

Liverpool, Lambeth, Edinburgh

Strike to defend councils

AFTER TWO years of shadow-boxing, the Tories are squaring up to take on Liverpool council, for its defence of jobs and services. The gloves are now off. But Liverpool workers will back the stand being taken by the council on their behalf. The Tories will be made to understand that they are not taking on a council, but hundreds of thousands of working people in the city.

Forty-nine Labour councillors in Liverpool now face possible surcharge, disqualification from office and personal bankruptcy for the crime of defending the workers they were elected to represent.

Their families and their futures are on the line, but they have backed their words—pledges not to cut jobs or services—with action.

On June 14 the City Council voted by 49 to 42 to set a deficit budget which in effect will be deemed illegal.

The Labour Group voted unanimously, except for the same five traitors who opposed the group last year and who are still formally members of the party. This solid show of support will be an inspiration to workers throughout Britain.

If only leadership like this was shown throughout Britain. As John Lindon a Labour councillor pointed out: "If we are made bankrupts, not only am I going to lose my home, but I could never work again".

Elected on a policy of defending jobs and services and not implementing rate increases to comply with Tory cuts, the councillors have shown their willingness to follow the agreed policies

to the very end. The phoney war is now over.

The commitment given by the councillors will be backed by the trade unions. The local authority Joint Shop Stewards Committee held last Wednesday was attended by 700 stewards who gave unanimous support to the council.

The District Labour Party meeting on Thursday night was attended by over 350 delegates and visitors—again giving unanimous support. The lobby of the council meeting was attended by a thousand workers, mobilised in only two days.

The section meeting of individual trade unions, even with secret ballots and in less well organised areas, are showing solid support for industrial action if the councillors are surcharged or if attempts are made to remove them from office.

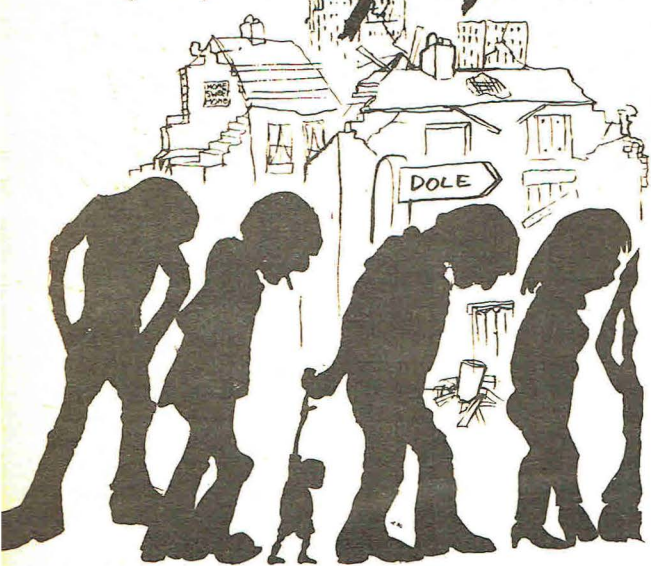
The budget introduced by the Labour Party set a rate increase of nine per cent with an expenditure of £265 million. The only alternative, if jobs were to be preserved, was a rate increase of 75 per cent increase.

Because of the Rate Support Grant penalties, £62 million of the revenue from the rate would have gone directly to the Tory government. If the penalties were

(Continued on back page)

LEGAL

ILLEGAL



YOU BE THE JUDGE *Alan Handman*

Demonstrate for jobs

"REAL JOBS for youth, defend Liverpool Council" will be the slogans on everyone's lips on 29 June on the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign Liverpool demonstration.

What better time and place could you choose for a protest demonstration over youth rights? Liverpool City Council's battle for jobs and services and YTURC's fight for a future for young people are one and the same.

Working class school leavers are given a miserable choice by this bosses' government. There's the dole queue, slave wage Youth Training Schemes on

£26 a week or if your luck's in, a low paid job.

YTURC is fighting for decent jobs for youth, for real training and a living wage. They are calling on all young workers to mobilise behind the local authority with the best record of helping young workers and providing jobs.

The school strikes in Scotland in March and the rest of Britain in April showed that hundreds of thousands of young people want to fight back against the no hope system. Last weekend's SSU conference, the most representative school students' meeting ever, proved that the strikes

were not just a one-off explosion of anger. Working class youth want to organise (see page 3). Meetings outside schools and YTS centres in Liverpool are building support for 29 June.

But not only young workers are supporting the demonstration. It is now backed by Liverpool Council, the District Labour Party and the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee. The unions are joining YTURC speakers outside Liverpool factories to get the maximum

Continued on back page.

The Editorial Board urges all supporters of *Militant* and labour movement activists to support the demonstration in Liverpool on June 29. Resolutions of support for the three defiant councils should be sent to Labour's NEC from Labour Party and trade union bodies. Preparations must be made now to mobilise solidarity action if any legal measures are taken against councillors.

MASS MARCH FOR JOBS LIVERPOOL ♦ JUNE 29

11am Shaw Street • March to Pier Head for rally + bands + lots more

Militant

City-wide general strike to defend council

LIVERPOOL, Lambeth and Edinburgh councils have been forced into illegality purely as a result of Tory demands to intensify the social problems in these boroughs. Lambeth has still not set a rate; Edinburgh is refusing to lower rates to make job cuts and Liverpool has set a rate which is effectively illegal because it does not cover the income needed to cater for the modest needs of the people.

In every case, these councils are being forced to preside over a combination of worsening council services, big increases in unemployment, or a big increase in rates, any one of which would directly affect the workers in the area.

The individual councillors on these authorities now face legal sanctions, including disqualification from office, and personal surcharges which would lead to bankruptcy. The whole labour movement must now be rallied round in support of the councils and the councillors.

In Liverpool, mass meetings have already been held or are being planned among the council workforce. A mass rally of all the workers is being planned, probably in a local football stadium.

An all-out strike of all local authority workers must take place if one single councillor is surcharged or disqualified. As well as the council workforce, the workers in the private sector must be involved in defence of the council in a city-wide general strike.

Similar preparations must also be made in Edinburgh and Lambeth. Edinburgh District Labour Party has called an aggregate meeting for 24 June.

The campaigns of the three councils must be tied together. The national local authorities committee of shop stewards must be used to coordinate the fight and to mobilise support on a national level.

In the broader labour movement, resolutions of support must be raised at all Labour Party and trade union branches, as well as shop stewards committees in the councils and in the private sector, demanding that support be given to the councils by the national leadership of the trade unions and Labour Party.

Solidarity action must be prepared, in the form of a one-day national strike of all local authority workers in support of the defiant councils. In the immediate term, the national demonstration of the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign, planned for Liverpool on 29 June, must become a focus around which local authority workers are mobilised from all parts of the country.

The stand being taken by these councils, in refusing to hand on vicious cuts imposed by the Tories, is in line with the policy carried at the last Labour Party conference. It is a stand that workers everywhere will applaud.

Workers will not be saying, as they have said about Labour and Tory councillors in so many boroughs up and down the country, that "they're all the same". All too often workers have become disillusioned as "Labour" representatives meekly pass on Tory cuts.

Now, at last, a lead is being given. Labour representatives in Liverpool and elsewhere are genuinely representing working people with the same determination and resolution that Thatcher is showing in representing the ruling class. The class lines are being drawn.

Liverpool City Council won a victory over the Tory government last year, thanks to the magnificent campaign of the council in mobilising the Liverpool working class behind it. The battle for the city's jobs and services will be no less intense this year.

But as long as the Tories and their system remains, Labour councils will have to fight over and over again to defend the gains in living standards built up over the past decades.

The call must go out for a mass campaign to force the Tories to back down, to give back to the councils some of the hundreds of millions taken away in the last few years. But the campaign can also be a launching pad for a wider mobilisation to resist the onslaught on living standards, force the Tories from office and return a Labour government firmly committed to socialist policies.

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Battle lines dr

Liverpool will fight Tory demands

THE TORY Government has forced Liverpool City Council into a position of illegality because the Labour authority has had the audacity to stand up against Westminster's brutal economic demands.

Liverpool has some of the worst

social problems of any city in Britain or Europe, and trying to alleviate some of the mass unemployment and the huge shortage of decent housing, the policy of the council is perfectly reasonable. It is the Tory government who are outrageous in

demanding that the council pile grater burdens on the people of the city.

The vast majority of workers in Liverpool and nationally will applaud the stand being taken by the council, but that must be turned into active support.

JOBS

Since 1979 Liverpool has lost:

- 40,000 jobs
- 1/3 of the City's manufacturing jobs
- Over £300m stolen by the Tory Government
- 4,000+ Council jobs lost between 1975/82
- 60,000 people are unemployed in Liverpool
- 90% youth unemployment in parts of the City

HOUSING

- £165m housing money denied to Liverpool since 1979
- 22,000 people on the Council's housing waiting list
- 20,000 houses need urgent attention. Highest Council house rents outside London
- Between 1980-83 — No municipal family accommodation built
- 100% rate increase — between 1979/83
- 120% rent increase 1979/83

Labour's record

- The Labour council *stopped* a planned 3% cut in the council workforce and saved 1,000 jobs.
- *Created* an extra 1,000 jobs (examples: day-care assistants, nursery nurses etc.)
- *Proposed* to generate 16,000 private sector jobs.
- *Started* 2,000 new municipal houses.
- *Committed* £51m on grants to private house owners. £12.7m on funding improvements by Housing Associations and Co-operatives. £3.6m improving the environment of Housing Action Areas.
- *Refused* to increase rents or rates to compensate for Tory cuts and gave decoration allowances to make up for years of neglect.

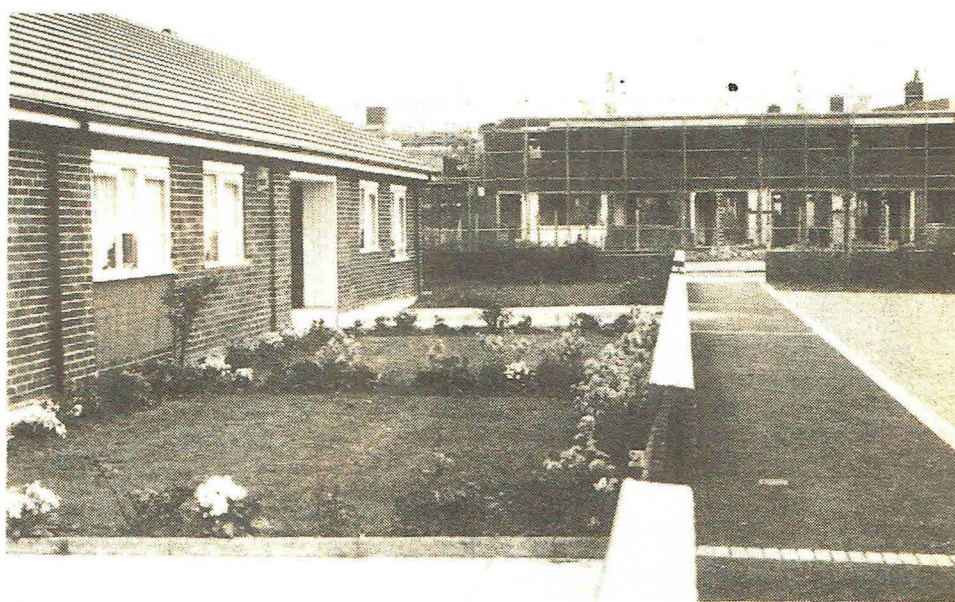
Kinnock must support fight

NEIL KINNOCK, Labour Party leader, should be supporting the fight for jobs and services being undertaken by the Labour councils in Liverpool, Lambeth and Edinburgh.

However, in a letter to the Chief Whip of Lambeth Council last week, Kinnock argued against defiance of the government.

"I do not accept", he said, "... that chaos in local government brings benefits, either to the people of a borough or the Labour Party". This disgraceful comment—identical to the Tory papers, in blaming Labour councillors rather than Tory MPs for municipal "chaos"—is an insult to all those workers losing jobs and services as a result of Tory cuts.

Moreover, Kinnock's remarks go against resolutions passed at the 1984 conference of the Labour Party. Composite 43, for example, moved by Liverpool Deputy Leader, Derek Hatton, saluted "the stand taken by Liverpool City Council" and called on other councils as well as the national leadership, "to take an equally unequivocal stand in defence of the working class". The resolution went on to support "any councils which are forced to break the law as a result of Tory government policies".

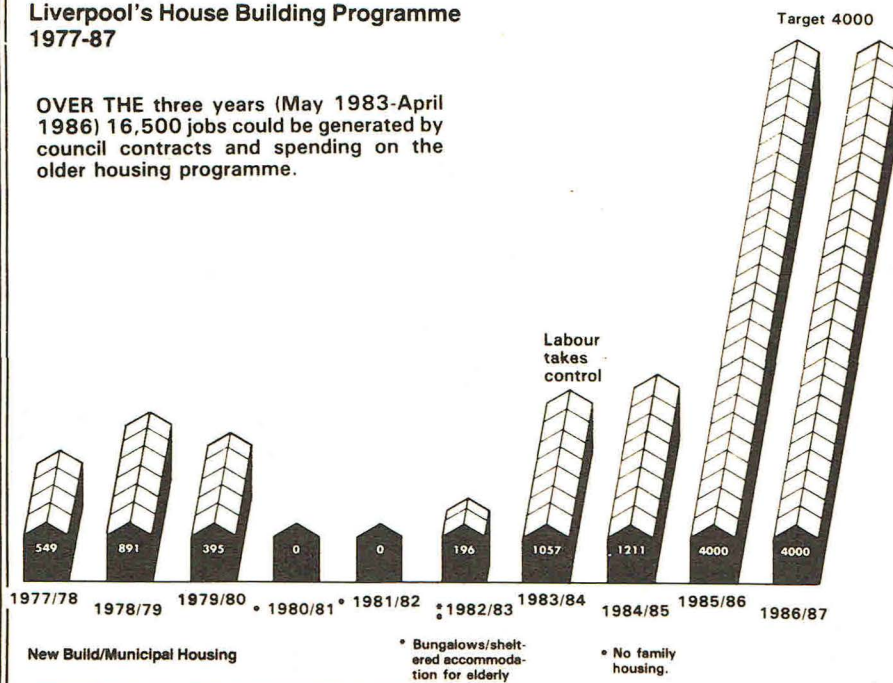


Some of the new and renovated housing built by Liverpool's Labour council.

Photo: Dave Sinclair

Liverpool's House Building Programme 1977-87

OVER THE three years (May 1983-April 1986) 16,500 jobs could be generated by council contracts and spending on the older housing programme.



awn for councils



Liverpool's campaign brought thousands into the streets on many occasions to ensure powerful backing for the council's stand on jobs and services.

Press statement

IN ITS press statement last week, the city council condemned the Tories' attempts to "wreak vengeance on Liverpool". The alternatives to its policy—big cuts, big rate rises or 6,000 jobs going—were all unacceptable. "The Tory government were able to give £40

million to private businesses in Scotland in rate relief," it said, "so they can provide Liverpool with £30m for the city to make a legal budget". "If anyone is sacked", it continued, "let it be Mr Banham of the Audit Commission, with his £60,000 salary".

Liberals' budget

THE LIBERALS, Tories and five renegade Labour councillors all voted for an alternative budget that would have meant huge cuts in services and the loss of thousands of jobs in the city. When they go to the people of Liverpool, they will have to explain to them what "benefit" there would have been for the city for another 6,000 on the dole, to add to the 60,000 already there.

Serious fight

MARK MANAMAN, Liverpool council worker, commented on the mood of workers lobbying last week's crucial council meeting: "The chant of 'here we go!' didn't suit the mood. This is no laughing matter. We've got a fight on here. When we discussed the issue in our department before the council meeting, everyone wanted to lobby the council, so we all booked a half-day holiday *en masse*".

Defend councils

LOCAL authority stewards have moved swiftly in response to the council setting a 9% deficit budget.

The following day a meeting of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee decided to take immediate strike action if any legal moves are made against the councillors. A mass rally of the whole workforce has been organised for Friday 21 June probably in a local football stadium.

An early meeting of all the stewards in the authority is also planned. Full support has been given to the YTURC demonstration to be held in Liverpool on Saturday June 29. The theme of this event will be, we hope, the defence of the stand taken by Liverpool City and other councils.

The whole workforce are being urged to join the Labour Party, and affiliated unions to send their full delegations to their local Party. This is the best guarantee that the Labour

Party, its policies and its candidates will reflect the interests of working class people.

Campaigning will also begin to win the support of the leadership of the various national trade unions. Through them, it is hoped to ensure that the national leadership of the Labour Party will give support to those councillors threatened by Tory laws.

On June 25 a National Local Authority Stewards meeting will be held to organise a turn-out for the YTURC demonstration followed by a national stewards conference to be held on July 13 to seek solidarity action from council workers throughout the country.

A stewards delegation from Liverpool will visit Lambeth on Thursday June 20. Lambeth delegates at the national committee fully accepted that Liverpool is still in the fight, although by setting a rate with a deficit budget, they are following a different tactic to Lambeth.

By Terry Harrison

Lambeth pledges to remain defiant

THE LABOUR Group on Lambeth Council is to remain firm by defying the government in not setting a rate, despite threats of surcharges and disqualification.

The councillors have decided to confirm this position at the next council meeting on 3 July. The joint trade unions of Lambeth council pledged themselves to take industrial action if any councillors are surcharged.

Jim O'Brien, chair of London Bridge, a co-ordinating body of London local authority trade unions, and chair of Lambeth Joint Trade Unions pointed

out the similarities of social conditions in Lambeth and Liverpool. Many of his stewards, he said, had taken this into account when decided how to mobilise their members to fight the Tories.

The Lambeth JTU was looking to build support throughout London and nationally. Links would have to be made with Liverpool. The unions would also be taking action to inform the community in Lambeth of the council's struggle.

By Steve Nally
(Vauxhall LPYS)

Horrific deprivation

IN LAMBETH there are 20,000 people on the housing waiting lists. 1,500 families, including children, are made homeless each year and there are 35,000 sub-standard homes in the borough, 70 per cent of which are in the private sector.

There are also 18,000 council properties in such poor condition that they are hard to let. Out of all the authorities in the country, Lambeth's housing is the third worst.

1981 riots

The council would require hundreds of millions of pounds to put it right, but since 1970 the government has cut £250 million from the council's housing programme.

These are conditions faced by the working class in Lambeth. The government is saying that in defending the

working class, Lambeth council is breaking the law.

In the summer of 1981, Lambeth made the news when young people facing daily unemployment, slum housing, police harassment exploded in anger on the streets. These events frightened the Tory government into setting up the Scarman Enquiry which concluded that the social and economic conditions in Lambeth were a direct cause of these riots.

Since 1981 the town centre has been brightened up, flower pots are in evidence, bright signs welcome you to Brixton and a new leisure centre, sponsored by the GLC has been opened. But in the sidestreets and the sprawling council estates conditions have sharply deteriorated.

Unemployment has continued to increase since 1981 with 20 per cent unemploy-

ment now. Unemployment among the black population approaches 70 per cent. In the last year alone youth unemployment is up by 50 per cent and amongst young males it is up by 85 per cent. These figures do not include many women who do not register.

Over 50 per cent of households are wholly or partially dependent on social security. Lambeth has the largest percentage of one parent families, who along with pensioners are unable to meet the cost of food and essentials and therefore run up massive arrears on rent and fuel costs.

The real criminals are the Tory government whose policies are driving down the living standards of working people in the interests of profit.

By John Reid
(Norwood CLP)

Edinburgh - no to cuts

EDINBURGH COUNCIL, like Liverpool and Lambeth, voted last week to defy government-imposed economies.

A thousand strong rally before the council meeting last Wednesday was told by Alex Wood, leader of the Council, that there would be no increase in rents, no jobs cut and no services hit, in defiance of George Younger, Tory Scottish Secretary.

George Younger is demanding that the council cut their budget of £78 million by over a fifth and cut their rates from 22.7 pence to 15.7 pence in the pound. He has threatened that unless this is done the £200,000 weekly Rate Support Grant will be withdrawn by the end of the month, and that he will pursue action in Parliament and through the courts.

This could lead to disqualification and surcharging of the councillors.

Housing will be one of the most important areas hit if Younger gets his way. A

limit of £2.8 million was set for the contribution from rates to the housing revenue.

The council on the other hand budgeted for £8.5 million. Over the past 12 months, rents already too high, have been frozen. If Younger gets his way the rents will increase whilst housing conditions deteriorate.

Already, there are 15,500 damp houses, 6,000 houses without a bath and 13,000 on waiting lists. Repairs would be left undone and many of the homeless will remain so if these attacks on housing go through.

The District Council have created 80 new jobs in cleansing and recreation and improved general conditions of those on YTS by increasing their basic training allowance from £26.25 to £39.25. The Tories want to reverse all these steps forward and drive down living standards and services.

The campaign must therefore be taken to the working class of Edinburgh

to mobilise them. Graham Wilson, a NUPE caretaker at Craigmillar skills centre said: "If the council put up the fight the workers will respond. For many of them it's life or death, either employment or the dole."

If a campaign was taken to the council staff, and they were mobilised to show their strength, Younger would sit up and take notice of this power. Edinburgh cannot remain isolated, however, and must link up with those councils, Liverpool and Lambeth who are also in struggle against Tory attacks.

By Eddie Donaghy

Edinburgh LPYS Public Meeting
Defend local democracy.
Speakers include Derek Hatton (Dep. Leader Liverpool City Council) Alex Wood (Leader Edinburgh City Council) 7.30 Tuesday 2 July—Assembly Rooms, George Street, Edinburgh.

School students union

THE FOUNDING conference of the School Students' Union, attended by 200 school students from England, Scotland and Wales took place in Manchester last weekend

It aims to get recognition from school authorities and campaign against the cheap labour YTS schemes.

The conference adopted a political and organisational strategy with the aim of building a union of thousands of members. School Student Union members will also be urged to join the Labour Party Young Socialists, and links with other labour movement bodies will be encouraged.

The conference was slightly soured by the antics of an ultra-left sect who tried to disrupt the proceedings, with some of their older members posing as school students. However they lost all the political arguments and the conference resolved to build a mass union to fight for a future for youth.

By conference delegates

Turin visit

A TEAM of councillors from Liverpool visited Turin to express their sorrow at the tragic deaths during the Liverpool versus Juventus football match in Brussels.

Councillor TONY MULHEARN also President of the Liverpool District Party, commented:

"We went to Turin to discuss with the Socialist Party, other working class parties and with the trade unions. This is to express our sympathy with the bereaved, but also to have discussions on how best to prevent this kind of catastrophe in the future.

"We believe the solution has to be a socialist one, in terms of houses, jobs and giving the youth of this country and on the Continent a future where their energies can be channelled constructively. We exchanged views on social conditions in Turin as well as in Britain. In Turin, we understand, 33 per cent of youth are unemployed.

"We hope we can forge links with the Socialist authorities in Turin and the labour movement generally."

THE *Daily Mirror* editorial (June 19) denouncing Derek Hatton for blaming Thatcher and Big Business for the Brussels tragedy shows how effective Liverpool Council's visit has been.

This vicious mouthpiece of millionaire Robert Maxwell is galled at the marvellous success in forging links with the Italian workers. This supposedly "Labour" paper acts as a screen for Thatcher and capitalism. It is trying to unload responsibility from capitalism onto the shoulders of the working class for the obnoxious anti-social behaviour of football hooligans. When the bodies were still warm, Maxwell even went on TV to blame the 'Militant Tendency' for the violence. British and Italian workers know better and they said so loud and clear in Turin.

Witch-hunt spreads — resistance grows

ALL OVER the country Labour Party members face expulsion threats. Encouraged by the Appeals and Mediation Sub-committee of the party's National Executive, some local parties are going beyond any decision of the party conference in expelling members for such crimes as selling or donating money to *Militant*.

As predicted, this has already spread to members with no connection with *Militant*. All on the left who raise their voice against the national or local leaders are now vulnerable to attack.

But the counter-attack has begun. Some local witch-hunts have been nipped in the bud, where members have

taken up the issue to the wider membership and the trade unions. Resolutions are starting to flow into the Party's Walworth Road HQ. The greatest success has been the protest against the eviction of the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign. The Eastern Regional Conference and at least sixteen constituency Labour Parties have passed resolutions against this blow to those fighting for the rights of young trainees.

More is needed, however. The flow of resolutions must become a flood, to show the NEC that the party ranks will not tolerate these attacks on socialists within the party.

Eastern region backs YTURC

THE EASTERN Region Labour Party conference passed an emergency resolution condemning the actions of the National Executive in expelling the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign from its office in the party's headquarters in Walworth Road.

The resolution defending YTURC also called on the Executive to give back the use of the office and to give money to help the campaign, which aims to achieve trade union rights and rates of pay for YTS trainees.

There was a mood among delegates at the conference for unity and a determination to get on with fighting the Tories. The conference also came out solidly in favour of renationalisation

of firms privatised by the Tories, without compensation.

Any attempts at victimisations of *Militant* supporters in the Eastern Region will meet with difficulties. *Militant* supporter Steve Glennon, member of the National Society of Metal Mechanics was elected to the Regional Executive Committee from the trade union section with the third highest vote.

Many copies of *Militant* were sold at the conference and £130 was collected at a lunchtime *Militant* meeting.

By John McKay
(Basildon LPYS)
and Steve Glennon

Redcar right beaten in bid to oust left

A MOVE to suspend seven members was defeated in Redcar Constituency Labour Party. The executive's recommendation of two-year suspensions was rejected by 29 votes to 28, on the grounds that the seven members were not allowed to attend the executive committee meeting.

The executive committee alleged that the seven, from South Bank ward, had "intruded" into Ormesby branch's area to investigate complaints of tenants who have been told to get out of

their houses, as the estate is being sold by the Labour council.

None of the seven are *Militant* supporters, which indicates the present mood of the right wing in taking action against anyone who disagrees with them. At the same meeting, the left candidate for constituency secretary was elected by two votes.

By Andy Walker
(Redcar Labour Party, in personal capacity)

NUPE expulsion

PAUL SEVERN, an active member of NUPE's Loughborough University branch since 1978, was informed last Thursday by his branch secretary that they are starting procedures to have him expelled from the union.

This follows this year's NUPE conference which passed a resolution calling for action to be taken against *Militant* and its supporters.

The decision arose from a meeting called to discuss the political levy. Normally the branch secretary applies for paid relief for all members of the branch committee to attend the meeting. But the branch secretary informed Paul that he had been excluded and that if Paul attended the meeting management had the right to stop his pay.

Paul told the secretary that he should fight for the members and not do the

management's dirty work. There was a heated row, during which one of the secretary's friends walked in and said he had no right to talk to the secretary in that manner.

Paul was then threatened with expulsion by the secretary saying there had been complaints from members—which turned out to be from one of his friends. He said he had contacted the NUPE East Midlands Area Office and full-time officers had given them the go-ahead to start proceedings.

"It is obvious", said Paul, "that they are using a personal attack to try to stop the growth of *Militant*'s ideas spreading within the branch. I am involved in helping to build the Broad Left in NUPE. I decided to go round with a petition calling for no witch-hunts, and after only one day got 50 signatures.

Field put on the spot

FRANK FIELD, MP for Birkenhead, whose local party recently passed a resolution banning the sale of the *Militant*, faced an embarrassing question and answer session after speaking at a public meeting in Harlow, Essex, organised by the newly formed Harlow Benefits Action Campaign.

Field had referred to "Trotsky trying to take his seat away from him" and upset many at the meeting by announcing that he had to leave early, avoiding a full debate.

A supporter of *Militant* asked him about implementing 'Clause Four' of the party's constitution, the clause which embraces Labour's commitment to public ownership and control by working people. Field told the questioner that she was misinterpreting the constitution and then he shouted to the audience not to listen to her. He also commented that if we had a Labour government in power like the last one then we would be better off.

The meeting was also addressed by *Militant* supporter Kevin McHugh, chairman of the DHSS section of the CPSA whose argument answered many of the questions of the action group.

A further meeting is planned as part of the group's campaign against the Fowler benefits review.

By Olive Edwards
(Harlow Labour Party and Harlow Benefits Action Campaign)

Young Socialists investigation

WREXHAM Constituency Labour Party has called for an investigation into the local branch of the Labour Party Young Socialists. It has already banned the sale of *Militant*.

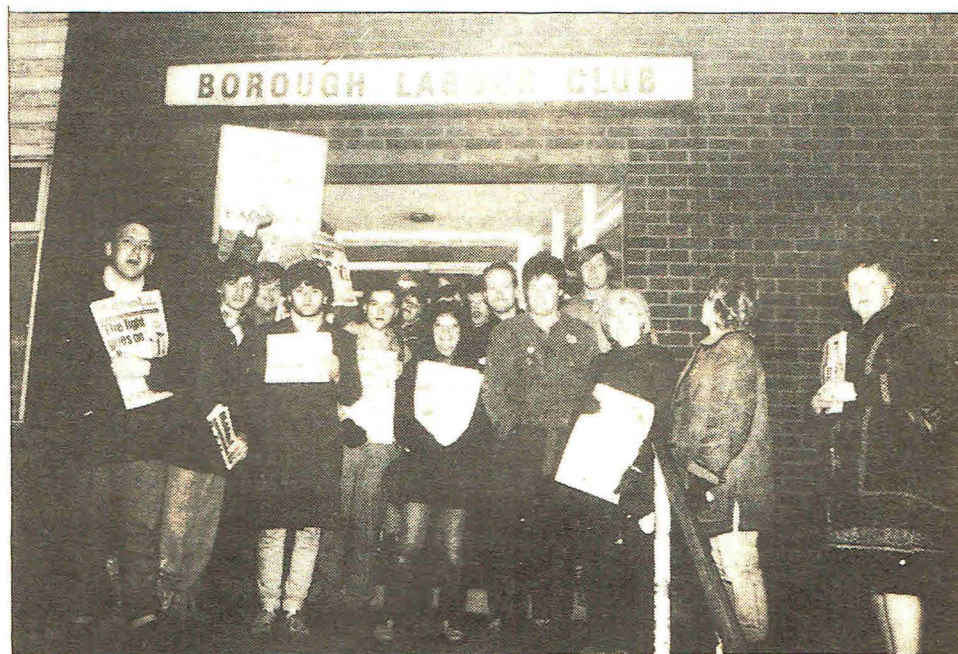
During and after the County Council elections, Chris Roberts, the Constituency secretary, attacked *Militant* supporters for organising a public meeting on "The lessons of the Miners' strike". Local Tories then mounted a campaign to try and highlight these divisions, directed at councillor Martin Jones, saying he was a member of the *Militant* Tendency.

Martin was elected with a much increased majority. Despite this, the involvement of LPYS members in



Above: Striking Notts miners on the march. Mansfield's right-wing MP, Don Concannon demanded an NEC enquiry into miners joining his party.

Below: LPYS members and *Militant* supporters lobby Mansfield Labour Party against its decision to outlaw *Militant* earlier this year.



Biggest ever meeting in Mansfield

OVER EIGHTY people attended the biggest-ever *Militant* public meeting in Mansfield last week.

Mansfield Labour Party has moved faster and further than any other to expel Marxists. Its resolution passed in February said "that to organise, recruit, finance or on any basis to be employed by the *Militant* Tendency (this to include the selling or distribution of the *Militant*) are grounds for expulsion from the Mansfield Constituency Labour Party".

Mansfield's MP Don Concannon, who supports the moves against *Militant* was invited to debate with Paul Shawcroft, already expelled by the party, but he declined.

The meeting's chairman, Kevin Cocker, secretary of the local branch of the National Union of Railwaymen, had been warned the previous night of action against him if he chaired the meeting.

Paul Shawcroft, already expelled from the Mansfield Labour Party, told the meeting that "the Labour Party should be giving every possible support to help Cocker and his members

fight against privatisation and not trying to undermine it".

Both Paul Shawcroft and Lynn Walsh, also expelled from the Labour Party, spoke against witch-hunts. "We will never accept" said Lynn, "that the Labour Party is the property of Don Concannon (the local MP) and other right-wing MP's like him".

£169 was collected for the fighting fund and a bucket collection raised £40 for local strikers.

By Wayne Jones

Swansea slur

I WAS sad, sickened and disgusted by a resolution passed by Penderry ward Labour Party, Swansea, calling for the expulsion of all *Militant* supporters from the party. The resolution will be debated at next month's meeting of the Swansea Labour Association.

All this has taken with the Brecon and Radnor by-election just a few weeks away, with an excellent chance of a Labour victory. We are also in the midst of a reselection battle where local *Militant* supporter Alec Thraves is challenging Swansea's sitting MP Alan Williams.

During nomination meetings, Alan Williams and his supporters have continually accused *Militant*

supporters of being against unity and not loyal to the party. The Labour Party will never be unified when these people call for the expulsion of long-standing party workers.

I will challenge anyone to accuse me or any *Militant* supporters in Swansea of not being loyal. My family have always been in the party and I myself officially joined at 15 and been active ever since.

There is no way I will be kicked out of the party. *Militant* supporters belong in the party—they might try to expel us but they won't expel our ideas.

By Clive Lloyd
(Chairman Swansea LPYS)

By Christopher Johnson

Political levy campaign

Body blows to Tory plans

THE RESULTS so far of the trade union ballots on the political levy have been a body blow to the Tories' strategy of trying to weaken the links between the trade unions and the Labour Party.

Originally devised by Norman Tebbit, this strategy had two aims: to cripple the Labour Party financially—80 per cent of the party's income comes from the trade unions—and to further shackle the unions' effectiveness in fighting for their members' interests.

Under the legislation, all trade unions are being forced to ballot their members on whether they wish to continue their political levy.

Predictably the Tory press have attempted in the run-up to the ballots to blacken the image of the trade unions—especially through the campaign about alleged ballot rigging in the TGWU.

Influence

The Tories argue that it is immoral for the trade unions to buy so much influence in the Labour Party and that trade union votes at Labour Party conference are unrepresentative of their members.

The Tory party itself however, is very secretive about where it gets its money from. The Labour Research Department estimated in figures available from company returns for 1983, that more than £3½ million was given to the Tory party by 384 companies.

The Tory press also argues that ordinary Trade Union members have no control over the political expenditure

of their unions. Yet the majority of shareholders in companies donating money to the Tory party have absolutely no say in that expenditure. How many companies conduct ballots of their shareholders or workforce before giving money to the Tory party? None.

Connection

The reason for the compulsory ballots? Thatcher herself said:

"What would please me immensely would be if the TUC were not and the unions were not part of the Labour Party or the Labour Party of the Trade Union movement. That connection I must say, I think is wrong."

John Selwyn Gummer, the Tory party chairman, put the idea in even more blunt terms: "It is very valuable to have two sensible parties that both support capitalism. We have suffered in Britain from having the Labour Party."

That is why all trade unionists should vote "Yes" for their unions to have political funds. Some leaders however are playing down the tie between the Labour Party and trade unions, posing the issue purely as whether or not it is right for trade unions to have political funds.

The issue at stake is that the Labour party was the party formed by the trade unions to fight for workers' interests and socialism. Therefore it is crucial that the links between the trade unions and the Labour Party are strengthened by joint campaigning work and getting more union members active in the Labour Party.

For this to be successful however, the Labour Party



May Day march, London 1984. The ruling class are desperate to break the link between trade unions and the Labour Party

leadership have to show that the next Labour government will genuinely fight for a socialist programme to defend workers' interests, rather than repeat the disastrous policies of wage restraint and cuts in public spending that the last Labour government followed.

The splits in the Tory Party are beginning to widen into a chasm, which could deepen still further if the campaign to maintain the political levy is won.

By Ken Smith

At the end of the last century it had become increasingly clear that a purely industrial struggle was insufficient to maintain any gains that the unions achieved from the employers. On the basis of capitalism any concessions gained through industrial action would be taken away by government legislation.

Realising this and faced with increasingly brutal attacks on the trade union movement at the beginning of this century, the unions became the main force behind the rapid development of the Labour Party. It was they who in 1900 set up the Labour Party Representation Committee the fore-runner of the Labour Party.

Successive Tory and Liberal governments continually attempted to weaken these bonds between the movement's industrial and political wings, through famous legal actions such as the "Taff Vale" case in 1900, and

the "Osborne judgement" in 1909. These decisions were very similar to today's legislation; they fined unions enormous sums of money for taking secondary industrial action and declared that unions could not support political parties.

These attacks in the early 1900s boosted the Labour Party's development. More and more workers were pushed into political activity. The rapid rise of the Labour Party's parliamentary representation forced Asquith's government to make many concessions such as the Insurance and Pensions Act in 1910 and the reversal of the Osborne judgement in 1913—making it legal for unions to support political parties on the basis of members "contracting in".

Again today, at a time of attacks on the working class by employers and government, the political link between the trade unions and the Labour Party is being challenged.

Industrial action increases

Those on the right of the labour movement and many on the left argue that the working class has shifted to the right. Even the miners were singled out, before their strike, as a group of workers which had given up militant struggle.

Now new evidence has been published in the report of the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) for 1984 which shows that workers are more likely to take industrial action in support of defending jobs than in previous years, confirming the view consistently put by *Militant*.

SUMMARISING its findings the ACAS report says:

"Measured in terms of man-days lost through strikes... 1984 was a bad year.

"Even excluding the special effect of the coal mining dispute, days lost were 30 per cent higher than in 1983."

The report also notes that "disturbances tended to be larger, and longer and often more complicated".

The figures show that workers are far from cowed or unwilling to struggle and

that wider layers of workers are being drawn into struggle despite all the odds.

"In both the public and private sectors," the report continues, "we detected indications that trade unions and their members were becoming more willing to consider the possibility of industrial action."

"In some areas, too, which have been particularly affected by high levels of unemployment, we noted signs that closure and redundancies proposals were meeting greater opposition from employees than before."

The outcome of the miners' strike will not reverse these trends. As we said at the time, that strike was not the end but the beginning of an entirely new chapter of open warfare between the classes, where all sections of industry will be drawn into battle on a similar scale.

ACAS goes on to say "there were indications in companies and sectors where some easing of financial problems had occurred that a return to more combative bargaining over pay was beginning to emerge".

The report also reaffirms our analysis that the basic organisations of the labour movement, have remained intact despite the most sustained attack on trade union rights and living standards since the 1930s.

Difficulties

Around 10 million are still organised in trade unions.

"The difficulties which changing economic circumstances have brought to trade unions continued in 1984", the report says, "although it seems that the falls in membership which many had faced over

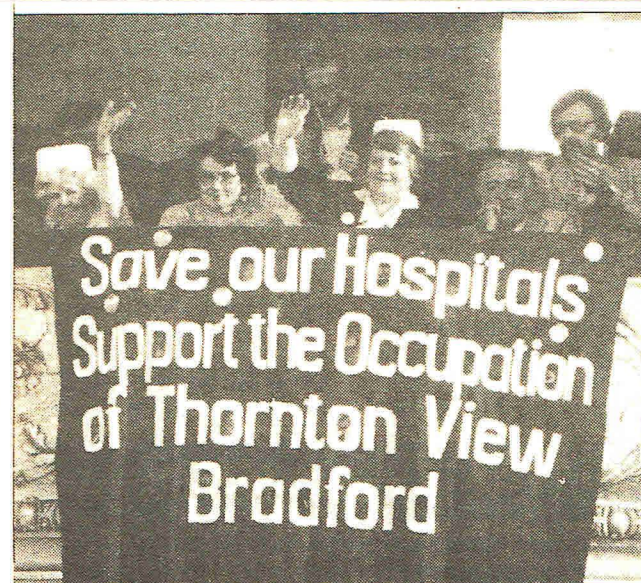
1980-1983 slowed somewhat and may in some cases have been reversed".

Another feature of 1984 industrial relations was the use of the law. In the miners' strike the forces of the state were mobilised as never before to break the strike. But neither in the miners' nor in other disputes did the Tories get the unqualified success they hoped for. Against the use of the law, ACAS says: "The reaction of trade unions was mixed, with some withdrawing industrial action and others persisting".

On closed-shop ballots, the report notes a reduction in the number covered from the peak of 5 million. But, it adds: "Most reductions in closed shop coverage to date have followed from the changing pattern of employment away from older production industries," in other words from the collapse of the British manufacturing industry.

The Tories introduced legislation to make closed shop organisations very difficult to operate, by demanding support in a ballot of either 85 per cent of all union members or 80 per cent of all employees.

"During 1984, in line with TUC policy," the report says, "most trade unions declined to cooperate in closed shop ballots. By the end



There is no shortage of willingness to fight when the issues are clear.

of the year some 80 occasions on which ballots had been held had come to the attention of the service.

"In 65 of these it was known that the agreements in question had been upheld by the necessary majority of workers covered and only in 11 did we know that the necessary levels of support had not been achieved."

All the findings disclosed in the ACAS report are significant because they reveal the true level of resistance to the Tories at rank and file level and the determination of working people to stick by their organisations.

Moreover what the report does not go into are the changes taking place within the unions themselves. At every level a new leadership is coming through, particularly with new young fighters whose will to fight has been formed in the harsh economic realities of the 1980s. A harder breed of leaders are being moulded by capitalism, reshaping and refitting the unions, ready for the decisive battles of the future.

By Wayne Jones

Marxist Daily Building Fund

	£		£
Eastern	2731	Scotland East	2249
East Midlands	2984	Scotland West	2546
Humberside	1595	Southern	3821
London NE	3113	South West	770
London NW	3935	Wales East	1829
London SE	1953	Wales West	1453
London SW	2160	West Midlands	1948
Lancashire	518	Yorkshire	1514
Manchester	2441	National	1292
Merseyside	5024		
Northern	2808	Total	46684

This week: £623

LIVERPOOL CITY Council is again standing firm to protect jobs, services and living standards.

It's one thing to have nice ideas but *Militant* supporters have always been determined to put those ideas into practice when in a position to do so. But for Liverpool councillors, who once again risk being declared bankrupt, losing their homes, possessions, jobs and even possibly facing jail, the sacrifice they are making is great.

For council workers too, the stakes are high. The Liberals' proposed budget would mean five thousand workers would lose their wages every week.

As with the miners' strike, the key to Liverpool winning will be the solidarity of other workers. And what better way to show that solidarity than to send money to build the resources of a Marxist paper so that it can intervene and help the struggle in Liverpool.

Merseyside has a tradition of sacrifice to build support for Marxism as shown by the nearly £5,000 donated by supporters there to the Marxist Daily Building Fund since January.

This week, we have had a further £67.50 from supporters in Liverpool Garston. Unemployed readers have been the best donors with comrades from the Black Country, South Tyne, Rotherham and Manchester donating £80 between them. A further £168 has been raised in Manchester towards a more regular Marxist paper.

"DEAR COMRADE,
"Please find enclosed a cheque for £50 as a contribution to your 'fighting fund'. This money was collected as a tribute to Arthur Evans (Crosby CLP and Civil Service Union) who died on 9 May.

"Arthur was a keen supporter of your paper. Those of us making this donation are not supporters of *Militant*, but we know that Arthur would have wanted us to remember him in this way. If you decide to mention this contribution in the paper, we feel that the acknowledgement should simply say that the money was received "in memory of Arthur Evans".

We are deeply touched to receive this donation from members of Sheffield Hallam CLP and would like to send our condolences to his widow Mrs Lil Evans.

Conference collections

Once again, this week's donations reflect our very concrete support amongst working class people and trade unionists. Our special thanks go to Mr Pick a pensioner from Bingley, Yorks who gave £25 and to members of the GMBATU who contributed a total of £144.67 collected at their national conference. The National NCU conference produced a massive £1,364. A Labour Party Readers' Meeting in Wales raised £107.65.

FIGHTING FUND

This week: £5,411

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
Eastern	564		3200
East Midlands	343		2900
Humberside	285		1900
London East	313		2850
London West	458		2650
London South East	250		1950
London South West	267		1100
Lancashire	243		1100
Manchester	216		2650
Merseyside	714		6200
Northern	778		4650
Scotland East	358		3000
Scotland West	277		3800
Southern	924		5000
South West	277		2150
Wales East	350		2450
Wales West	429		2150
West Midlands	835		4350
Yorkshire	666		5950
Others	6572		10000
Total received	15120		70000

Our supporters have also been busy using special events to raise money. Jimmy Hall from West Lancs raised £19.30 doing a half-marathon. Paul Rodgers from Stafford YS raised £5.75 on a sponsored run. A school student from Stafford raised £10 in a rattling tin in a miners' social club at Littleton in Staffordshire.

Another comrade raised £16.47 selling stickers on the anti-apartheid demo. See advert for ordering your stickers now for the YTURC rally in Liverpool. Manchester comrades have also shown initiative using appeal

sheets in Chorlton, collecting £10!

By Ruth Campbell

Donations

J Hughes, Lancs £1; D Muscrop, Bristol ASTMS £8.60; Skittles night £25.38; extras from Keresley miners' wives £1.74; £5 Hounslow YS members; Kev Ferguson AUEW, £10; K and J Mills, Leics, £5.50; G Young, Notts, FTAT, £1.50; D George, Notts, NASUWT, £5, F Warwick, West Ham South, TGWU £1; Glyn Robbins, Wanstead £1; Michael Silva,

East Ham YS £1.75; £58.82 from a London CPSA Readers' Meeting; Pamela Harding, Stone, Staffs, National Union of Students £5; George Harrison, pensioner, Wimblebury £1; Baza, a pensioner from Cannock £5; Wrekin CLP supporters £10. Sale of Springs-teen ticket £5; Mark Angel £1 Southampton; BBO in Southampton raised £43.81; Steve Leniham gave a magnificent £40 his first week's wages from a new part-time job after already giving one week's money to the daily building fund; Gordon Chesters, Newcastle, Staffs £1; G Pugh, Balham £25; A Dernard, Balham £2.

GET Militant

"JUST A short note to congratulate you on your newspaper, and to thank you for sending it to me for the past four weeks. I am much obliged to you. I have been looking for a newspaper like *Militant* for some time now, and I find your newspaper first class. Please find enclosed £5 for an order for 13 weeks."

This letter from a new subscriber in South Humberside, is one of many such letters regularly received by *Militant*. And just like him there are thousands of workers looking for our ideas and our paper. Every *Militant* seller has a responsibility to be out on the streets and outside workplaces, giving these potential

new readers the opportunity to get in touch with us.

Militant can be sold anywhere. Edinburgh sellers used their initiative and sold 21 papers outside a performance of a play about miners' struggles. Down the road in Musselburgh, 20 were sold during the local Labour Party's 'Jobs and Industry' campaign, and a regular sale of 15 to 20 has been established in the High Street on Saturday.

National events are also recording big sales. Over 40 *Militants* were sold at the Baker's Conference, and 200 of the two issues sold at NALGO. 200 were sold at Sunday's Anti-Apartheid demonstration and over 100 at Yorkshire Miners' Gala.

MILITANT SUMMER DRAW

- 1st Prize—Holiday worth £500 in resort of your choice
- 2nd Prize—Portable Colour TV worth £200
- 3rd Prize—Camera worth £100
- 4th Prize—two prizes—
a Cassette Recorder worth £50 and
a Personal Stereo worth £50
- 5th Prize—five prizes of £20 worth of socialist books

Price of ticket: 10p
Get your ticket now from local *Militant* sellers.
To be drawn 27 July.

Manchester *Militant* Weekend School. June 22nd/23rd Sat + Sun Theory of Marxism—Historical Materialism—Dialectical Materialism. Speakers include Roger Silverman.

Overnight Accommodation. Cost £1 unwaged, £2 waged. (includes study guide) Further details contact: Gordon, Tel. 061 969 4383 or write to 17 Catterick Ave, Sale, Manchester M33 4GQ. Crèche available.

ads

CLASSIFIED: 15p per word, minimum 10 words.
SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per column centimetre. Three weeks for the price of two. *Militant* meeting ads free.
All advertisement copy should reach this office by Saturday.

"LIVERPOOL MILITANT Labour" badge with Labour logo, "Black and white youth unite" badge with red *Militant* logo, 25p each plus 25p minimum p&p. FF cheques payable to P Cooper, 31 Balmoral Road, Fairfield, Liverpool, L6 8NB.

PECKHAM LPYS present BAND DISCO BAR, Sat 22nd June, 7.30pm Wyndham T A Hall Wyndham Rd Camberwell SE5. £1.50 Waged 75p unwaged. Sponsored by Southwark Labour Party Trade Union Committee.

CARRIER BAGS—5p each + 25p postage and packing.
CARTOON BOOKS (*Need not profit and More*)—reduced to 50p each + 25p postage and packing.
RATTLING TINS—75p each. Bulk order of 10 or more 65p each + 50p p&p.

STICKERS—"Get *Militant*", "No slave labour on YTS", "For a Socialist South Africa". Cost 1p each. Stickers *must* be sold for donations. Please add 50p p&p.



STUD BADGE—75p each. Please add 25p p&p.

BADGES—small 1" tin *Militant* badges, 20p each. Bulk order 15 or more 10 peach—available in white, yellow, blue or green background. Please add 25p p&p

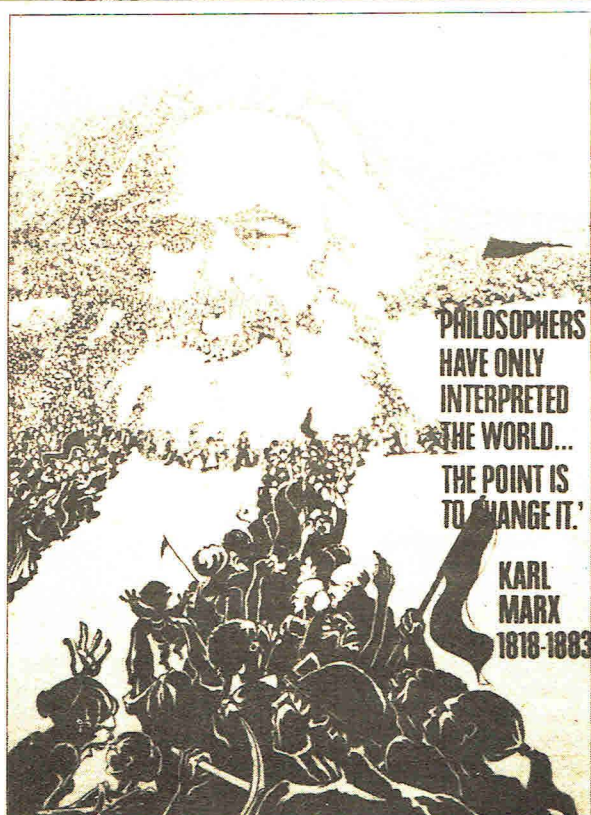
All orders to: *Militant*, 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB. Cheques made payable to *Militant*.

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Militant

Meetings

HARROW *Militant* Marxist Discussion Group. Monday 24 June, Britain in Crisis; Monday 8 July What *Militant* Stands for; Monday 22 July, The State; Monday 5 August, Northern Ireland; Monday 19 August, Russia; Monday 2 September, The Communist Manifesto.

All at 11am at 172a Kenton Road, Kenton. Near Kenton B.R. Station.

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

RHONDDA *MILITANT* public meeting: Wednesday 26 June, 7.30pm, at the Maerdy Workmen's Hall, Maerdy. Speakers: Terry Fields MP, Mike Richards, Maerdy NUM (personal capacity), Michelle Tree, Rhondda LPYS (personal capacity), and Brychan Davies, expelled LP member. All welcome.

DEFEND SALEP against Labour Party proscription! Buy a SALEP T-shirt! £3 & postage. Also still available: SALEP bulletin with NUM member Roy Jones report on his visit to SA NUM. 20p & 13p postage. Available from: Southern African Labour Education Project (SALEP), 28 Martello Street, London E8. Phone: 01-241 0434.

YOUNG *MILITANT* supporter seeks accommodation in London urgently. Phone: 01-607 4307.

HEPSCOTT *MILITANTS* send best wishes to John and Clare on the birth of their baby boy.

TO MY closest comrade, Danny. Happy 40th birthday. Love Linda.

DAN AND Gill Taylor would like to announce the birth of Carl on 12 June, 1985.

Tories aim to attack youth wages

POVERTY WAGES, exploitation, abuse and a total lack of training. These were the shock findings of a report by the West Midlands Low Pay Unit into conditions on the Youth Training and Young Workers Schemes.

The report by Jean Mulholland shows that the Tories are consciously using YTS and YWS to drive down youth wages to boost profits.

This was the aim outlined by Thatcher in 1982 when she announced the massive expansion of YTS and the introduction of YWS. She made the comparison with Germany where youth wages are at a much lower rate than adult wages.

But there is no comparison. Besides the obvious higher standards of living in Germany which makes low pay 'tolerable', 70 percent of German youth start proper three year apprenticeships at 15, and are full qualified by the time they are 18.

Apprenticeships

But the majority of YTS and YWS schemes offer little training or qualifications at the end of them, while the apprenticeship system in Britain has virtually collapsed.

Youth wages are always notoriously low, but the Tories have driven them to poverty level. The report highlights the case of 16 year old Nick Kamen. When he was unemployed the DHSS paid his bed and breakfast rent. But when he got a job, at £35 a week, this was stopped. He was left with 47 pence a week!

There are now 330,000 16-17 year olds on YTS. Had the £25 a week pay on the Youth Opportunities Programme (the forerunner of YTS) been kept in line with inflation, YTS would now be £40. Yet it is only £26.25.

There are 61,000 18 year olds and over on the Young Workers Scheme. Here bosses are paid £15 by the government for every young worker they employ on £50 or less—there is no bottom limit. A 1983 survey found the average YWS wage to be a mere £35.50. The Tory claims that this will create more jobs is nonsense. A 1982 survey found that only 6 percent of YWS places were actually new jobs.

The Tories are legitimising poverty pay levels, not only through the schemes but also with their threats to scrap the training and wages councils, which gave some protection at least for youth wages.

Those that remain are ignored by the bosses. In the hairdressing trades for example, formerly the Hairdressing Wages Council set a rate of £30.40 for the first year apprentices, rising to £33.90 for the second year.

Yet even this pitiful level has been driven down. Increasingly trainees are being taken on for the first year, in

which the bosses only have to contribute £18.90.

But it is not only youth trainees who suffer. As the government intended, the schemes have had a knock on effect throughout the industry, setting the 'normal rate' for youth wages.

Since 1979, youth have faced a 6 percent cut in real earnings—one in ten youth under 18 (not including YTS) earn less than £38 a week; for females the figure is even less. Youthaid have pointed out that today it is cheaper for a boss to employ three school leavers than one adult worker.

A survey on youth wages carried out in the West Midlands by the Low Pay Unit (not including YTS) had horrendous findings.

The best they could find was a young chef on £64.15 gross for up to 48 hour a week—the worst was a 19 year old working 49 hours for only £25. There was a youth with eleven O-levels being paid £32.25, and an 18 year old waitress on £28 gross.

They found many cases of young people having to work unpaid overtime or face the sack, and many cases of discrimination, poor health and safety standards and sexual harassment.

One workplace had only two toilets for 40 female employees. One 16 year old girl told how at her workplace the innuendo of the bosses was that if they agreed to have sex with them they could expect to have an extra £10 in their wages.

Insult

As if these intolerable conditions weren't enough, the Tories are adding insult to injury. Young people are quite rightly rejecting the slave labour YTS schemes—there is a shortfall nationally for YTS places of over 150,000.

The Tories plan to cut benefits for school leavers to force them onto YTS—a plan shelved for the moment at least thanks to pressure from the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign.

But the Tories imply that youth don't want to work, that they're lazy. The Low Pay Unit points out that young people are clamouring to get places on proper apprenticeships with full three year training. In Birmingham last year, for every apprenticeship in the city there were five applications. When Talbot in Coventry advertised 12 vacancies for apprenticeships, they received 350 applications.



Working class families, even in the worst conditions, face cuts in housing benefit

Photo: Dave Sinclair

Liverpool Labour opposes cuts in benefits

TERRY FIELDS MP and Broadgreen Labour Party have launched a major campaign against Norman Fowler's social security cuts.

On the evening of the publication of the government's green paper, Terry Fields addressed a public meeting which drew support from claimants and DHSS staff.

Cuts for claimants and cuts for DHSS staff was the warning from Mark Palin of CPSA, who made no apologies for the system that he was forced to administer, but he came under attack from several claimants in the audience.

One woman described how she had been thrown out of an office with her two young children by the police. Mark explained that the staff do not make up the rules or decide how much benefit claimants receive—the reason why there are mistakes and delays is due to undermanning.

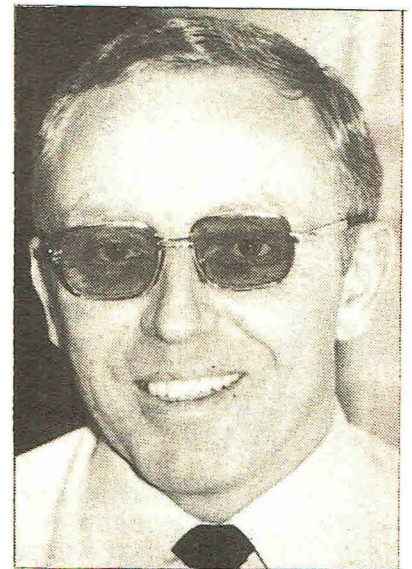
Tony Clarke, NW Regional official of CPSA spoke from the floor about a strike in Manchester involving 40 CPSA members. They are on strike, in protest against a team of 4 DHSS "snoopers". Clearly, the Tories prefer to put resources into spying on claimants rather than see that they get the correct benefits in the first place.

CPSA nationally has also donated £5,000 to the campaign against social security cuts, so links are being made between claimants and staff.

Broadgreen CLP will continue the campaign by saturating the area with leaflets and continuing to explain the real reasons behind the reviews.

Terry Fields has written to Norman Fowler to request a meeting between himself and a delegation of claimants from Broadgreen.

By Phil Cooper



Terry Fields MP

Photo: Militant

Liberals' business links



Broadgreen Labour Party members and Young Socialists picket Liverpool British School of Motoring with Terry Fields MP.

Photo: Tommy Carroll

Broadgreen Labour Party are also fighting the other party of big business—the Liberal/SDP Alliance.

Their business links were typified by the donation from the British School of Motoring.

Broadgreen Labour Party Young Socialists organised a picket of the BSM office in Liverpool. John Ireland reports on what happened:

"Whilst supporting the Tories in attempting to stop union donations to the Labour Party, the Liberals themselves have just received £188,000 from BSM—the biggest ever company donation to a political party.

Road Bill

"There is speculation, about the Liberals' motives in obstructing the Road

Traffic Instruction Bill in parliament, which was concerned with raising the standards of driving instruction. It was objected to on three separate occasions by members of the Liberal/SDP Alliance.

"By co-incidence, the chairman of BSM, Mr Anthony Jacobs, just happens to be the national treasurer of the Liberal Party!"

MP backs social security staff

THIS IS how the *Liverpool Echo* described Breckfield DHSS office.

According to the article, this office comes under frequent attack and all the windows have wire grills on them. The 15,139 claimants are dealt with by just 140 staff.

A week before this report, Terry Fields MP met with the staff at the office, which deals with many of his constituents, to discuss the Fowler Review and its effects. He pledged his support for any action against staff cuts.

Angry

Earlier, Terry Fields joined Labour Party members and Young Socialists leafletting the nearby shopping centre. There was an angry response from women shoppers to the news of cuts in housing benefits, supplementary benefits and family income supplement (FIS).

At present, women form the biggest group that claim FIS, but the Family Credit scheme which will replace it means that cash will be transferred from the purse to the pay packet. It has been estimated that only 50 per cent of the 400,000 entitled to claim FIS actually receive it.

Militant

What

SUPPORT FOR the ideas of *Militant* has been steadily growing in the ranks of the labour and trade union movement. The possibility of Marxist ideas getting mass support, as shown by the explosive school students' strike has frightened some of the right wing leaders, and even some of those once considered as 'left', into renewed attacks on *Militant*.

But these leaders hold onto the ideas of the past, and its *Militant's* ideas which are becoming more relevant, as the crisis of capitalism deepens. The possibility of socialism is within our grasp as thousands, and eventually millions will join the ranks of marxism to defeat capitalism worldwide.

In this feature we briefly outline the main planks of *Militant's* programme, as a preview of the new edition of the *What We Stand For* pamphlet, which is being published in the next few weeks.



THE HISTORIC, year-long miners' strike has shown workers how to struggle. During the strike workers throughout the country were willing the miners to win and took solidarity action to support them. But at every stage no clear course of action was shown by the leadership of the trade union movement, and these struggles were dissipated. *Militant* consistently argued for a 24 hour general strike as a means of drawing together the strug-

gles of workers and preparing for a mass campaign to force the Tories to call a general election.

The miners' strike has swept aside the honeymoon which the "Falklands factor" gave to Thatcher. Labour now stands ahead of the Tories in the opinion polls, but to gain a convincing victory, being anti-Thatcher is not enough. The Labour Party must be able to defeat the capitalists' second eleven, the Alliance.

The attempt by some of the right-wing such as Roy Hattersley to win the 'middle ground' by returning to the failed policies that led to the defeat of past Labour governments will actually play into the hands of the Alliance. It is only socialist policies, those of *Militant* which, by differentiating Labour from capitalism, can offer a real alternative to workers and to the middle class.

By Kevin Ramage

Militant demands:

- ★ A £115 minimum wage.
- ★ A 35-hour working week without loss of earnings.
- ★ Reversal of all cuts in public spending—for a massive programme of useful public works.
- ★ For a massive cut in 'defence' spending. Put the resources into socially useful services.
- ★ For unilateral nuclear disarmament—scrap Cruise and Trident.
- ★ Labour movement action to fight racism and to drive the fascists off the streets.
- ★ Put the police under the control of local government police committees.
- ★ Disband the Special Patrol Group and other similar units, and the Special Branch.
- ★ Action to be organised by the trade unions in defence of jobs and living standards—for a mass campaign to force the Tories out.
- ★ For a Labour government committed to a socialist plan of production to end the rule of capitalism.

Defend the unions

Faced with a new recession in the economy next year, the Tories are desperate to try and break the power of the trade union movement to drive down living standards. But trade union membership of those employed remains at about 54 per cent.

Faced with this the Tories have resorted to a whole series of anti-trade union laws, in an attempt to shackle the workers' organisations.

Despite the defeat of the miners on the issue of pit

closures, the Tories failed in their main aim—to smash the NUM, and so have resorted to legal threats against the unions. But these tactics will fail, as the organisations which workers have built up over generations of struggle cannot be wiped out at the stroke of a lawyers pen.

Militant stands for the immediate repeal of all Tory trade union legislation, and the reimbursement of funds 'sequestrated' (stolen) by Tory courts from the trade unions. We reject the hints being made

by some front-bench Labour spokesmen that 'alternative' legislation will be needed.

Democracy in the labour movement

Militant believes in building a mass membership of the Labour Party. But the leadership in the labour and trade union movement must be fully accountable to its membership.

We defend the right of Constituency Labour Parties to reselect their MPs. Only those

End low pay and long hours

TORY MINISTER Norman Fowler has announced his plan for a "family credit system" encouraging employers to pay low wages topped up by the state.

Militant argues for a statutory minimum wage of £115—which is approximately two-thirds of average industrial earnings with pro-rata payments to part-time workers. According to the Low Pay Unit 4.7 million workers are low paid, before overtime earnings are taken into account. A minimum wage would lift millions of workers for the first time clear of the poverty-trap and the need to

work long hours overtime.

Even if successful in making the minimum wage law, it will still require the vigilance and struggle of the movement to force such a demand into practice.

35-hour week

Tom Mann, one of the founders of the labour movement wrote in 1889, "six hours a day, five days a week, is quite enough of such work as we have to do". In 1938 the average working week for men was 47.7 hours. Forty-five years later after the greatest development of technology in history, in 1983,

the average working week for men had only fallen by nine per cent to 43.3 hours.

A 35-hour working week with no loss of pay, combined with a decent wage would release millions from having to work long hours of overtime to make ends meet, and would create, according to the TUC about 1.5 million jobs. With modern technology, a 35-hour week would be a stepping-stone to a four day week.

While many trade unions have a commitment to a 35-hour week, *Militant* stands for the organisation of a massive campaign to actually turn this demand into reality.

who are not fighting for the interests of the working class will have anything to fear! Similarly, trade union officials should be open to regular election by the workers they represent and subject to immediate recall.

Militant stands for all representatives, MP's, trade union officials etc, to be on the

same wage as the workers they represent. This was the slogan of Marxist MPs, Dave Nellist and Terry Fields, elected in the 1983 election, which won them enthusiastic support. As an immediate minimum every Labour MP should give at least £1,000 of their salary to the party.



What we stand for

Real jobs for youth

Tory Britain is a nightmare for youth. 600,000 unemployed teenagers chase 9,700 jobs. 1.3 million youth are unemployed. For a further 500,000 on YTS schemes all they face is the prospect of slave labour with little or no prospect of a job at the end of it. For example in Sunderland in the North, from April to June 1984, only 30 percent of boys and 40 per cent of girls leaving YTS schemes got jobs. So much for it preparing you for future employment!

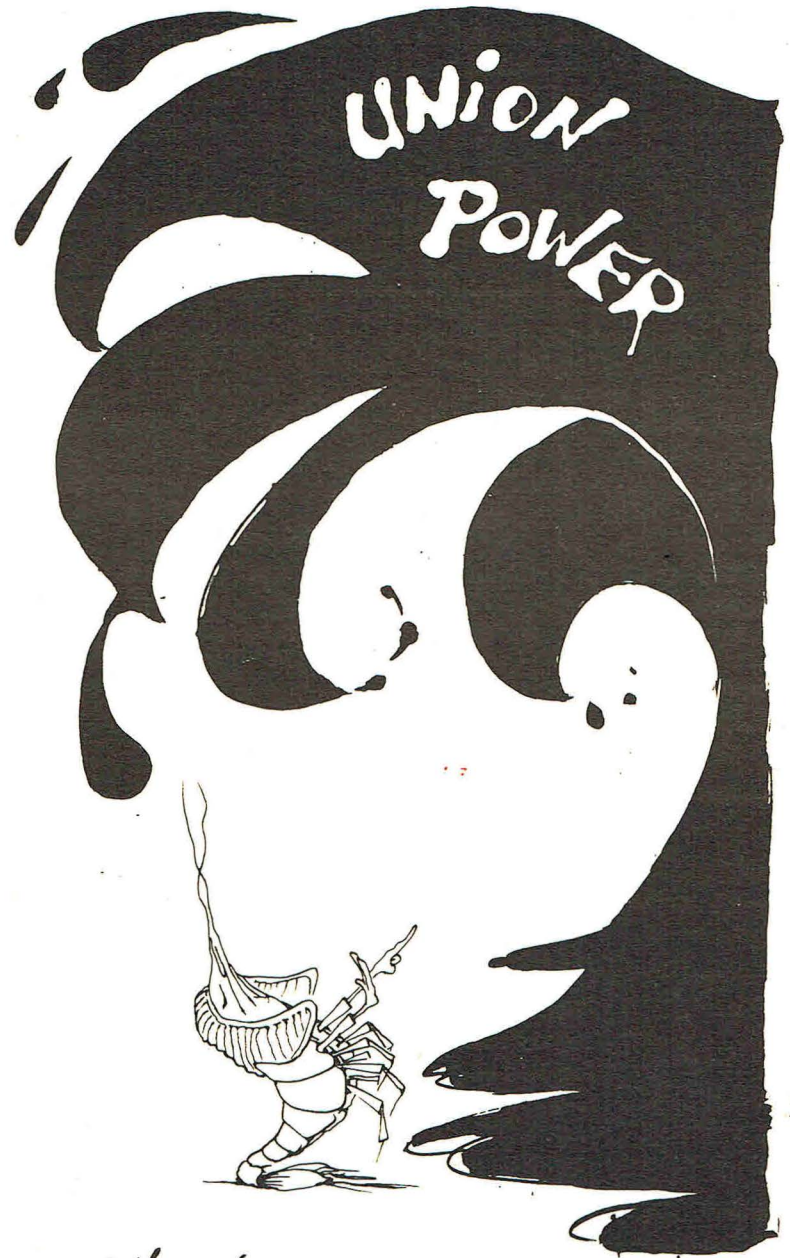
As well as paying slave wages, YTS is a health haz-

ard. Since April 1983 there have been 8 deaths and 243 serious accidents on YTS schemes. The MSC are now attempting to cover-up accidents, instructing its employees not to disclose information on health and safety to outside bodies. *Militant* fully supports the campaign by YTURC against slave-labour wages, and for trade union rights for all youth. The magnificent strike of 250,000 school students on 25 April shows that youth have learnt from the miners' strike and are not prepared to take things lying down any longer.

The capitalist system has proven in Britain, and throughout the world that it can no longer afford jobs and decent wages. Our reply must be that we can't afford capitalism.

Militant stands for:

- ★ End slave labour—no to YTS industrial conscription.
- ★ For a minimum wage of £55 at 16 on schemes.
- ★ For a guaranteed job for every school, college and training scheme leaver.
- ★ Trade union rights for all YTS, all young workers, and for the formation of a mass school students union.



DRAWN OF THE SYSTEM Alan Handman

What Socialism would mean

Under capitalism factories are destroyed, and workers are thrown on the scrap-heap, while others desire the products that could be created. In Britain over four million are unemployed. The loss of national income, added to the payment of benefits, and loss to taxation is an incredible £63,000 million.

Waste

If this is added to the waste on defence and advertising this would total £83,000 million—or enough for £4,000 a year for every household. The creation of four million jobs in productive industry would enable the doubling of spending on health and education, and the building of half-a-million houses a year.

These examples are only the tip of the iceberg, of what would be possible with modern technology, and robots and silicon chips, if the fetter of

private ownership of the means of production was abolished through a nationalised, planned socialist economy.

For the first time the resources and potential of society could work in harmony for the common interests of the working people rather than the needs of private profits. The resources released could be turned to socially useful production, improved social services, and an ever shortening working week. This in turn would allow the working class the time and the freedom to be involved in the day to day running of society.

Such would be the beginning of the development of socialism—a human democratic and developing society. This is what *Militant* stands for, in contrast to the alternative of the deepening cess-pool of capitalism.

Defend women's rights

Working class women face a double-oppression under capitalism—as part of the working class and in the form of low-pay, and sexual harassment. Despite equal pay legislation, in 1983 women only earned 75p to every pound that a man earned, a proportion lower than in 1977. The tenacity of the Ford sewing machinists, with their 17 year struggle for equal pay shows the kind of battles that are needed to turn legislation into real wages at the end of the week.

Militant supports the hospital workers, the sewing machinists, and women in the mining communities who have shown the way for working class women to fight against low pay and discrimination.

We are opposed to women being pushed back into their 'traditional' role of passive homemakers, removed from the labour and trade union movement.

Fight the cuts

Norman Fowler's savage review of benefits, with at least £1 billion cuts, is the latest in a whole series of cuts the Tories have carried out in the NHS, education, local authority spending, house building etc.

Militant demands that the next Labour government immediately reverses the Tory cuts and begins a massive programme of useful public works to build new hospitals, schools, a million houses a year, and other urgently needed public services.

The strategy to fight cuts must oppose big rate rises to compensate for cuts, and defend all jobs and services with all-out strike action in the event of any redundancies. Only a mass campaign, involving council workers, tenants and the community can force the Tories to back down as they did against Liverpool City Council last year.

Plan the economy

Working class people in Britain are suffering because of the the devastating decline of British capitalism and the crisis of capitalism throughout the world. In the 1960s nine million worked in manufacturing industry in Britain, whereas today the figure is below 5.5 million. (Many more figures are given in Ted Grant's pamphlet *Capitalism at an Impasse* which we recommend readers to study).

Any future Labour government that attempts to work within the framework of capitalism will end up attacking the living standards of the workers, as the Socialist governments of Mitterand in France, Gonzales of Spain, and Papandreu in Greece have shown. Firms that threaten redundancies or won't pay a decent minimum wage should be nationalised with compensation

only on the basis of proven need. Industries like British Telecom that the Tories have hived off should be renationalised without compensation.

The 200 or so major monopolies that control 80 to 85% of the economy must be nationalised with compensation only on the basis of proven need, only then will it be possible to plan the economy in the interests of working people and not for the glut of profits.

Nationalised industries should not be like the NCB, run by the Tories, but should be run under workers' control and management with the Boards made up from the representatives from the trades unions in the industry, the trade union movement as a whole, and the Labour government.

Internationalism

Militant supports the battles of the working class and poor peasants throughout the world in their fight against landlordism and capitalism.

Like in Britain, the onset of crisis in capitalism has reawakened the working class internationally. In recent months we have seen a partial general strike in Denmark, and a major public sector strike in Sweden—which always used to be pointed to as a 'model' of capitalist harmony! The 60 per cent vote for left parties in Greece indicates the overwhelming desire of Greek workers for PASOK to step forward towards socialism. The magnificent struggle of workers in South Africa, Central America, and recently in the Sudan, are testimony to the desire of workers and poor

peasants throughout the world for socialism.

For Marxism, internationalism isn't a sentimental question, but represents the drawing together of workers and peasants by the development of the world economy.

Today the working class is far more powerful than ever before, and socialism in one country, like Britain, would be a prelude to socialism throughout Europe and the rest of the world. One victory of the working class would also shatter the rotting Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe and Russia. The struggle of the Polish workers in 1980-81 showed the desire not for a return to capitalism, but to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy and establish regimes of workers' democracy.

Lebanon

Beirut hijack crisis



The US embassy in Beirut after suicide bomb attack in 1983

TWA FLIGHT 847 was the third plane within a week to be hijacked in the Middle East. Unlike the first two, however, this hijacking has turned into an international crisis with repercussions all over the world.

By Pat Craven

Thirty American hostages remain in the hands of Lebanese Shi'ite militia men, either on the plane or somewhere in Lebanon. The hijackers are demanding the release by Israel of 766 young Shi'ite men captured in South Lebanon. The Israeli government refuses to act unless requested to by the USA.

The Reagan administration, which came to power after Carter's failure to resolve the Iranian hostage crisis in 1980, says it will make no concessions.

At the root of the crisis is the collapse of the Lebanese state. Nabih Berri is "Minister of Justice" in the "cabinet", yet he is negotiating on behalf of the hijackers and is believed by some commentators to be acting in collusion with them.

Berri's real position is that of leader of the Amal militia, the main armed body of Lebanon's Shia Muslims. They are the largest religious grouping within Lebanon and traditionally the most oppressed. The 1982 Israeli invasion of Southern Lebanon, where most



Demoralised Israeli troops waiting to leave Lebanon

Shi'ites live led to the formation of a strong militia to challenge the power of the Christian, Druze and Sunni Muslim forces, who previously dominated the country in the absence of any effective government or national army.

At first the Shi'ite population welcomed the Israeli army, hoping that they would rid them of the PLO who had been based in Southern Lebanon. Soon however, they turned against what became an army of occupation and its stooge Christian militia, the South Lebanon Army (SLA).

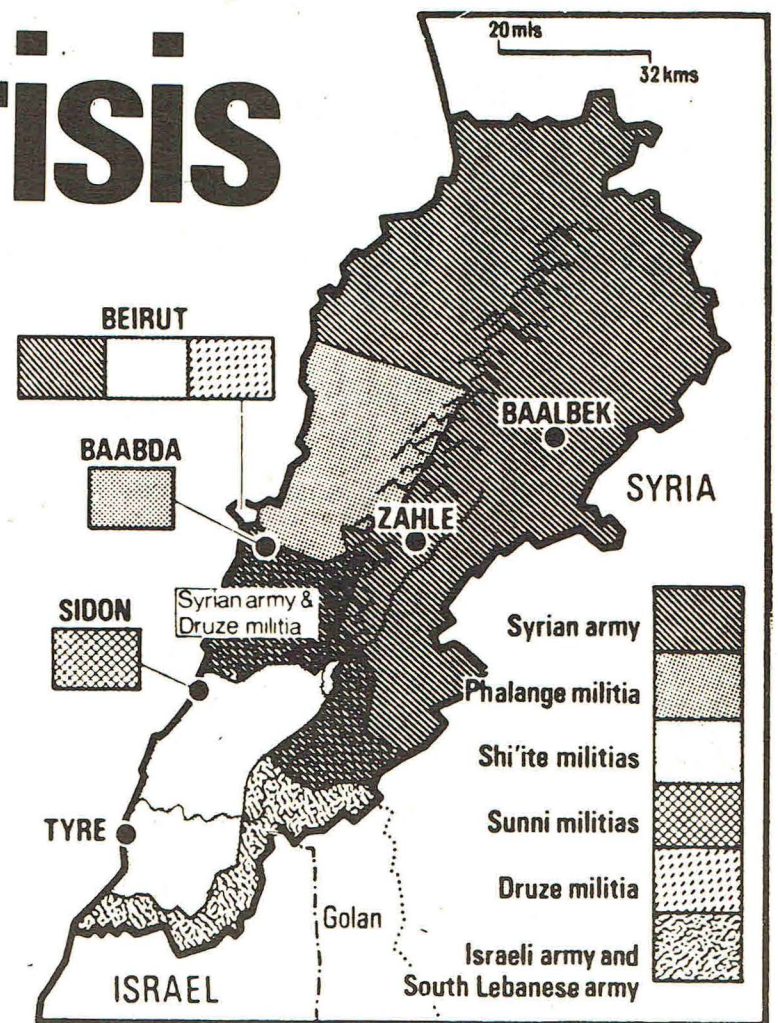
Acts such as the rounding up of young Shi'ite men, purely on suspicion of involvement in armed attacks on Israeli troops, and their removal to Israel, stimulated the growth of Amal and other splinter groups, to force the Israelis out. Quite prepared to commit suicide in their cause, they fought with a spirit which demoralised the Israeli

troops.

Now the Shi'ite militias are the most powerful within Lebanon, and have used that power to try to force concessions from Israel, and to avenge the recent car bomb attack which is believed was carried out by the CIA, on Sheikh Hussein Mohammed Fadlullah, leader of the breakaway Party of God.

Although smaller than Amal, this fundamentalist sect is heavily armed and backed by Iran, and, according to some sources by Syria and Libya too. It may have carried out the suicide bombing of the American embassy in Beirut in 1983, although two other groups, the Holy War or Islamic Struggle organisations could have been responsible.

Any one of these splinter groups, or Amal itself may be involved in the TWA 847 hijack. Such is the complexity of Lebanese sectarian politics that the US government



A map published by the Irish Times showing the complexity of Lebanon's sectarian divisions

US and Israeli hypocrisy

AMERICAN government spokesmen have been quick to exploit the understandable outrage of American people to justify a tough line and possible retaliation against "terrorism". Yet only last week, the US Congress voted to donate \$38 million to the Contras, the counter-revolutionary "terrorists" fighting to overthrow the elected left-wing government of Nicaragua. Reagan regrets that this aid is restricted to food and welfare. He wants to send arms. Nor is the Israeli ruling class any

less hypocritical. The 766 Shi'ites being held in Israel are as much hostages as the Americans on TWA 847. They are being used to exert pressure on the Shi'ite leaders to come to terms.

Israel was also involved in the abduction of 23 Finnish UN soldiers, by the "South Lebanon Army". The SLA is no more than a front for the Israeli army anyway, but according to the Finns, actual Israeli troops were helping to guard them, using vehicles painted in SLA colours.

cannot be sure which group they would have to deal with if they wanted to make concessions, nor which to retaliate against if they decided to stand firm and strike back.

As we go to press it is impossible to predict which course will be followed. If Reagan climbs down and authorises Israel to free the prisoners, it will be another humiliation for American imperialism. They could use the pretext that under the Geneva Convention Israel has no right to hold on to the prisoners, but that would not disguise the extent of their climb-down. International "law" has not been a constraint on either Israel or the US when they have the military muscle to enforce their will.

No victory

If a rescue mission is launched, on the other hand, it will bring no victory for Reagan. The chance of getting the hostages out alive is slight. Any armed assault would leave hundreds of Lebanese dead. Even the most reactionary Arab regimes would be forced to oppose it and America's position in the whole economically crucial area would be damaged.

Reagan is therefore likely to end up like Carter, presiding over a crisis for which there is no solution. There will, however, be no victory for the workers of Lebanon. Hijacking aircraft, car bomb attacks, assassinations and kidnappings do nothing to solve the Lebanon's economic collapse and the poverty of the mass of its people. "Victories" for different sects can at best achieve limited advances for a few leaders of that particular

group; the workers are left with no role to play.

In the long run, they are not "victories" at all. Lebanon is at the mercy of powerful ruling classes and bureaucracies, the US, Israel, Syria and Iran. Now that Israel has been forced to withdraw, Syria is believed to be about to make a new bid to consolidate its position in the country. A Syrian advance could be the pretext for Regan to gain his revenge for the hijack, with a military strike.

Lebanon is thus likely to remain a battleground for a war by proxy, in which the local militias are stooges of the big powers. Just before the TWA hijack, there were even rumours that Israel was considering switching its support from the decrepit SLA to Amal! Meanwhile the Christian "President" Gemayal is increasingly becoming dominated by Syria, and has been disowned by the main Christian militias.

These factions are fighting purely for power and wealth for their leaders. Capitalism has reduced Lebanon to a shambles. The working class of what was once one of the wealthier countries of the Middle East are the losers. While the immediate outlook for them is bleak, there is a future if workers from within all the different communities can come together to form a class-based party to pose a socialist solution.

Lebanon displays capitalism at its most anarchic. In the absence of any state to impose order, sectarian warlords are free to plunder the country's wealth. The Lebanese nightmare cries out for workers' unity and socialism to bring peace and stability and rebuild the shattered economy.

Sri Lankan rights attacked

THE RECENT Home Office measures to refuse entrance to Sri Lankans unless they have a visa has far-reaching implications for blacks in Britain.

As a Sri Lankan in Britain for over 20 years, with the permanent right of residence stamped on my passport, I was detained and told on a recent visit abroad that I needed a visa to re-enter Britain.

This is in total contradiction to my legal rights to live and work in Britain and opens up the possibility that Sri Lankans resident in the UK could be under threat of deportation at any time.

According to *The Times* (17 June) the Home Office has confirmed in relation to a Sri Lankan Sinhalese that all Sri Lankan passport holders need a visa to re-enter Britain regardless of the fact that their families may be British, or that they have a permanent right of residence in the UK.

These new Home Office regulations are nothing less than blatant racial harassment of Sri Lankans.

But the frightening implications are that such visa restrictions (hurriedly introduced while Parliament was in recess) could in future be extended to affect hundreds of thousands of blacks legally living in Britain but who don't have British passports.

The Tory Nationality Bill has made the cost of gaining a British passport prohibitive to most working class blacks and takes up to one year to obtain.

These experiences show the importance of ensuring that the policy of the next Labour government is one of abolishing the anti-working class and racist visa requirements, immigration laws and nationality law.

By a Sri Lankan socialist

USA, Poland, Hungary, USSR, Spain, Portugal, France

"Many lessons will be learned"

EMPLOYEES OF the East Bay Municipal Utility District (Water Board) in the San Francisco Bay area returned to work on 7 June after a 30 day strike.

The militancy and resolve of the American working class is shown by the rank and file of AFSCME (Association of Federal, State, City and Municipal Employees) Local 444 and their decision to reject not only the first contract but the second, brought to them by their leadership on 1 June.

The union members were fighting plans to reduce employees' rights over trade unionism, sick leave, overtime, etc (see *Militant*, 17 May). The second decision was in opposition to almost all the local's leadership who recommended ratification. Members had been on strike for five weeks with no strike pay whatever but remained almost 100 per cent solid.

Picket lines

Following the second rejection of the contract, the picket lines actually strengthened, more members turning out on the Monday (3 June). Pickets slowed cars and trucks entering and leaving the yard for hours. In one area, when threatened with a court injunction, pickets put paper bags over their heads to prevent identification. Also a campaign started to help members of Local 444 by members of Local 2019 which represents

white collar workers for EBMUD.

With the beginnings of success in this campaign, management turned to the courts, first getting an injunction prohibiting us from getting a construction project at EBMUD closed down. Then the very next day they got another injunction which would severely limit the effectiveness of the remaining picket line. Faced with these attacks and the tiredness and growing hardship of some members the only answer would have been to turn to the rest of the labour movement. This is what a section of the leading picket captains called for.

Organised around one of the negotiators, plans were laid to call on the central labour council to bring out the rest of the labour movement and openly violate the courts. This would have strengthened the pickets, helped bring out the members of 2019 and revive a section of the 444 membership.

These members also started laying plans for a fund-raising campaign. Speakers were being sent out to other unions for donations and to shopping centres by families of strikers. It was pointed out that last winter when a striking British miner came to the area, over \$5,000 was raised in five days. Management, meanwhile, were talking of breaking the union and replacing all the strikers.

This same section of the leadership, having foreseen

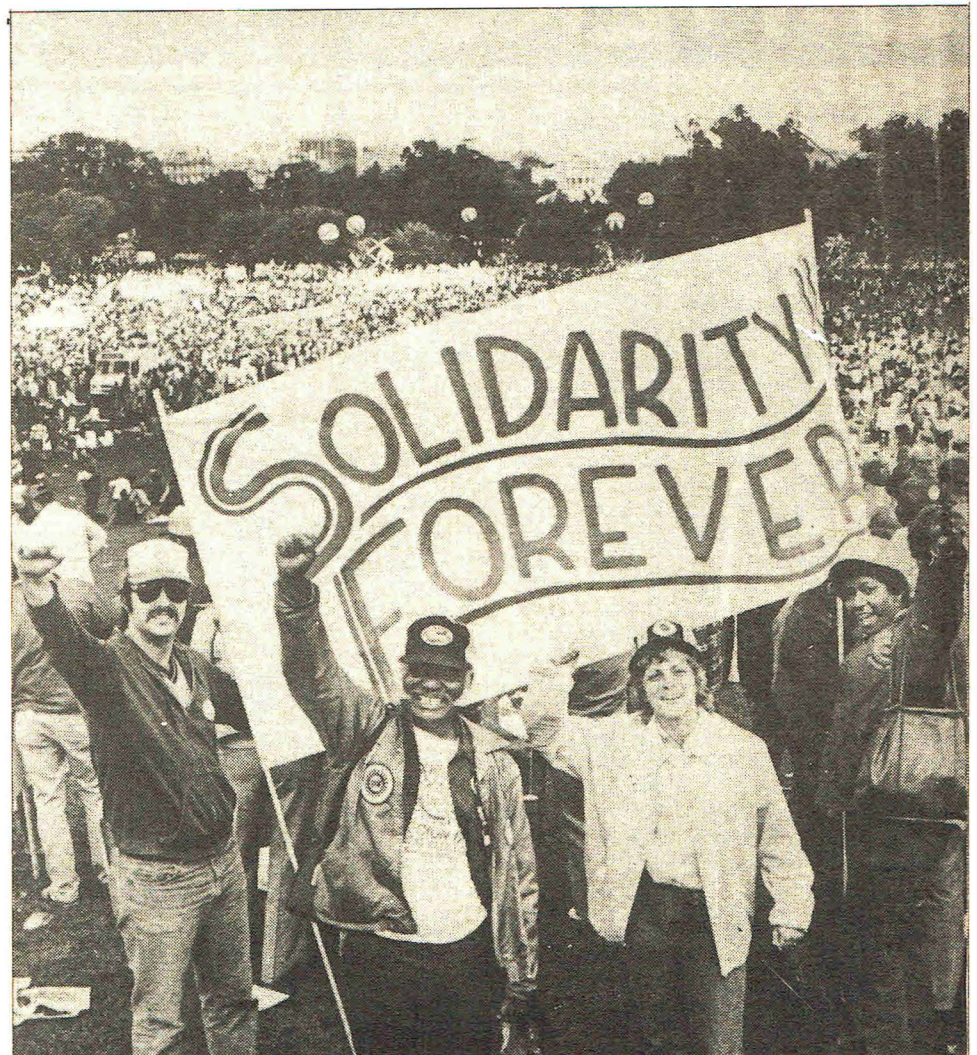
such a possibility, called for an appeal to the unemployed both before and during the strike, stressing that the strikers were fighting for demands that would create more jobs and that attacks on unions were one and the same as attacks on welfare, social security, etc.

Had all these steps been taken in advance or even early on in the strike the outcome would have been totally different. The members had shown their willingness to fight and their understanding of the issues. The problem lay in the majority of the leadership both elected and self-appointed, who refused to put forward any sort of winning strategy.

Amnesty won

Although the strike did not remove the concessions from the table, staying out for an extra week did bring a full amnesty for all supporters of the strike including some members accused of violence on the line.

Of course those who had committed acts of violence against pickets, including breaking one worker's elbow and carrying guns on company property, have been allowed to work all through the struggle. Many lessons have been learned during this strike. Only the Marxists presented the correct strategy to win. When presented correctly, Marxist ideas are not rejected by American workers but on the contrary are recognised as a continuation of a tradition of our



Trade unionists show their strength in Washington in Solidarity Day 1982. The working class must organise politically

class.

As a minority, the Marxists could not bring about the implementation of a correct strategy but by pushing class appeals to the labour movement rather than to liberal politicians they exposed the role of the union leaders. Local 444 stood alone and was actually attacked by the labour bureaucracy. The rest of the leadership relied on the "fairness" of the elected board of directors of EBMUD.

However, not a single board member ever spoke up to denounce the union busting demands of management. One liberal member of

the board had the gall to brag of his being arrested twice protesting apartheid in South Africa but he openly helped victimised striking workers here.

Change society

One response to this sort of liberal hypocrisy was one of the strongest picket's quote: "I'm a right winger, but I've lost my money I was saving for a down-payment on a house. My wife has to go to the neuro-surgeon every month. But with what management is offering there's no sense in going back". One speaker at the

last Board meeting pointing at the open enemies on the Board as well as labour's so-called close friends commented: "What we need is not the friends of labour but labour on the Board".

This type of demand will come more and more to the fore during the battles coming up which will be on the scale of the 1930s if not bigger. Many lessons will be learned. The working class of America will move to build a Labor Party and to change American society.

By John Reimann

Anger in Poland

IN THE news you get from Poland you can probably see for yourselves that nothing in this country changes for the better. After liquidating *Solidarity* the authorities are slowly squeezing the church and the oppression of the people increases.

Monthly earnings are hardly enough to buy food and pay the rent. And where do we get money for clothes, and recreation? Since 1981 we have gone through three enormous increases in the price of essential goods for life, and it has had unprecedented effects.

Devaluation

The Polish government devalued the Zloty over the weekend (1st June), which will further reduce the amount of goods available in the shops and increase their prices. This highlights the point that the Jarzelski leadership has no policy to solve the economic crisis apart from increasing the misery of the Polish masses.

Our debts to the West are growing and the government

continually wants to borrow more, only it has nothing with which to pay back. At work also we see greater and greater disorder and lack of organisation, everything is going back to the way it was under Gierek.

Bigger crisis

Workers see time after time a lack of sense at their workplaces, bad political control and no way of influencing events—at the same time the television and the press all the time repeats that with Jaruzelski and Urbans we are getting the upper hand over the crisis. It's not true, a bigger crisis than that of 1980 is getting the upper hand over us.

The anger of the people has exploded in repeated cycles in the history of the forty years of the Polish Peoples Republic. It is not surprising, how long can people have their belts tightened and be punched and kicked?

By a Polish worker

Stalinism—repression and reforms

THE CRISIS in Stalinism continues. Eastern European governments alternate between severe repression and mild reforms to prevent the working class gaining control of the state and economy from the bureaucracy.

In Poland the trial of leading *Solidarity* activists shows how afraid the 'Communist' party leadership are of workers organising. The prosecution have demanded long prison sentences for 'stirring up' protest strikes over price rises.

The Hungarian officials

have tried reforms from the top to stop a comparable movement to Poland in 1980-81 (see *Militant* 31 May). In the elections of 8 June most parliamentary constituencies had to be contested. 25 seats were in fact won by candidates other than the official Patriotic Peoples Front (CP) list. Some former ministers lost their seats.

Economic chaos

Behind all this lies the chaos of the economy and society in the Stalinist states. In a period of international capitalist decline, the

deformed workers states of Russia and Eastern Europe can still not catch up with the living standards of the most advanced western nations.

What is needed, as has been the case since the Stalinist bureaucracy usurped the gains of the revolution from the working class is workers' control and management of the economy and society. But none of the present leaders are going to give up their privileged position!

To paper over the cracks Russian leader Gorbachev has been testing the water for a new round of crisis measures, talking of a com-

plete overhaul of industry, more decentralisation, better quality goods, and other steps to reduce inefficiency including an attack on 'overmanning'.

Sniping at officials

Gorbachev also attacked inefficient state officials. Many previous leaders in the Soviet Union have sniped at individuals or groups of bureaucrats. But short of a political revolution to bring the unaccountable bureaucracy under the control of the working class, the problems will remain.

European round-up

IN SPAIN the right wing leaders of the Socialist Party (PSOE) government are under increasing pressure from the working class. On 4 June hundreds of thousands of workers and pensioners marched against new social security plans, part of Prime Minister Felipe Gonzales' package of austerity measures.

For the first time members of the PSOE-linked UGT unions marched, chanting "Felipe, comrade, do not abandon the workers".

In Portugal, the ruling class have put pressure on the right wing Socialist Party prime minister Mario Soares. The reactionary Social Democrats have withdrawn from the coalition government accusing the Socialists of dragging their feet on a new anti-union package.

Police break occupation

In France about 200 workers in the SKF ball

bearing plant stormed their factory to try to re-occupy it on 5 June.

The plant was declared closed in 1983 and was occupied for 19 months (see *Militant* 29 March). Riot police broke the occupation the week before.

Police stormed the building with tear gas and reoccupied it again after only a few hours. Many workers and a number of police were injured.



Portuguese Prime Minister Soares

LETTERS

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

The richest and the poorest

Dear Comrades,
The *Sunday Times*, magazine recently had an article dealing with the lives of poverty stricken workers who scrape a living off the rubbish tips of Merseyside followed by a full colour feature on the incredibly luxurious lifestyle of Nabila Khashoggi, daughter of the world's richest man.

There can be few more damning indictments of Britain under Thatcher than the degradation and lost hope of the unemployed who search the rubbish tip at Bidston Moss, Birkenhead, desperate to eke a living out of other people's waste. The growing competition for the better pickings is so intense that whole families spend their weekends sifting through the filth for anything to repair or sell.

This degrading life is all that stands between them and crime, drug addiction, broken families, insanity and suicide. The little extra income and just being occupied ripping through the rubbish bags is the best they can hope for amidst the growing sickness of society which Thatcher regards as the only way to a fitter Britain.

The workers who spend their days searching through filth, "shite and dead dogs" as one says, and return home to run-down council estates riven with street crime and heroin epidemics have no illusions in Tory lies. As he digs through the rubbish Max talks of Thatcher as a murderess, "people on the dole are killing themselves and it's going to get worse". Then predicts: "The next time it won't be riots, that namby-pamby Toxtety stuff. The next time it'll be bloody revolution!"

To follow this with a glimpse into the unreal world of Nabila Khashoggi only confirms the bitter words uttered on the Bidston Moss tip: "The richer get richer and the poor get poorer".

Besides a villa, a helicopter and speedboat Nabila also has a 270ft yacht complete with telephones, 11 suites, 2 main kitchens and three chefs! Yet poor Miss Khashoggi is having to trade this in for an even bigger 400ft yacht costing £100 million. The optional extras on this little junket include two helicopter pads, marble baths and anti-aircraft missiles—to keep the rent collector away no doubt. As the lady says: "How can anything be too good?"

Nabila, whose daddy has to scrape by on £500 per minute, once considered working with Mother Theresa in Calcutta but doesn't think the lifestyle would suit her. I don't suppose she would find it a piece of cake on the Merseyside rubbish tips either.

Not everyone has the choice. For the working class of Britain third world conditions are fast becoming a fact of life. Even the *Sunday Times* admitted the only difference between the poor who live off the Bombay and Birkenhead rubbish tips is that in Birkenhead they're more selective, as yet.

Yours fraternally
Dave Beckwith
Bristol

Deteriorating lives

Dear Militant,

Many times I have sat down to write an article or letter for our paper to try and describe to the readers the anger and frustration I feel towards this capitalist system of profit before the needs of human life. But more often than not I've felt my writings inadequate, and never sent them in. With the circumstances of my own life, and the lives of people around me rapidly deteriorating, I find I can't contain that anger any longer.

This week alone I found myself trying to help and comfort an old lady in her 70's, who for the past two years has been taking a particular drug for depression and illness, and now finds herself suddenly prescribed a different tablet due to the recent removal of certain drugs from the NHS prescription list. She was obviously suffering withdrawal symptoms and complained of sleepless nights, and needed constantly to be on the move although she felt exhausted. She cried over her endless boring days, and worried for her husband and family as she felt she had inflicted worry on them because of her illness.

I spent a night talking to friends, an unemployed cou-



Glue sniffers in Yorkshire

Photo: Philip Gordon (Reflex)

ple with two children struggling to make ends meet.

I don't have to go far to realise the hopelessness of our youth, one step out of my back garden and you can find scores of glue bags lit-

tering around the waste land.

I ask you, what do our people have to suffer before they join the fight for socialism? Let's get rid of this crazy system once and for all. I won't rest until we

do.

Yours fraternally
J Gibson
East Hull Labour Party
(Personal Capacity)

Living on £2 a week

Dear Militant,

In September last year I moved to Bristol in search of work, to move there I had to take a job in a pub, where I worked often over 50 hours a week for around £65. I was living in a tiny damp bed-sit with insects and no heating. In April I'd had enough so

I gave up the job and signed on before moving to another hole back in Kent. After nearly six weeks of waiting, filling in endless forms and endless visits, I finally got one week Supplementary Benefit from which I had nearly £10 deducted, because I left my employment without satisfactory reason!

I owe four weeks rent, and they offer me £15 for six weeks unemployment,

although I may get the backpay eventually. I may be starving by then!

The Tories would say "Well, you shouldn't have left your job then" and "it's your own fault, you had a job". If we listened to them we would all be working for nothing.

Yours fraternally
G Diffey
Mid Kent LPYS

Class judgement

Dear Comrades,

Mr Williams (Letters Page issue 752) condemns the *Militant* for saying that the two Welsh miners who have been imprisoned for murder are not criminals.

Mr Williams justifies his reading the *Militant* "In order to appreciate the situation concerning trade union and human rights," in other words, for information, not

in order to give support or commitment to the Marxist Tendency. Even though he supported the miners, this detached attitude shows that he doesn't understand that society is a product of the struggle of the classes, and it is impossible to be a detached observer. Everyone will end up either supporting or opposing the overthrow of the old, decaying, and useless ruling class.

Mr Williams says he will be alarmed at facts printed in the *Militant*. Yet *Militant* prints the truth, it does not

claim that the two miners did not drop the post on the taxi, or anything of the sort. What Mr Williams objects to is not the facts, but the class-based judgement which *Militant* uses to draw out the lessons of events. Judging from our class, the real criminal is the ruling class, not the Welsh miners. And that's not an abstract generalisation. That's the truth.

Comradely
PS Mason
Leicester West CLP

Grassing over the problem

Dear Comrades,

At last it's here! The answer to the problems of the West Midlands.

The West Midlands Forum of County Councils have produced the document of the century—called "Regenerating the Region".

"The money can be found" they say. "Houses can be built, derelict land can be reclaimed, and industry can be revived by both public and private sectors."

Chairman of the Forum
Mr David Sparks says one of

the priorities is to improve the image of the West Midlands by "Upgrading the urban environment, dealing with derelict and disused industrial sites and 'greening' the regions towns and cities."

So there we have it, "Upgrade the urban environment", let the grass grow everywhere and we in the West Midlands can, as the document says: look forward to a "21st Century of revived prosperity" simple isn't it?

Yours fraternally
A Bentley
North Staffs

First class journalism

Dear Comrades,

Paul Rice in his article on the Heysel stadium disaster, was in a couple of columns, able to give a word picture and pass on the atmosphere of the night in a clearer way than any of the hundreds of columns by the Fleet Street professionals and the television hit-men with the instant judgements.

A bit of first class eye-witness journalism.
Yours fraternally
B. Norman
Caerphilly

Who carries out football violence?

Dear Comrades,

Although of course your editorial was quite right to oppose football violence, it was wrong to be simplistic about who carries out this violence.

Your editorial stated that 'football violence is...the activity of de-classed, demoralised, lumpen-proletarians, not workers'. This is not actually true. As *The Observer* found out (*Observer Weekend Sun 2 June*), organised football violence is just as likely to be carried out by well dressed young people sitting in the expensive parts of the stadium (Most of the trouble at Millwall was in the expensive seats).

The fact is that it is not unemployment which causes football violence, but the alienation caused by living meaningless lives under a capitalist system. This is an alienation which can occur in employed and unemployed alike, as both are repeatedly battered by the system.

If some of us are cheated and lured into supporting fascist groups, this is because of the intense oppression of unemployed working class youth. The socialist response is not to hate the fascists, but to organise youth and educate against racism.

Yours fraternally
John Mullen
Leeds 7

LEFT and RIGHT

Toeing the Party Line

A REPORT from Reuter's newsagency has revealed that boots with high heels attached to the toe were put on display at an exhibition of defective goods in the Ukraine, the display is aimed at shaming manufacturers into improving efficiency in state controlled factories.

Situation Vacant

An advert in the Australian Communist Party newspaper, *Tribune* (May 22), asked for applications for the vacant post of full time organiser for the CP branch in Victoria. "Political experience preferred but not essential", the advert said.

Star line-up for AUEW

FROM A recent AUEW press release: "The AUEW July Journal's major feature will be 'Manufacturing Matters'.

"In this July issue there will a number of special contributors, including Mr David Lange, New Zealand Prime Minister; Sir Walter Marshall, Chairman of the CEBG; Mr James Prior MP, Chairman of the General Electric Company; Mr Alan R Rousell, Managing Director, ICL; Mr Paddy Ashown MP, Liberal Spokesman on Trade & Industry; Mr John Smith QC, MP, Opposition Spokesman on Trade & Industry."

Never sack a computer operator

BUSINESSES THAT rely on extensive use of computers are now having to insure their companies against 'logic bombs'. The *Daily Express* reports: "the so-called bomb is often the work of a computer operator, resentful over pay and conditions... All he or she needs to do is feed in some false information—the 'logic bomb'—which confuses the computer so much that all real information becomes distorted". Such action can cost a firm thousands and even put them out of business.

What kind of Labour Left?

IN THE second of two articles, Peter Taaffe looks at the policies of the Labour Coordinating Committee, who advise Labour leader Neil Kinnock, on policy, strategy and tactics.

PART OF the amorphous left within the Labour party and lacking a clear idea of what to do, the Labour Co-ordinating Committee shows intense animosity to those with a strategy, tactics and perspective for the labour movement. Hence the venomous hostility towards *Militant* and its supporters.

Even if this means linking with the right wing of the Labour Party in a witch-hunt, then some of their main spokesmen have not hesitated to do so.

This in turn has led to a split with those workers who support the LCC but will have no truck with a witch-hunt. At the recent Civil and Public Services Association conference George Galloway, a prominent Scottish leader of the LCC, speaking at the Communist Party dominated "narrow left" spent 23 minutes of his half hour speech denouncing *Militant*. He also referred to Alistair Graham the right wing leader of the union as "a good friend of mine".

The flabby nature of the LCC means they have become prey to the moods of despondency which occasionally affect the labour movement. After the miners' strike they spoke about the "trade unions being demoralised". This is the myth which capitalist commentators have disseminated to bring about the actual demoralisation of the labour movement.

The basic power of the trade unions remains intact. The drop in union membership can be accounted for by the recession and the growth in unemployment. The strike of the teachers, the movement of the local government workers and particularly the school students' strike are a harbinger of the real, explosive mood.

In the wake of the miners' strike the mass of the working class has transferred its hope from the industrial to the political plane, to a new Labour government.

Militant supporters, despite the crude smears of Roy Hattersley, will be the most energetic workers for the return of a new Labour government despite the criticisms we have of Labour's programme.

Experience of France

However the left has a responsibility to warn about the catastrophic economic and social situation that will exist when that government comes to power.

Why should a Kinnock-led government, with a programme to the right of any general election manifesto since 1964, expect to do any better than the government of Mitterrand?

Although France has one third more industry and is richer than Britain, Mitterrand's radical election programme, involving widescale nationalisation, became a programme of counter-reforms. His government allowed the majority of industry to remain in the hands of the monopolies who thereby exercise the dominant economic and political power in French society.

Similarly, so long as the monopolies remain untouched under a Labour government they will call the tune.

An LCC booklet points to monopolisation: "British industry has a greater concentration of production, investment and employment in large firms than other economies of comparable size and level of development. If we consider for example the very large firms—those employing 40,000 workers—we find there are 30 firms with that number of workers employed in the UK. Those 30 giant firms produc-

ed in 1972 35 per cent of UK manufacturing output.

"For comparison, no other European country had more than 12 firms of this size operating within its frontiers, and in no case, except the Netherlands, did their share of manufacturing output exceed 20 per cent."

The LCC points to the multinational character of the monopolies in Britain: "In 1971 the UK was second only to the US as a home base for multinational corporations—while nearly a fifth of UK output was produced by overseas based companies. Only 108 companies, almost all multinational companies, produce half of Britain's exports".

One would imagine that on the basis of this evidence the LCC would demand the nationalisation of the monopolies. It concedes that, "public ownership is a crucial part of the AES". It then goes on to say: "However, widespread nationalisation is not popular."

Past Labour governments carried through a *state capitalist* type of nationalisation. On the boards of these industries sit the opponents of nationalisation and such rabid anti-socialists as MacGregor. Thus the nationalised industries are not as popular as when they were first set up by the 1945-51 Labour government.

The alternative, however, is not to abandon the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy and accept the "mixed economy", ie. capitalism. It is necessary to work out a democratic form of management of the nationalised industries to make them work in the interests of the working class.

This measure would also show in practice the necessity to link the present nationalised industries with the nationalisation of monopolies now in private hands.

Instead, the LCC proposes socialism "by stealth". Rather than nationalising "unprofitable" industries, it proposes the nationalisation by piecemeal measures of "profitable sections" of the economy.

Militant would support the demand for the nationalisation of the 20 or 25 dominant companies which was a plank in the Alternative Economic Strategy.

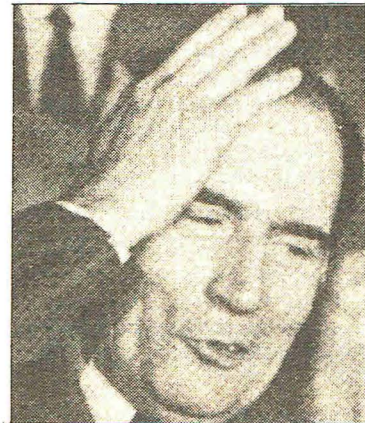
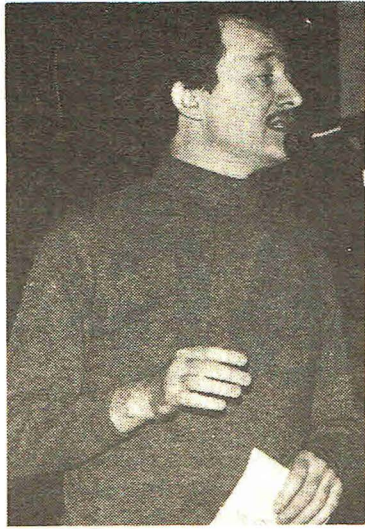
But some leading figures, like Peter Hain, are not even prepared to see the re-nationalisation of industries de-nationalised by the Tory government.

He writes in the *New Statesman* (24 May, 1985): "Instead of playing a numbers game over candidates for re-nationalisation or fresh nationalisation some hard choices must be made.

"For example, is it preferable to re-nationalise as a priority when it would take a year of Parliamentary time and when finance needed (even at no "speculative gain", over £4 billion) would create nearly 100,000 construction jobs? Or would it be better to stick firmly to the objective of re-nationalising BT, but meanwhile to acquire immediately sufficient shares (about five per cent would be needed) to exercise direct control?"

Hain, in arguing against re-nationalisation of BT, is to the right of John Golding, the arch right-wing witch-hunter! When will the time be ripe for re-nationalisation of BT if not in the first period of a Labour government coming to power?

Moreover this re-nationalisation should not take a year. A Labour government could follow Heath who nationalised Rolls Royce with enabling legislation in 1972 in 24 hours! Nor would it cost £4,000 million if re-nationalised with com-



pensation on the basis of "proven need".

Careerist aspirations

For Peter Hain, the real priority is the careerist aspirations of those middle class camp followers of the labour movement: "Labour ministers should bring in scores of political aides drawn from the labour movement," he writes (our emphasis).

The enthusiasm of this layer for a Labour government is increased in proportion to their expectations of a share in the state pie. It would be a repetition on a gigantic scale of the experience of the GLC where a layer of middle-class 'trendies' have done very well out of a Labour administration.

If Peter Hain thinks this criticism is unjust why does he not also call for such "political aides" to be drawn from shop stewards and trade unionists, to get no more than the average wage of a skilled worker, the balance coming back to the labour movement?

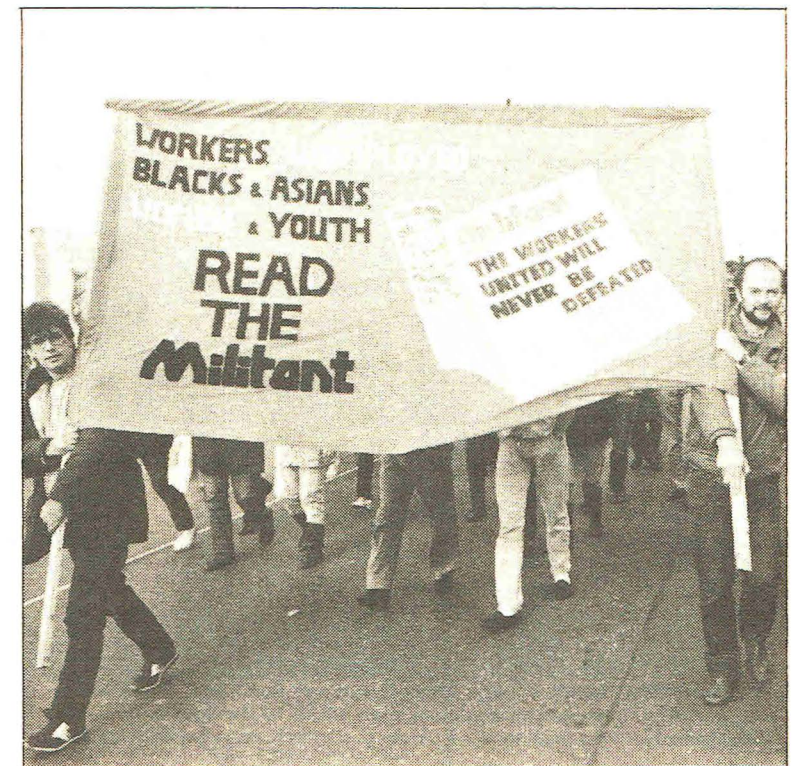
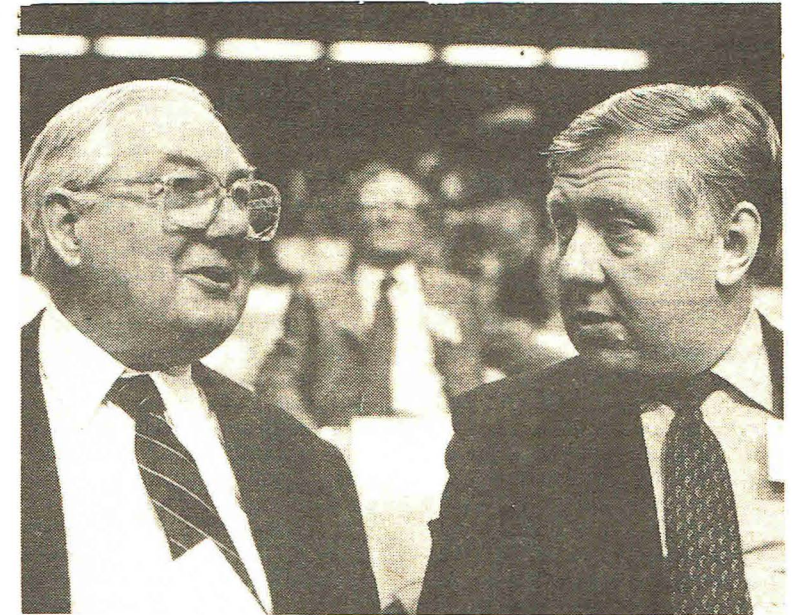
A few political aides alongside Labour ministers would be completely ineffective unless that government decided to break with capitalism. This would in turn mean taking over the monopolies.

But what will the British ruling class be doing when a Labour government attempts to take over, ever so carefully, one by one, bit by bit, profitable industries? Will they roll over and play dead?

On the contrary, they will organise the most ferocious resistance from within and outside of Parliament. They see the nationalisation of even bankrupt and ruined industry as a springboard for the taking over of profitable sections—"The appetite increases with eating".

If the working class and the labour movement are to be called upon to take the sternest measures to resist the conspiracy of big business to topple a Labour government, why not pose things in a clear fashion? Why stop at the 20 to 25 companies which would still leave the dominant economic power in the hands of the monopolies? Why not nationalise the 200 monopolies with minimum compensation on the basis of proven need, to gain control of 80 to 85 per cent of the economy?

This is the basis for a real socialist plan of production and for the satisfaction of all the demands and wishes of the working class. It is Marxism which provides the weapons which will allow the work-



TOP: Ken Livingstone, Robin Cook and Neil Kinnock. Leading a march to the right? Second row: French Socialist Party leader Mitterrand, Callaghan and Hattersley. The movement must learn from the experiences of France and of Labour in 1974-79. Bottom: *Militant*'s support will grow as the crisis worsens.

ing class to gain victory in the struggle against Thatcher and the system of capitalism.

By its programme of piecemeal measures, left reformism, of which the LCC is but one strand, fails to satisfy the working class but at the same time irritates the ruling class and gives them the necessary time to prepare to strike a blow against the labour movement.

Radical measures

The next Labour Cabinet will have people in it like Hattersley who, from day one, will be striving might and main to prevent that government from carrying through any radical measures. They will reflect the pressure of big business within the Labour government.

The LCC, in shifting towards Hattersley's position, along with Neil Kinnock, is preparing future disasters for the labour movement. While working energetically for a return of a socialist Labour govern-

ment, the Labour left needs to organise a campaign in defence of party policy.

The real left is not reflected in the muddled and pro-Stalinist "lefts" gathered around the LCC, but in those leftward moving workers in the shop stewards' committees, the union branches and the ward Labour Parties.

They were aroused into activity by the miners' strike and have not suddenly gone to sleep. They are turning over in their minds the events of last year. They can be drawn into activity through a campaign which re-asserts Labour's socialist, working class roots.

The LCC will not attract these workers. On the basis of events and Marxist criticism they will come to see that only through the programme of *Militant* can the working class and labour movement forge the weapons which can guarantee victory over the Tory and capitalist enemy and usher in a socialist Britain.

Industrial Reports

TGWU biennial delegate conference

Right's rotten history in T&G

THE 1985 conference of the TGWU has been polluted by eight resolutions calling for a witch-hunt against *Militant* supporters in the Labour Party and for their banning from office within the union. Fortunately the General Executive as well as the mass of union activists are opposing these resolutions.

By Richard Knights

One of the reasons for this opposition is the bitter memory of the bans on Communist Party members between 1949 and 1968.

The ban on the CP was used by the right-wing General Secretary Arthur Deakin to impose dictatorial control on the TGWU.

Before 1949 the CP had built a strong position in the TGWU. During the Second World War they had collaborated with the union bureaucracy in opposing any strikes.

A CP member (Bert Papworth) was even elected by the TGWU on to the General Council of the TUC.

However, with the onset of the

so-called 'cold war' between Russian Stalinism and Western capitalism the relationship between the CP and the union bureaucracy changed.

Under pressure from its own members the CP was forced into supporting strikes, particularly in the docks.

A full scale attack was launched on the CP in the unions. The TUC issued a circular calling for Communists to be banned from office, and the Labour government excluded Communists from holding office in the civil service.

The 1949 TGWU conference met against the background of a state of emergency declared against an unofficial docks strike.

Delegates were presented with a hysterical article in the union journal by Arthur Deakin under the title 'The gloves are off'.

It accused the Communists of working: "by carrying on whispering campaigns, encouraging people to believe that they can only make progress by being in a constant state of conflict with the employers... by carrying on constant agitation against a disciplined approach to the solution of these problems with which we are being

faced.

"And bringing a barrage of misrepresentation in regard to the intentions of those responsible for leadership either in the industrial or political field.

"In addition strong-arm methods are used—intimidation and even violence is threatened... In the meantime, our members themselves must take an active part in cutting out the cancer.

"Those people who assume unofficial leadership, who are constantly to the forefront in every dispute which arises, must be dealt with and given their marching orders".

Generalised attack

A composite motion banning Communists from office was carried by 426 votes to 208. As a result of this decision eight Communists lost their position on the Executive and nine full-time officials were given the sack.

Deakin used this opportunity to attack the left within the movement.

When *Tribune* published a mild attack on Deakin, after he had call-



Photo: John Butler

Britain's biggest union can use its industrial muscle to organise and defend every section of the working class.

ed the leadership of another union "a moronic crowd of irresponsible adventurers", Deakin complained to the NEC of the Labour Party.

Morgan Phillips, the General Secretary of the Labour Party, wrote to *Tribune* inviting them to state: "how you reconcile the attack on the leadership of the TGWU with your membership of the Party and that you be asked to indicate your future policy...".

Within the TGWU few strikes were declared official and a tight rein was kept on the union by the full-time officials.

In desperation some members on the docks, in a misguided move, left the TGWU to join the National Association of Stevedores and Dockers—known as the 'Blue union'.

These attacks on rank-and-file union activists by the right-wing bureaucracy in the 1950s have left a permanent mark in the memory of the older activists. Their struggle democratised the TGWU in the 1960's.

Clearly the right wing want a latter-day Arthur Deakin style regime in the TGWU.

Every TGWU member should beware:—if the attack on *Militant* succeeds it would open up the prospect of the union being shifted rapidly in a rightward direction.

Strikes would not receive official support and activists would be hampered and hounded by the union bureaucracy.

The Executive of the TGWU must be applauded for their stand against the infamous eight resolutions. The election of Ron Todd

with an increased majority shows that TGWU members reject the campaign by the right wing and media to reverse the TGWU's moves to the left

Rank and file activists must recognise, however, that at a time when members are under constant attack it would be a terrible mistake to imagine we can keep our heads down and wait for a Labour government.

The pessimism of the Labour leaders and many trade union officials about the willingness of workers to fight back has affected even some activists embroiled in the union bureaucracy. They are isolated from the mood of bitterness which exists amongst the rank-and-file.

Broad Left

A fighting socialist leadership of the TGWU has never been needed more urgently. That requires the mass involvement of rank-and-file members in building a democratic and open Broad Left.

The time has never been riper for such a campaign. The attacks on the Communist Party after the war came when the right-wing was on the advance. This attack on *Militant* is a symptom of the weakness of the right.

They are making a desperate attempt to destroy potential opposition to any repeat of the Wilson and Callaghan Labour government's failures. Defend TGWU democracy! For a fighting union leadership! For a socialist Labour government!



Photo: John Harris (JFL)

Spurious unity: George Wright, Moss Evans and Ron Todd. Every worker recognises unity in struggle is vital, but the right wing have waged a campaign on behalf of the bosses to undermine the willingness of the TGWU to fight their offensive. The best form of defence is attack must be the new leadership's motto.

Welsh shopworkers

MANAGEMENT OF Aberystwyth's Kwiksave Supermarket told workers that because of short-staffing there would be no days off. Staff would have to turn up to work each morning and would work if required. Otherwise they would go home, unpaid.

This outraged the women

who got together and decided to resist these intolerable conditions. An ultimatum was presented to management—back down or we walk out!

Two hours later the manager backed down.

Even in a rural area like this, workers are being forced into action to fight the

ever-increasing attacks of the bosses on working conditions, hours and pay.

By Alan Huyton
(Secretary, USDAW,
Aberystwyth Private
Trades Branch)

If the bosses and the right-wing don't want you, you must be Militant

DEMOCRACY IS a word much in use in Britain. The bosses talk about it while workers are denied it. In the automotive industry we know how management operate.

A few years ago Derek Robinson was sacked at Longbridge and since then shop stewards in Leyland have been victimised and the workforce intimidated.

On 27 March I was elected area senior steward for the TGWU at Range Rover in Birmingham. The company have refused to recognise me. The reason is that I am a *Militant* supporter. They don't say that of course.

The bosses also know they have friends in our union. At the biennial delegate conference the right wing are at-

tempting to launch a witch-hunt against *Militant* supporters. One resolution even demands the banning of people like me from holding office in the union.

Right-wing allies

The right wing are motivated by weakness and fear for their positions and will never succeed. Nevertheless it must give the bosses a little heart that they have allies inside our union. But the members who know us recognise that *Militant* supporters are in the front line of all workers battles with the bosses.

The shop stewards and the members at Range Rover know why the company won't recognise me. In fact

one member said to me: 'If the bosses don't want you, you must be the man for the job.'

In the Land Rover factory the other two senior stewards who had full time trade union facility are now back on their jobs. While this facility was denied to me I recognise that it is an erosion of trade union rights.

When our organisation and members are under attack we must fight back. Mass meetings must take place where the issues can be explained and action taken. Our members will respect leadership if it is given.

By Ian Schofield
Senior steward, Range
Rover, personal capacity

No Golden Wonder in Grimsby

WORKERS AT United Biscuits, Grimsby, have foiled a move to get them to break a strike by workers at Golden Wonder crisps.

GMBATU member Susan Hare says that members were shocked when they learned of this idea: "No way will United Biscuits

machines produce Golden Wonder."

Emotions were running high at the factory already: "United Biscuits are withholding a bonus payment which is due to us and rumours suggested that it was to be consolidated into the basic wage, which would only mean more money in

the bosses' pockets and less in our wage packets.

"Management have backed down over the Golden Wonder issue, but in today's economic climate it will not be too long before we are faced with some other test of union strength and solidarity".

Rail workers must prepare to fight

THIS YEAR'S NUR Annual General Meeting comes at a vital time.

Uppermost in the minds of every NUR activist from NEC to branch level must be how they are going to adequately prepare the entire membership on the railways for the very real possibility of strike action on a scale not seen for years, within the very near future.

After six years of attacks and inconclusive disputes the crisis facing our jobs and industry is deepening. The BRB's recent announcement regarding the closed shop and their intention to seek damages against the NUR for taking strike action are both a provocation and a preparation to attack on the issues they are really after, workshop closures, Driver Only Operation (DOO) of trains, cutbacks and closures.

The BRB have even in-

formed the NUR that Eastern Region management intend to restart trials for DOO of the freight trains on 8 July; apparently immediately.

NUR policy is absolutely clear, as decided by AGM decisions of the past two years. This union is totally opposed to any further extension of DOO of freight or passenger trains—so that rules out trials too.

'Driver only'

Although there is no item on this year's AGM dealing with DOO many delegates will be on their guard, mindful of the way that the AGM has been used to force or manoeuvre through policies against the membership's interests; most notably the decision to abandon the strike in 1982.

If management actions do bring the crisis to a head whilst the AGM is in session and the leadership use this as the basis for bringing the

issues before the AGM then previous union policy must be reiterated and preparations for action made.

It is important therefore that the resolutions from London No7 and Newcastle (Staffs) which call for the union to submit itself to the Tories' anti-union legislation are roundly defeated.

The amendment to Euston No1, from East Ham branch spells out the need to campaign amongst the membership to explain the nature of the legislation and the need to oppose it, to refuse to comply with any of it, and to call upon the TUC to take action in support of any union or member who is fined, imprisoned etc. It is this, not Euston's resolution as it stands which shows the way forward.

After the derisory pay deals of recent years, contrary to NUR policy, the Wishaw resolution, with the amendment from Glasgow No6 needs supporting. This calls for the 1986 pay deal to

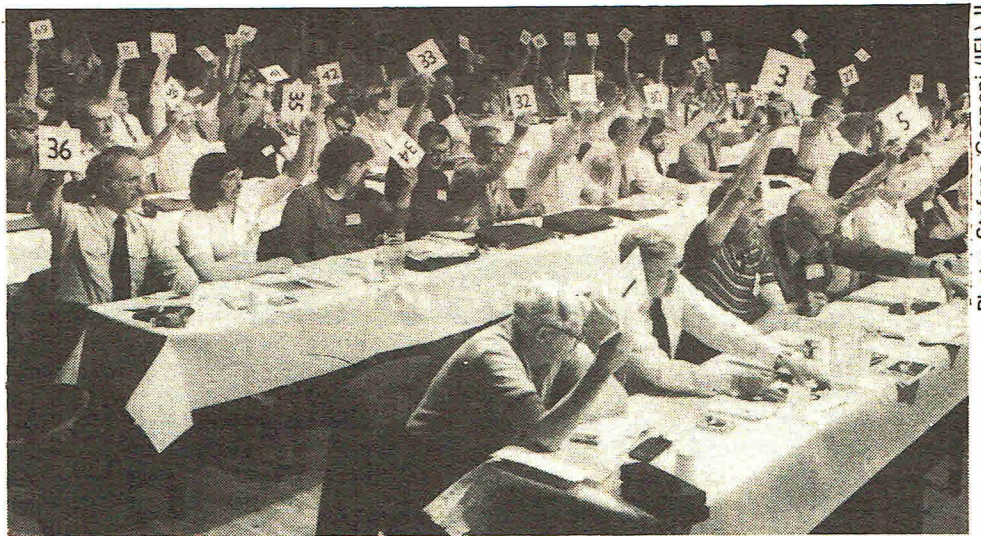


Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (IFL) II

A past NUR conference votes for industrial action as last resort to defeat Serpell. Only decisive national action can halt continued job losses.

be referred back to a special general meeting for approval or rejection and action.

Rhyl branch calls for £125 per week minimum wage for the lowest paid railworker and this is just what is needed to lift our members out of the present poverty trap.

Democracy

Labour Party issues are well represented on the agenda. Liverpool No5 call for the AGM to decide the union's candidate for the Labour Party NEC rather than it automatically being the Senior Assistant General Secretary. This is a basic

democratic measure highlighted by Charlie Turnock's consistent support for the right wing's witch-hunts and expulsions. There is also a resolution calling for the NUR to campaign against witch-hunts which must be supported.

On the question of accountability, it is vital that the rule changes from Glasgow No5 and eight other branches, calling for the election of the General Secretary every five years is fully supported by AGM.

Above all the message to the membership from the conference must be: stand firm on pay policy and

prepare for action soon.

- ★ **Defend the closed shop.**
- ★ **Don't pay the damages.**
- ★ **No compliance with Tory union legislation.**
- ★ **No more DOO.**
- ★ **No workshop closures or job losses.**
- ★ **Build the Federation of Rail Unions.**
- ★ **Labour to power on a socialist programme.**

By Dave Evans
(Liverpool No5 AGM delegate)

Tory health pay insult



COHSE conference comes at a crucial time for health workers—battles against privatisation like above in Oxford and the pay claim need a fighting leadership.

IN A cynical attempt to split health workers, the Tories have been heaping praise on nurses for allegedly not taking strike action in 1979 and 1982. Having patted us on the head, they then kick us in the teeth by offering us a derisory two stage 'pay cut', part now and part in February.

A pay cut it is. To keep pace with inflation since the Halsbury awards of 1974 we should have been awarded some 22 per cent across the board. Instead we have been offered crumbs disguised as cake. No doubt the chiefs will get the bigger crumbs, whilst the workers who do the hard graft, will be left to fight amongst themselves for what is left.

Porters, cleaners, laundry workers—some who may soon lose their jobs to help finance our pittance—have been offered the dust off the table. The grand sum of £3.50 has been thrust at them in an arrogant take-it-or-leave-it manner.

We are told that the 'nation' can't afford any more. Yet the 'nation' can afford £17,000 million for the Tri-

dent and other nuclear deterrents; the 'nation' can afford £4,000 million on a war against the miners, and £3,000 million on building up Fortress Falklands.

All health workers should reject this derisory offer. We will have no alternative but to take industrial action and that this will mean every member of every union playing their part.

We must be in control of events to ensure that no patient suffers and we will have to call upon our fellow workers in industry to give us, once again, the magnificent support they gave us in 1982.

This time we will have to guard against the leaders frittering away our resolve to obtain justice and will have to fight not just for pay but to drive out the profiteers and to reverse the decimation of our hospitals and services. The situation is bound to worsen if we fail to act now.

By Bob Demaine
(Secretary)
and Kevin Mullins
(Chair High Royds,
227 COHSE branch)

Civil Servants defeat management attempt to use overtime

AFTER A 15 week struggle by Civil and Public Services Association members at the DHSS in Greenwich Park, management have decided to "temporarily" withdraw the offer of overtime. No doubt this was prompted by a vigorous CPSA campaign which resulted in a series of one-day and two-day strikes.

Solidarity

The campaign was strengthened by the support of fellow members at Greenwich West and Southwark DHSS offices who also took strike action. Strikers addressed other offices in the area and received donations and messages of support. They were also encouraged by the speeches of Kevin Roddy and Doreen Purvis on behalf of the Newcastle and Washington shift-workers and Gill Tromans

(DHSS Assistant Secretary) for the SEC.

As the strike progressed, it became clear that CPSA members were determined to stand by union policy that overtime is never more than a short-term solution seriously inadequate staffing levels. We hope that this action has gone a little way towards showing how wrong are those in the union who have argued that overtime cannot be fought.

At a time of massive unemployment there is no place other than the dustbin for overtime and we would encourage CPSA members to take up similar campaigns to combat what is one of the biggest evils in an evil department.

By John Barr
(Chair, CPSA DHSS
Greenwich Park)

ASTMS leadership in trouble

ASTMS CONFERENCE showed some of the contradictory processes at work in the unions. It got off to a flying start in passing a motion proposed by *Militant* supporters on the minimum wage. The union is now committed to campaigning for this policy in the TUC and Labour Party.

The defeatist influence of 'New Realism' was seen when conference voted to accept Tory money for postal ballots rather than fighting anti-trade union laws.

Even here, however, the pessimism of the leadership was unevenly reflected by the delegates when conference voted to improve work-place balloting as an acceptable method of voting. Conference recognised the importance of collective discus-

sion and decision-making and doubted whether head-office had the competence to run a postal ballot.

This increasingly shaky grip on the union, exercised for so long by Clive Jenkins, was particularly highlighted in the debate at the end of conference on a motion condemning the leadership's running of head office and: "ignoring the repeated complaints from branches and divisional councils that the union's financial and administrative procedures had fallen into disrepair over a long period."

Significantly, one delegate said that the issue was: "symptomatic of the whole malaise that has crept into the association".

The conference is organised around a deliberately tight time-table which

prevents real discussion of issues. There was a clear move to the right by the leadership, seen in their opposition to support for local councils defying Tory laws, and totally unexplained attack on the Southern African labour Education Project. (Whilst they supported its policies in another motion).

Nevertheless the cracks are showing in the previously monolithic control by the leadership, particularly Jenkins. There are great opportunities for the development of a Broad Left arguing clearly and openly for democracy, accountability and fighting policies.

Over £400 was raised for the *Militant* fighting fund from an appeal at the readers' meeting and sale of raffle tickets. 62 papers were sold.

News in brief

SCAFFOLDERS IN Merseyside are on strike against victimisation. When the Northwestern Scaffolding Co folded, a 'new' company was set up called the Northern Scaffold Group. Despite assurances that all the old workforce would be re-employed, three men—one a steward of 10 years standing—were told they were redundant. This went against the 'last-in-first-out' agreement, and was despite some of the workers retained wanting voluntary redundancy. The 60 scaffolders, members of the TGWU, are out until the men are reinstated.

ROSYTH NAVAL dockyard came to a standstill on June 5 when 4,000 workers held a half day strike. This followed the sending home earlier of six men who blacked equipment as part of the union's campaign against the government's comparability exercise with the private sector. EETPU convenor Jock Penman said: "We believe that the whole comparison exercise is a farce; the government has clearly already decided to privatise the Royal dockyards, whatever the outcome of the exercise. All they are trying to do now is make the private yards look as good as possible".

MEMBERS OF NUPE employed by Essex County Council are taking action after management failed to agree to standby arrangements for emergency cover for the M11 and M25 motorways. The new motorway meant a huge increase in emergency work for the county's highways department. NUPE area officer Dave Smith said: "For years now they have been relying on the goodwill of our members to respond every time the telephone rings in the middle of the night. It is now time for a proper worked out agreement with pay. Essex have responded by saying they will give the work to private contractors."

THE SHEFFIELD Private Trades Branch of USDAW has voted for the Broad Left candidate, Bill Connor in the close running election for general secretary.

This is the second biggest private trades branch in the country, covering Sheffield, Rotherham and Doncaster and puts 2,500 votes onto Bill's total. The issue that clinched the vote for Bill was that he stood for regular election of general secretary.

Militant

Lebanon hijack
crisis

See page 10

TGWU in conference

Organise to defeat Tories

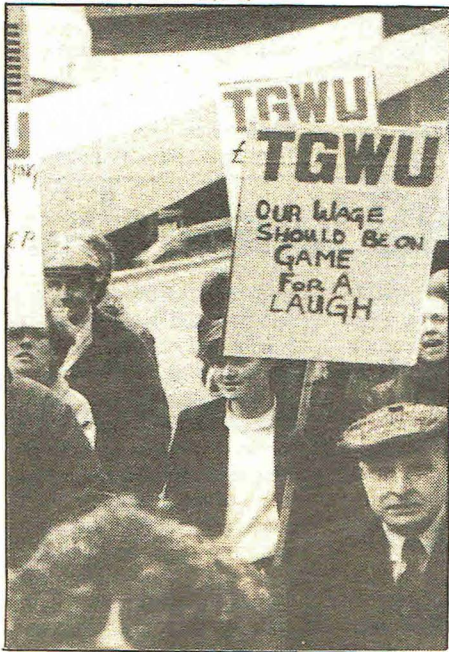
RON TODD'S sweeping victory in last week's general secretary re-ballot was a big step forward, particularly in view of the media backing for George Wright.

Our union will need a fighting leadership in the next year or so, in battles over jobs, pay, privatisation and many other issues. The last year's battles on the docks and in Austin Rover will be repeated in all sections. The Tories want more asset stripping, more attacks on wages and with a possible new downturn in the economy even more industrial jobs will be threatened.

Any attempt to resurrect right wing 'New Realism' policies must be decisively rejected. This Tory government will not listen to 'reasoned argument'. Our members need clear socialist policies and plans for national action in defence of jobs and living standards.

This must start with the campaign for the maximum 'yes' vote in the political levy ballot. The present 'non-political' campaign is totally insufficient. The TGWU has a long tradition of close links with the Labour Party. We should campaign proudly to have them strengthened, explaining that the Tory demand for political levy ballots is a veiled attempt to destroy Labour financially and silence our political voice. The campaign gives us an opportunity to build a mass Labour Party membership amongst TGWU members.

Photo: John Harris (IFL)



Left: Longbridge workers vote for strike action at a mass meeting last autumn. Right: One of the many T&G disputes since last conference at Phillips Rubber, Manchester.

Photo: John Smith (IFL)



The TGWU has long had a policy of non-co-operation with Tory anti-union laws. But the recent Austin Rover dispute has shown that opposition must be backed with industrial action. That dispute saw our union taken to court and fined £200,000 for refusing to hold a secret ballot.

Car industry workers have traditionally decided upon industrial action at mass meetings. Quite rightly, the active participation of all the leaders' failure to organise democratic than postal ballots where the bosses' media influence decisions in a far greater way. Our leaders refused to bow down to the courts and order a secret ballot, but unfortunately when the union was fined they did not mobilise

any action to defend our union's assets.

Not only did their inaction make a mockery of our opposition to anti-union laws. The NUM at the same time faced a major attack through the courts. The TGWU leaders failure to organise strike action to defend our funds meant that a major opportunity was missed to defeat this Tory government. The miners were left isolated.

The BDC must not only reaffirm total opposition to anti-union laws, it must also clearly instruct the leadership that in the event of any further legal attacks the BDC will be reconvened to consider industrial action.

The left must not rest on its laurels after Ron Todd's victory. This conference

must be the start of a campaign to ensure that the TGWU remains firmly committed to fighting in workers' interests. We must build open, democratic and campaigning Broad Lefts in every part of the union with the confidence of T&G members. The TGWU, as a truly democratic, fighting, socialist union will play a major part in the struggle to transform society.

By Keith Edwards
(4/92 TGWU branch, personal capacity)

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.

(Continued from page one)

removed, Liverpool City Council could set a budget of £252 million with a nil rate rise.

The lowest possible expenditure needed for the modest plans of the council is £265 million. By setting a rate of nine per cent, there is a deficit of £117 million—but most of this is "penalty" money. If the Tories removed the penalties and gave the city £30 million, a legal budget could be introduced on the basis of a nine per cent rate.

This is only asking for a small return on the £350 million robbed from the city since the Tories came to power—and could easily come from the national contingency fund.

The budget introduced is entirely different to some of those set by other defiant councils which have included a provision for unallocated cuts but which the councils have said they are not going to introduce. Whether this is done or not depends on the political complexion of the ruling Labour groups.

What Liverpool has done is to set the expenditure and the rate and then say that the gap will have to be filled by central government. The City Treasurer clearly indicated that the budget was illegal and that court action can be taken by individuals or by the District Auditor.

The ball is now in the court of the Tory government. In no way can the setting of a rate be regarded as a surrender as some ultra-left sectlets have argued.

A rate deferment policy could not continue to mobilise popular support.

Lambeth councillors are open to surcharge because they have not set a rate. Liverpool councillors are open to surcharge for introducing an illegal budget. But this illegality is due to the Tories forcing councils

into the position. The Tories can make it legal by providing the cash.

The stark, unacceptable alternative of massive job losses was put by the Liverpool Liberals, seconded by the Tories and supported by the five Labour traitors.

In a magnificent and rousing speech Derek Hatton, Deputy Council Leader pointed out: "That the Liberal proposal of £228 million would mean a cut of £37 million in comparison to the budget introduced by Labour. In other words it would mean cutting 5,000 jobs".

What is essential now is that the national Labour Party leadership come out unequivocally in support of Lambeth and Liverpool. *The Times* recently stated that there had been a "deafening silence" from Neil Kinnock on this issue. This now has to end.

The Liverpool Labour leadership is not looking for confrontation, but they were legally elected on a policy of defending jobs and services and not cutting living standards by introducing massive rate rises.

The seriousness of the workers can be gauged from all of the meetings which have taken place this week. Even at the council meeting the mood was sombre and serious, not the jocular mood of last year.

The Liberals and Tories were hardly interrupted or for that matter, listened to. What everyone was waiting for was the vote. The councillors justified all their hopes and aspirations. The leadership has given a lead.

For the first time in decades a major council led by the Labour Party has taken a stand on a principled socialist basis. The fight now begins.

By Dave Cotterill

Demonstrate (From page one)

possible turnout. Council workers and other trade unionists throughout the country should follow their example.

In 1982 a big lobby of Parliament made the Tories draw back from cutting pay on YOP (the forerunner of YTS). This year the massive opposition of the February YTURC lobby and the school strikes made the

Tories think again about withdrawing dole money from school leavers who refuse to go on YTS schemes.

The enthusiasm of youth and the power of the labour movement can force Thatcher to back off from the attacks on Liverpool too. You must play your part. Come to Liverpool on 29 June. Fight for your future.



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