

Tories evict young jobless

“ON MAY 26 three of us face eviction because of new Tory regulations limiting young people to four weeks in our area without a job or permanent accommodation. Even though we’ve lived here all our lives we have to move away. We cannot come back for six months”.

Theresa Haslam, from Long Eaton in Derbyshire, told of the plight she faced along with 85,000 other young people forced into internal exile as a result of new DHSS regulations, introduced at the end of April.

“The Tories tell you to get on your bike and find work, but they won’t let you stay in an area long enough to see if you’ve got it!

No money

“Can you imagine moving into a strange town once a month, handing the ‘Social’ all your ID and spending the waiting time without money?”

“It will mean homelessness and—through desperation—more crime and more social problems. Yet the Tories claim they are ‘protecting the family’.”

The regulations mean that all unemployed people under 26, with no dependents, living in board and lodgings will now only have their rent paid by the DHSS for a limited period: 8 weeks in large cities, 4 weeks in most places and only 2 weeks in resort areas.

After this time-period they will only get the non-householder rate of £22.25 a week until they move. And that must mean moving to another region, again for a short time only.

The regulation will mean that tens of thousands of young people will be turned into nomads, spending most of their time in benefit offices, desperately trying to sort out their claims before they move on, only to start all over again.

The rules, clearly designed to force young unemployed to stay at home with their parents, will mean that many young people will

By Julia Ingram and Graham Lewis

effectively lose their right to vote and to medical treatment because they will not have a permanent address.

Because pregnant women are exempt, many young girls will find themselves trapped with unwanted pregnancies as an “alternative” to homelessness.

The frustrations of young unemployed are great enough without this scandalous regulation, designed according to Tory Ministers to save £70m. The Labour Party and the trade unions must take up these issues and become the champion of the unemployed youth trapped in this treadmill. Civil Servants’ unions will be especially hard hit as their members face mounting pressure to deal with hundreds of thousands of extra claims.

Labour must fight for full rights for the unemployed. “Work or a Full Wage” must be the demand of the whole movement. But the fight must also be stepped up for a Labour government committed to socialist policies to bring about an end to the horrors and harassment of the unemployed and an end to unemployment.

‘DEMONSTRATE AGAINST TORY EVICTIONS’. Protest called by Erewash LPYS and Long Eaton Trades Councils. Tuesday 21 May, 10am at Long Eaton dole office (Derby Road/Fletcher Street) to hand in petition, then march to West Park for rally.



Photo: Reflex

The Tories’ new DHSS rules will hound unemployed youth, driving more to survive on the streets.

The new DHSS rules will hit 85,000 youth. It will mean—

★ Unemployed youth having to move board and lodgings to another region every 1/2 months or less.

★ If they don’t they’ll lose rent payments, getting only £22.50 a week.

★ People aged up to 26 will be forced to return to overburdened parental homes.

★ With no permanent address they’ll lose the right to vote and to medical treatment.

...as Labour evict YTURC campaigners

JUST WHEN the Tories are kicking the young unemployed in the teeth, the Labour Party have taken the disgraceful decision to eject the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign from the Waltham Road head office.

This is an insult to the hundreds of thousands of young people who have been mobilised through the campaign to fight against YTS conscription, youth unemployment, and for de-

cent conditions for young workers.

Even Neil Kinnock said on 28 February after a 5,000 strong YTURC lobby of Parliament that “the YTURC is genuinely committed to mobilising and informing young people. My view substantially concurs with the view of YTURC.”

Support

The last two Labour Party conferences passed motions explicitly supporting

YTURC. As the Party chiefs are well aware, leading figures in the pop world like Paul Weller (joint President of International Year of Youth) and Billy Bragg have played concerts for the campaign.

YTURC has done pioneering work on the question of health and safety on YTS since its inception in 1981. Sponsors of the YTURC Health and Safety Charter include Arthur Scargill, Ken Livingstone, John Prescott MP, Barry

Sheerman MP (Shadow Employment Spokesman) and Michael Meacher MP as well as unions like NUPE and TGWU.

YTURC’s sponsors should vigorously protest, along with the ranks of the labour movement at this scandalous action. It is clearly part of a concerted campaign to stifle the rights of young people to organise politically.

In Scotland, Labour’s ex-Continued on back page.

Bradford fire horror raises safety fears

THE BRADFORD City fire disaster will have horrified workers everywhere. The old wooden stand, built in 1908, went up in about four minutes, killing over 50 people and leaving many others horribly scarred for life.

Militant supporter Duncan Woodhead was at the Kop where the fire started, with other Bradford City fans:

"Smoke started coming over us—it wasn't like a smoke bomb but something burning. We didn't know how bad it was then. We all started chanting, laughing it was just what the old stand needed. Nobody, us or the police, realised how bad it was. When the flames hit the roof it just tore along the stand".

Yorkshire Television relayed the disaster to every home in the country. Some time later their telex began warning other TV companies of their copyright.

It is the sensationalism of the media that has angered many fans like Duncan: "One Sunday paper said 'more dynamic pictures inside'. It just can't get across the horror of it; the smell and standing there knowing there was nothing you could do.

"The press are speculating that a smoke bomb caused it and are blaming the 'Ointment' gang. The 'Ointment' bit came about long ago. The TV were going on about a Millwall gang called 'the Treatment', so we called ourselves 'the Ointment' as a joke. The name

stuck for a small hardcore. But on Saturday I saw some lads from that gang pulling people out, as far as I could see even before the police were. These were folks the press in the past called 'yobbos' and the 'dregs'—they were in the thick of it".

The Tories have been quick to link up the fire with football hooliganism. Yet, if the anti-hooligan measures much loved by the Tories such as fences, had been installed at Bradford, the consequences do not bear thinking about.

Milked dry

They talk about Bradford in the same breath as the Birmingham City riot that happened the same day.

Raising 'hooliganism' fogs the real issue—because sport has been milked dry by big business there's no money for adequate safety facilities.

Many clubs have old wooden stands—all pre-war stands are 80% wood—but because clubs have to operate to the profit motive and are heavily taxed by the Tories safety standards have been neglected. Betting levy tax is now taking £200 million out of the game every year. It amounts to 42.5 per cent of the game's takings. Horse racing—the 'sport of Kings'—only gets 8 per cent taken. Increased VAT is also bleeding football dry.

New safety legislation which currently covers the lucrative top two divisions may be extended to all league clubs, and with it subse-

quent government aid. Yet Tory sports minister Neil Macfarlane said: "That is a programme we would like to work towards but it is an expensive business".

When a Tory says "but" the alarm bells ring. To the Tories, spending £5 billion to break the miners is 'money well spent', yet a few million to ensure the safety of thousands is "expensive".

In the past *Militant* has been derided for demanding the nationalisation of football, putting the game under the control of the fans, staff and local communities. We call for this to get the game out of the hands of big business who rip off the fans. However, the need for adequate safety levels following the Bradford disaster gives the demand a grim new urgency.

Council workers mount pressure

Liverpool

THE REMAINING Labour councils fighting the rate-capping threat must stand firm.

If the Tories can find £40 million rates relief for Scottish businesses then money can be found to solve the problems of councils such as Liverpool and Hackney.

The Tories have already been helped by the capitulation of the GLC and the defeat of Sheffield. The crunch point is now rapidly approaching. The war of nerves will continue with legal threats being showered down on those councils fighting back.

But the remaining councils have the support and backing of the local authority trade unions, and the local communities. The demonstration in London on May 21 organised by the National Joint Shop Stewards Committee will clearly underline this support.

Strike action

If court action is taken against one single councillor or council, the only response can be united strike action, to force the Tories to back down.

The idea of preparing deficit budgets—to set a rate but not detailing the expenditure, opening up the possibility of councils running out of money later in the year—is not a serious proposal. In the eyes of the workers it will be seen as a defeat for Labour councils.

The unity of the councils will be totally destroyed. Each council will face a different situation later in the year—some will run out of money, some will muddle through and some which do not have the will to fight will capitulate.

The only recipe for success is to follow the Liverpool road and stand firm. Liverpool has the backing of workers in Merseyside with its plans for further YTS jobs at union rates and implementing a minimum wage of £100 and 35 hour week.

With this support victory can be won. On Tuesday 11 June a conference has been called in Liverpool to unite public and private sectors against Tory privatisation plans.

By Dave Cotterill

Sheffield

SHEFFIELD CITY Council set a legal rate on 7 May, in compliance with the Tory government's rate-capping legislation.

The combined vote of the Tories, Liberals, and 20 out of the 61 Labour councillors was enough to set a rate by a slim majority. However the agreed budget is £31 million short of planned expenditure. £17 million can be found from reserves but the rest must be met by cuts in services and loss of jobs.

The actions of the 20 renegade councillors is causing uproar in the labour movement in Sheffield. Only one week before on 1 May, the District Labour



A thousand workers demonstrated outside Islington Town Hall protesting at the visit of the District Auditor warning councillors of the consequences of not setting a rate. Photo: Stephano Cagnoni (Report).

Party voted by two to one not to set a rate and to step up the local and national campaign against the Tories.

No cuts

To make the best of a bad job the council must proceed with its planned expenditure and refuse to make any cuts in jobs or services. The campaign must go on to get back the money stolen by the Tories. NALGO has pledged to take industrial action if any one job is lost or one cut in services is made, in a decision by 3,000 votes to two at a mass meeting.

By John Gowland

(Supplementary panel, Sheffield Labour Group, personal capacity)

Labour turn-coats let Tories in

TEN LABOUR councillors last week voted with the Tories at the North Tyneside Council AGM to oust the Labour Leader and remove Labour members from Committee chairs.

This followed their actions last month to vote against the Labour group's decision to defer a rate; instead they voted with the Tories to put forward a "legal" budget which will entail a large rate rise, rent rise, and cuts in jobs and services. Now these right-wing traitors are posing as an "independent" group on the council.

There were angry scenes in the Town Hall with shouts

of 'scab, scab', from both the packed public gallery and the floor of the council chamber itself.

These anti-working class traitors were challenged to resign all their seats and face the electorate.

Our campaign for jobs and services has been pulled out from under us by our own side.

We have the situation where Labour, from having an overall majority of three seats is now today a minority on the council which is now led by a previous Labour leader with a Tory deputy!

With rate-capping, cuts, privatisation, etc, looming on the horizon, Labour Party members have pledged to go on the offensive against these scabs and their bedfellows in the Tories and Alliance.

Plans are now being drawn up by the District Labour Party and local authority trade unions to launch a campaign to expose these people for exactly what they are—traitors to the movement.

By Councillor David Corkey
(Personal Capacity)

Marxist deputy in Southwark

JOHN BRYAN, a Marxist, and supporter of the policies of *Militant* was elected as deputy leader by the Labour Group on Southwark Council on 13 May.

This shows the determination of left wing councillors in Southwark to continue the fight against Tory rate-capping laws, despite the threatened breakaway of some right wing councillors.

John was nominated for the position by the local authority trade unions against the present right

wing deputy leader. He has the full support of activists in the three local CLP's.

National rally

OVER 400 council workers and councillors attended the Local Government Information Unit rally at Central Hall, Westminster last Monday. They heard John Hamilton (Leader of Liverpool City Council) and Hilda Keen (Leader of Hackney Borough Council) pledge their continued determination to stand firm in the battle to defend jobs and services.

One of the best received speeches came from Jimmy

Hollinshead on behalf of the newly formed shop stewards organisation—the National Local Authorities Coordinating Committee.

"The councillors campaign against the government's rate-capping measures meant little without the support of the local authority workers" he said.

"The task now is to mount a campaign amongst local authority workers across the country to prepare for strike action, if necessary, in defence of jobs and services". He urged those present to ensure the national demonstration called for in support of Hackney Council on 21 May was a major success.

Left can win sixth largest union

VOTING HAS begun in the election for the next General Secretary of USDAW. The USDAW Broad Left is increasingly confident of victory with its candidate, Bill Connor, in what will prove to be a very closely fought election.

Bill has already spoken at rallies around the country in Swansea, London and Edinburgh. More

rallies are being planned in other parts of the country.

But every vote must be fought for if the Broad Left candidate is to win. What are you doing in your area? When is your branch meeting? Who do you know in USDAW locally? With a concerted effort over the next six weeks, victory will be ours.

Bill Connor is committed to giving a lead to shopworkers in their fight against longer hours and low pay. His election would represent an enormous advance for the left in the movement as a whole.

Vote Bill Connor! For a socialist USDAW General Secretary!

By Rick Grogan
(Capital Holdings Branch
USDAW)



Bill Connor, USDAW Broad Left candidate for general secretary.

School students fight reprimand

SCHOOL STUDENTS are getting organised to defend their rights and against the punishments they received following the massive school strike on April 25.

In Leeds, at the Foxwood school, students prepared against punishment threats—150 of them had letters from their parents giving them permission to go on strike.

In Ashington over a hundred school students were suspended following the strike, although many of them ripped up their suspension papers. In the town students at the Hirst High school have set up their own committee.

In London on Sunday, over 80 students met to discuss forming a union.

Similarly in Liverpool, where 25,000 joined the strike, students met at the founding conference of the Merseyside School Students union. Twenty schools were represented.

List of demands

After John Blackhall of the National Union of Teachers explained the issues in the teachers strike, the students drew up a list of demands which included:

- ★ The school student union to be recognised by local authorities, with facilities for the union in schools with elected reps on the board of governors with voting rights.
- ★ More say in school curriculums, better grants for school uniforms and educational facilities generally, and the right of students to see their own personal files and references. Also an end to corporal punishment.
- ★ Union or YTURC speakers to be allowed into school to explain the issues of trade union rights and rates of pay for YTS trainees, no to YTS conscription, a £30 grant for FE and school students over 16.
- ★ For the union to link up with trade unions in the schools.

A Merseyside conference of school unions has been called for 1 June.

By Rob Owen
(LPYS National Committee, Merseyside)



Police overkill at Newham demo

POLICE RANKS line up in Plashet Park, East Ham. Two of those arrested on Saturday were members of the Juicy (Capa) steel band. One of them had wanted to move his car as the sticks and stones began to fly but was stopped, beaten and arrested. When his brother went to his aid he received the

same treatment. Both have been charged with assaulting the police.

There was another arrest at the picket of the Old Bailey on Monday, when a 13 year old was arrested after he and other youngsters had been playing with a toy gun. Photo: John Woulfe.

FIFTEEN PEOPLE were arrested during clashes between local youth and riot police following the Newham 7 demonstration through East Ham, London, on Saturday.

While the march organisers were determined to complete a peaceful demonstration after the previous march on 27 April was broken up with 34 arrests, the police went for overkill.

On Saturday, parts of East Ham looked more like a mining village during the strike.

As the 1,500 strong march set off, hundreds of police lined the route. Barriers blocked off side streets. If marchers slowed down—such as when the LPYS contingent stopped for a "short discussion" with four racists heckling the march—they were pushed on and abused by police.

Old Bailey picket

By the time the march returned to Plashet Park, tempers were frayed. As the last of the marchers went in-

to the park, masses of police formed up. With this, adding to the angry memory of the march two weeks ago and the fact that amongst local black and Asian youth police credibility numbers zero, pushing and shouting began, particularly at one black policeman. As police moved in to arrest people so the fighting increased.

Out of nowhere, mounted riot police clattered around the corner while out came the riot shields. Missiles flew through the air and an orange smoke bomb was let off. Eventually riot police jumped over

the fence and into the park, and in the open space advanced on the crowds, dispersing them up the rabbit warren of side streets.

The Newham 7 Campaign is continuing its defence of the seven youths arrested last year. The trial of the seven has begun, with a picket outside the old Bailey everyday, and a mass picket every Monday starting at 9.30am (nearest underground St. Pauls).

By Bob Wade &
Brian Debus

Keep up the new sales

MILITANT'S TWO week sales campaign was an outstanding success. Every area has reported significant increases in sales.

Up and down the country new factory and estate sales have been started.

Sellers in Oldham went out to a different factory every morning, including seven factories where *Militant* had never been sold before. In Nottingham 11 papers were sold at a new sale outside the University hospital. Nottingham sellers now intend to make this sale a weekly event.

In London a renewed drive was made towards the tube sales. Last Friday squads of sellers went out to the different stations. The Elephant and Castle topped the league with 32 sales. Ten were sold at Bethnal Green and 10 at Stratford and Kennington. Nine were sold at Whitechapel, Hammersmith and East Ham.

The challenge now is to make sure all sales, old and new are kept up every week.

Seller of the week is however, Peter Jarvis who sold 27 at the NGA London Region meeting. Let us know if anyone in your area has beaten that, and report the successes of the sales campaign in your area.

Glasgow pulls them in

THE CHORUS that *Militant* is dead received an answer in Glasgow on Tuesday 7 May. More than 250 people heard Peter Taaffe, the editor of *Militant* speak, along with a young miner and Jock Penman, the chairman of the Shop Stewards Committee at Rosyth dockyard.

The meeting raised nearly £200 for the fighting fund and in the spirit of May Day, the whole hall stood and sang a raising chorus of the Internationale at the end.

By Bob Wylie

Pit strikers fight on

SOME NINE weeks after the strike the NCB announced Bates Colliery in the North East is to close before Christmas, and also the Horden and Whitburn works, with 3,000 jobs lost.

During the strike, some scabs at Bates colliery joined with the Tories and NCB, and formed the Working Miners' Committee.

Some men were forced back before the end of the strike through poverty but the majority of the men managed, through guts and determination to stay out till the end.

When we returned to Bates Colliery we were sent home and told the shift times were altered. This was the NCB telling us we would do what we were told. The next day we were herded like cattle into the canteen and told in a glib tongue: "There's years of work left in this pit," outlining plans for new driifts, faces and many other goodies.

Then they cut the wet money, cut the overtime and enforced rigid discipline on the men.

What of the Working Miners' Committee? One promoted to a job outside

the colliery, the rest taking redundancy, these are the democrats who 'care for the industry' and their workmates.

We at Bates will seek to raise the banner of defiance to defend our jobs and communities, to defend the working class. We have had lads killed, and in the strike lads in prison on trumped up charges, and we have had lads sacked. We owe it to them and our supporters as well as ourselves to fight this closure threat.

By Ray Palmer
(Bates NUM, personal capacity)

Norwegian miners resist closure

FOR ALMOST two weeks, 1,200 miners have been on strike in the city of Kirkenes, in northern Norway, near the Russian border. It is a political action against the decision in Parliament to stop production in one of the two iron ore mines.

"When they stopped production in one of the fields", said Kurt Markussen, district secretary of the miners' union, "we decided to stop all production in protest. The pit has the capacity for

the production of a further 30 million tonnes. Now Norway has to import iron ore.

"The capitalist government claims that every job is subsidised by 400,000 kroner a year, but the union has revealed that the cost in reality is only 10,000 kroner.

"The Labour Party has opposed the decision. We will go on until the pit is reopened. The closure means the closure of the whole town; there are no other big workplaces here. We have

complete support from trade unionists and ordinary people all over the country".

The strike is unofficial, which means that the workers cannot get any financial support from the union. This week it will probably be made illegal by the decision of a labour court.

Therefore the miners make an urgent appeal for financial and political support from other workers and miners in particular. During the British miners' strike

they gave 20,000 kroner in support. It is now time to develop this traditional international solidarity. Send letters of support and donations to:

Kirkenes striking miners, c/o Ellipsis Wessell, Stiftelsen, 9900 Kirkenes, Norway.

Their bank account number is 75950503424

By a correspondent
in Norway

Why Tories are split

THE DECISION of Tory 'wet' Francis Pym to form a group of dissident MPs, the Conservative Centre Forward, marks the deepest divisions yet in the party.

The Tories usually conduct their arguments out of earshot of the working class. Their splits have never reached the organisational level of this new group. Pym has even threatened to create his own whips so that they vote as a bloc on important issues. 'Centre Forward' is critical of the key government policies and, despite Pym's denials represents a challenge to Thatcher's leadership.

Even before Thatcher was elected in 1979, *Militant* predicted that any Tory government would be riven with splits. Thatcher's monetarist policies tried to tackle the crisis of capitalism and the gross neglect of British industry through attacks on union power, using mass unemployment as their main weapon.

The ruling class have approved wholeheartedly of Thatcher's aims. Unemployment does not prick any Tory consciences, but the ruling class are increasingly worried about its likely political consequences within the working class, the generation of school leavers abandoned by the Tories and even within the middle class.

The miners' strike transformed the consciousness of whole communities. The school students strikes have

given warning of future explosive movements and even the middle class base of the Tories has been hit. Small businesses are bankrupted, reduced purchasing power hits shopkeepers and unemployment hangs over even previously Tory workers.

The economic chaos which Thatcherism has brought, the eclipse of industry, and the collapse of investment have led to sections of capitalism demanding reflation. Tory MPs are beginning to fear their own unemployment at the next election, heralded by their disastrous showing in the county council polls. They also fear future radical changes in the leadership and policies of the labour movement.

Back to Disraeli

Thatcher's government has seen the Tory mask of moderate reform, caring and democracy fall off. "Centre Forward" merely wants to put it back on again. Pym regards his ideas as "true Toryism" quoting Victorian Tory leader Disraeli on the need to create "one nation". Facing a strong organised working class the Tory Party has been forced to "pay ransom for the security it enjoys" as Joseph Chamberlain put it.

The Tories accepted, if grudgingly, the welfare state reforms after the second world war, not due to any abstract commitment to "one nation" but because British capitalism's instinct for survival was matched by its ability, in a period of upswing, to allow reforms. In the '50s and '60s, Macmillan and Butler's Tories had very similar

policies to those of Labour leaders like Gaitskell.

Now, in a period of crisis, the Tories are forced to attack living standards and rights. The basis the Tories built up amongst the middle class and sections of workers due to the failures of reformism is being eroded.

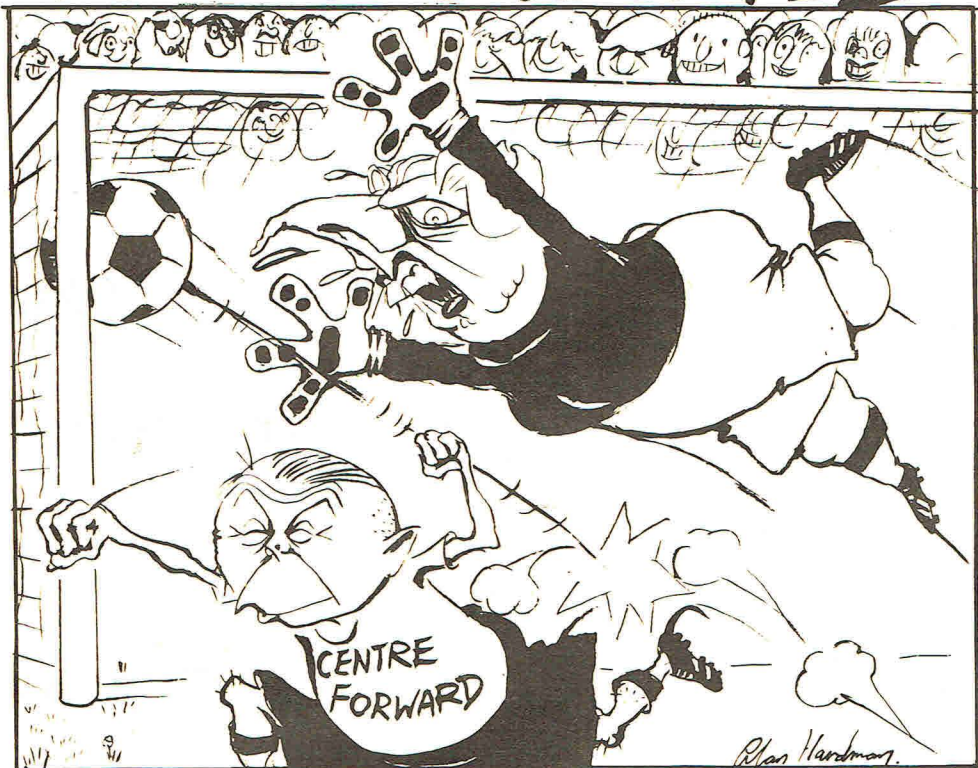
Centre Forward will not halt this process. Pym and Co. would follow those capitalist pressure groups in construction and sections of manufacturing who would benefit from reflationary measures. But these policies would bring only a slight and short lived improvement in employment prospects at the best. Economists expect the present hardly noticeable boom to end within a year or two.

A non Thatcherite Tory government could even face similar problems to Mitterrand's reformist government in 1981-82 which had to bow to pressure for more orthodox policies if they wanted to maintain capitalism. And Pym certainly has no socialist intentions!

The Alliance parties will try to woo the Tory wets, hoping joint statements on unemployment will prevent Tory waverers voting Labour. It would be fatal if Labour politicians themselves fell into the trap of looking for spurious allies in Centre Forward.

The problems workers face are caused by capitalism itself, not just by Thatcher's control of the Tory Party. Whatever the outcome of the civil strife, Labour should take heart at the growing Tory divisions and campaign hard for socialist policies to escape the bonds of capitalism, both wet and dry varieties.

TORIES DISUNITED



Miners must stay united

MANY SECTIONS of the National Union of Mineworkers, particularly the rank and file, are demanding that action be taken against those individuals who organised strike-breaking or campaigned in opposition to, and without regard to, the rules of the national union.

As we go to press, the NEC are meeting to discuss disciplining Notts Area officials Roy Lynk and David Prendergast.

Militant fully supports taking action against these individuals, but the NUM leadership must be extremely careful not to allow these reactionaries the opportunity of posing as martyrs unjustly treated by a dictatorial bureaucracy as the press would undoubtedly portray it.

The most important aspect is the need to draw the Notts area back into the national union. To do this, a campaign must be launched

to isolate Lynk and Prendergast from the rank and file and to convince Notts miners that it is in their best interests to avoid a split.

If the question of disciplinary action is handled correctly and the necessary lessons from the dispute are not only learned but also implemented, the NUM can go from strength to strength.

By Chris Herriot
 (Sacked miner
 Monktonhall NUM)

Oppose media pressure for NUM rules changes

WITHIN MINUTES of the proposals by the leaders of the NUM to change the union's national rules there has been both a barrage of propaganda from the media attacking the alterations and the union's right-wing threatening legal action.

The Tories' anti-trade union legislation has meant that many unions are now altering their rule books in an attempt to comply and protect themselves from the courts. This, however, is never possible, because the Tories can always change the rules.

Militant supporters in the NUM would welcome a complete review of not only national but local rules.

It is absolutely necessary that after any battle, the structure of the union is examined by the membership to see how it fared.

First, however, must come an open debate on the lessons of the dispute, its successes and shortcomings. Any changes would be seen as a necessity and would easily be endorsed by the membership.

United response

Certainly, the question of the federated nature of the union would have to be discussed. In a period when the union and the industry is under constant attack it

is necessary to have a united response.

One of the major weaknesses of the recent strike was that the majority of Notts miners never struck. But the key to this was the lack of a campaign previous to the strike.

We however, say it is a mistake, to change the rule to deny the president the right to vote. This has been proposed in response to new government legislation that forces officials who vote on national bodies, to stand for election every five years.

Militant has long stood on a re-election platform for all officials whether they have a vote or not, to

ensure that they stay close to the interests of the rank and file members.

Regular election

Arthur Scargill should stand for re-election for these reasons but not because of changes in any law relating to the trade unions. Trade union democracy can never be based on allowing the representatives of the bosses dictating a union's rules. The NUM accepted at their 1983 conference that officials, elected after August of that year, had to stand for regular re-election.

We need to prepare now for the

Prison for backing miners

MILITANT SUPPORTER, Bob Harker, an active member of the Gateshead Miners' Dependents' Support Group throughout the miners' strike is set to face a prison sentence for refusing to pay a fine of over £200 after being found guilty by Sunderland Magistrates Court for "threatening behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace".

In what can only be described as a complete travesty of justice, the court evidence from three policemen often contradicted itself and claimed

that Bob pulled two police officers to the ground and injured one.

The defence evidence included a photograph showing Bob standing with his hands in his pockets at the time, when miners were marching back to their pit, Wearmouth, at the end of the strike.

(A full account of Bob's story will appear later in *Militant*).

I charge you with...

Imprisoning scabs

MINER JOHN Schofield was acquitted of the charge of "Unlawful imprisonment" at Liverpool Crown Court, after two days in the dock when the judge threw out the case for lack of evidence.

John was arrested after an incident while driving the 'picket bus' on the way to picket Bickershaw pit, when three men were picked up and assumed to be pickets. It turned out that they were on their way to work at Parkside pit.

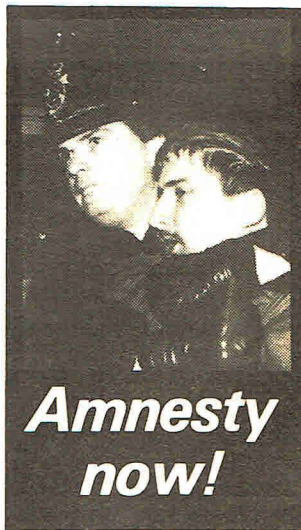
"We had picked up three live scabs", said Gary Knowles, Bold NUM; "so we left them on the bus and carried on picketing. We thought it would be the last

we heard of them... but the scabs had been into the police station and said they had been assaulted. Later John was charged with "unlawful imprisonment"... the police will do anything including lying to break the resolve of the miners".

Stealing a bridge

BUT THE most incredible case, worthy of something out of 'Noddy and Big Ears', is of the miners who were charged with stealing a bridge. The four miners from South Wales were also charged with obstruction and unlawful assembly, and sent for trial along with 40 others at Newport Crown Court.

The arrests arose when



miners occupied the Newport Transporter Bridge. Mostyn Jones, one of the miners, says that in the prosecution's evidence, PC Fry "claimed to have seen Gary Mann (Marine Colliery) throwing a door made of iron, 12 foot by three foot at a group of PC's... Gary Mann was suspended above the River Usk with myself and two others 150 yards away, a fact later proved by video".

As the defence council pointed out; "he (the PC) claims a huge iron door was hurled 40 feet and hit several of his PC's who just carried on, arrested about ten miners and none of them were hurt."

The prosecution's evidence was thrown out and the miners bound over to keep the peace for two years on £300. All the defendants were acquitted.

By Peter Jarvis

Trade
union
elections

Back Ron Todd

WITH THE re-ballot for general secretary beginning this week, TGWU members must give the Tory press a clear message that they are not prepared to tolerate media interference in union affairs, by recording a massive victory for Ron Todd.

With the major problems facing the union, through the attacks by this Tory government on working people, many TGWU activists have been angered that their attention has been side-tracked by this re-ballot on the flimsiest evidence of ballot-rigging. They will now be looking for a bold lead and campaign that offers a clear way forward.

Already, the media campaign against Todd has begun. Through smears and innuendo, the press are seeking to attempt to link him to ballot rigging. The *Sun*, for example, on 13 May claimed that "Had it not been for the courage of Mr Wright who went on television and demanded a re-run they wouldn't have the chance to vote in a fair election now. *George must be the right choice*". In fact the reverse was true; it was *Ron Todd's* insistence on a re-ballot which persuaded the executive to agree to it.

Meetings

The only way this influence can be effectively countered is through a firm and decisive campaign around clear socialist policies which takes the issues to every branch and every member of the union. Where possible, left activists must organise public meetings and rallies of TGWU members. Leaflets and posters should be produced for distribution in every region.

A victory for George Wright would be a major set-back for the union. Already he has shown his intentions through launching a vicious witch-hunt against *Militant* supporters in Wales.

Many activists, however, will also have been disturbed by Ron Todd's recent statement in the *Sunday Telegraph* that he is "above factions" in the union and that he voted in favour of the expulsion of the *Militant* Editorial Board from the Labour Party.

This election, above all, has shown the need for an open, democratic and accountable Broad Left in the TGWU which has firm roots and authority amongst the members through campaigning in their interests for socialist policies. Along with campaigning for a victory for Ron Todd, activists must use this opportunity to establish open Broad Lefts both nationally and in every region of the union in preparation for the major struggles that lie ahead in the future.

By Nick Toms

ENOCH POWELL'S "Protection of Unborn Children" bill is now unlikely to get any further. However, its supporters will be clamouring for the government to include an absolute ban on human embryo research in any legislation based on the Warnock Committee's findings.

Despite some help from the Deputy Speaker on 3 May, the Bill was "talked out", thus failing to complete its report stage. It is virtually ruled out that Powell will get the parliamentary time necessary to get his proposals made law.

The television news made a lot of the angry protest by Dafydd Wigley, Plaid Cymru MP for Caernarfon, who accidentally smashed the arm off the speaker's chair. He and others were incensed at the speaker's unusual ruling to take an early vote—before time ran out.

Less well publicised was the reason for Dafydd Wigley's involvement. Last year two

THE RIGHTS of women to have complete control over their bodies and their right to choose whether they want to have children or not are coming under increasing attack from the Tories and other right wing groups.

Last year Mrs Victoria Gillick won her appeal against West Norfolk Area Health Authority, preventing them giving advice on abortion to under 16 year old girls without their parents' consent.

More recently Enoch Powell has been trying to push through his bill preventing experimentation on human embryos. Although this Bill has been delayed in its report stage (see above article) if passed it would have a serious effect on the research into infertility, and genetically related diseases. The right of infertile women to effective treatment would be curtailed.

By Linda Douglas
London LPYS Regional
Committee

ALREADY AS a result of the Gillick decision there have been cases of suicide of young girls because they thought they wouldn't be able to seek abortions.

There's even been cases of girls waiting until their 16th birthday before they seek an abortion, a few months wait could effectively rule some girls out of getting an abortion on the NHS.

In 1980 there were 1,800 legal abortions among 15 year olds, and 46,000 among 16 year olds. Because of the Gillick ruling many girls would not be able to get parental consent for abortions. Some would simply be thrown out of home or run away because they are too scared to tell their parents they are pregnant. In the same year 1,056 15 year olds gave birth to children and 4,304 16 year olds bore children and most conceived when 15 years old. These figures are now guaranteed to zoom higher because of the Gillick ruling.

Mrs Gillick has ten children (at the moment) and she can afford to bring them up decently. She has no right to impose unwanted pregnancies and backstreet abortions on young girls who can't afford private abortions or contraception.

Mrs Gillick has a lot of support from the Catholic church and morality groups; she is seen by many as just an ordinary Catholic woman trying to protect her five daughters and other young girls, but there is more to her morality than first meets the eye.

Back in 1972 Mrs Gillick was active in a racist anti-immigration group called the Powelights. This group had connections with extreme right-wing groups such as the NF, and the British Movement and the Tory Monday Club and it often played host to some of their leaders.

Attack on abortion rights

The Gillick decision is the first prong of a new attack on women's right to abortion. Enoch Powell's Bill, although aimed at stopping experimentation on human embryos could also open a second line of attack on rights to abortion.

The Powell Bill

sons died from an incurable disease—which many doctors believe could become curable as a result of research involving human embryos.

Powell's Bill would ban any research whatsoever, whereas Warnock recommends that research should be allowed with human embryos up to fourteen days old, at registered supervised centres.

While socialists will rightly raise questions about the proposed controls when the NHS is being cut back and the big drug companies and private medical interests have more and more influence, it cannot be in the interests of human well-being generally to outlaw research on embryos which are "spare" and would not in practice become biologically viable in any case.

Under Warnock's proposals there is no question, in reality, of potential human lives being "sacrificed" for medical interests of others.

After the debate, Powell called on the government to give his private members' bill government time, but Thatcher made it clear she would not agree to this.

As on other issues, like capital punishment, Thatcher is playing a double game. According to lobby correspondents who have their off-the-record briefings, she "privately opposes the bill".

But Thatcher is not prepared to speak out publicly against Powell's demands. For right-wing Tory crusaders these demands become just one more slogan in their holy war to revive the authoritarian "morality" (that is, discipline) which used to cement the social order which our capitalist rulers nostalgically link with the "good old days".

'Moral right' vs women's rights



Above and below—march to stop the Powell Bill, in London. Photos: Tim Picton (Reflex).

The significance of Powell's bill is that if he wins the argument about when life begins in pregnancy it could lead to the stopping of all post-coital methods of contraception and abortion.

The Bill would also have huge repercussions on In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF)—fertilising a human egg outside the womb, the method used for 'test tube babies'. This treatment of infertility still has a very low success-rate (10%) and only further experimentation on human embryos will improve its success.

Thus the Bill will discriminate against infertile women. Only certain types of infertility will be allowed to

be treated by IVF. Infertility treatment for men of course won't be affected because the Bill only deals with eggs and embryos.

Approval

Powell also wants the Secretary of State to approve each woman requesting this treatment. This could lead to further discrimination in many ways. What would he base his decision on?—social conditions, marital status, her age, economic status or her sexual orientation? Would he have her full medical history? Would he allow her to use a donor's egg? It's clear that a system that requires the Secretary of State's personal approval is wide open for discrimination against working class infertile women.

Doctors would also be required to breach medical confidentiality by being made by law to name the woman requiring the treatment. If the Secretary's permission is obtained it will only last for 4 months and it could take much longer than that for this sort of treatment to get a result, positive or not.

Thirteen per cent of all recognised pregnancies result in spontaneous abortions (mis-carriages), 50 per cent of these mis-carriages have chromosomal abnormalities—either one too many chromosomes or too few.

Further research is urgently needed in this field and in the field of single gene defects—which are responsible for diseases such as haemophilia, muscular dystrophy

and some forms of cystic fibrosis. These are unique to humans and can therefore only be studied on human embryos. If these defects are to be spotted at an early stage, late abortions could be prevented for women with such defects in their pregnancies and maybe in the future the embryos could be corrected. Only further experimentation on human embryos can achieve this.

The last time an attack was made on a woman's right to abortion it was defeated by a huge mobilisation of women backed by the labour movement seeing it as another attack on working class women. But on the Powell Bill it was a free vote in the House of Commons for Labour MPs, over 30 of them voted for the Bill! Why were they sponsoring a bill put forward by a known reactionary like Enoch Powell any way!

Clear stand

These issues are not moral issues; the Labour Party should make a clear stand on this. This bill along with the Gillick ruling falls in perfectly with the Tories' arguments for a return to Victorian values. It will put back the rights of women, young and old, to have control over their own fertility—for their right to choose whether to have children or not. It is a class issue—the overwhelming burden of these decisions initiated by the 'moral right' will fall on the shoulders of working class women. The labour movement has to ensure that these attacks are stopped in their tracks.



ads

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Leeds Miners Defence Group. Please send us up to date information on suspended, sacked and imprisoned miners. Can offer help and hospitality for wives and children of jailed miners in Yorkshire. Contact: Mrs A Jones, 245 Winrose Drive, Belle Isle, Leeds 10 LS10 3HA. Telephone: 715520.

CHILEAN DAY School organised by the Labour Party Young Socialists for the Chilean Socialist Defence Campaign, Saturday 25 May, 10.30am—5.00pm. Morning: The Latin American Revolution. Afternoon: Chile and role of LPYS in CSDC. In the evening Latin American Band & Disco. YMCA Hall Woolwich Dockyard, Woolwich Church Street, SE 18. £1.50—75p students + UB40. Nearest trains: Woolwich Dockyard

GORDON AND Eileen McKinley would like to announce the birth on 14 May of Daniel, a little brother for Shaun.

Militant Meetings

Welsh Labour Party Conference: Friday 17 May. Empire Hotel, Church Walks, Llandudno, 7.30.

DOVER: Marxist Discussion Group meets on Wednesday evenings at 8.00 pm at 36 Priory Hill, Dover. Subjects and dates as follows:

- 22 May: The future for capitalism.
 - 29 May: Can we stop the arms race?
 - 5 June: The future for the Stalinist States.
 - 12 June: The state, the media and the party.
 - 19 June: Trade unions and leadership.
- For further details ring (0303) 43541.

SOUTHAMPTON: Marxist Discussion Group meets every Sunday, 7.30pm, 206 Honeysuckle Road, Bassett, Southampton. Tel: 551420 for details of subjects or any further information.

Newcastle *Militant* Readers Meeting: Unite and Fight the Tories. Speakers: Derek Hatton (Deputy leader Liverpool City Council), Bill Hopwood (Expelled LP member). 7.30 Wed 22 May Nixon Hall, YMCA Ellison Place, Newcastle.

UCW Conference
 Militant Public Meeting
 Defend Political Levy
 Reject sell out deal
 Defend Jobs, Fight Unemployment
 Tuesday 21 May 8pm. Winterbourne Hotel, Priory Rd. (on West Cliff) (2 minutes from BIC) Bournemouth. Speakers: Dave Nellist MP, Eddie Thorpe UCW Oldham (pers. cap) Alan Short UCW Bridgend (pers. cap) Chair: Phil Waker UCW East London Counter (pers. cap)

FALKIRK: Marxist Discussion Group. Monday 27 May—Racism and the labour movement. All meetings at 7.30 in Bainsford Community Centre, David's Loan, Falkirk.

TGWU BIENNIAL Delegate Conference *Militant* Meeting, Tuesday 25 June, 7.30pm. Speakers: Dave Nellist MP and Christine McVicar (delegate to Conference, personal capacity). Wessex Hotel, West Cliff Road, Bournemouth.

NEWCASTLE-Under-Lyme (Staffordshire) *Militant* Readers Meeting Tuesday 28 May, 7.30pm Guild Hall, Newcastle-under-Lyme.

CHILE SOLIDARITY Night. Southampton Labour Club, Queensway, Southampton. Thursday 30 May 7.30pm Food and Music £1.50 (waged), £1.00 (unwaged)

FIGHTING FUND First week £1,255

New quarter—get moving NOW!

MANY AREAS are already off to a good start to the new quarter. Last quarter's record total of £50,397 proved that support for *Militant* is increasing week by week.

Our enemies would like to see our support on the wane but that just makes us all the more determined to raise the necessary cash. Our aim this quarter is the full £70,000. This would mean a tremendous stride forward for our paper. It would mean we could buy much of the new equipment and machinery needed for the twice weekly and daily *Militant*.

£20 aim

We have already had many supporters commit themselves to raising a minimum of £20 this quarter. Can you raise £20? Write in and let us know how you plan to do it.

Planning is the key to easy fund raising and comrades must start immediately.

Don't wait for the last few weeks. Jumble sales, summer "fayres", parties and video nights all need to be well planned in advance. We need to receive half the target by 18 June so there's no room for delay.

An increasing amount of our fighting fund is coming from readers simply by asking their friends and relatives or taking collections at union meetings, workplaces, Labour Party and LPYS branches. This week we thank in particular Pamela Roberts from Newham NE CLP who gave £20, Dianna Hayes a YS member in West Ham gave £5 and Sarah Rolfe, secretary Southend NUPE who gave £5. Southampton readers are even planning to raise fighting fund at their local fairground.

Sales of raffle tickets so far are going extremely well. In just one small mining town of Cannock our readers have already sold 30 books and have requested a further 50 books! Looks like being a record here too. Don't relax your efforts.



Every time you sell *Militant* ask for a donation to the Fighting Fund.

Forward to £70,000!

PS. We are now in receipt of photographs from a pyjama party in Stoke-on-Trent. A donation to the fighting fund will destroy the negatives.

Donations

Taunton LPYS £15; M Wanton £5 Black Country; A Brooks £1; Stafford LPYS collection £3 and Stafford Poly collection £2; M Loftus, Acton LP £1; Rotherham readers

sent in £4.69 collected in a rattling tin on a May Day rally; £1.15 collected outside Marine Colliery, Gwent in a rattling tin. May Day social in Stafford raised £25; thanks also to John Cheesman, unemployed who sent in £4 and Linda Jackson from Grimsby £5; Welsh TUC supporters collect £229.40. Many thanks to all our contributors whom we cannot mention due to lack of space.

By Ruth Campbell

This week £972

THE DEVASTATION wreaked by the Thatcher Government has meant the eradication of the one time North-South divide. Unemployment, or low wages, with no prospects is the norm in all areas of the country, even those which at one time might have felt safe from the ravages of capitalism.

Workers in these areas are not taking it without a fight.

Not so soft South

The recent schools strike saw students out in Portsmouth, Basildon, Canterbury and many other places giving the Tories a taste of the battles they will have to face. Likewise, support for a Dai-

Marxist Daily Building Fund 1985

| | | | |
|-------------------|------|---------------|--------------|
| Eastern | 2545 | Scotland East | 2249 |
| East Midlands | 2765 | Scotland West | 2442 |
| Humberside | 1595 | Southern | 3374 |
| London East | 3063 | South West | 720 |
| London West | 3875 | Wales East | 1760 |
| London South East | 1908 | Wales West | 1453 |
| London South West | 1701 | West Midlands | 1722 |
| Lancashire | 501 | Yorkshire | 1208 |
| Manchester | 1817 | National | 1292 |
| Merseyside | 4226 | | |
| Northern | 2463 | Total: | 42679 |

ly Marxist paper is not confirmed to areas north of Watford.

Andy Coles of Eastleigh in Hampshire has donated a total of £236 to our fund. This is a MONTH'S wages. Chris Goodman of Southampton has donated £100 despite having been made unemployed recently. Mike King, another

unemployed reader from Southampton has sent in £50. Steve White of Brentwood, Essex, sent £100 "towards the building of a socialist daily paper."

This support from the so-called 'soft' south shows how far the ideas of Marxism are reaching. Even in the other traditional Tory areas like the Home Counties workers are looking for a way to fight back against Thatcher. Many are finding it in the ideas of Marxism.

Ask everybody

But we need to reach every single part of Britain with our ideas. To do that a daily paper is vital. Following the example of those readers

who have already given a week's income, some readers have given two, three and even four, weeks income in order to obtain just such a daily paper.

Readers in Merseyside deserve a mention for the regular money that is being sent to the Fund. This week a further £522 was raised bringing their total to £4,285. Make sure that in your area the campaign for a Marxist Daily does not slow down. Ask every reader for a contribution. The support so far received shows how workers are willing to support a paper that supports them.

By Nick Wrack

Marxist Weekend School 1985

London 14/15 September

Courses on: Marxist Philosophy, Marxist Economics, The Russian Revolution, Marxism and the state, Black workers and the struggle for socialism, the Colonial Revolution, The Trade Unions—the 1920's and Today, The lessons of Popular Frontism, Women and the struggle for socialism.

Plus a rally/debate on Saturday and disco. Professionally run crèche. Put the date in your diary and make your transport plans now!

Only £7 (£5 unwaged). Book now! Cheques to "Marxist Weekend School" 3/13 Hepscoth Road, London E9.

I would like to register for the course on ... at the Marxist weekend school (Reading guides will be sent out from July)

I will need accommodation (Bring a sleeping bag) for Friday/Saturday nights.

I will require the crèche for the following children (name and age)

—

I enclose booking fee.

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 To be drawn 27 July.

In memory of Ian Burge (Secretary, Tower Hamlets JSSC, London Hospital). May 18th 1980. From those who knew and worked with him.

Reasons behind textiles decline

THE LATEST closures announced by Courtaulds are yet another example of the criminal neglect of the textile bosses and their incapacity to develop the industry. Between 1978 and 1983, the three largest textile firms reduced their workforce by 45%, 49% and 31% respectively. Between '79 and '82 there was a loss of 52.4% of the jobs in cotton textiles in Rochdale. The Amalgamated Textile Workers Union membership slumped from 45,243 in '74 to 15,000 in '84.

The whole history of textiles shows the unwillingness of the bosses to invest, even though new inventions were based and manufactured in Lancashire. Between the wars new machinery such as ring spindles were manufactured in Oldham for export abroad, but British firms stuck to old fashion mule spinning. In the '30's there were 2½ more times mule spinners than ring spinners in Lancs.

This inefficiency was partly hidden by the rise in demand for textiles after the war. The bosses even opened canteens and nurseries to attract women workers back to work.

But this didn't last. In the first slump in '52, trade was lost to Scandanavia, Canada, USA and West Europe. A recent report in Oldham, 'The Winding Down of Textiles concludes that cheap imports merely filled a gap caused by the failure of British textile bosses to modernise their products and invest. Even recently most cheap imports are not from low wage third world countries but the EEC, USA and Japan.

Take-overs

There was no major re-equipment and re-organisation until '59. This was done with lavish government grants. The main effect was take-overs of the smaller firms by 5 major companies. Far from improving the conditions and wages for textile workers the closures continued. Night work was stepped up and continuous working and heavier loads introduced.

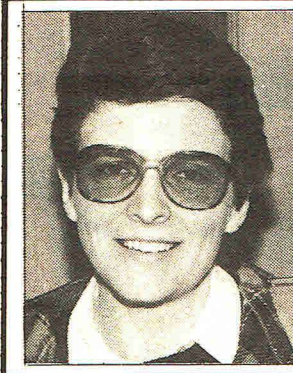
Textiles still rely on cheap

labour. According to the New Earnings Survey '84, 23.7% of male manual workers and 77.9% of female workers earned less than £100.

3,000 workers have been confirmed as suffering from byssinosis. The Matindale face mask which is widely used is said by the Factory Inspectorate to be useless against cotton dust and toxic substances. In spite of the decline in textiles, the industry still employs more workers than coal and steel industries together and is in the top five export earners, which only goes to show how bad the rest are!

Even at this stage a fightback to save the textile industry should be launched. There is an urgent need for the amalgamation of the many unions which organise textile workers as the small, often localised unions, are no match for the well organised bosses. The unions should build a shop steward structure which has been lacking in the past and has made workplace organisation difficult.

Special measures should be taken to involve women workers and particularly black and Asian workers who are seriously discriminated against in terms of shift allocation and segregation into particular jobs. There must be no more grants to employers—that's just throwing good money after bad. Firms threatening redundancy must be nationalised and a national plan put forward by the labour movement for the modernisation and redevelopment of the industry under workers' control and management.



MARGARET CREEAR looks at the crisis in the industry and talks to a women shop steward in a Lancashire textile factory



Photo: REFLEX

'We need to stand up for ourselves'

'The place I work in is supposed to be a textile firm. They started off making stuff like shrouds and bandages. They use paper to line coffins now and we don't sell much embossed cloth so they've switched to making more household goods like dusters and dishcloths. It's a very old-fashioned firm. All the machinery, like a lot of cotton firms, is very old. The workers perform miracles.

I was talking to one of the women downstairs. She worked on the slitting machine. It's very old and made up of a lot of knives which slit a piece of cloth into bandage widths. It breaks down every few minutes and the mechanic keeps taking the knives away to sharpen them. She said to me: "That won't make any difference. We need a new machine. But even if we got one it wouldn't cut this rubbish properly". The boss keeps buying cheaper and cheaper stuff to keep down costs. At the same time he's bought himself a new car. I suppose he's got his priorities right from his point of view: look after number one.

No shop-steward

There are not many workers who are militant. They're too worried about their jobs to voice their opinions. They are in a union, and now they're electing a representative which they've never had before. I once asked who was the shop steward because I wanted to give out NHS leaflets. (I wasn't even allowed to do that. Even though you'd have thought the boss would be interested in defending



Photo: REFLEX

the NHS, what with the shrouds and bandages!)

Anyway they told me they had no shop steward. They didn't like shop stewards or the union. If anyone had a complaint they could put their coats on, catch a bus to the town centre and complain at the office there. Previously they were supposed to be represented by the works manager. He started off as a loom tacker and by dint of much creeping he managed to become works manager.

We need to get together and

stand up for ourselves. When our dinner time was cut from three-quarters to half an our, they never consulted us. They get a lot of co-operation mainly because of the threat of losing your job hanging over your shoulder. The number of times I've heard the boss say: "Well it's that or no job". But they don't seem to realise that more and more these days it's resentful co-operation. I only hope I'm around for the backlash because I'm sure its building up!"

Export the bosses

THIS PICTURE highlights the contradictions in calls for import controls.

Here Asian textile workers in Leicester in 1980, who face taunts from racists as immigrants who should it's said 'go home' because they are taking 'British jobs', support demands for import controls designed to destroy jobs abroad.

These ideas rest on complete confusion about the system we live under. People buy imported goods because they're cheaper. If the government imposes import controls to stop foreign textiles coming in, then that means workers will have to spend more on clothes. That means they'll have less to spend on housing, cars and consumer durables. Therefore the workers who produce those things are more likely to find themselves out of a job. Import controls just juggle unemployment around nationally and inter-



nationally.

It's a dear way to subsidise jobs. A recent report to the British government on the Multi Fibre Arrangement suggests it will cost us all £700 million in dearer clothing. If the MFA were scrapped instead, about 13,000 jobs would go! This works out at £53,000 per job! Textile workers who are not paid £53,000 in a year should ask—who is being protected? Obviously it's your bosses' profits.

There has been a tragic loss of jobs—50% have gone in textiles and 60% in the rag trade since 1972. New investment which has taken place has allowed the bosses to

shed labour. The other reason is that in advanced countries like West Germany employers have invested even more and stepped up imports into this country.

When the US government restricted the import of steel, they found the steel came into the country anyway in the form of cars and fridges. To save steel workers jobs, car workers' jobs were lost. Capitalism kills jobs, not foreign workers. Only production planned for workers' needs not the bosses' profits offers hope for the future.

By Mick Brooks

CP on road to

★ Morning Star

504 30p ★ ★ INCORPORATING THE DAILY WORKER—FOR PEACE AND SOCIALISM

FOCUS

The communist party weekly 25p

Marxism Today

January 85 75p



McGahey slams Star editorial

Mick McGahey, the miners' vice-president, has written to the Morning Star objecting to its recent attack on the Communist Party over the pit dispute. At the time Focus went to press, the paper had not published...

Time to reverse hijack of Star

The paper, while providing a platform for the whole left and democratic movement, editorially expresses the views of the CPGB. The paper, while providing a platform for the whole left and democratic movement, editorially expresses the views of the CPGB.

Shock report exposes CP vote rigging

Workers of the world unite! For a reformed Communist Party

THE COMMUNIST Party of Great Britain (CPGB) this weekend which is likely to prepare the way for The Party is fundamentally divided between newspaper the *Morning Star* and those who support it. Some *Morning Star* supporters have already been expelled. This is the culmination of years of political and organisational struggles. This article examines the background and causes of the split.

IT IS CLEAR that the CPGB is heading for a major split. After months of organisational manoeuvring the Party leadership is likely to consolidate its majority at this Congress and then try to capture the *Morning Star*.

The fact that the Party right-wing have an open dislike for even pretending to defend the ideas of Marxism and have no confidence at all in the group presently in control of the *Morning Star* to rally behind it many, though not all, of the workers still remaining within the Party.

However, there should be no illusions that the *Morning Star* group presents a real alternative to the CPGB leaders.

For many years *Morning Star*

editor Tony Chater was part of and fully supported the Party leadership's policies, including the 1977 version of *The British Road to Socialism*. During this period a powerful right-wing "Euro-Communist" tendency was growing within the declining CPGB.

For a time the old Party leadership had a love-hate relationship with this tendency, sometimes linking up with it to defeat the more left wing elements in the Party and sometimes opposing it. However the increasing strength of the right-wing eventually caused a split in the old Party leadership between those who were prepared to co-operate with the right and those who were not.

This first came out into the open when the majority of the old leaders decided to support a right-wing motion at the 1981 Party Congress which was mildly critical of the *Morning Star*. This was something editor Chater would not stand for and marked the beginning of the total break-up of the old leadership.

History of lost opportunities

THE COMMUNIST Party was formed in 1920 through a coming together of Marxists inspired by the victory of the 1917 Russian revolution and determined to fight against the influence of the reformist leaders of the British labour movement.

Throughout the world similar developments took place as workers flocked to join the Communist International, the World Communist Party formed in 1919 and led by Lenin and Trotsky.

At its foundation the CPGB became the British section of the Communist International and remained so until Stalin dissolved the International in 1943 as a gesture to his wartime allies.

At first CPGB members could also be members of the Labour Party. In fact two CPGB members were elected to Parliament in 1922 with the backing of their local Labour Parties. However, the growing support for the CPGB led the right-wing Labour Party leaders beginning organisational attacks on their left-wing critics.

Minority movement

Until the early 1920s the Labour Party was essentially a federation of working class and socialist organisations, but fear of opposition led to the Labour Party leadership surrounding itself with organisational devices in an effort to stifle support for Marxism.

The attacks on the CPGB in the mid-1920s by both the Labour Party right-wing and the state did not at first seriously hinder the growth in the new party's influence.

Despite having only a few thousand members the CPGB's policies had growing support, particularly through the left-wing Minority Movement which at its peak had

the backing of a quarter of all trade union members.

However the chances which the CPGB had of building large scale support, particularly after the 1926 General Strike, were ruined by the corrupting influence of the Stalin clique over the entire world Communist movement.

The rise of Stalinism in Russia, due to the isolation of the revolution in industrially backward Russia, had a profound effect on the policies of the Communist International. Under pressure from the Stalin clique in Moscow Communist Parties carried out one zig-zag after another.

In the mid-1920s their policies were opportunist, seeking agreements with various 'left' leaders. In Britain this led the CPGB into not criticising the role of the 'left' TUC leaders who remained silent at the right's betrayal of the 1926 General Strike.

This was followed by a sharp turn to a sectarian, ultra-left policy characterised by the CPGB calling the Labour Party 'fascist', trying to split trade unions and attempting to physically break up Labour Party meetings.

The application of this ultra-left policy in Germany led to the German Communist Party refusing to call on the Social Democrat and trade union leaders to undertake joint activity against the Nazis. This prevented the building of the united action which alone could have stopped the Nazis' victory.

The victory of Hitler made an attack on the Soviet Union far more likely and produced an about-turn by Stalin, by then firmly in control after eliminating the rest of the original Bolshevik leadership. Stalin sought to reach an agreement with Britain and France against Nazi Germany.

This policy was reflected in the sudden rightward turn of the Com-



Communist Party trade union leaders on opposite sides of the split—Ken Gill (TASS) supports the *Star*, Mick McGahey (NUM) backs the executive

unist Parties towards joint activities with other workers and capitalist parties, a tactic completely different from Lenin's 'United Front' of workers' organisations fighting together on specific issues.

1945 election

In Britain in the mid and late 1930s the CPGB campaigned for a 'People's Front' with the ILP, Labour and Liberal parties (later extended to include 'progressive' Tories) to fight against the Chamberlain government. It was this period which saw Communist Parties adopting increasingly reformist policies and more and more openly abandoning the principles upon which the Communist International had been founded.

The CPGB reached its peak strength during the Second World War largely on the basis of the popular support for the Soviet Union's fight against the Nazi invaders. But at the same time the CPGB was so keen in its support for the wartime coalition between

the parties that it argued against those within the Labour Party who wanted an immediate general election and the election of a majority Labour government.

In fact the Labour Party's sweeping 1945 election victory took the CPGB completely by surprise and provoked an internal debate over whether it had been correct to campaign for a new coalition government rather than a majority Labour government.

The 40 years since the end of the last world war have seen a steady decline in the CPGB's fortunes. Part of this decline clearly lay in the fact that the long economic upswing of the 1950s and 1960s produced a period of relative class peace in Britain.

It was only in the late 1960s as the specific crisis of British capitalism worsened that the class struggle began to develop again. But this did not stop the fall in the CPGB's membership and in the sales of its paper, the *Daily Worker* now called the *Morning Star*.

Immediate task

Chater used his position in control of the *Morning Star* to try to build an alternative powerbase to the Party Executive. The majority of the Executive responded by trying to re-establish Party control over the *Morning Star*, which legally is not the CPGB's paper but belongs to the People's Press Publishing Society. From then on there has been a continuous infighting between the differing groups.

The *Morning Star* has tried to attack the Party leadership from the left but without putting forward a real alternative. It tries to be radical on trade union issues but will not make any criticisms of the 'left' union leaders (unless they support the CPGB leaders).

For example, when the government took out a court order banning the CPSA from holding a one-day strike the *Morning Star* ran the story as its main front page headline and implied that the CPSA left would defy the order (March 23).

However by the following Monday (March 25) the story was relegated to a tiny item on page three because it was clear that the paper's supporters on the CPSA executive did not want to challenge the Tory court order. Sure enough, when the CPSA executive voted to comply with the government order the *Morning Star* put the item back on the front page explaining that its supporters were against "political posturing".

Despite the paper's attacks on the ideas of the CPGB right-wing it too calls for the building of some kind of 'democratic alliance' in Britain (10 April). No indication is given as to which classes would be in this alliance although Tony Chater has linked it to the wartime coalition. It would be interesting to

Split



holds a Special Congress a major split in its ranks. Those who support the party executive. expelled. But this crisis national decline. BOB LABI t.

Decades of decline

Once the CPGB had a big influence within the labour movement. At its peak in 1942 the CPGB claimed over 56,000 members, but then followed years of decline.

In 1970 it still claimed 29,300 members, but by that time many were inactive, and not even paying their membership subscriptions. Increasingly the CPGB's membership was ageing as they failed to recruit young people, apart from the university students who today form the basis for the most rightwing grouping in the Party. The 1970s saw the acceleration of the CPGB's decline so that in July last year it claimed 14,591 members on paper, of whom less than half paid membership fees. In the last 15 years the Young Communist League's membership has fallen from 3,452 to 370.

This decline, during a period which has seen the beginning of an enormous radicalisation within the labour movement, has been the inevitable result of the degeneration of the CPGB from being part of an international Marxist movement into a nationally based reformist party; unsuccessfully competing with the Labour Party.



Merseyside CP members on march in support of Liverpool City Council. Photo: Militant.

see if he supports the CPGB's 1945 position that the Labour Party was wrong to break that coalition up!

The outcome of the battle over the paper is less certain and most probably will end up in the courts.

Politically the CPGB right-wing are on a course for the right-wing camp within the Labour Party, although whether or not they will all end up in the Labour Party depends on what happens to the CPGB's considerable financial reserves.

Eastern Europe

The *Morning Star* group will probably form a new party and be able to maintain a paper on the basis of the support it gets from Eastern Europe. Already over half of the paid sales are in Russia and Eastern Europe. But this support from the East will place the *Morning Star* in great difficulties, as for example in the miners' strike when it refused to comment on or even accept advertisements against the imports of scab Polish coal.

After the strike the paper did carry a one line comment that 'it is true Polish coal is and was a problem' (10 April) but this type of whitewash will not be accepted by workers.

It is clear that both the major groupings within the CPGB represent different strands of left reformism, despite the use of Marxist language. These ideas will be put to the test and be found wanting as the capitalist crisis will not allow partial solutions. This is why the ideas of genuine Marxism, as represented by *Militant*, will continue to grow, becoming the programme of the left and then of the labour movement as a whole.

The break with Moscow

THE FUNDAMENTAL causes for the Communist Party's decline lie in its programme and in its support for what it calls the 'socialist' countries.

Since the 1930s the Party programme has been basically reformist, although for many years radical rhetoric was used to disguise the fact. Today the CPGB's programme is very similar to that of the left in the Labour Party.

Soft lefts

Indeed increasingly the CPGB is now to the right of Labour Party conference decisions, especially those proposed by *Militant* supporters. The policies of the powerful *Marxism Today* grouping within the CPGB are the same as those of the so-called 'soft lefts' in the Labour Party who support Kinnoch's ideas.

In this situation where there are two parties putting forward very similar policies it is inevitable that the smaller party will decline. This is precisely what is happening to the CPGB.

Why should anyone be attracted by the programme of the reformist left join the tiny CPGB when they can join the mass Labour Party?

The CPGB try to claim that they are still a Marxist party but their policies are based on the fundamental premise that significant lasting reforms can be won under capitalism. They can not appeal to those increasing numbers of youth and workers who seek a bold and fundamental social change—those who have provided the basis for the tremendous increase in support for *Militant* over the past 15 years.

In addition the tremendous boost which the CPGB got in the past from the attraction of the Soviet Union now no longer exists.

The fact that the CPGB had to admit that it had lied to defend Stalin's crimes severely undermin-

ed its position. Furthermore the regular shocks which came out of the so-called 'socialist' countries lessened their attraction to workers generally, as well as providing the capitalists with a propaganda field day.

Tito-Stalin clash

At first the CPGB completely defended the Moscow leadership in the 1948 Stalin-Tito clash, the 1953 Berlin uprising, the 1956 Hungarian revolution and the Sino-Soviet split which led to armed clashes between two supposedly 'socialist' countries.

By the time of the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia the CPGB had begun to distance itself from these regimes, but in so doing moved closer to a reformist position. Not being prepared to advance the policy of political revolution and workers' democracy in these states the Party tut-tutted and moralised about mistakes!

Socialism a distant target

THE DECLINE in the CPGB at a time when there has been a radicalisation within the working class has produced the current crisis within the Party.

To a limited extent the division is on class lines; with the majority of middle class members supporting the Party Executive and the majority of working class members backing the more 'radical' sounding opposition.

Most participants in the inner-Party debate state their agreement with the 1977 Party programme *The British Road to Socialism*.

The most right-wing grouping in the Party, based around the *Marxism Today* journal, argues that there have been severe defeats for the working class and that the widest possible unity is needed to defeat what is called 'Thatcherism'.

The main opposition to this comes from the group around the *Morning Star* editor, Tony Chater, and stresses the role of the working class.

However this stress on the working class does not prevent the *Morning Star* from putting forward an explicitly non-socialist programme. *The British Road to Socialism* justifies this by arguing that because at present there is not mass support for Marxist ideas, socialist policies cannot be fought for.

Raise consciousness

This watering-down of ideas is the precise opposite to the Marxist method of struggling to raise the political consciousness of the working class to fully understand what policies are required to solve the problems it faces.

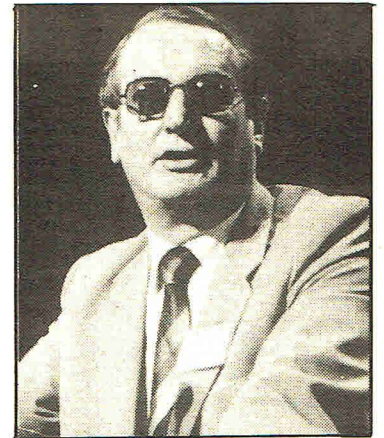
It is not at all a question of posing "impossible" demands or making demands simply for 'socialism now'. Marxists start from the immediate issues facing the working class and while fighting to win the current battles for reforms and improvements link these struggles with the necessity for the socialist transformation of society.

Thus the Bolsheviks campaigned for 'Bread, Peace and Land' in Russia in 1917 and explained that they could only be permanently won if the working class took power.

Today in Britain it is necessary to explain to workers that only the overthrow of capitalism can prevent conditions from worsening. Marxists understand that the vast majority of workers learn through experience and that before the programme of Marxism wins mass support workers will put to the test all other programmes that seem to offer an easier way out of the problems they face.

The inevitable failure of attempts to work within capitalism will lead workers to draw the conclusion that the Marxists are right and that capitalism must be overthrown. But workers will only draw these conclusions from their experience if the Marxists, while supporting every reform which is won, fight against the illusion that capitalism can sustain reforms.

This is something which *The British Road to Socialism* fails to do. The *Morning Star* consistently points out that it is not fighting for socialist policies, ie the overthrow of capitalism, now. Instead socialism is relegated to the dim and distant future.



George Bolton, Scottish miners vice president and chairman of the CPGB. Photo: Militant.

The *Morning Star* is fighting for the CPGB to once again campaign for the 'Alternative Economic Strategy' (AES) which the Party right-wing believe is too radical. But the AES itself is a strategy for working within capitalism.

The *Morning Star's* economic expert, Photis Lysandrou, has explained in a 18 January article that the "AES is not a socialist programme" and is based upon putting "controls" through "compulsory planning agreements and further nationalisation" on the capitalists.

Despite the mention of nationalisation Lysandrou makes it quite clear that even after the implementation of the AES Britain would still be a capitalist country.

An editorial in the *Star* on 23 March put forward the illusion that it would be possible for a Labour government to carry through lasting reforms without overthrowing capitalism when it stated that "what is needed is a package... with a view to opening the road to socialism at the same time as it increasingly resolves the problems created... by capitalist crisis." Tony Chater, the *Morning Star's* editor, explained on 4 April that this package was based around making "inroads into wealth and power" of the bosses, not the nationalisation of commanding heights of the economy.

The theoretical basis for the paper's position, and also that of the *Marxism Today* grouping, is the idea that it is necessary to build an alliance of different class forces to fight for basically democratic, but not socialist, demands.

But the question of whether or not Marxists should fight to build a movement for socialism is not decided by the workers' present level of political understanding. The socialist character of the struggle flows from the crisis in the capitalist system.

Powerbase

The immediate task of Marxists is to explain the impossibility of an solution without removing capitalism. The fact that workers today do not fully accept this is no reason to abandon or postpone the struggle for the socialist transformation of society.

Marxists must patiently explain the issues and show the link between the struggles of today and the need for socialism. Otherwise a conscious movement to change society will not be build.

Despite all the sharp words, both wings of the CPGB are agreed on the impossibility of fighting for a socialist programme today in Britain. The CPGB right-wing, especially Eric Hobsbawm, expresses these ideas most crudely and are on a course which will soon take them into Kinnoch's camp in the Labour Party.

USA, Chile

On strike
in California

ABOUT 500 blue-collar workers in the East Bay Municipal Utility District in the San Francisco area, the Waterboard, went on strike on 8 May.

Members of the Association of Federal, State, City and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Local 444, struck after management refused to back down in their attempt to take away employees' rights and force other concessions on the union.

Management's demands included removing members from the union, as well as forced overtime and standby.

They also wanted concessions in the sick leave provisions which would allow the employer to fire workers with recurring illnesses, and tried to get round state laws by eliminating the requirement for management to meet and confer over changes in wages, hours and working conditions.

A militant section of Local 444 leadership foresaw the coming attacks and organised internally for the defence of the union. The leadership had to deal not only with the employers but also opposition to their actions from the union hierarchy. They did not lose confidence in the rank and file, and successfully organised before the strike deadline, telling their opposition that they were merely expressing the mood of the ranks.

The ranks proved them correct with the overwhelming strike vote. Two days prior to the strike the Local held an "informational" picket and rally to express its demands. The rally, a huge success, was also attended by the white collar union Local 2019 at EBMUD.

The feeling of solidarity and determination was expressed by the chant "we're fed up, we won't take no more, we're 2019 and 444".

In the first two days of the strike there has already been one incident of a picket receiving a cracked elbow and three separate incidents where scabs have threatened pickets with guns. Police have failed to act against these attacks.

The pickets are not intimidated in the least. On 10 May a rally of 150 strikers discussed the tasks to be taken up.

These include a strong campaign by AFSCME District Council to get local 444's sister local (representing white collar workers for East Bay MUD) to come out on strike now. Also a campaign throughout the rest of the labour movement to honour 444's picket lines and for active support through the building of mass pickets.

That sort of unity would be unbeatable, one speaker pointed out. He was greeted by chanting for several minutes of "We will win, we will win, we will win". This is the fighting spirit of the American working class as it moves into battle.

Donations and messages of support should be sent immediately to:

AFSCME Local 444, 8400 Enterprise Way, Room 115, Oakland, California 94621, USA.

US workers - 'No more concessions'

THE RULING class are fond of telling American workers of the "collapse" of the US trade unions. They hope to convince union leaders that their forces are weak and demoralised and unable to fight for their rights.

They proclaim that only 19% of wage and salary earners are unionised in 1984 compared to about 33% in 1950. But in 1950 the US workforce was 65 million, with 21-22 million organised. By 1984 the workforce was 108 million. The number of organised is much the same as 35 years ago.

The US trade union movement is still the most powerful force in society and still the most powerful in the world with 20 million organised even though the proportion in unions has gone down.

Unions' gains

Compare this to the decline of US unions from 4 million in 1920 to 2.6 million in 1933. Bear in mind also that even this catastrophic decline was followed by the explosive movement of the CIO to reach 15 million organised by the early 1940s. There is no room for pessimism today.

The unions have been under attack for some years from union bashing employers, led by Reagan. During the last four years or so the smokestack industries of steel, auto, rubber etc. the most organised industries have shed hundreds of thousands of jobs. In the white collar and service sectors, on the other hand the numbers organised went up from 4 million to 7 million.

During the post-war boom, the increased living standards of American workers were only won by magnificent strikes in auto, steel, rubber, mining, transport etc. Unionised workers struggles pulled up all pay. Still today union wages are one-third higher than non-union.

Why then has there not

By Robert O'Neill

been an enormous surge in union membership since the war? This is not due to "affluence". After all in Sweden, the powerful unions represent 90% of the workforce. We have to look at the role of the union leaders and the AFL CIO leadership in particular.

These people with enormous power at their disposal and the clear advantage of union membership for all to see, should have used their resources in a massive recruitment campaign. But they did not, they were content to wheel and deal with employers and successive governments using their memberships as levers to increase wages and benefits.

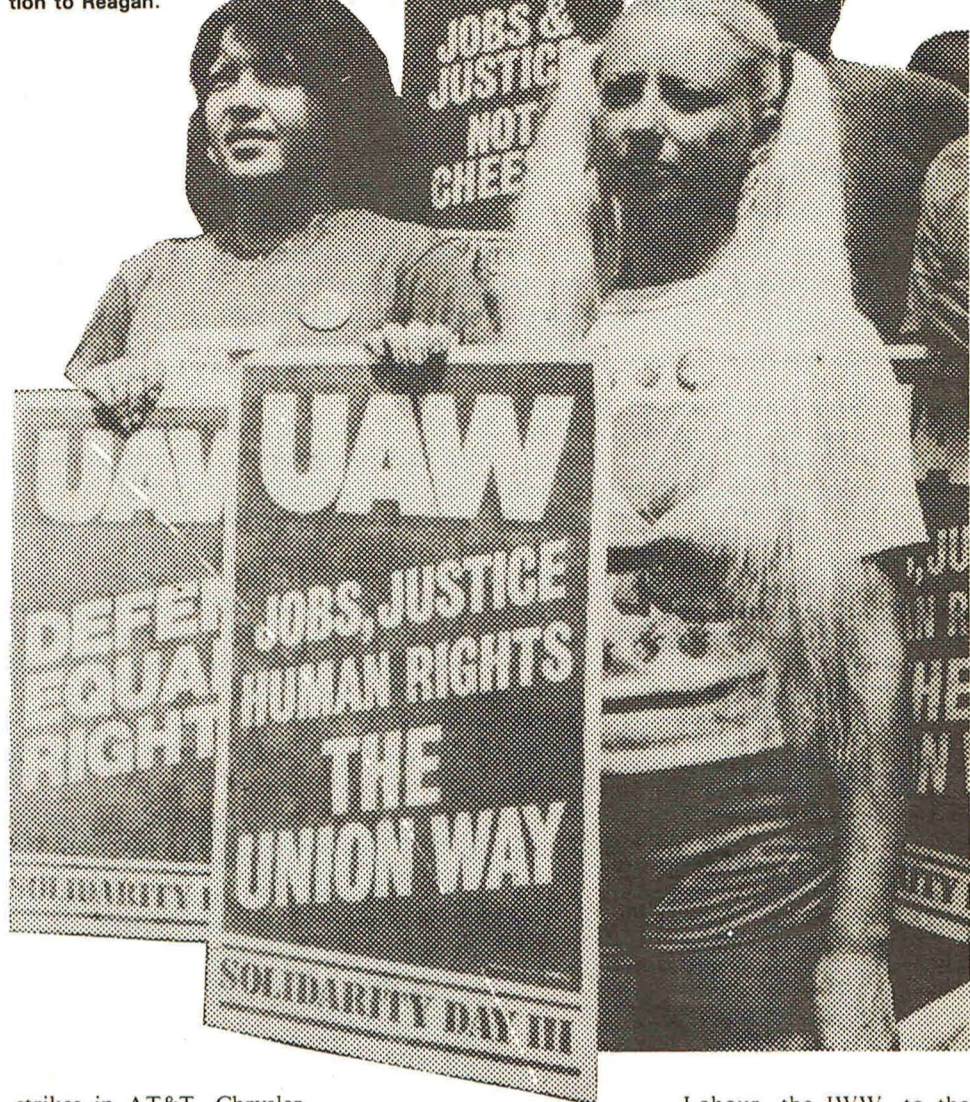
One figure shows their priorities. 25% of the AFL-CIO's post war budget went on foreign affairs, much of it used to make the international trade union movement safe for capitalism and US imperialism in particular. Only 3% was used in organising in the USA itself.

Over the past four or five years of Reagan's offensive the bosses have demanded and got concessions. The unions have received some, albeit small, set backs, in wage cuts, two tier wage contracts, attacks on health and safety benefits.

The deregulation of the economy, the high dollar and rising imports have all set the atmosphere for attacks as has the huge budget deficit for state spending. The bosses, politicians and media call for cuts. The union leaders don't organise resistance, they merely echo the bosses, saying "there is no alternative" and anyway "the workers won't fight".

Their second argument is totally false as shown by the

Solidarity Day 1983 showed the opposition to Reagan.



strikes in AT&T, Chrysler and Greyhound in 1983. The closeness of the vote for concessionary contracts in auto and elsewhere, in spite of campaigns by the union leaders also shows the strength of feeling as do the solidarity shown for the British miners strike and the numerous local disputes like local 444 in EBMUD.

Money to big
business

Workers are willing to fight, their mood is "no more concessions". The problem is that their leaders are not prepared to lead them. After the success of Solidarity Day 1982 the leaders swit-

ched all their efforts to get right winger Mondale of the big business Democratic Party elected over his rival right-winger Reagan of the big business Republican Party.

\$20m of Union funds went to this. Threatening strikes were restrained so as not to embarrass Mondale. Union activists were directed to get out the vote for Carter Mark II. He responded by promising to increase taxes and naturally lost the election.

American workers have a record of struggle second to none, stretching from the insurrectionary nationwide railway strike of 1877, through the Knights of

Labour, the IWW, to the gigantic battles of the CIO in the 1930s.

Strike record

In the post war boom also the US workers showed their militancy. In the 9 years 1973 to 1981 working days lost per 1,000 employees in all industries and services in the US averaged 404. Compared to 17 of the other most industrial countries of the West almost all of which had higher percentages of their workforces unionised the US averaged 7th place.

Workers are prepared to fight back and to organise, the only thing preventing them is the lack of lead.

Collecting for Chile

"THE MISSION" is the Latino community of San Francisco. It is there that the economic laws of motion of capitalism—those vast impersonal forces—take on a very human face in the form of suffering and hardship.

A few months ago, while we campaigned there to raise funds for socialists in Chile, we talked to a group of young men in Dolores Park. Suddenly, a fight arose. Several youths stood over one young man sitting on a bench slapping him and yelling. He had been allowed to spend the night at one of their places and they were accusing him of stealing some money while he was there.

Desperation

The fact that he didn't fight back made him look

guilty. Then, an unemployment (redundancy) claim slip fell from his pocket. The youth had been without a job and without any place to stay. He was desperate. The people we were talking with immediately agreed that the pressures of capitalism are to blame for this little incident. Before we left, they explained that they're unemployed too, but they dug into their pockets and donated a little spare change.

The next day, walking up from Mission Street, we stopped a young woman and gave her a leaflet on the meeting on Chile. We explained that the comrades down there are fighting against the same kind of conditions as we have up here. The young woman showed some interest.

We talked about how

under capitalism we have dope and crime in the streets and whoring. Not because people want it, but because they're forced into it. At the mention of whoring, the woman said quite simply, "that's what I'm doing."

Hunger

Later, we stopped to talk with three young black men, one just up from Birmingham, Alabama. They were interested in talking and seemed interested in the meeting we were holding, but they also asked, were we going to serve anything to eat at the meeting.

The Mission Café is in the heart of the Mission District. It is usually filled with older people who come there because the meals are large and cheap. Sitting there for



Chilean workers have proved ready to fight the Pinochet dictatorship and workers internationally are ready to back them.

a few minutes, I suddenly realised that for many of these people, this would probably be their only meal of the day. This, in the richest country the world has ever known, is what capitalism really means. And it was

from these people that we collected one dollar bill, 17 quarters, 24 dimes, 16 nickels and 15 pennies for socialism in Chile.

By John Reimann

Australia, Sweden

Queensland's Thatcher meets resistance

FOR THREE months, workers in Australia's "sunshine state" Queensland, have fought very tenaciously against the union busting antics of the state's maverick premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Peterson.

By Laurence Coates

Workers across Australia, in road, rail and maritime transport, construction, power, post and telecommunications have shown magnificent solidarity, striking in support of 940 sacked electrical linesmen—victims of Bjelke-Peterson's vicious government.

Brutal policing, the arrest of hundreds of pickets, including the national president of the sacked men's union—the Electrical Trades Union (ETU)—and the battery of anti-union laws, has parallels with Thatcher's attempt to smash the NUM.

With the same hard menacing calculation, Bjelke-Peterson prepared long and hard for today's confrontation with the "thugs and lugs" of the trade union movement, particularly the ETU. In 1980 he was forced to concede the 38 hour week to Queensland power workers, opening the floodgates for the rest of the state's employees.

Queensland's economy was then the most buoyant in the country. It is now the most depressed. With the mineral boom of the early 1980's fading, the state has suffered the sharpest rise in unemployment. A section of the ruling class have now decided to test the working class's resilience and strength.

The decision in February, to use contract labour in the power industry was a deliberate provocation. Two weeks after the men's walked out, Bjelke-Peterson sent out dismissal notices, and declared a state of emergen-

cy, outlawing strikes in the industry. For ten days the government sat it out—in darkness—as members of the Municipal Officers Association turned down the power supply.

This action was lifted after an assurance that the ETU men would be reinstated—a promise broken as soon as the lights came back on!

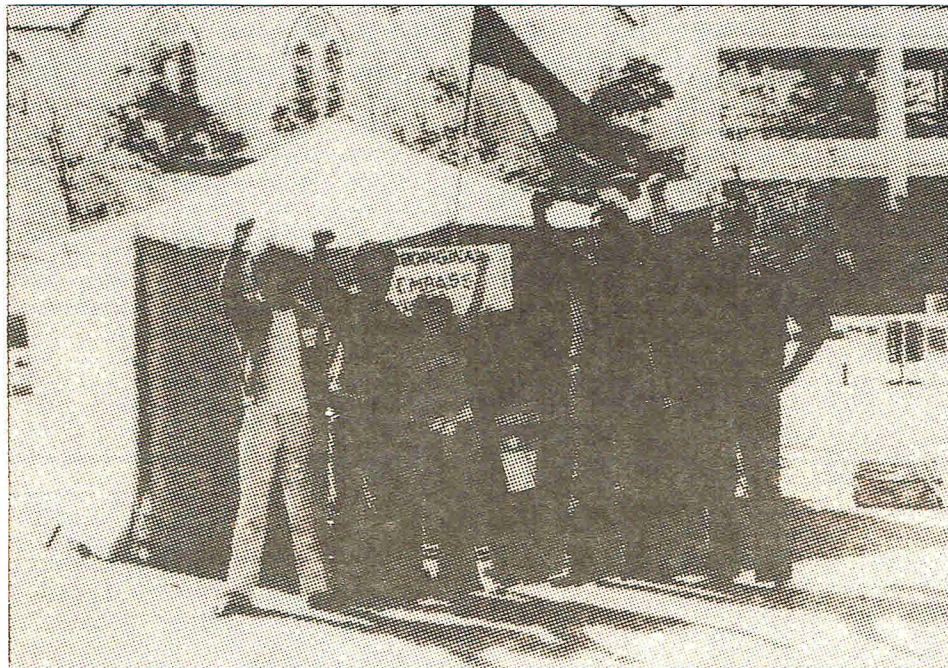
Not only was it demanded that a 'no strike' agreement and longer working week be accepted before reinstatement—but a clutch of new legislation was rammed through the state parliament.

The new laws extended the definition of a strike to "any action by an employee other than normal work", increasing fines by 250 per cent and made it an offence to "incite industrial unrest", it also admits as evidence against trade unionists "any material published in a newspaper or journal and regarded as factual!"

This in the most serious attack on Australian trade unionism for decades. Workers recognise that a defeat for the ETU would embolden big business and herald an offensive against other sections of the working class.

Despite the hesitations of the leaders of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, a huge wave of solidarity action is sweeping Australia. On 18 April, 30 trade unions organised a 24-hour state blockade. Nothing moved by road, rail, air or sea. Telephone calls were disrupted and 1.2 million letters impounded. The powerful New South Wales transport workers began their blockade 48 hours before the 'official' start!

On May Day, members of 16 different construction unions downed tools in every town and city. In Melbourne, the building



The Queensland government is the most reactionary in Australia. Aborigines here protest in Brisbane as their interests are bulldozed to one side for the mineral millionaires. Now the unions are being attacked.

workers' produced one of the biggest protest strikes and demonstrations in the city's history. In Queensland, dockers and seamen joined the May Day action, closing all the state's ports.

Illegal pickets

Thousands have taken part in 'illegal' pickets, even priests and nuns have been arrested for picketing.

One priest told reporters as police took him away... "The law is stupid. There is no moral obligation on the part of strikers to obey any of these laws!" It was these events that prompted the Archbishop of Canterbury's defence of the right to strike, reported (without explanation) in the British press. The devoutly Christian Sir Joh told the Archbishop to "go back to London!" Even Queensland Police Union has donated 2,000 dollars to the families of the sacked men!

Behind Bjelke-Peterson's bombastic posturing, the more sober of Australia's ruling class are hitting the panic button. The chairman of the Confederation of Australian industry has called for urgent talks. Queensland's heads of industry are distancing themselves from the Premier. None of the state's employers have so far been prepared to sue the unions for sympathy action, despite Bjelke-Peterson's offer of legal advice.

Newspaper editorials lash the Queensland Premier for playing an "extremely hazardous and potentially destructive game". The Melbourne Age bemoaned "if he loses, Queensland's ailing economy could be left in ruins and its society more bitterly divided."

This disarray can only boost the confidence of the labour movement in seeing off the attack. Victory would probably already have been

assured if not for the reluctance of the leadership to join the fray.

With such a blatant attack on fundamental union rights, there can be no equivocation from the tops of the movement. Yet, workers have been treated to the spectacle of ACTU's Vice President, Simon Crean, pleading before the television cameras... "You should give us one more chance, Mr Minister, just one more chance!"

Union leaders

Having been forced by mass pressure to call, rather belatedly, for national action, the trade union leadership have nevertheless sought to limit its effects. Incredibly, the power workers themselves—whose intervention would secure a speedy victory have been instructed to work normally, so as not to 'alienate' public support. This stand has not gone

unchallenged especially in the ETU. The power committee of Australia's biggest union, the Amalgamated Metals, Foundry and Shipwrights Union, organised in all power stations, has called for national action in support of the ETU.

The fence-sitting of British Labour party leaders during the miners' strike has been repeated by their Australian counterparts with one important difference—Labour are in government.

Prime Minister Bob Hawke refuses to intervene, using the Federal Government's 'constitutional' powers to bring the Queensland government to heel and overrule this vicious legislation. His only comments on the dispute have been an all too familiar call for 'talks'

Discontent

The Labour Government appealed to the Liberals, and the National Party to "use their special relationship with the Queensland National Party to get Sir Joh talking".

Labour's Industrial Relations Minister, Mr Willis (no relation) outraged trade unionists with his remarks that "if the right (to strike) is to be retained it is absolutely essential that those who have the right to exercise it do so responsibly. Otherwise they risk losing that right altogether."

This statement only lends credence to the Queensland government's attacks. This has fuelled growing discontent within the ALP over Hawke's government—his plans to cut spending and limit wage increases through the 'accord' with ACTU.

Nevertheless the resolve of the striking ETU men is undiminished. With transport unions planning a 'second offensive' against the Queensland Government, and with other sections lining up, including workers in television, radio and computers, the stage could be set for a massive escalation.

Swedish workers fight lock out

ON 11 May the Civil Service Employers Board backed by the Social Democratic government started a lock out of 80,000 public sector workers, mainly teachers.

This followed a civil servants union strike, which paralysed the country.

The public sector union TCO-S brought out workers all over Sweden, hitting railway freight, airports, customs officers and teachers. As in the huge 1980 strikes which in the space of a fortnight ended the formerly cosy relations between unions and bosses, even the police were on strike in some areas.

The strike of May 1980 was over a wage claim by blue collar workers and a subsequent lock out which was encouraged by the then government, a 3 party capitalist coalition. The strikes of May 1985 are over a wage claim by mainly white collar workers in the public sector whose pay had fallen well

behind that in private industry.

A deal had been agreed in past years that if private sector pay deals were substantially larger than public sector settlements, then these agreements, which are made on a centralised basis, could be renegotiated. TCO-S used this hard won concession to put in a claim for 3.1% retrospectively for 1984.

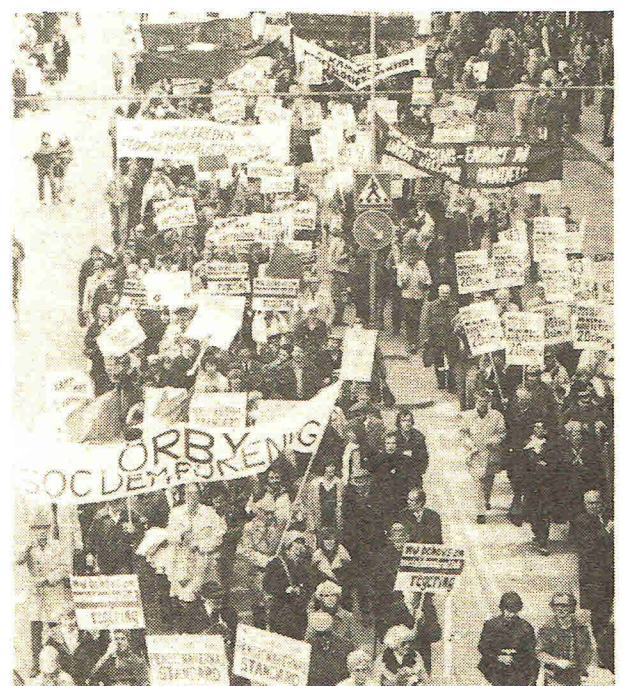
But the Social Democratic government face elections in September and seem to want to reassure the capitalist class that they are reliable defenders of an incomes policy. They have a 5% pay limit which the manual unions, closer linked to the government party, have accepted. The government, realising that this claim could also cause the dissatisfaction over pay limits among private sector workers to grow, took a hard line with the public sector.

The workers in the public sec-

tor face many threats in the future, particularly if the "Moderate" i.e. Conservative opposition win this autumn's elections; cuts in state spending, Thatcher-style privatisation, more private health care and private education schemes.

The government tried a compromise, offering a small rise next December, an increase which should have been paid at the end of last year. It failed. This is now the biggest ever dispute in Sweden's public sector.

The government used the threat of a Swedish Thatcher to try to pull the TCO-S back "into line". But as the Callaghan government in Britain showed in 1978-79 and the Mitterrand government in France is demonstrating now, policies of austerity for the workers and concessions to the capitalists alienates working class support and opens the door to right wing victory.



Years of "social peace" disappeared in the strikes five years ago.

LETTERS

Militant welcomes letters from readers. Send us your views, comments or criticisms. Write to *Militant*, 3/13 Hepscott Road, London. E9 5HB

Depo-Provera

Dear Comrades,
Firstly I would like to congratulate Viv Seal on her interesting article on the contraceptive injection Depo-Provera. I agree with everything in the article but I would criticise the presentation of the arguments.

A study is quoted that shows a two-fold increase in cervical cancer in long-term users of Depo-Provera. There is an association here but not necessarily one of cause and effect. Did this study look at the incidence of genital warts? This is important since recent studies suggest that it is the genital virus that causes cervical cancer.

Another criticism made of Depo-Provera was that it causes increased menstrual bleeding in 30 per cent of

users and that this may cause anaemia in undernourished Third World mothers. Anaemia doesn't often kill mothers but tragically pregnancy does in the Third World. Depo-Provera is an effective contraceptive.

The slant of the article shows how the drug is abused and how people can be exploited by its indiscriminate administration. I think this is correct. Nevertheless, I would prescribe Depo-Provera under certain conditions. For example a woman for whom pregnancy was a health risk and who preferred a three-monthly injection to taking a daily pill should be offered Depo-Provera as an alternative to sterilisation. I should add that every sexually active woman should have a cervical smear test every year or at least every two or three years. Cervical cancer is preventable no mat-

ter what contraceptive is prescribed.

Yours fraternally
Dr J Simpson
South Belfast Labour and
Trade Union Group

Birth control

Dear Comrades,

While attending her local gynaecology unit for treatment, my friend told the doctor that she wished to be considered for sterilisation. The doctor then proceeded to ask about her financial circumstances and told her that as her husband was in a 'good' job (engineer at British Telecom) and they were buying their house, under no circumstances would she be referred for sterilisation. "It would be a different story if your husband was unemployed, we would definitely do it then"

said the doctor.

No reference was made to their two children, no reference to medical circumstances except to say that the next birth would probably be a caesarian section, and perhaps most important no questions at all were asked of why she wanted to be sterilised.

We continually hear of how 'free' women are today with modern birth control, but it seems that methods of the contraceptive pill, the coil, the cap and the sheath are the only methods in which we can really choose. The choice of sterilisation may be your choice but unless the doctor gives his/her consent what you decide and want is irrelevant.

Yours fraternally
Elizabeth Smellie
East Kilbride
Women's Section

Strike poll

Dear Comrades,

Recently an NUM member from Ayrshire who didn't lose a shift for the whole of the strike (the only one, I'm glad to say) offered himself again to the test of the ballot box as a Tory candidate in a local government by-election. He had stood before in the same seat and had been defeated by the Labour candidate (who had now resigned causing the by-election.)

Students impress local Tory

Comrades,

How inspiration inspires. A fine demonstration by Southampton school students was so positive it made our local mayor, Derrick Hall, ask who were the

The Tory, so beloved and praised by Thatcher, boldly fought his campaign and such was the hatred for the strike he polled less votes than last time. On the same day elsewhere in Ayrshire a safe Tory seat went to Labour for the first time.

So, as during the strike the people of Ayrshire told Thatcher: "We don't want your closures", so after it they told her: "We don't want your scabbing 'heroes' or their friends".

Yours fraternally
Ronnie Stevenson

speakers and how old were they. "14 and 17" I replied. "They are very good, I'll mention it in the local press" he said. He was a speaker for the Tories when Heseltine came down!

Fraternally
Mike King
Southampton

Russian restrictions

Dear Comrades,

As part of my Russian course at Bristol University, I am lucky to be able to spend three and a half months in Kiev next spring. Whilst greatly looking forward to it, I have also been given a taste of the 'freedoms' enjoyed in a 'socialist' country.

For any trips further out than a 20 mile radius around the town, an internal visa is needed, for which "full and adequate reasons must be given". Once the visa is obtained, we could travel

anywhere we liked, but real places of interest like the Black Sea resorts could only be afforded if organised as a large excursion with only brief stops on a town to town tour.

Another 'snag' is that excursions are only organised during public holidays which means a few one-day holidays in the Russian calendar.

Unlike foreign students, Soviet workers have to live with these restrictions all their lives.

Yours fraternally
Bristol West LPYS
member

to the football terraces every week, the latest is a golf ball with nails sticking out of it, which has already claimed the sight of one youth.

We don't harm the government, the rich, or Thatcher, we only harm ourselves and the working class people around us.

Yours fraternally
Paul Cairnson
Riverside LPYS
Liverpool

for those lucky people in London, Manchester and Birmingham they have eight weeks to get out.

At the end of that time young people will have to leave the area for six months or face the prospect of living rough. Many young people will be forced to become bedsit nomads, wandering from town to town seeking accommodation, but being allowed to settle nowhere.

Shelter estimate that tens of thousands of young people will be made homeless by these regulations, nobody has attempted to estimate how many young girls will find pregnancy desirable to eviction, or how many youngsters will turn to crime or prostitution to pay the rent.

A mass campaign, comprising of claimants, trade unions, and all sections of the working class, needs to be mounted, to repel these attacks on our old, poor and jobless.

Yours fraternally
Dave Middleton
Milton Keynes

Fight for a future

Dear Comrades,

I was one of the so-called louts of soccer hooliganism but sense taught me that fighting my own class was not the way to achieve the way forward for a better life for us. It was only separating us from each other, we must stop this stupidity. People are now getting killed.

New weapons are coming

New 'Poor Law'

Dear Comrades,

If anyone was in any doubt about who should pay the price for the recession, the new social security regulations coming into effect on 29 April make it quite clear that if you are young and unemployed you are to be treated as a second class citizen.

The new regulations have been introduced ostensibly to prevent the unemployed taking holidays—the so-called 'Costa Del Dole'. How anyone can imagine being in Hastings in the middle of winter is a holiday is left unanswered.

After encouraging their friends in the media to run shock-horror stories of scroungers taking holidays at the taxpayers' expense, the Tories introduced new regulations.

The effect of the new regulations is that young people under 26 will have to leave their board and lodgings. Time limits depend on where you live; on the coast you have two weeks, in most towns it's four weeks, and



The LPYS march through Pontypridd in support of the miners last year. Photo: Militant.

Miner says thanks

Dear Comrades,

During the last 14 months I have met more left-wing sects and groups than most people do in a lifetime. I must make it quite clear that

the only influenced me has been the supporters of *Militant*. As a member of the much-famed Fitzwilliam LPYS I have seen at first hand exactly what happens when the *Militant* puts itself into gear.

I would like to thank

through the pages of *Militant*, the Leeds and Wakefield *Militant* supporters for the help given to me while in Armley prison and throughout my court cases. I think it most important to especially thank 'Chip' for helping me

through a very difficult month up to my last court appearance. I will finish by saying 'Forward to socialism and the daily paper'.

Yours fraternally
Bill Getty
Fitzwilliam LPYS
and Frickley NUM

LEFT and RIGHT

Undemocratic vote shock-horror!

At the shareholders' annual general meeting of Bodingtons real ale brewery in Manchester, a motion was put by the chairman that the firm should increase its £5,000 donation to the Tory Party. However, the 250 shareholders present overturned this decision. They then went on to vote that the company should give no money to the Tories. Following this vote, the chairman informed the AGM that it was not up to the shareholders to make decisions about company donations, but that the directors would decide. Do not hold your breath waiting for front page headlines denouncing this blatantly undemocratic practice: lectures in democracy only apply to the labour movement.

Left hand slaps right hand

An indignant editorial over the VE Day celebrations in the *Daily Star* (May 8) said: "Some newspapers—driven, we suspect, by a sickly surge of circulation seeking are actually printing more pages on the subject than on the day the war did end in Europe." One such 'sickly' newspaper was the *Daily Express*, which on the same day produced a 44 page bumper issue. The *Express* is the *Daily Star's* sister paper.

A (30) grand life-style?

In a major interview with the *Tribune* (10 May) Roy Hattersley said: "I call the rich those who earn £20,000 a year. Its a different world they live in." He quite rightly points out that compared to his constituents, someone on twenty grand is "bloody rich". It is therefore presumed that when Roy Hattersley becomes the Chancellor of the Exchequer under the next Labour government, he will not draw his full £31,271 ministerial salary, otherwise he might get out of touch. Watch this space.

Employment protection

Law biased against workers

THE TORIES are extending the period for which you have to have worked with an employer before you can sue for unfair dismissal, from one to two years of continuous employment. **NICK BRADLEY**, a NUPE area officer, in a personal capacity, looks at the implications for workers.

THE EMPLOYMENT Secretary Tom King has claimed that: "the risk of unjustified involvement with tribunals in unfair dismissal cases and the cost of such involvement are often cited as deterring employers from giving more people jobs."

What a load of nonsense! As many workers and active trade unionists know, the scales are already heavily balanced towards the employers. The only effect of the change will be to make it easier for employers to sack people they don't like. And it is the weakest and most vulnerable who are at risk. In non-unionised, or poorly organised industries, the only protection for workers rests with the much weakened employment protection legislation.

Since the Tories have been in office, they have attempted bit by bit to weaken our organisations and impose legal burdens to prevent us from protecting our members.

When Tom King claims that the two year qualifying period to claim unfair dismissal, "should help reduce the reluctance of employers to take on more people, while still preserving a fair balance between the reasonable interests of employer and employee" we know exactly what he means. We are being returned to the dark days of the thirties. Fair balance means 'for the employer' and reasonable interests are the bosses' profits.

No rights for part-timers

IN 1983 (the latest available figures), one in four complaints of unfair dismissal came from workers with less than two years service. Under the new proposals, they would have virtually no legal rights at all, like part-time workers working less than eight hours a week, who can never claim unfair dismissal, and those working between eight hours and 16 hours a week who have to be employed for five years before they can claim.

Before the Tories came to office in 1979, the qualifying period of employment necessary to claim unfair dismissal was six months. First the Tories extended it to one year. Then they extended it to two years for workers employed in companies employing 20 or less workers.

In case we didn't understand exactly what they were doing the 1982 Employment Act (Section 9) made strike and lock-out dismissals automatically fair as long as everyone involved was sacked! What more could express the Tory intentions—sack strikers and it's fair!

The first president of the Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT), Mr Justice Phillips, expressed the intention of the law quite plainly: "It is important that the operation of the legislation should not impede employers unreasonably in the efficient management of their



Tom King, Employment Secretary

business which must be in the interests of all."

In a brilliantly understated observation, Mr Justice Phillips told us in the EAT (Devis v Atkins, 1977) that: "The expression 'unfair dismissal' is in no sense a common sense expression capable of being understood by the man on the street".

In fact the 1980 Employment Act (Section 6) altered—away from workers' interests—the burden of proof in dismissal cases. This is what the Act now says:

"The determination of the question whether the dismissal was fair or unfair, having regard to the reason shown by the employer, shall depend on whether in the circumstances (including the size and administrative resources of the employer's undertaking) the employer acted reasonably or unreasonably in treating it as sufficient reason for dismissing the employee; and that question shall be determined in accordance with equity and substantial merits of the case".

Judges make law

And if you can overcome that hurdle what next? In the last few years, judges' decisions in the higher courts have 'clarified' the test above. Judges' decisions—in effect—make the law. Parliament lays down the framework and the judges interpret and modify. Coming as they do exclusively from the ruling class, public school and Oxbridge educated, it is quite clear their law is class law.

Tribunals—in deciding on unfair dismissal cases—have a number of basic 'tests' to apply to the facts of a particular case.

The EAT (Rolls Royce Ltd v Walpole, 1980) declared that: "An employer may have a range of reasonable responses to the conduct or capability of an employee and these may range from summary dismissal down to an informal warning. Dismissal is only unfair if it is outside that range".

And in case that wasn't clear enough, Lord Denning pronounced in the Court of Appeal (British Leyland UK Ltd v Swift 1981) that: "The correct test is: was it reasonable for the

Photo: Militant



Miners' families demonstrate at Monktonhall colliery, Scotland, in support of amnesty for sacked strikers.

Photo: Rick Matthews (IFL)

How workers have fared in the tribunals

This table shows the latest (1983) figures:

Unfair dismissal

| | |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Cases registered | 30,076 |
| Withdrawn before hearing | 9,664 |
| Agreed settlements | 10,051 |
| Tribunal hearings | 10,381 |

Outcome of tribunal hearings

| | | |
|----------------|------|-----|
| Case dismissed | 7082 | 68% |
| Case upheld | 3299 | 32% |

Of those upheld:

| | | |
|------------------------|------|-------|
| Reinstated | 61 | 0.6% |
| Reengaged | 38 | 0.4% |
| Compensation awarded | 1756 | 16.9% |
| Redundancy pay | 210 | 2.0% |
| Remedy left to parties | 1234 | 11.9% |

So of all the cases heard only 99 people, 1%, actually got their jobs back.

And of those who received compensation?

Compensation for cases upheld (1983)

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Over £5,000 | 6.8% |
| £1,000 - £3,000 | 39.8% |
| £500 - £1,000 | 19.7% |
| £100 - £300 | 8.0% |

And of those who agreed—outside of tribunals—only 301 (3%) got their jobs back. The rest were compensated.

Compensation in agreed settlements

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Over £5,000 | 2.5% |
| £1,000 - £3,000 | 16.1% |
| £200 - £750 | 52.4% |
| £100 - £200 | 15.8% |

employers to dismiss him? If no reasonable employer would have dismissed him then the dismissal was unfair. But if a reasonable employer might reasonably have dismissed him then the dismissal was fair. It must be remembered that in all cases there is a band of reasonableness within which one employer might reasonably take one view; and another quite reasonably take a different view..."

No wonder the success rate in Industrial Tribunals is so poor.

Not neutral

The Tory decision to increase the qualifying period of employment puts yet another obstacle in front of workers being treated badly by their employers. Despite the illusions of 'Employment Protection' law, we live in a society where the law is not neutral. It serves the interests of the capitalist class. In Mr Justice Phillips' words it must not "impede employers unreasonably". An analysis of the statistics above shows that is far from being the



Derek Robinson, sacked convenor at BL Longbridge.

Photo: John Starrock (Report)II

case.

For active trade unionists there is only one conclusion to draw. That while we will use every mechanism to protect and advance our members' interests—at the end of the day we have only one line of

defence. That is powerful, militant trade union organisation. It is ironic that the Tory attack on workers' rights will—in the long term—foster and encourage such a development.

Industrial Reports

Unity needed in the print

THE NEXT few weeks will again see the National Graphical Association (NGA) entangled in the legal webs of the Tories' anti-trade union legislation.

The management at *Wolverhampton Express* and *Star* are claiming the union is in contempt of court and are seeking the sequestration of their funds.

The *Kent Messenger*, which has sacked 142 printers, is trying to break the union by having their paper printed by Eddie Shah's Messenger Group in Warrington.

Both disputes concern the introduction of new technology. For decades the print employers have had to accept near 100 per cent unionisation on the production side. Now the bosses see new technology and new Tory laws as tools to defeat the unions and provide them with extra profits.

Since the defeat at Warrington, where the NGA's traditional methods of pursuing disputes proved ineffective, the legal threat has paralysed the union leader-

Peter Jarvis
(London NGA)

ship. No strategy to fight these moves is being offered by our leadership to the members of the NGA.

The outlawing of secondary action has deprived the union of one of its weapons of defence, if we obey the laws. Either we back down—meaning the end of the union as it is today or we break the Tory law and go on the offensive.

Essential to a fight-back is unity between the unions.

The relationship between the NGA and NUJ has deteriorated in the past months. The background to this is the control of new technology in the composing room. The advent of computers has meant that the traditional composing or typesetting operation is obsolete. Therefore unless the NGA and NUJ come to an

agreement on who operates the new computerised typesetting keyboards we will end up fighting each other not the bosses.

A mass campaign explaining the issues and strategy must be started. At present no official is really willing to comment because of the legal threat. This will end disastrously, you cannot mobilise anybody by remaining silent.

After the TUC abandoned the NGA during the *Messenger* dispute the NGA National Council rejected *Militant's* strategy. We advocated that the leadership should have appealed over the head of the right-wing for support for a 24 hour general strike. This wider solidarity would have been forthcoming if the NGA members had been called out.

Picketing must be stepped up involving as many members and other trade unionists as possible. A solid response will deter any future newspaper employers following the same path.



Photo: Andrew Wiard (FL)

NGA pickets outside NUJ headquarters in London over dispute at *Wolverhampton Express and Star*. Now *Kent Messenger* journalists have voted not to black work being typeset and printed by Eddie Shah. Disunity will make print workers easy targets for the bosses.

Maxwell's 'socialist' sackings

AS IF throwing a thousand Watford print-workers on the scrap heap two years ago wasn't enough when he shut Odhams, that well known Labour Party member and "socialist" Robert Maxwell has now announced plans for 500 more redundancies at Watford's remaining print works, the re-named 'Sun-Odhams'.

In true MacGregor style Maxwell has threatened that if the unions do not agree to his plans by a given deadline then he will simply close down the whole factory.

Maxwell's 'reorganisation' also includes a change to a new three shift system which will worsen working conditions and cut wages for the remaining workforce. It is believed he is to offer the unions a 'carrot' of wage increases for those remaining.

The final chapter of his plan, unbelievably, is the privatisation of all cleaning and security work at Sun-Odhams.

It is more than ironical that Maxwell, who has already used Tory anti-union laws against print unions NGA and SOGAT continues to hold Labour Party membership whilst *Militant* supporters continue to fight off witch-hunts and attacks from the right-wing.

Workers will clearly come to see who represent their struggles best and who will stab them in the back.

By Graham Cooper
(Hemel Hempstead LPYS)

Scottish teachers demand decisive lead

MANY SCOTTISH teachers are understandably concerned that pupils in practical and oral examinations face the prospect of no awards being made. This situation has come about because of the intransigent attitude of the exam board which seems determined to proceed as if no dispute exists.

By Terri Patterson
(EIS Central Region Local Association, personal capacity)

In these circumstances there was pressure from local association secretaries of the Educational Institute of Scotland to ease back on the pay review campaign as a gesture of good-will to the pupils. Certain elements in the leadership seized upon these teachers' understandable concern for their pupils and used to it seriously threaten a weakening of the whole campaign.

The chairman's committee, described in the Scottish press as "the inner cabinet of the EIS", recommended by 7 votes to 1 (with the President the only voice against) to lift the boycott on all SCE examination procedure and not just on the practical examination. In so doing they ignored a ballot vote in which members had opted 7-1 for the boycott. They betrayed the best and most loyal of their members who had been prepared to carry out EIS policy to the letter despite the agony the decision had cost many of them.

Also betrayed by this about turn were the members and pupils in the

targetted schools. In these schools, in the constituencies of government ministers, school has meant a two day week in some cases for more than 10 weeks. No teacher has had to face harder decisions than in these schools.

Now, as the 'O' grade, and higher grade exams are beginning, all this was to be swept aside as a mood of panic gripped some of the leadership.

One region had actually tackled the problem and found a solution. Central region, one of the smaller Scottish regions, has a strong and well organised EIS local association. Reps from the secondary schools have met together almost weekly since the campaign began. Meetings have been organised with subject teachers getting together to discuss their problems and primary members have joined their secondary colleagues in involving every primary school in one way or another.

The problem of practical exams has been identified and it had been agreed with the Director of Education that the region would employ appropriate people to carry out the various tasks that were necessary if the exams were to go ahead.

Had the other regions and headquarters been as organised, the question of lifting the boycott need never have arisen. Central Region's local association executive held a meeting at which the National Salaries Convenor was left in no doubt about members' reaction to plans to drop the boycott.

The next day Central



Photo: Rick Matthews (FL) II

Scottish Teachers on day of action as part of a long-running pay campaign.

Region's council member attended the meeting of council armed with an amendment to prevent the lifting of the boycott. About 40 teachers, mainly from Central Region formed a lobby of council members organised hurriedly by one rep.

The Chairman's Committee's recommendation was soundly defeated. During the next morning session, concessions were made on practical exams. But the wholesale retreat advocated by the leadership had been averted.

All the signs are that this will be a long campaign, the EIS leadership must get down to organising the detail of the campaign, there must

be no more last-minute mud-dles. Communication must be two-way between the leadership and the members.

The planning must be done in advance in consultation with every section of the union, this is the members' campaign. Again and again they have pushed the leadership to take a firmer line.

The EIS has to find a leadership which recognises that foresight is to be preferred over astonishment, and organisation is better than panic. With government attacks on local authorities intensifying, the fight on pay is only the beginning of a campaign for a decent education service, for teachers and for students.

Bar staff empty pubs

BAR STAFF at Tetley pubs in Merseyside were on a one day strike last week on Bank Holiday Monday. This was the latest of a series of strikes that have been going on since Christmas. Clare Stanley, the TGWU official talked to Anne Bannister about the dispute:

The union are asking Tetley Breweries for separate wage negotiations, but all they are getting is a flat refusal. The unions are able to negotiate the terms and conditions of service of other sections of the Tetley's workforce, from draymen to managers, but the bar staff, even though 70% of them are in the TGWU, are being refused.

The bar staff are the poorest paid, work the most

unsociable hours and generally in the worst conditions and need the most protection. They recognise that if the Wages Councils are disbanded by the Tory government, their only protection will be the union, and are determined to fight on.

Last Monday, between 30 and 50 Tetley pubs on Merseyside were empty. At the *Liverpool Arms* in Bootle, Jane Hinton and Karen Billington, two of the bar staff on strike, described the tremendous support that has been shown by the locals for the strike, especially the regular customers—consequently the pub was empty.

A bus driver showed his support by making an unofficial bus stop for the girls, in the pub car park, when they were reporting for picket duty. At the *Liverpool Arms* 15 staff were out on strike, and at the *Coronation* the manager was working.

North East Gas face £50 wage cut

GAS WORKERS are in dispute in Yorkshire and Humberside with North East Gas Board (NEGAS). The two unions involved are the T&G and G&M. Regionally there has been a unanimous vote to come out.

The strike is about bonus schemes and the management bringing in new machinery, which they asked the workers to start working without getting any extra pay or any other concessions.

Management have refused to negotiate—they are totally ignoring the union—who have declared their willingness to discuss any time management is ready.

This whole business means the workers will lose £40 to £50 a week in their wages. There is strong feeling in the whole region, the union is preparing for a long dispute. Both unions have supported the strike and it is official now on a regional basis. They are thinking of organising flying pickets to go round to try and get the lads out from areas still working. In Bradford itself, the two main depots have come out; NEGAS on Canal Road and Mill Street. *By Hamid Khayam (Bradford LPYS)*

Reject NUPE witch-hunt

The National Union of Public Employees' conference meets at a crucial time for hundreds of thousands of low paid workers in public service industries.

Many bitter battles against privatisation are being fought up and down the country. Jobs, wages and conditions are under threat on all fronts. Members are in the forefront of the campaign against ratecapping in key local authorities.

Co-ordinated national action is required in order to bring together the separate struggles taking place. It is therefore disturbing that conference could find itself wasting time debating divisive motions calling for attacks on *Militant* supporters.

mitted motions and amendments along these lines. The

most hypocritical must be that from Liverpool City General Branch, which claims that expulsion of *Militant* supporters "does not constitute a witch-hunt."

If members look at the record of Liverpool Council's fight against Tory cuts, its defence of jobs and services, in creating jobs and building homes they will appreciate real nature of this attack.

Of all the Labour councils resisting the Tory attacks, Liverpool has played the leading role in building a mass campaign of city-wide resistance with the support of the vast majority of its

trade unionists. The Tories recognise that of all the Labour councils Liverpool is their most serious opponent.

Another major initiative has been the launching of the National Local Authorities Co-ordinating Committee by Liverpool Joint Shop Stewards and the London Bridge organisation (which brings together Joint Shop Stewards Committees throughout London).

The task of uniting NUPE members and other workers facing the brunt of Tory attacks must be the central job of conference. It is in the interests of the members and the union to bring together rank and file activists in the Broad Left and shop stewards organisations for a united fight back and to reject witch-hunts.



NUPE members face attacks on all fronts. Industrial action must be co-ordinated nationally and the full weight of the union put behind local struggles.

Oil Workers

ON WEDNESDAY 10 April BP announced the closure of the majority of its refinery at Llandarcy, near Neath in West Glamorgan, leaving only the production of lubricating oil. It will mean the loss of 750 jobs out of the workforce of 1,100.

There had been no consultation with the trade unions, and only the day before, local management denied the existence of any closure plan at all.

The workers are determined to fight this closure, which would devastate the local communities of Skewen, Neath and parts of Swansea—an area in which male unemployment already stands at 22%.

TERRY HOPKINSON spoke to MAL GUNTER, Chairman of BP Llandarcy Joint Action Committee:

What has been the response of workers here to the closure announcement?

We are determined to fight this all the way. Hundreds of families in this area have built their lives on this refinery, and BP just announce its closure as if they don't matter. They are treating us like dirt. There was absolutely no consultation whatever with the Trade Unions. After the miners' strike, they think they can do what they want. But we will keep this refinery open.

Has the refinery been losing money?

No! Most refineries are unprofitable at the moment because of the international oil "glut", but this plant made £7 million profit in 1984 and £4.7 million in the first quarter of 1985.

This year is shutdown year, when the plant is extensively renovated. This is done every three years, and the cost is about £3 million. So the first quarter's profit more than covers the cost of shutdown.

Llandarcy has been profitable because, unlike many other refineries, we have the distillation and "cat-cracking" facilities to refine any grade of crude oil. This means that all waste is usable. Also, much of the profit has come from the manufacture of lubricating oils.

BP say they will keep open the production of lubricating oil what is your reaction to that?

I don't believe they can do it. "Lube oil" production is profitable because it is part of the all-round refining process here. All residues from "lube oil" production can be re-used.

If the rest of the refinery closes, "lube-oil" production will therefore become less profitable, so in two or three years BP would close that as well.

Why do BP want to close the refinery?

We are victims of the international oil cartel. To them, we are pawns on a world-wide chess board. BP have begun to contract out the refinement of their crude to Texaco. In return, Texaco have withdrawn from the Dutch market. This refinery is perfectly viable and has been strike-free for 64 years, but they want to sacrifice us for international wheeler dealing.

In Brief

Dundee

Both the Ferranti and Bonar Law factories in Dundee, with predominantly AUEW workforces, are in dispute over pay and conditions. Ferranti are striking for parity with the Dalkeith factory where workers are on up to £30 a week more. Bonar Law are demanding an £8 a week across the board rise whilst the company is offering £6. *By Jim Bennett and Terry Quinn*

Grimsby

On Wednesday 8 May TGWU members at Christian Salvason, a cold storage firm, staged a 24-hour strike as part of their battle for a 15% pay rise. There was overwhelming support in the factory for the strike. Only two quality controllers refused to join in. Lorry drivers from Birds Eye refused to cross the picket line, along with other drivers, effectively sealing off the factory. *By Ian Parker*

Liverpool

GEC workers in Liverpool are striking against a proposed one hundred redundancies. 700 voted almost unanimously for the action. Management said workers must sign a no-strike agreement. They refused to sign and are now effectively locked out. Messages of support and donations to Wally Brown, 4 Holborn Hill, Ormskirk, Lancs. *By Kenny Rooney, GEC shop steward.*

Brighton

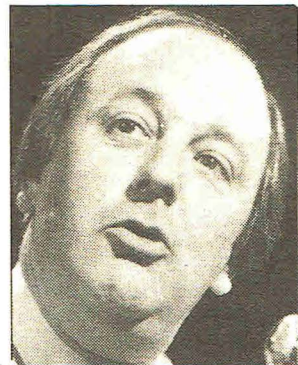
About 150 workers at the Sunblest factory in Brighton have been on strike since 10 May over the sacking of a 19-year old baker. He took a few obsolete plastic bags home to wrap his sandwiches in. Management initially suspended him and the workers unanimously voted to strike. Management have since sent a letter out to the pickets sacking him for "gross industrial misconduct." *By Mick Gowler*

Postal jobs and union amalgamation

THIS YEAR'S UCW Annual Conference will be dominated by two issues that will have far reaching consequences for postal workers.

On the one hand conference will be discussing a Business Efficiency Report that if implemented will cost thousands of jobs. On the other hand we will be discussing proposals to amalgamate with the National Communication Workers (formerly the POEU). This would create a union with the strength to fight off management's attacks.

Postal Workers over the past few months have been subjected to an unprecedented barrage of both management and union leadership propaganda to accept a so called efficiency deal that will cost postal workers thousands of jobs and increase post office profits by at least £55 million.



Alan Tuffin General Secretary of the UCW will receive in two months pay packets (without expenses), around about what it takes a postman on a flat rate to earn in one year.

Two months ago over a thousand delegates to a special conference rejected proposals from the management and leadership to negotiate on casual and part-time workers and a compulsory productivity scheme—by over three to one.

The leadership's response to the rejection

has not been to campaign or give a lead to the members to defend those decisions, but to go cap in hand to management pleading for another chance to convince the UCW membership to be realistic, lower their sights and accept job losses.

Anger has spread throughout the members at the leadership's response. They have totally ignored the willingness postal workers have shown over the past twelve months to defend jobs and working conditions.

Both the UCW and NCU members are facing attacks from an aggressive management, determined to destroy effective trade union representation and cut jobs. Conference must support the amendments that seek to formulate stronger links with the NCU, those links have to be made not only at national level but at local level also if we are to defend our working conditions and jobs.

The post office has just made a measly offer of 4.8% for postal workers, with much being said about the inability to pay and the high overtime levels. Post Office workers are forced to perform overtime to earn a decent wage. A campaign must be organised now to convince management of our seriousness. It must be developed around demands for a flat rate increase for all postal workers of £15 per week with a maximum rate of £115 per week for all UCW members.

Its ironic that while many postal workers have to perform overtime to make ends meet,

By Eddie Thorpe

MILITANT Readers Meeting: Hear a 'workers MP on a worker wage' Dave Nellist MP, and union speakers Eddie Thorpe and Alan Short. Tuesday 21st May 7.45pm Winterbourne Hotel Priory Road Bournemouth. All welcome plenty of time for discussion.

Rail jobs threat

THIS YEAR'S NUR Grades Conference for Passenger Traffic and misc. Grades comes at a time when these low paid staff are suffering attacks from all sides.

For several years the leading Railwayman grade at many small suburban stations have had to staff the place alone on each shift, issuing tickets, collecting tickets and minding the station itself.

Recent productivity proposals and deals threaten the future of their jobs in some areas, whilst increasing the workload in others and threatening other grades in the process.

A resolution from Streatham branch draws attention to the particular problem of the use of leading railmen for the issuing of tickets in place of booking office clerks and of course at a far lower rate of pay,

By John Herron
(Glasgow NUR No5, personal capacity)

whilst Rhyl branch call upon the NEC to negotiate a restructuring of passenger traffic grade and request the NEC use more muscle on behalf of "those very low paid grades".

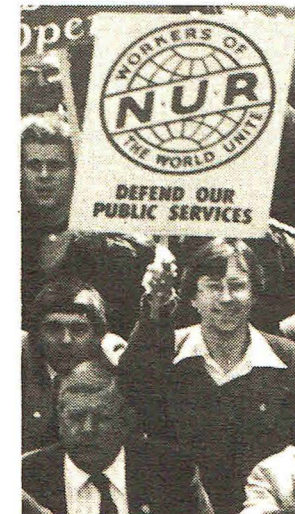
With the development of the open station concept and the issue of tickets on the train, increasingly BRB are making no attempt to ensure that small suburban stations are being staffed on the late shifts, with a consequential threat to the grade's existence at these small halts.

An even greater threat in

the Glasgow area comes from the "Crouzet" automatic ticket issuing machine. This has been installed at fourteen stations in the Clyde suburban area, for a six month trial period, during which time the "clerical function" has been suspended.

Scandously, this arrangement was forced upon the railworkers in this area after the NUR leadership refused to back the membership despite a strike lasting several days on Clydeside against the introduction of these machines.

A resolution from Battersea No1 criticises the NEC for continuing the Minimum Earnings level, which again hits these grades particularly such as carriage cleaners. The resolution calls on upon



the NEC to wage a campaign against the anomalies of the MEL agreement.

But above all the attacks upon the leading railmen and station grades in the Clyde area must be fought off and the membership throughout the rest of BRB alerted and prepared to resist these attacks.

Militant



Crisis in Communist Party
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CPSA Conference

Delegates demand a fighting union



Protests over GCHO. More and more sections of the civil service are having to fend off Tory attacks. PHOTO: John Harris (IFL) II.

At the CPSA conference *Militant* Readers Meeting on Tuesday night, 240 delegates and visitors heard Dave Nellist MP speak and collected at least £2,800.

EVEN THOUGH the Civil and Public Services Association (CPSA) National Executive will probably be hampered in its struggles by a new right wing majority, the mood of this year's conference is one of resentment and defiance towards the Tory government.

The never ending attacks on civil servants have built up a hatred of the Tories. Delegates know that this government want to deal with the unions, to make the working class pay for their system's crisis. They know what is behind attacks at GCHQ, at Barry DHSS office and Newcastle Central Office.

New young activists arrived here already blooded by attacks in the workplace. These future leaders of CPSA have learned early the political realities of capitalism. The delegates' willingness to fight back con-

Bill Boyle
reports from Brighton

trasts starkly with the pessimism of the leadership.

In his address to conference Alistair Graham pointed out how the full force of the state had been used to try to smash civil service trade unions.

Anger on Pay

Even though the Tories failed in their plans. Graham concluded that the unions were weak and unable to fight.

Delegates were asking what have the top officials done to fight this onslaught? Absolutely nothing. The full time leaders still look back with longing to the days when improvements could be secured, just by negotiation.

The widely anticipated right wing majority was not reflected in the debates. There was real anger at the NEC's failure to fight this year on pay. The censure motion on the NEC was defeated by 304 votes to 573 mainly because of the alignment of Broad Left '84 (who split from the Broad left last year) with the right wing and bureaucracy. Unfortunately the mover of the motion also failed to drive home the point that non-compliance with Tory laws was a prerequisite for successful strug-

gle against the Tories.

In debates on pay, hours, leave, casuals, overtime and the need to defend jobs, the programme of the Broad Left was emphatically endorsed despite the advice of the right wing/BL '84 coalition NEC.

Campaigning

The Broad Left swept the board in the Department of Health and Social Security section elections for the first time. The huge DHSS has been in the firing line from the Tories. Experience of such attacks, which will come to many other sections, showed the correctness of BL ideas. The right wing hoped they had crushed the Broad Left and *Militant* in the DHSS but it was the Broad Left '84 who suffered

in the section elections.

Militant supporters were to the fore in all debates, despite the now familiar obituaries from the right wing, BL '84 and the *Financial Times*.

Delegates will leave

Brighton faced with another year of Tory attacks on jobs, pay and conditions and union rights. The Broad Left programme must be campaigned for, over the next year, to pave the way for a Broad Left NEC and union.

SCPS: a real Broad Left

THE MOST successful ever Society of Civil and Public Servants Broad Left meeting was held at the union's Eastbourne conference on Monday. Over 250 turned up to hear Tony Benn MP—many had to be turned away at the door.

This meeting has firmly established the Broad Left in SCPS. In the past, the 'left' in SCPS failed to build a real base amongst the membership and confined itself largely to promoting various individuals. This was underlined by Tony Benn when he said the Broad Left could only be built on the basis of struggle, around definite issues and a series of demands.

He added that a 'left' union leadership could not survive without open debate on the issues, and an open Broad Left organisation was essential.

A member of the audience took up Benn's remarks, urging the need for "unity"

and saying that those who attacked 'left' leaderships were "disruptive". Tony Benn's reply took up the role of the Communist Party in the 'People's March for Jobs' campaign. They had prevented him from speaking in Bristol because the march was "non-political". He said therefore the march had as much effect as "a soggy pancake on a wet pavement".

This meeting, only the second the SCPS Broad Left have held, places the Broad Left in a good position for future campaigns.

By an SCPS delegate

P.S. At the CPSA conference the proposals for a purely bureaucratic merger with SCPS, ditching elections for many full time officials' positions was defeated by 86,181 votes to 58,981

Young jobless

FROM PAGE ONE

ecutive passed a resolution "deploring" the school strike organised by the West of Scotland YTURC. A call was also made for a national "enquiry" into YTURC with a view to "reforming its structure". This action by the Scottish executive will particularly anger Labour's ranks because the members of this committee profess to stand on the left.

It seems that for the Scot-

tish Executive it is all right for the youth of Nicaragua or Soweto to take to the streets but wrong for Scottish school students to fight the Tories.

In Wales a similar call has been made by the TGWU, to follow the example of the Scottish Labour Party, but specifically suggesting action against *Militant* supporters. This call will be debated at the forthcoming Welsh Labour Party Conference.

As the *New Musical Express* stated recently; "The

LPYS' and YTURC have done more to expose the nature of YTS and attract young voters to Labour than anyone else in the Labour Party hierarchy."

Emergency appeal

Labour should be welcoming the 250,000 school students who struck for a future on 25 April with open arms, instead of turning them away. At a time when Labour is ahead in the opinion polls and the Tories

are split, an attack on the youth will cause confusion and throw away the party's support especially among young people.

The YTURC campaign has launched an emergency appeal for finances from Labour Party and trade union branches. Donations should be rushed to YTURC c/o Dave Nellist MP, House of Commons, London, W1.

By Tony Cox
(Secretary, YTURC)



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