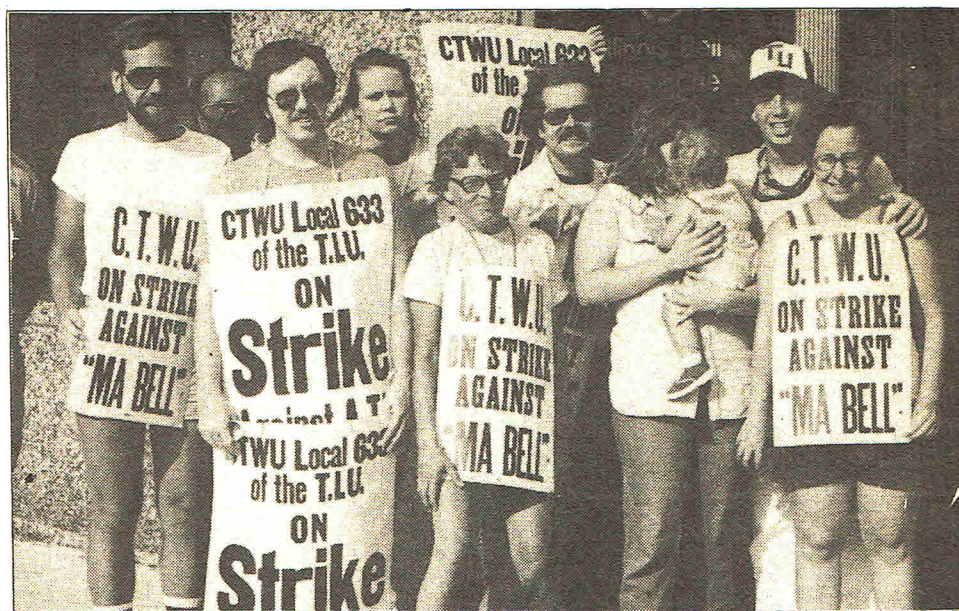
A brief exchange between a picket and a scabbing delegate best shows the bind labour is in by blindly supporting the "lesser of two evils": When the delegate was taunted for crossing by a picket who shouted: "We'll remember, come November", the delegate shot back, "Well, what can you do about it—vote for Reagan?" Under the circumstances, without a

San Francisco Chronicle article. In addition to such major corporate donors to the convention as Atlantic Richfield Bechtel, Crocker Bank and Standard Oil of California (\$100,000 each) there are such individual donors as Lee Prussia (Bank of America) Ann Getty (Getty Oil) Walter Shorestein (real estate investor) and Madeline Haas Russel (Levi Strauss heiress) along with others who have also donated \$100,000 each.

A party of labour

This money wasn't donated for charitable purposes. "Nobody, including senators and governors, has a higher priority than our major contributors," said the chief fundraiser for the Democratic Host Committee, Walter Shorestein. In addition to such "perks" as seats on the floor of the convention and private meetings with the candidates (where they will be able to "discuss" the issues of their concern) donors are promised, "we'll do the right thing by you."

While the poverty and hardships of the homeless, the unemployed, the underpaid—along with the Macy's



American telecomms workers on the picket line against the ATT monopoly. But the bosses dominate both US political parties.

and Emporium strikers—continued during this convention week, Mondale shouldn't be feeling the pinch too much—in his hotel suite which is costing some \$1500 per night! (Jackson, as befits the American tradition of making all blacks second class citizens, even the middle class ones, is 'only' pay-

ing \$850 per night.)

No less than 44% of the delegates to the convention earned over £38,000 a year. Only one in ten earned less than £19,000. This is the party which organised labour has supported—but for how long?

The issues continue—as do the contrasts between the

lives of American workers and big business. The spirit of the many young sisters and brothers on the picket lines, and the creativity of the "Rank and File Against the Two Gate" will build a politically independent workers' party. Unlike the Democrats, they are the real voice of our class.

Jackson shows need for class politics

ON 17 July, Jesse Jackson made a keynote speech to Democratic convention which was covered by the TV networks nationally on "prime time".

As a speaker, Jackson is head and shoulders above any other major political figure in America—both in oratory and sharp wit. This is no accident. The political leaders are becoming increasingly mediocre (at best) due to the increased confusion and inability of capitalist leaders to see any way out of the coming crisis.

Much as he might wish the contrary, Jackson will never truly stand in the real inner circles of those who chart the course for corporate America. Jackson's two basic themes appear to be a demand for "respect" and "hope" for the oppressed,

the downtrodden and the youth of America.

The outer trappings of respect were given him, inspiring a tremendous pride among millions of black Americans, as a reaction to the racism built into American capitalism. As for the hope for the future, most especially for the youth—that must remain unchanged.

Big business

As do all American politicians, Jackson spoke against poverty, unemployment, dope, hatred, and war. He spoke convincingly but given his open commitment to work within the Democratic Party, both now and in the future, there will be no way for him to lead a movement which can really make a difference.

Jackson laid the blame for

poverty at the feet of Reagan, for example. However, under Carter, with a Democratic congress, the number of families in poverty in the United States rose by some 700,000. Unemployment at the close of the Carter administration was higher than it stands today.

There will be no solution while big business dominates American society. The only way forward remains a mass movement of youth and American workers which will channel itself into the labour movement, build a mass labour party, and provide the basis for the transformation of American society in the interests of American workers. As was the case with the Liberal Party in Britain, the Democrats will play absolutely no progressive role in this process.

"Just another reactionary millionaire"

THE DEMOCRATIC Party circus in preparation for November's presidential elections offered little real opposition to Reagan's reelection.

Cuts in public spending (except defence) accompanied by tax rises was the exciting prospect offered by Mondale. He wanted a 4% increase in military spending after inflation, while moderate old Hart wanted a mere 3% rise and stipulated it should only be for conventional weapons.

Breakthrough for women?

Not surprisingly, the Democrats, who depend on an uneasy coalition of organised labour and various pressure groups feel they need a boost to stop any pressure towards an independent party of labour. They have given a large amount of publicity to Mondale's selection of Mrs Geraldine Ferraro as running mate for Mondale for Vice President.

It has infuriated a few reactionaries, but improved for a while the Democrats' opinion poll ratings. Is this



Geraldine Ferraro.

a breakthrough for working class women in the USA? Betty Traun writes from New York.

"Geraldine Ferraro was first elected as a congresswoman from Queens in New York City in 1978 on the Democratic ticket. She lives in a very rich district of Forest Hills; her husband is a real estate millionaire. They live in four homes!

"Just adjacent is the lower middle class Ridgewood district with such a reactionary tradition that TV producers used it as the locale for the popular Archie Bunker show about a reactionary racist (the American equivalent of Alf Garnett). There is a mainly Catholic population from Italian origins so Ferraro suddenly

poses as the poor Italian workers' daughter who knows the problems of the poor.

"She knows nothing about the poor and nothing about foreign policy either though she admits that much. If Mondale wins this year people are saying she is just a "pistol shot" or a Nixon-type scandal away from the White House. The Vice Presidency is an important position.

Zip code campaigner

"But in her six years in the House the only bill she put any effort into was to change the Post Office zip code for her Ridgewood constituents. I send a lot of protest letters to leading reactionaries. The reply I got to one for Mrs Ferraro showed her to be very abrasive and she showed this in her newspaper interview on accepting running for Vice-President.

"She merely showed her enormous belligerence towards the "evil empire" while saying she would be working for peace. Mrs Ferraro is just another stupid reactionary."

'Workers' MP on a worker's wage' - one year on

IN HIS election manifesto, Dave Nellist promised that if elected he would live on the wage of the average worker, so that his life style did not become remote from those he represented.

At the time some people cynically suggested that this was just an electoral ploy. But one year after his election Dave has given a detailed breakdown of his expenditure during his first year as an MP.

Living on £113 a week

He told Coventry SE CLP, 19 July, that from

August-December 1983 his net income per month was £490 (ie £113 per week) after he had made donations averaging £320 from a post-tax income of £810. In the six months of this year it was a virtually identical story. From a post-tax Parliamentary salary of £850, Dave gave an average of £350 in donations, leaving £500 (ie £115 per week) for his own consumption.

Dave's donations (August 1983-July 1984) totalled £4,143.73 and were made to:-

Coventry SE CLP £720
Coventry SE LPYS £469
Labour Party (national) £218
Labour Party (general) £86
LPYS, (national) £270
LPYS, (general) £55
Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign £396.27
Trade Unions, (strikes) £798.45
Trade Unions, (general) £339
Militant Fighting Fund £420.70
Parliamentary (ie Campaign Group) £98
Expenses (ie Conference etc) £283.31

In the local press, the defeated Tory candidate had challenged Dave to produce his expenditure over the year. After Dave had done so the following letters appeared in the Coventry Evening Telegraph, 9 July:

MP lives with the problems

IN calling for details of Dave Nellist's promised donations as an MP, Jacques Arnold (Letters, July 2) obviously bears grudges over his defeat in the Coventry South-east general election.

But, even reviewing events from a Conservative angle, it is obvious that, unlike Geoffrey Robinson, another Labour MP, Dave Nellist has remained living and working among Coventry's many problems, while Mr Arnold has deserted to the more comfortable middle-class affluence of Oundle. I wonder who would have been the more committed MP?

I disagree with nearly all of Dave Nellist's views but at least he hasn't defaulted.

William G. Haymes,
Coundon Road, Coventry.

... The letter from Jacques Arnold, the defeated (and now doubtless deflated) Tory candidate for Coventry South-east has had precisely the opposite effect from that which was intended.

Mr Nellist's detailed account of his stewardship during the past 12 months can only have enhanced his standing by leaps and bounds while his critic can only feel a "proper Charlie."

Mr Nellist's constituents are fortunate to have as their representative that rarity among men (and politicians in particular), one who makes a commitment and keeps it, who regards his job as a full-time occupation and has no outside commercial interests.

He has proved that he is certainly prepared to put his money where his mouth is.

(Mrs) A. Lynch, Harris Road, Stoke Green, Coventry.

Socialists under attack

THE 24 July meeting of the National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS) National Committee confirmed the determination of the "Democratic Left" leadership of NOLS to continue its bureaucratic attacks against student supporters of Militant.

The June NEC meeting had previously decided to reconstitute the 1983-84 NOLS NC following the abandonment of the 1984 NOLS conference. But despite the unconstitutional closure of the conference by the unelected Labour Party Student Organiser, John Dennis, the "Democratic Left" refused any discussions on the conference.

Irregularities

They used their majority to prevent any questions to Dennis, who had closed the Conference rather than answer delegates' questions about glaring irregularities including clear evidence of extra ballot papers being issued.

At one point Militant supporter David Jones, the Welsh Labour Student rep on the NOLS NC, attempted to tape the meeting to record this blatant suppression of

open discussion. Obviously trying to cover-up the undemocratic practices in NOLS the "Democratic Left" refused to continue the meeting—and John Dennis advised them that they "have the option of voting to expel" David Jones from the meeting! Eventually after the intervention of National Agent David Hughes, David Jones was allowed 20 minutes to question Dennis on "issues not relating to the conference".

But the threat of expulsion represents a pointer to what the "Democratic Left" hope to achieve from the NEC inquiry into NOLS conference. The inquiry is in the hands of the notoriously right wing Appeals and Mediation Committee which upheld the expulsion of Militant supporters in Blackburn and was behind the (so-far unsuccessful) attack on LPYS branches donating to Militant. And yet, in the only statement on the conference

By a Militant Reporter

allowed at the NOLS NC the "Democratic Left" "welcomed" the inquiry.

Now a number of student supporters of Militant have been summoned to appear before the Appeals Committee on 12 August because "it is alleged against them that they were responsible for disruption at the conference".

Witch-hunt

Undoubtedly a witch-hunt is being prepared. Already a large number of labour movement bodies have protested to the NEC at the arbitrary closure of the NOLS conference and the failure of the Student Organiser to implement the 1983 NOLS conference decision to open the NOLS files to inspection to all NOLS NC members—a necessary safeguard for a democratic NOLS.

Other Labour Parties, trade union branches and LPYS branches should add their name to this call and urge the NEC to reject any expulsions or suspensions in NOLS.

The witch-hunt has been deflected, but it is by no means over. An investigation is going ahead into Coventry SE CLP. A battle won once, still has been fought again and again.

Resolutions should pour in from the LPYS, CLP, trade unions, Women's Sections and shop stewards' committees showing the respect for the work of the LPYS and opposing any attack on LPYS finances and structure.

this week's Labour Weekly accuse the LPYS of sterile slogans and the "indoctrination" of young members. They call for the reduction of the LPYS age limits to between 13 and 18 and for the closing down of the LPYS National Committee.

These lies and distortions will cut no ice among miners or other workers who have seen the tremendous campaigning role of the LPYS. However, it is a serious threat which cannot be ignored.

LPYS

IN SPITE of last week's victory at the NEC, LPYS members should not be lulled into believing that there will be no more attacks.

A resolution to this year's party conference, from Plymouth Drake CLP, calls for a "much closer look to be taken at the insignificant, sectarian and undemocratic LPYS".

Furthermore two letters in

Left slate for NEC

AS WE explained last week Militant supporters who in the past have stood for the NEC have decided not to allow their names to go forward this year, in order to help maximise support for the left slate and to prevent any seats being lost to the right wing. Militant urges

all its readers to do all they can to ensure a big vote for the following candidates for the NEC:

Constituency Party Section:

Tony Benn, Eric Heffer, Dennis Skinner, Audrey Wise, Jo Richardson, Michael Meacher, David Blunkett.

Women's Section

Joan Maynard, Clare Short, Frances Morrell, Margaret Beckett, Patricia Olley.

Treasurer

Albert Booth.

Socialist/Co-operative Societies

Stan Newens.

Liverpool City Council Labour Group

Offers fraternal greetings and thanks to the Militant newspaper and its supporters for the outstanding help and assistance given to our campaign to defend jobs and services in Liverpool.



John Hamilton speaking at Liverpool Council public meeting.

Photo: J. Smith (IFL III)

John Hamilton (Leader)

Roy Gladden
Pauline Dunlop
Jacky Crowley
Willie Harper
Frank Mills
Alex Gamble
Jimmy Parry
Julie Lyon-Taylor
Felicity Dowling
John Ord
Tony Mulhearn
Bob Lancaster
Dominic Brady
Steve Jenkins
Bill Westbury
Frank Wiles
Paul Astbury
Steve Ellison
Alan Fogg
Terry Prout
Jimmy Hackett
Hugh Dalton
Paul Lafferty
Tony Rimmer

Derek Hatton (Deputy Leader)

Jimmy Dillon
John McKintosh
Harry Smith
Jimmy Rutledge
Paul Luckcock
John Nelson
Dave Leach
George Lloyd
Julian Clarke
John Humphries
John Linden
Vinny Wagner
Peter Owens
Dot Matthews
Tony Byrne
Joe Devaney
Mike Black
Peter Lloyd
Peter Ferguson
Alec Doswell
Heather Adams
Tony Hood
Bill Lafferty
Ken Stewart

"Today in Liverpool municipal militancy is vindicated..."
The Times, 11 July

**We've won the battle,
now let's win the war—
TORIES OUT IN '84**

Classified Advertisement

Letters

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

Lesson in struggle

Dear Comrades,

I have learned more this week about the mining industry in this country, than I even thought possible. Four Kent miners billeted in my home. They were picketing the Bowaters paper mill in Sittingbourne.

They called it their 'rest week,' because it is a respite from the battles taking place in Orgreave, Cortonwood, Notts etc. All had been arrested at some time in the past nineteen weeks. Tony had two ribs cracked, and was separated from Derek and George in the police station.

Out in all weathers at the mill, watching the scab lorry drivers rushing past them, noting all number plates and recording them, these men spent evenings relating their true feelings concerning the strike.

Allan who worked regular nights got £10 extra for doing so, and £5 for standing ankle deep in water. Tony who has four brothers in the mines, George (nick name "Goose") whose generation since the year dot were miners. Derek, whose wife is expecting their second child any day, told me that as long as the working class were backing them, they would beat the Tory government whose aim is to smash their union.

As an LPYS branch is being set up in Deal, where the men come from, we have now sent on four more names, all wishing to join. As they said: "When this is all over it is *Militant* only that will take us through on a proper socialist policy."

We are expecting four more miners this week

Fraternally
Anne Ursell
Sittingbourne

Capitalist crime

Dear Comrades,

I don't often read the Tory rags that deface the counters of our newsagents. On 10 July I picked up the *Daily Mirror* to see what was on telly. In the centre pages I read with horror that one unemployed person commits suicide every fortnight.

While the so-called 'Fox' with his shot gun runs wild utterly confusing the police, I see convoys of them drafted into intimidate strik-

ing miners who are protecting their livelihoods from another killer, 'Mag the knife' who wishes to inflict appalling injuries upon every working class person in this country.

Unemployed I may be, but I will not give in. I'm going to fight this bloody system so that my children can forget forever the prospect of a wasted life.

Fraternally
Paul Smith
Coventry

Peace plea

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As you will have probably heard USAF Molesworth is to become the second base for American Cruise Missiles in Britain. If we are to have any effective protest and disruption of these events we need to start planning and organising now.

We have heard that the government will be starting to build silos, bunkers, access roads and put up fences in February 1985.

We need support now. Support in the form of

publicity in papers like *Militant* explaining what's going on down here, and putting our case across. We also need financial support. We need activists who will take part in actions and events here.

We need *Militant's* help and we look forward to hearing from and meeting you in the very near future.

Yours fraternally in struggle,

John Perry
On behalf of Molesworth
People's Peace Camp
Northants

Police try it on

Dear Editor,

I was astonished at a story told to me recently by a friend. While walking down the street peaceably minding his own business, he was stopped by two policemen in a panda car. His crime? He was wearing a "Support the NUM" sticker on his lapel.

He was told to remove the sticker "or else". When he recovered from his amaze-

ment, he told the police in no uncertain terms what to do and walked off. The police made no attempt to enforce their threat. Maybe the odds weren't high enough on their side, or perhaps they had left their riot gear at home.

Yours fraternally
Nick Worth
West Bromwich
West CLP

PS. We don't even live in a mining area—the nearest pits are 25 miles away!

What a mess

Dear Comrades,

I could not agree more with the letter from E. Edwards (issue 708). The leaders—if you can call them that—are just letting the grass grow under them. Len Murray always believed that he could talk to the Tories. So he refused to act when the NGA dispute at Eddie Shah's took place. When Thatcher delivered her 'death blow' at GCHQ he

was well and truly gutted. Now he retires!

He started in a mess and left us in a mess.

What we need and want is a leader who will fight for the workers and not sit back like Murray and hope the Tories will talk over tea and biscuits. Arthur Scargill is a leader, I wish he was a contender for Murray's job, he'd get my vote.

Yours comradely
Paul Sparks
Epsom and Ewell LPYS



On the Kent miners' demo.

Photo: D. Doran

Unity is strength

Dear Comrades,

On August 4 striking miners' families in Thanet will be giving out a very warm welcome to 30 Nottingham children for a holiday by the seaside. The children all come

from families that have been out on strike and are not receiving any money from the Department of Health and Social Security, as their area strike has not been declared official. The main aim is to give

these children's parents a well deserved break. Conditions in Nottinghamshire put the striking miners (a large minority) under enormous pressure. Constant police harassment, verbal and physical abuse from scabs are all part of the daily lives of strikers' families.

The children will be

receiving their meals along with our children at the Labour Hall, High Street, Ramsgate.

This is showing yet again that the workers' unity is its greatest strength.

Yours fraternally
Joe and Ruby North
Kent NUM

5-day general strike?

Dear Comrades,

Now the hour is here for the fightback against Thatcher and her cohorts I think it not before time that we called on the TUC to call a general strike; not just for 24 hours but for a week in solidarity with the miners. Cammell Lairds, the Health Service and all other working class people who are on strike, also the most important people, the four million who are on the dole and also the wives, mothers and children who are living on

the breadline.

Let us show the Tory government and big business that the working class have had enough and that the fightback is on. Also comrades a campaign on this theme should be fought right up to the TUC conference and then onto the Labour Party conference.

Comrades, I feel that if our paper ran a campaign like this it would get the full backing of the working class people in this country.

Yours fraternally
Joe Griffiths
Branch 5 GMBATU
Liverpool

Fighters needed

Dear Comrades,

While I agree with David Drazeg's letter (*Militant* issue 707), supporting Neil Kinnock, I would like to point out to him that it is the right wing within the Labour Party who have caused embarrassments during the crisis in Liverpool and in the miners' dispute.



Roy Hattersley.

Roy Hattersley, when interviewed on BBC North East's *Coast to Coast* programme in February, was asked about Liverpool City Council's stand. His reply was that the council should, "stay within the law, even if it means cutting jobs and services since breaking the law will lose the Labour Party their popularity. The cuts would be restored when Labour returned to power in 1988".

That statement has proved that the right wing within the party have accepted 'Tory Law and Order' and if working people took the advice from the likes of people such as Kinnock and Hat-

tersley there won't be a Labour Party to vote for in 1988.

The only way we can overthrow this Tory government is for the party to fight and unite now to ensure a Labour victory in the next general election which is what our comrades have been doing. But the middle class right wingers are more determined to expel the socialists within the Labour Party than fighting the Tories which was one of the reasons why they lost the 1983 general election.

These middle class 'careerists' are only after their money and as soon as we can replace them with members who are prepared to fight on behalf of the working class the better.

Yours fraternally
Brian Renforth
North Shields LPYS

Double standards

Dear Comrades,

Tory ministers were quick to condemn the Metropolitan councils for spending ratepayers' money on a campaign against abolition. But these same ministers are strangely silent when the NCB spends millions of pounds of taxpayers money to attack the NUM. It just shows the double standards of this government.

Yours fraternally
D Copeland
Leyton



All in day's inheritance

Baron Enrico di Portonova inherited a fortune when his grandfather died. He now has \$20 million coming in every year, and spends his life either at Claridges in London, luxury homes in Italy and Washington, or at his \$25 million mansion in Acapulco, which can seat up to 1,000 people to dinner. He is a close friend of the Royal family and married the daughter of a Texas millionaire. You'd think the Baron would be quite content with life. But no, he is currently engaged in a family legal battle with his cousins to get his hands on a further \$2 billion inheritance. Its hard work at the top.

Food for thought

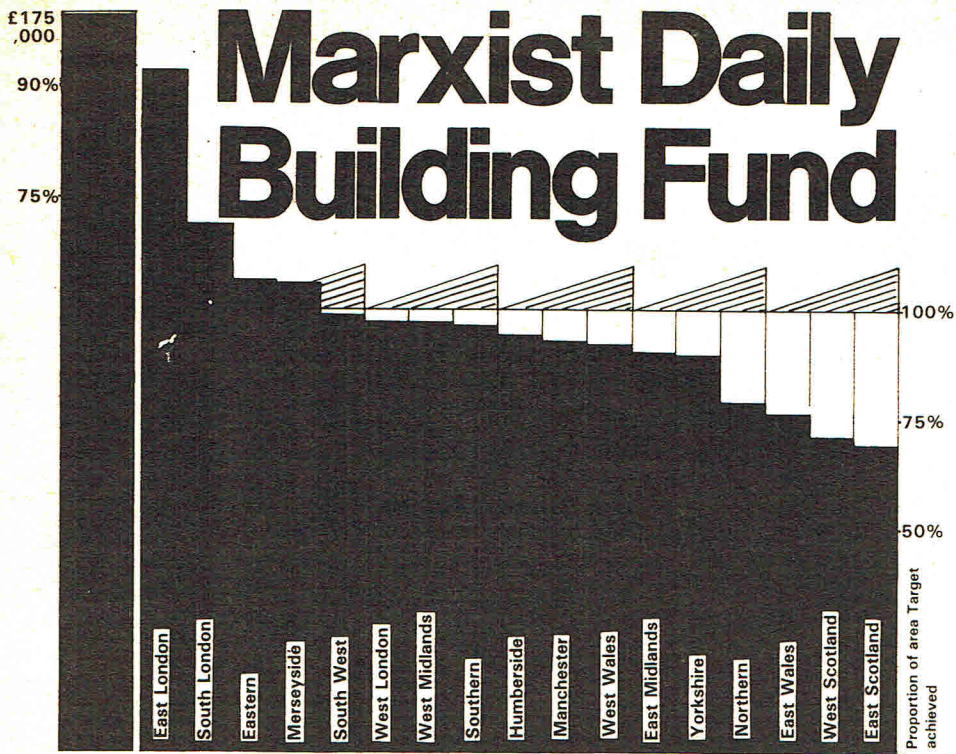
The Euro-food mountains have come to Britain. At a former Admiralty depot in Coventry 1,788 tons of bread wheat and 370 tons of barley have been stored, while in Warwick there is a stockpile of 1,216 tons of butter. Coventry MP Dave Nellist has pointed out that given the cost of handling charges, it is costing Coventry £330,000 a year just to let the food rot. He has demanded that the food be handed out to pensioners and people on social security, free of charge.

Explain this one, Gummer!

No matter how much Selwyn-Gummer and the Tory leaders try to play down the fascist infiltration of their party, the neo-Nazis just keep turning up like bad pennies. The latest is Francois Dior. She is not some reactionary who in her past stumbled into the National Front: she was a raving Nazi fanatic. She is the former wife of British Nazi Colin Jordan, was imprisoned in England for conspiring to burn down synagogues, and gaoled in France for sticking up Nazi posters on the British Embassy. She is now an active member of the French branch of the British Conservative Association.

Bright and breezy

The EETPU leadership announced in the July issue of the union magazine *Contact* that they are trying to make the magazine "bright and breezy and more in keeping with the go-ahead dynamic 21st century image that the EETPU now projects". Its new editor will be prominent SDP member John Grant. This former Labour MP breezed his way into the SDP, stabbing the Labour Party in the back. In the last election the go-head, dynamic Mr Grant lost his seat, to Labour.



MILITANT readers will remember the frantic appeals earlier this year to reach deadlines on our Marxist Daily Building Fund.

First it was to reach £150,000 in order to convince our bank they could lend us a similar amount of cash. Then it was to reach £175,000 because the bank would not lend us as much as we needed!

The purchase of the building we wanted was then held up by an important but solveable legal point. This gave us that little extra time to raise the extra cash. But

now we are within a hair's breadth of completing the deal and we are also just a fraction short of the £175,000 target. We will exchange contracts by next week. So YOU must make quite sure that we have the full £175,000 by then.

Only £571 to raise

Step up your efforts! Raise it with your friends, workmates, comrades in the labour movement. Look at what a daily Marxist paper would do now in assisting the struggle against the Tories, their laws and their whole rotten system!

Help us reach that goal by

sending more than you can afford—it will be worth it in the end! Don't be afraid of taking us over the target—there is plenty more cash needed after that! The £175,000 is just the second hurdle! But it is a magnificent achievement in itself. Keep it up!

Send donations to Marxist Daily Building Fund, c/o 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN WITHOUT DELAY! Thanks to all those who have contributed this week and a special mention for Doug Court, West Derby Labour Party who sent £50. An example for all readers to follow!

FIIGHTING FUND This week: £1,383

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
Eastern	231		2900
East Midlands	146		3550
Humberside	61		1850
London East	187		3200
London West	233		2150
London South East	50		1950
London South West	165		1650
Lancashire	62		1950
Manchester	68		2200
Merseyside	426		6100
Northern	234		4400
Scotland East	70		2950
Scotland West	318		3650
Southern	408		5100
South West	27		2150
Wales East	35		2550
Wales West	30		2050
West Midlands	245		4300
Yorkshire	257		5350
Others	120		5000
Total received	3374		65000

YET again, record profits of £668 million were announced by the British Gas Corporation for 1983-4!

However their profits did not stop prices rising by 4% in the same period nor did it stop the destruction of 4,000 jobs with a further 9,000 jobs planned to go. And further price rises are forecast for this year.

Meanwhile the government clearly showed their interest. They said that "gas prices and profit should rise more steeply to achieve economic pricing." We can see clearly from this one example how the Tories are putting profits first; they have no compunction about making workers redundant nor any thought to families facing increased hardship with consistent price rises.

The only way to stop the Tories crusade on jobs and living standards is to fight back. Fight to get rid of the Tory system and replace them with a Labour government committed to socialist policies. That fight can start here—only by making a donation will we be able to guarantee that campaign—so make your contribution now.

Get on target!

Areas should have plenty of plans now underway to reach their targets. The comrades from Paisley have had a successful jumble sale raising over £100 and are planning a sponsored cycle in September. Coventry comrades raised FF by doing sponsored press ups!

All areas should follow

these examples and we will sail over the target.

By Kim Waddington

M Celwin unemployed Dundee 26p; J&N Ward Erdington 50p; M Doyle unemployed builder Fulham 50p; A Dodd AUEW No 2 Coventry 50p; S Capplethwaite Coventry SW LPYS 75p; M Hanson Sittingbourne 82p; M Aitken Portsmouth 60p; Ashfield Valley Tenants Association Rochdale £1.05; D Osborne NUPE Guys Hospital, Thamesmead; E Jeffries Hosiery worker Derby £2; Lisa, Bar worker Derby £4; Bootle Women's Section £3.10; J Maxwell-Taylor Coventry £4; Rattling tins raised £5 for Darlington supporters; S Morgan NUPE Worsley £10; T Phillips TGWU Andover £10; Liverpool AUEW and Knowsley NALGO £15.10; K Little Bradford £20.

ADS

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

MIKE KING is planning a parachute jump in September for the Fighting Fund and would like sponsors. Contact him at 10 Rodney Court, Anson Drive, Sholing, Southampton.

FOR SALE stereo Hitachi Dolby VGC. Good for socials, silver grey colour smoke glass top. Ring Jo for address 985 1442.

'OFFICIAL' Militant rattling/collecting tins, 75p each + p&p. Available from Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Money with order please.

WANTED: television black&white or colour. Will pay. Contact Steve or Dave 01-515-1718.

'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.

SOUVENIR COPIES of 'Special South Wales Miners Militant' are available send 50p each (inc Postage) to 'Militant Circulation', 1 Mentmore Tce, London E8 3PN.

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

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

WOMEN'S MINING PAMPHLET Militant Miner—'Women Fight to Save the Pits'—printed and published by Aylesham Women. 70p (incl p+p) from Robbie Segal, 10 Westbourne Gardens, Folkestone.

MILITANT pocket diaries, 60p, 10 or over 50p each. All cash donated to Fighting Fund. Orders to: Mike King, 10 Rodney Court, Anson Drive, Sholing Soton. SO2 8RU

MAIDSTONE LPYS Public Meeting: 'Support the Miners'. Speakers from NUM, TGWU (docks) and LPYS. Shepway Community Hut, Northumberland Ave., 8 pm, Friday 10th August.

MINERS MARCH and rally 2pm, Sat. 8th September, Abbey Wood Station. Rally, 3.30pm, General Gordon Sq., Woolwich. Organised by Greenwich CLP and S.E. London Labour Movement.

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

Talks on: Marxism and the trade unions, Central America, Ireland, Middle East and Marxism and the Labour Party.

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

Further details from, and cheques payable to 'Swansea Summer Camp'—181 Hanover Street, Swansea SA1 6BP. Tel Swansea (0792) 463623. During day phone Swansea 466631.

SRI LANKA Public Meeting: 'Lift Ban on NSSP' at Conference Hall, County Hall, London SE. 1. On Wednesday 8 August, 7.15pm. Speakers: Vickramabahu (General Secretary NSSP), Ronnie Perera (Secretary United Federation of Labour) and V. Subramanian (General Secretary United Lanka Estate Workers Union). Chairman Steve Morgan (LPYS rep on NEC).

SUMMER SALE at reduced prices of the last of the MILITANT T-shirts. All at £3 each (includes postage and packing). Red motif 'turn left for workers unity and socialism'. First come first served return of post.

Small—2 yellow, (32-34") 2 black.
Medium—1 Navy, (34-36") 2 black, 1 Yellow, 1 White.
Large—2 white (36-38") 2 navy, 3 black.
Extra large—2 white, (38-40") 2 black, 1 yellow.
Cheques and PO to R. Harris, 2 Dukes Brow, Blackburn. State preferred size and colour. All proceeds to the Fighting Fund.

Militant pamphlet

"The Crisis—where is Britain going" by Ted Grant. First written in August, 1983, this new Militant pamphlet analyses the main political and economic developments in Britain. Price 40p (plus 10p, p+p) from World Socialist Books, 1, Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

WOMEN AGAINST pit closures/NUM National Demonstration, Saturday 11 Aug. Assemble 12 Noon, Temple tube, march through Trafalgar Square, Elephant and Castle, to Gala in Burgess Park, Camberwell.

Greetings in Militant—Labour Party Conference and Militant October Rally

We are offering a discount to organisations that advertise in both issues. The rates are as follows: Please tick box.

	ONE ISSUE	TWO ISSUES
Semi-display 3 column centimetres	£6 <input type="checkbox"/>	£10 <input type="checkbox"/>
6 column centimetres	£10 <input type="checkbox"/>	£15 <input type="checkbox"/>
Display one-sixteenth page	£15 <input type="checkbox"/>	£25 <input type="checkbox"/>
One-eighth	£35 <input type="checkbox"/>	£50 <input type="checkbox"/>
One-quarter	£50 <input type="checkbox"/>	£100 <input type="checkbox"/>

Deadline for Labour Party Conference issue 17 September, 1984 and combined adverts. Deadline for 20th Anniversary adverts 8 October, 1984.

Cash with copy. Cheques payable to Militant. Return to Circulation Department, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

A CORDIAL invite to all readers, to a SOCIAL on Saturday August 11th, from 8 pm at Stanton Social Club, Stoney Stanton Road, Coventry, to celebrate the wedding of Dave Nellist and Jane Warner. Door collection for the miners; raffle for the fighting fund. Music and Dancing—all comrades welcome.

MARXIST WEEKEND SCHOOL, Middlesbrough Cassette tapes (post paid) any single tape £1.50, complete set (7) £9.00. Orders with cheques to K. Skethaway, 51 Baret Road, Walkergate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 4RT. Allow 28 days for delivery. Proceeds to Fighting Fund.

1. Dialectics—J. Pickard 2. Economics—W. Hopwood 3. What is rank and file-ism—W. Hopwood. 4. Lessons of the 1926

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

Now available on cassette: all centre page articles from issues 668-692. Send either seven blank C-90 cassettes or £6.30 payable to Militant Tapes, 26 Ashton Terrace, Harehills, Leeds 8 or phone: (0532) 493440.

general strike—T. Cross. 5. Recent struggles and a programme for the unions—D. Cotterill. Fascism and Popular Frontism; Lessons of the 1930s—D Churchley. 6. In defence of October: the opposition to Stalinism—J. Pickard. 7. The death agony of capitalism: Trotsky's perspectives today—L Walsh. The lessons of the miners' strike: The way forward for the labour movement—R. Wylie.

SELLING Militant

WITH THE 'Paving Bill' going through Parliament and the continuing struggle of the miners there is no "silly season", no holiday break for our sellers this summer.

Holiday sales

All our supporters must be ready to get stuck in wherever they are. In the holiday resorts sales must be stepped up. So, workers on holiday take some papers with you, you never know when you will meet potential readers! We will be publishing during August so you can take Militant with

you on holiday!

Sales in new areas continue to boom with the Wombwell (Barnsley) sellers selling 37 in less than an hour in the local shopping centre. 14 papers were sold in an hour outside a post office in Longton (Stoke) and this despite the tropical heat! New orders have come in from Pontefract, Cudworth (Barnsley), Chichester, Ramsgate and Llangadog (Dyfed).

The attempt to stop Militant receiving donations from LPYS branches was beaten back last week but the only real answer is to show your support for Militant by advertising in our paper (see

this page for details). Don't be cowed by the right wing, be proud of your support for Marxism! For more information about sales or adverts contact 'Militant Circulation' 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN or Phone 01-986-3828.

By Dave Farrar

Would you like a copy of Militant delivered by our sellers each week? If you would, please contact Circulation Dept, 1 Mentmore Terrace London E8.

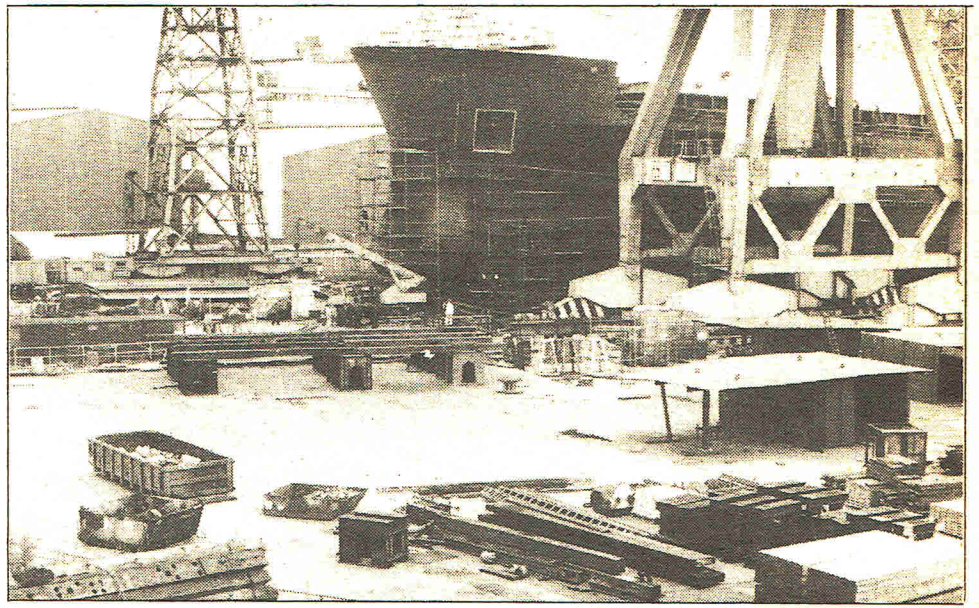
SHIPYARD WORKERS once again find their industry at crisis point. The recent government statement that warshipbuilding yards will be hived-off could sound the death-knell of merchant shipbuilding in Britain.

Last year employment levels declined by 22% at BS; at present less than 15,000 workers are building merchant ships. The BS order book continues to decline. In 1982-83 BS won contracts to build 19 ships, last year they received only 13 contracts. Now yards are facing empty order books with consequent mass lay-offs. Even in the so-called prosperous warshipbuilding section BS received five fewer orders last year.

The government have put forward privatisation as a panacea; nationalisation they say is the cause of shipbuilding's decline. But the decline of shipbuilding in Britain has nothing to do with nationalisation—in fact nationalisation has saved shipbuilding from complete extinction.

At the time of nationalisation in 1977 shipyard workers not only inherited yards that had been starved of investment but also had to contend with a collapse in shipbuilding worldwide. The decade to 1983 saw a halving of world tonnage and a three-quarters drop in order books. Against this background only South Korea has made any progress.

It is not the job of union leaders to accept this situation but to put forward an alternative. Union policy of scrap and build must be fought for now, not wished for. A campaign to stop redundancies and lay-offs, linked to a substantial wage increase would restore the confidence of shipyard workers in their fight to save the industry.



British Shipbuilding - crisis looms..

CAMMELL LAIRDS: Billy Albertina of the occupation committee explains the struggle they face.

FOR SIX weeks we've been occupying two vessels at the yards to prevent them being moved out. We took this action because two shop stewards found out that management planned to take both vessels out on 2 July. After we've seen the deliberate ploy of the government of diverting away any work, there could only be one conclusion, during the yards annual holidays, with no vessels in, the management would announce its closure.

Therefore, the staging department, that is the scaffolders, occupied the vessels and called on other departments to join in. The boilermakers in the plant department voted to join the occupation plus other individuals, including nine shop stewards. About 50% of the men occupying the vessels have already received their redundancy notices.

As far as I am concerned we are responding to a planned attack on the trade union movement in Lairds because every progressive shop steward had been put on notice including every officer of the boilermakers' branch. Therefore we are sitting in.

Respect picket lines

There is a lot of apathy among the rest of the men at the yard because of low wages and the lack of any union leadership. When the redundancies were first announced in British Shipbuilders, there was a national ballot and a majority voted to strike in every yard on 3 January but that mandate was never carried out, so the men got demoralised and lost faith in the unions. We are picketing the gangways of the occupied vessels. No work can be done on them and so the only people working are the maintenance men with the rest layed off. The attitude of the mass

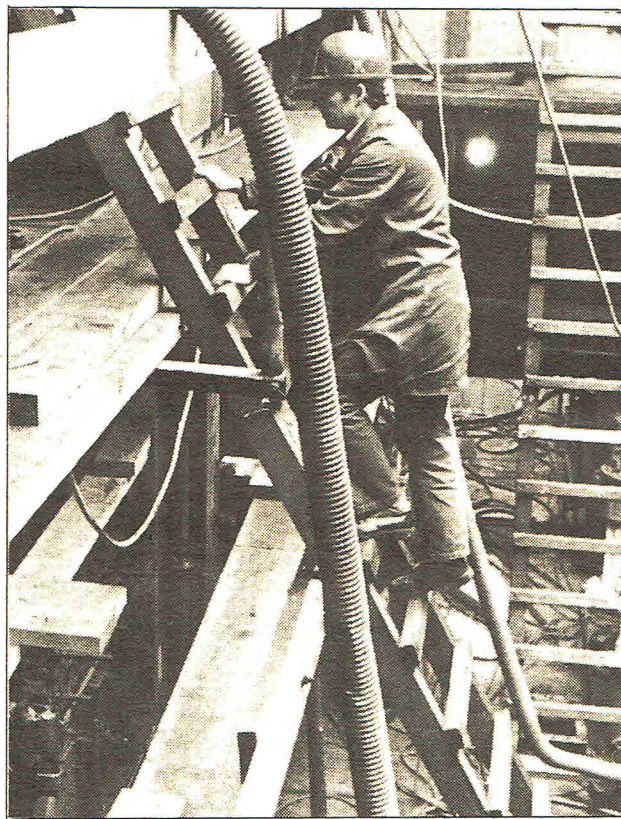
majority of the men who have been laid off is that they will respect the picket line and, although they are not prepared to fight, they hope that we win.

The morale of the men sitting-in is sky high. We are prepared to stay there for months on end. The position of the occupation committee is that there will be no deals regarding higher redundancy pay outs or cuts in the numbers of men to be made redundant. We will stick it out until all the redundancy notices are recinded, there will be no compromise. If they take out a writ and try to get us out by legal means we will dig in call for mass pickets by the labour movement on the gates of Lairds. I think the management must try something like that after the annual holiday is over.

Privatisation threat

In regards to the proposed privatisation of the yard which the government announced a couple of days ago, this came as no surprise to us, although I understand that the manager at Lairds didn't know the yard was to be privatised until he turned on the TV news that night. At the same time as Tebbit was making the announcement, Graham Day, Chairman of British Shipbuilders was on TV saying that Lairds wasn't being sold off and he was looking for orders for the yard. We always said that they intended to close the yard and then sell it off to private ownership and we have been correct.

If they could get away with it what they will do is close the yard and probably a "saviour" would come along to reopen it with bad union agreements and lots of sub-contracting. There wouldn't be a permanent workforce, all the men would be on short-term



contracts. Alternatively it wouldn't be reopened as a shipyard. They could keep it closed so as to reduce the competition. Anyone who thinks privatisation is the way out is deluding themselves. The government first privatised the small yards which they said weren't viable then the diverted the work from the nationalised to these privatised yards so that they could attack the nationalised yards that are left. If the government privatised the yards only two or three of the best yards would be kept open. They would pick the plums and the rest would go to the wall. We heard leaks from the corporate plan which indicated that only 3,000 jobs will remain from 45,000 jobs in the industry now.

Solidarity

The support we have had from outside has been fantastic. There has been support and donations from all the other yards; the bigger industries on Merseyside, Labour Parties and the rest of the trade union movement. Wirral Trades Council is organising a public meeting for us on 10 August. There has been special support from

the dockers who have said that no way will they allow any tugs into Lairds basins to tow the vessels out.

Jobs threat

It will be a disaster for Birkenhead if this yard was closed or privatised. For many years the only hope that young people had in the area was the yard. It was the biggest employer. In the 1950s it employed 20,000 men. At the start of this year that was down to 3,000 and now it is only 1,800. If it closes there is no future for the youth around here as far as employment is concerned. In fact there has been a social audit done which shows that thousands of other jobs will be lost in the spin-off. I think that everyone realises this. Even in the local press and radio has been sympathetic to us, which is a change. There have been no press statements from Cammell Lairds, I am sure that they see it as another fight back on Merseyside, like with the Liverpool Council and the dockers and want to play it down.

Any messages of support or donations to: Lol Duffy, 3 St James Court, Victoria Road, Wallasey, Merseyside.

AUSTIN & PICKERSGILL: shop steward Tony Carty (personal capacity) outlines the problems at their yard.

AUSTIN AND Pickersgill shall be out of work by the end of the year. Our last launch is on 23 November. Even if an order were obtained it would not result in immediate work because of the lead-in time.

Yard rundown

After the holidays management will probably try to enforce lay-offs. The tactics of the management are clear, run the highest paid yard (A+P) down, keep it in a mothball situation then open it up under a new company with low wage rates.

The local press have made much of A+P losing £19 million last year but the majority of the loss came from the cancellation of a bulk-carrier which we continue to build in the hope of finding a new owner.

At the moment our fate seems linked to the international debt crisis. The Ethiopian government want to build two ships at our yard but their financial position is so acute

they cannot borrow the money on the world markets. Also Brazil has won an order to build ships if they cannot raise money from the international banks then A+P will get the order.

The proposed privatisation of the Naval yards makes the government strategy clear—they want to destroy merchant shipbuilding in Britain. If the Naval yard lads think like the Notts miners that their future is secure then they are wrong. Swan Hunters, for example, cannot sustain its workforce by Naval work alone.

Wages and conditions

The pay offer has been accepted by the SNC but our stewards are recommending rejection. No matter what happens here we will not tolerate eroding of wages and conditions.

To fend-off the threat of privatisation and to secure an industry with decent wages and job security the SNC has to have a national strategy.



The BLOC has now launched its own journal *Unity*. It hopes that *Unity* at first will appear quarterly and provide news and comments on what's happening in the trade union movement and what Broad Left supporters in the various unions are doing. To sustain its vital activities and to publish the journal it needs money. We ask every trade unionist to either take out an individual subscription (£5 per annum) or get your organisation to take out an individual subscription (£10 per annum) to subscribe. Send off to G Williamson, 11 Sutton Place, London E9 6EH.

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

Rail feature

Tory cause of accidents

THE HORRIFIC consequences of a train crash at high speed has been brought home to many as a result of two recent accidents.

Traditionally travelling by rail has been safer by far than travelling by road, but the drive of the present government for profit, profit and more profit from the nationalised industries has led to an inevitable conflict. For example, there is always the pressure to "get on with the job" dealing with track-side maintenance rather than carry out all the necessary checks and double-checks.

Pressure of work

The current BR Annual report lists six "key performance indicators" but safety is not included. While staff has been reduced by 26,000 since 1979 (apart

from BREL), total staff productivity rose by over 3% in 1983 alone!

The 1982 Report of the Chief Railway Inspector makes it clear that although there was a significant improvement in the level of injuries and the number of deaths was very low: "District Inspectors began to discover, however, that copies of these (Accident) reports, or precis of them, were not reaching the local managers..." and he decided to issue reports singly instead of in batches with an index as "it was recognised that a batch of reports was, due to pressure of other work, less likely to be read than a series of individual ones..." (Report on the Safety Record of the Railways in Great Britain during 1982, para 85.)

By Steve Cawley



London NUR members take to the streets

Job threat in London

THE NEWLY established London Regional Transport Authority has taken London Transport out of the control of the GLC and into the arms of Tory minister Ridley using LRT as a front.

It is part of a strategy of privatisation and cuts in jobs and services. Already a reduction in subsidy of 50% has been announced. Now 200 jobs are supposed to be slashed.

200 underground station

staff, members of the NUR, but amongst the weakest section of underground workers because they are isolated in their local stations, are under threat.

Fight back

Union branches and the District Council expect the NUR Executive to call an official strike if necessary to protect these jobs.

The stronger sections of

NUR's underground members, the train crews and signalmen must support the station staff, they are next for the chop. ASLEF and all the other LT unions must be approached for solidarity action.

By Bob Law
(NUR London Transport District Council, personal capacity)

NUR Exec. election

MICK ATHERTON, President of the West Midlands District Council of the National Union of Railwaymen is standing for the NUR National Executive Committee in a by-election to fill a vacancy up to the next main EC elections.

Vote Atherton

Mick is also a candidate in the main three-yearly election. Nominations for this election close on August 30. This EC seat represents railworkers on the S&T, Permanent Way and Overhead Traction in Districts 5 and 6 (ie South West, South Wales, West Midlands and South of England including London).

Urge all railworkers to attend their branches to argue for nominations for Mick as his election would be a big step forward in the struggle for a fighting, and accountable union leadership.

By Bob Russell
Willesden No 1 NUR, personal capacity

Civil service picket arrested

DOREEN PURVES, a leading member of CPSA, and secretary of the 8,000 member branch at Longbenton whose computer centre members are out on strike (see issue 708) in Newcastle was arrested on the picket line a week last Thursday.

Police activity has been stepped up, as dozens of miners have been joining the picket line to show their solidarity with the computer shift workers.

On Thursday morning 70 pickets descended on the premises of the Bell security Group, who have been regularly crossing the picket line, to bring in the post that post office workers refuse to deliver.

In the evening a small picket of around twenty were waiting for the small number of scabs, who are still working, when the police moved in and Doreen was arrested under the notorious section 5 of the Public Order Act. The next day (Friday) at the

By Jeff Price
Newcastle

Washington Child Benefit Office another arrest took place, workers there have come out in support of the shift workers in Newcastle. These arbitrary arrests and intimidation of strikers have only increased their resolve to fight on until they win.

Negotiations

This week negotiations with management have continued. Alistair Graham the General Secretary of CPSA has attempted to get ACAS to end the strike, but Doreen who went to the ACAS discussions with ten of the



Doreen Purves.

strikers, saw little hope of a settlement through ACAS.

She also explained that management did not like the strikers being there and attempted to create splits between the local union leaders and the strikers. But Doreen and the branch executive will not allow that to happen. She sees the union's job to fight with and for the members.

Coventry engineers defend closed shop

A RECENT forty-strong shop stewards' quarterly of the AUEW's Coventry East District discussed the Tories' threat to the closed shop. The stewards concluded that a united struggle is the key to defeating these plans and that it is necessary to prepare for battle now.

Prepare now

They passed the following resolution, which I moved, with only one vote against. "This Shop Stewards' Meeting request District Committee to advise our Executive Council that:—

1) Any move by an employer against an established closed shop in the district will be interpreted as a move not against any individual factory but as an attack on the organised trade union movement in the district, and will, therefore, involve all members in the

district.

2) That in accordance with Executive Council's letter District Committee will advise shop stewards in the first instance to invoke National Agreement and an early external conference.

3) If there is no agreement after the conference a meeting of all shop stewards in the district will be called within two weeks, where a full report will be given and the fullest support in defence of our union called for. It is expected at that time Executive Council's views on the issue will be known and taken into consideration by District Committee.

Injury to one...

4) That the District Secretary advise all shop stewards of this policy and request comment.

5) That District Committee give consideration to a

"one-out, all-out" position in defence of our union in Coventry and request Executive Council for such permission as necessary to implement that policy should any hostile action be directed at any part of the membership of our union."

Share experience

The resolution was subsequently endorsed by the DC which means that, come the Autumn, big battles could develop in this city, if the DC carries out the measures proposed.

Coventry AUEW members would be interested to see reports in *Militant* if further districts are discussing the matter.

By John Orme
(Convenor, Self-Changing Gears, personal capacity)

EETPU democracy in the dock

FROM ALL over Britain—London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Swansea, Liverpool—resolutions demanding the reopening of Edinburgh Lodge of the electricians' union, and the reinstatement of elected rank and file officers, have been flooding into Hayes Court, headquarters of the EETPU.

In January the Edinburgh Lodge was suspended while an investigation took place into an alleged theft of union funds. Subsequently the treasurer admitted stealing the money, and that he was the only one involved. He agreed to repay the sum on the terms outlined by the

NEC. This should have ended the matter.

Disciplinary action

However the EC continued the suspension and put an appointed full-time official in charge of administering the Lodge, ie collecting contributions. Further, in February, charges were brought against the Lodge secretary, Jim Greer, and chairman Ronny McQueen in an attempt to prevent the Edinburgh Lodge resuming its normal functions.

The union's disciplinary committee (made up of five

EC members) which brought the charges will also decide the verdict! No date was set for hearing the charges; it remained hanging over the heads of the secretary and chairman. Only a tremendous campaign launched by Edinburgh Lodge members forced the EC into setting a date, for six months later.

Quite clearly the right wing have launched a witch-hunt against the Edinburgh lodge, using an unfortunate incident to suppress democratic rights and political ideas.

Getting the EC to set a date was a small victory. This however, is only one

battle in a war not only to reopen the Edinburgh lodge and reinstate the democratically elected rank and file officers, but to bring accountability into the EETPU.

Support needed

The Edinburgh Lodge members thank those of our brothers and sisters who have already shown concern, and we are confident that many more resolutions and petitions will come forward opposing this witch hunt.

By Edinburgh Lodge
EETPU members

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.

★ For a fighting, democratic, socialist leadership in the trade unions.

Militant

British Shipbuilding
— crisis looms.

Page 14.

Organise the fightback

BLOC BROAD LEFT ORGANISING COMMITTEE

THE TORIES are in deadly earnest with their attacks on the trade unions.

Their class run the law courts, they have the press and the television. But it is the working class who run society.

We have tremendous potential power, but we need a fighting, democratic socialist leadership in the unions, we could then see a victory for the miners and total defeat for the anti-union legislation already on the statute books and the "improvements" in preparation.

Join the lobby organised by the Broad Left Organising Committee (BLOC) at the first day of Trades Union

Congress in Brighton on Monday 3 September. Already many active trade unionists have shown their support. Reportedly, eight buses have already been organised by local BLOC supporters.

There will also be a rally from the Level on 3 September at 1pm. Speakers include Dennis Skinner MP, Jack Collins general secretary of Kent NUM and Kevin Roddy of CPSA NEC. Many miners are already looking towards this lobby and rally to help their struggle, but all workers have a stake in this fight. Organise the fightback against the Tories.

George Williamson, organising secretary of BLOC spoke to Militant



Part of the massive demonstration in Pontypridd on 1 August. Mobilise the strength and anger against the Tories.

Photo: Jacob Sutton

THE TORY judges' threat to the Welsh miners' finance came on the same day as my union the National Graphical Association (NGA) was ordered to pay more than £125,000 damages to the anti-union boss of the Stockport Messenger, Eddie Shah.

Our union should not pay this money. We should link up our case with the NUM and fight against both attacks on the unions. In the Messenger dispute, we were fined £50,000 first

and the attacks were progressively increased with the clear intent to smash our union. We now face a bill for millions!

We were let down by the leaders of the TUC. This time the whole movement has got to rally behind the miners. That way we can not only stop the anti-union laws but also ensure an all out victory for the NUM.

By Chris Newis
(National Committee NGA, personal capacity)

Militant rally

WITH TWO recent attacks on the finances of the NUM and the NGA, and a five month long miners strike, the class lines in Britain are clearly drawn.

When *Militant* started in 1964, many observers told *Militant* supporters that the

ideas of Marxism were "old hat"; capitalism had "solved" its problems. Not many people can claim that without blushing today!

In October, we will be celebrating 20 years of publication and the *Militant* rally at Wembley on Saturday 20 October will show the paper's vital part in building a socialist alternative.

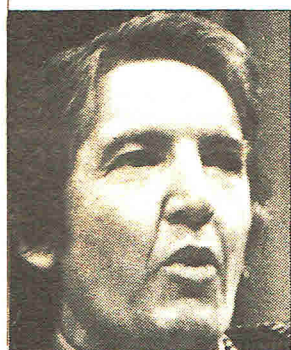
As Peter Taaffe, editor of *Militant*, said: "Marxism in Britain today is stronger than ever before. *Militant* supporters have played an important role in many struggles over the last 20 years and a vital role in more recent battles, like the tremendous victory for Liverpool City Council."

Test of time

"This rally will celebrate these successes, but also show that the ideas of Marx-

ism have withstood the tests of time and battle, these ideas both inspire and enthuse workers which means the *Militant* will continue to go from strength to strength. That was our view in 1964, it remains our view in 1984".

Speakers include Tony Benn MP, Peter Taaffe, Ted Grant, *Militant's* political editor and other speakers from the international labour movement. Make sure you're there. Order your tickets now.



Dennis Skinner - speaking at BLOC rally.



Tony Benn speaking at Militant rally.



NGA leader Joe Wade speaks at a Stockport Messenger rally last November.

Photo: Stephano Cagnoni (IFL)

Finance a workers paper

YOU ONLY need to look at the poison produced by the Tory daily papers to see the need for a paper which reports the news from the workers' viewpoint.

The fight against the Tories needs a more regular *Militant*. And the prospects for that have become that much closer—see page 13 for details.

But we still need your money to sustain us.

Remember, if you help us it makes it easier for us to help you with a more frequent paper.

End bosses monopoly

Keep up the donations to the Marxist Daily Building Fund and to the *Militant* Fighting Fund. Don't let the Tories have a monopoly of the press, put your money to work in the fight for a workers' paper.

Please note the number of tickets is limited and will be issued on a first come, first served basis! Rush your order in now!

We would like . . . ticket/s and enclose £ (cheques to Militant Rally, tickets £2.00 each).

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