

Rail sackings: GCHQ

TUC must lead the fightback

BY 4,815 votes to 4,360, British Rail guards have voted against industrial action to stop the introduction of driver only operated (DOO) trains.

This vote is a harsh setback for all those workers fighting to defend jobs, living standards, working conditions and trade union rights.

But it is not the end of the fight on the railways, even among guards. Ballots are planned in the rail workshops and amongst signals and telecomms staff on industrial action over closures, cutbacks and redundancies.

Among guards, Geoff Bright, Tinsley guard, branch chairman and District Council vice-president, has warned: "If the Board think that on the basis of this result they will be able to push through DOO they will be sadly mistaken. At some of the most well organised depots—we can guarantee—they will have a fight on their hands."

This ballot took place following a ferocious war of threats and intimidation by the British Rail Board against guards in Wales, Glasgow and other areas, whose only crime was that they stood loyally by their union in defence of a signed agreement with management, which BR had torn to shreds. 300 have already been sacked.

These guards will not be forgotten. Only hours after the vote was announced Dave Evans, branch secretary of Liverpool No. 5 NUR announced that his branch had already met and it was absolutely adamant: "There must be no rest in the industry until all sacked guards are reinstated." This

Editorial statement

branch has sent a message to Jimmy Knapp, general secretary of the NUR, saying that the struggle in the industry must go on.

Now, in the aftermath of this ballot, BR and the Tories will be more determined than ever to press on with their relentless assault on the working class.

GCHQ threat

In particular, the government will set its sights on the 90 workers at GCHQ who have remained members of trade unions. Like the guards, these workers could face the sack within the immediate future.

The Trades Union Congress, meeting in Blackpool is already committed to a day of action as part of a campaign to defend these workers. But if they are to unite the entire trade union movement in action against this attack, the TUC leaders must first draw an accurate balance sheet of the reasons for this ballot result.

Many on the right, and even some on the left, will point to this result as conclusive proof that the working class is opposed to struggle. The cynics and pessimists within the labour movement always see only the negative side of events.

The spontaneous walkouts, protests and strikes by guards which followed the sackings were symptomatic of a developing mood of militancy. Thousands of guards were prepared to fight. Unfortunately these guards, and the union leaders had not been able in time to convince the majority.

If the union leadership had called a strike immediately on the clear issue of principle—the sackings—they would have had a magnificent

response throughout the NUR. Their prevarication on this issue undoubtedly had an effect on the confidence of some rank and file guards.

The NUR had an unanswerable case on one man operation of trains. It was defending passenger safety and defending jobs from further encroachment by the Tories. If management resort to sackings each time union members act in defence of union policy and get away with it, then effective trade unionism is dead.

Guards in the NUR were not sufficiently made aware of the gravity of the issues at stake and the need to fight. The union leaders mounted a campaign in the last few weeks, after the fiasco on London Regional Transport when—again on the issue of one-man trains—a strike was called with no preparation whatsoever, with the result that it abruptly collapsed.

But the campaign among the BR guards was too little, too late. Years of neglect, inactivity, and complacency at national and local level and failure regularly to consult the membership, explain the issues and the action that was required, have all had their effect on this vote.

Leadership in the trade union movement is needed day-in, day-out, not only on the eve of battle. The working class do not enter battle lightly, especially today with the spectre of mass unemployment hovering over their shoulders. But once they are convinced of the issues and the possibility of victory, then they will fight.

Tactics

Some guards will have doubted whether victory was possible. A clear programme was never put before them. The government and BR were acting with decisive ruthlessness, but

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South African NUM members are preparing for a bitter struggle.

South African miners poised to strike

THE SOUTH African miners' strike is set to go ahead on Sunday 1 September. It was postponed for a week, following major concessions by Anglo-American.

The union has succeeded in splitting the ranks of the Chamber of Mines, the employers' negotiating body, the earliest capitalist institution in the country, renowned for its toughness. Other companies have either made much smaller concessions or none at all.

In response to the union claim for a 22 per cent wage rise, Anglo-American have now offered rises of between 18 and 22 per cent for surface workers and 17 and 20 per cent for underground workers. They have increased holidays allowances from 50 per cent to 60 cent of the monthly wage.

Solidarity

The firm stand taken by the South African National Union of Mineworkers has thus already begun to pay dividends, but the struggle is far from over and international solidarity is as vital as ever, if victory is to be achieved.

The union has made it

clear that it will not accept the Anglo-American offer, unless the other companies make a similar offer.

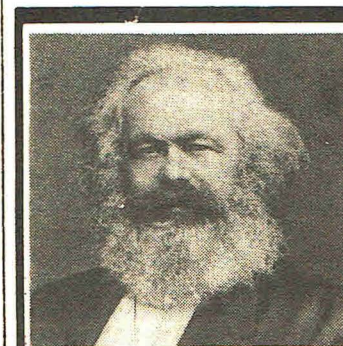
The fact that Anglo-American, which employs over 80 per cent of NUM members, broke ranks shows their fears of the consequences of a miners' strike in the present explosive atmosphere of South Africa. Botha's speech to the Natal National Party Congress has enraged black workers. It confirmed that his regime is committed to the continuation of apartheid, starvation wages and political servitude for the mass of the population.

The expectations aroused by the capitalist press that Botha would announce major reforms were inevitably dashed. Botha is trapped in a situation in which capitalism, in a period of deep crisis, makes any meaningful concessions to the black majority impossible.

Any real power in the hands of the black majority would spell the end of the whole system. All Botha can do is make vague suggestions about possible reforms at some distant point in the future.

The big multinational monopolies like Anglo-American, however, know

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Marxist Weekend School

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See page 2

London 14/15 September

Workers of the world back miners

INTERNATIONAL support for the South African National Union of Mineworkers (SANUM) is growing with solidarity letters from labour movement organisations.

From Sri Lanka a letter from the United Federation of Labour, "expresses its complete solidarity with the present struggle of the black mineworkers organised in the SANUM for the full implementation of their demands by the Chamber of Mines".

Labour Youth in Ireland have written to pledge "its full support to the democratic trade unions, the youth who are in struggle and the United Democratic Front in their action in support of the SANUM." Especially gratifying to the miners will be the letter from the Irish Distributive and Administrative Union, which "has been involved in a year long dispute over South African goods." This refers to their members at Dunnes stores, on strike since they were sacked in summer 1984 for refusing to handle goods from the apartheid regime.

From Britain, a letter and £50 has been sent by London Bridge, the London local authorities joint trade union committee, who say: "You are representing the conscience of trade unionists all over the world. When you strike we hope your organisation will grow in strength and be the base for

By Shareen Blackall

the building of a South Africa in which all can breathe the air of freedom."

A splendid response has been the £100 sent by the Rhymney Valley Miners' Support Group. They express their "admiration for the way you have organised under the most difficult circumstances."

"Vital role"

The London Press branch of the EETPU has written to say that "British trade unions can play a vital role in building solidarity with our brothers in South Africa in helping to bring an end to the vicious apartheid regime."

Other messages have been sent by TGWU branch 1/1647, (whose hotel and catering members were visited by SANUM general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa when they were on strike at the Arlington House Hotel in London in 1982), GMBATU Leith No 2 branch, Wearmouth and St John's colliery NUM lodges, Brighton Labour Party and the South East Wales Labour Students.



Mineworkers at the recent NUM conference. NUM general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa has called for solidarity action from workers internationally, including lobbies of South African mining companies. Members of Hackney South LPYS have shown the way with their lobby of Anglo-American and Consolidated Goldfields on 27 August.

NCB go to the brink

DESPITE INSISTENCE by the National Coal Board to get back to normal working in the mining industry it seems that the management at Ellington Colliery in the north east are aiming to force miners into strike action in the near future.

After two ballots in favour of industrial action NUM members have been operating an overtime ban for two weeks, and production in the first week halved.

The overtime ban was introduced after management brought in a new shift system and arbitrarily imposed new incentive agreements for every machine at the pit.

There were threats that a ceiling would be put on the bonus for face workers of £7 per shift, which could lead to a loss of earnings of at least £35 per week.

Now the negotiated bonus scheme has been scrapped by management altogether, and some men have been sent home for refusing to work

the new shift system. The Board have given indications that they want further shift changes in the future. Apparently these are aimed at working out the coal more quickly by increasing 'face availability' time which would shorten the life of the pit. The pit has good working conditions and high seams and there has been a massive investment in the past.

The days when miners could earn good money with bonuses of at least £12 per shift for face workers are drawing to a close. Now management are putting the screws on and attempting to streamroller new conditions over the heads of the union and the miners.

This style of management, however, is helping to reunite the union after the scars of the miners' dispute and there is new determination to fight the Board's offensive.

By an Ellington miner

School Students Union

BRITAIN'S NEWLY formed School Students Union (SSU) has agreed to form "the closest possible links" with the South African School Students Union (COSAS) and with the South African National Union of Mineworkers (NUM).

The first meeting of the SSU National Committee agreed to affiliate to the Socialist Links with South African Youth (SOLSAY) campaign. The meeting agreed that the SSU has an important role to play in bringing the struggle of South African youth into British schools through campaigns. Attempts will also be made to twin SSU branches to COSAS branches.

Recruitment

A RECRUITMENT drive will be set up by the SSU which aims to set up a

branch of the union in every secondary school in Britain.

Labour Party Young Socialists branches are being urged to take part in the recruitment campaign and support will be sought from Labour Party and trade union branches. Leaflets, badges, posters and pamphlets are available for the campaign (see address below).

Financial support is also vital and organisations wishing to donate money to the school students can do so through special appeal sheets which are available or by sending cheques or postal orders made out to the 'School Students Union' directly to the address below: SSU, c/o YTURC, 109 Rannoch Road, London W6.

By Dave Sirockin (National Secretary, SSU)

THE Southern African Labour Education Project broadsheet *British and South African mineworkers must unite* is still available. Read about Roy Jones' visit and the conditions of black mineworkers. Price 20p (+ 15p post an package) from SALEP, 28 Martello Street, London E8 3PE.

support from the international labour movement for the black miners of South Africa. This support will be decisive in our struggle with the mineowners. Our problems of low pay and exploitation are problems faced by workers throughout the world, indeed in many cases we have the same international employer. So our struggle is a common one—for freedom, for democracy and for socialism.

"Financial assistance for the NUM is vital and will be very welcome. Please send donations to the National Union of Mineworkers, PO Box 10928, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa. The NUM's bank account is Barclays Bank, Bree Street East, Johannesburg, number 8001659294."

By Norma Craven

SA miners

(Continued from page one)

that they are sitting on a time-bomb. The black working class, now organising in trade unions, will not tolerate years more of both economic and racial oppression. The miners' strike was bound to escalate into a political confrontation with the whole system of apartheid and capitalism as already acknowledged by the SA NUM.

Hence the big monopolies are urging Botha to make genuine reforms, and to buy time, are prepared to concede a proportion of their profits, even in the middle of a recession, to hold back the struggle in the mines.

What has forced their hand is the fighting spirit and organised power of the South African National

Union of Mineworkers (SANUM). Although they only organise 150,000 of the country's 550,000 miners their membership is growing daily. A strike would rapidly spread to miners not at present in the union.

With the setting up of the new trade union federation, which will organise half a million of the most militant workers, it is now possible that strike action could spread to other industries.

"Common struggle"

A strike is still very possible and international support must be stepped up, in line with the statement from SANUM general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa in which he appealed to the international labour movement as follows: "The South African National Union of Mineworkers welcomes the growing

Marxist Weekend School

FOR MARXISTS, theory is a guide to action, a compass to help plot a course through the ebbs and flows of the class struggle.

Many times in history the working class has struggled to change society, but has been defeated because it lacked a leadership sufficiently conscious of the tasks before it. Every socialist must raise their level of political understanding, to be able to give a clear direction to the struggles as they unfold.

The Marxist Weekend School on 14-15 September is a weekend of socialist education that will help equip activists in the labour movement with a more thorough understanding of the way forward.

Current developments

The nine courses (see right) each have three seminars—pick your course! In most of the courses two of the sessions deal with the historical experiences of the working class, and the third will relate that experience to current developments.

Each course at the school will be accompanied by a detailed reading list and study guide which will be sent out on booking—so book now and give yourself time to do some preparatory reading!

Don't miss out! Make your transport

plans and send your bookings now! Courses on: Marxist philosophy, Marxist economics, the Russian revolution, Marxism and the state, black workers and the struggle for socialism, the colonial revolution, the trade unions—the 1920s and today, the lessons of popular frontism, women and the struggle for socialism.

Disco, bar, films and videos. Professionally run crèche. Only £7 (£5 unwaged). Book now! Cheques to: "Marxist Weekend School" 3-13 Hepscott Road, London E9.

I would like to register for _____* course at the Marxist Weekend School. * Insert name of course.

I will need accommodation (bring a sleeping bag) for Friday/Saturday night(s) (delete as required).

I will require the crèche for the following children:

Name(s) and age(s) _____

Name

Address

.

Why the railworkers are striking

WE ARE witnessing in the railway industry at the moment a concerted effort by the British Rail Board (BRB) to implement Driver Only Operation (DOO) without going through the agreed machinery of negotiation.

The BRB have disregarded the National Union of Railwaymen and shown utter contempt for it and its members.

The guards are contemplating strike action, not for more money, even though they are poorly paid. It is for their jobs, their future and for the safety of rail users and other railway workers.

The traditional role of a guard is one of safety. BR management argue that DOO will only operate on lines which are track-circuited and equipped with colour light signalling. But that system is not a hundred per cent foolproof. Accidents, including collisions, have occurred even on lines with the most advanced safety equipment available to BR.

A guard has an important part to play in less dramatic circumstances. The very fact that a uniformed member staff is available on a train reassures passengers, particularly women travelling alone. We should not underestimate the importance of this fact. It is BR's policy to improve customer care. How does removing the guard fit in with this?

Guard's role

On freight trains, a guard still has a role to play. Instances of 'stop and examine' are more frequent than BR assume, as these are not always reported. The most common causes are brakes dragging, brakes failing, loss of vacuum and/or air pressure, loose chain fastenings and doors. At present the responsibility for providing remedial action rests with the guard. Under DOO the responsibility will be shared between the driver and another 'competent person.' BR have been unable to explain where this phantom 'competent person' will emerge from.

DOO also has an effect on the drivers. Despite mounting evidence of increased pressure on them, BR are forcing drivers to take on additional responsibilities.

Drivers will receive payment for this extra responsibility, but more money will

By Keith Stafford
(Secretary, Sunderland
NUR No1 branch)

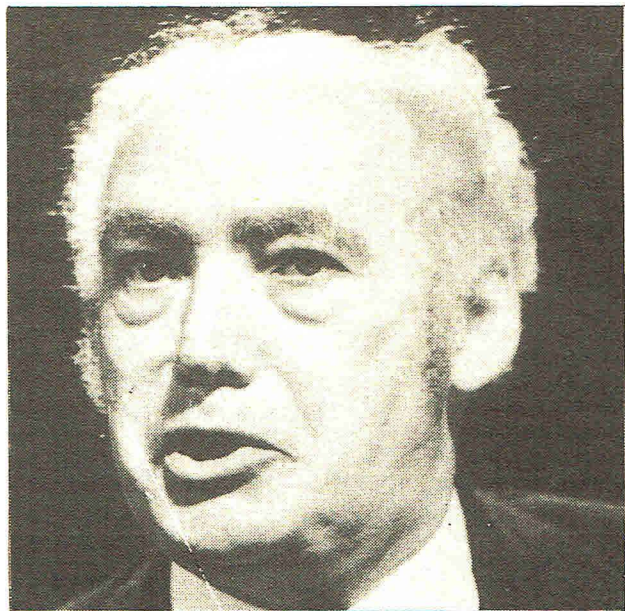
not reduce the pressure on them. It is essential that drivers of DOO passenger services should be equipped with radios but the same arrangements are not to be made for drivers of freight services. BR say they cannot afford to make the investment.

One reason why the railway safety record is so good is the clearly defined areas of responsibility for staff in emergencies. For example, a train on fire is

duties, resulted in revenue of £66,000 being collected. BR had calculated that the total loss to them in fraudulent travel on the Bedford/St Pancras service in a year was £85,000.

With staffing being reduced more and more at stations, passengers, especially women and the disabled, will feel even more insecure on a train where the only member of staff is the driver, locked away in the front cab. The simple fact is, if the travelling public lose confidence in the system, they will obviously look for alternative means of transport. How economic does BR's cost-cutting exercise look then?

What BR's proposals boil down to is a gamble with safety, a hope that a disaster can be averted. The same philosophy could be applied



NUR General Secretary Jimmy Knapp. Photo: Militant.

potentially one of the most hazardous emergencies that can arise.

Under the revised rules for DOO the driver will be responsible for a) stopping the train, b) fighting the fire, c) detrainning the passengers, d) protecting the train. As passengers on the tracks constitute a double line obstruction, the driver will need to stop trains on adjacent lines. It will be unrealistic; the driver will be faced with impossible choices at a time when he will, in any event, be under enormous stress.

BR argued there was no need for a guard at all on the Bedford/St Pancras service. Yet a six month experiment, where guards were used on one train in four to perform platform revenue protection

to the people of Bradford. After all, their football stand had never caught fire before. Do we wait for a tragedy of Bradford proportions before confirming that a guard has an essential safety role? BR should not be allowed to gamble with the safety of passengers or BR staff in order to reduce costs to meet government financial targets.

All railway workers must support the guards and the workshop staff. This is not just an issue for them. All grades are threatened. Already BR intend to put out to tender the upkeep of the track, bridges, tunnels and station buildings. Only if we all stand together can we defeat these destructive policies.

vaunted radio telephone system which BR are using as a central part of their argument for DOO.

Even the BRB should see how important it is to have a guard because in their own newspaper *Rail News* they report giving nine commendations to railworkers for bravery, three of them to guards.

One of them was working a Manchester to Liverpool train when it caught fire. He used his first aid knowledge to save the lives of the injured people on the train. Two other guards on this line saved the lives of passengers by uncoupling the train while it was on fire.

By an ASLEF member
(St Pancras)



Sacked guards picketing at Llanelli station.

Photo: John Harris (IFL).

BR's propaganda exposed

FACED WITH the threat of strike action, British Rail and the press are pumping out the same horror stories about the likely effect on the future of the industry as they did when railwaymen took action in support of the miners' strike.

Yet an internal BR management report has completely contradicted all their arguments that the blacking and other forms of action by rail workers in support of the NUM would do irreversible damage to rail freight, that the lorries would take away all rail traffic permanently, that customers would desert for ever, etc.

Written earlier in the summer, it says: "The return to normality continues following the end of the NUM dispute..."

"The major business—coal for power stations—has been returned to rail as quickly as practicable..."

Bonuses

"The pattern of movement has also radically changed because of the varied levels of stocks in mining areas and at power stations. While this is producing some short-term continuance of road transport, it is opening up bonuses for rail, the most obvious example of which is the movement of coal from stocks in Durham to the Aire valley power stations, which has reached 100,000 tonnes per week and is likely to rise further."

"Again, most other train load customers have quick-

ly returned to rail..."

"The distributive coal market—served mainly by Speedlink—has picked up quickly and budgeted levels were met in this period."

"A full return on the movement of iron ore to Ravenscraig and Llanwern has now taken place..."

Exactly the same kind of propaganda was conducted during the industrial action against flexible rostering in 1982. The following year there was actually a rise in freight traffic on the railways.

Facts like these should be in the hands of the rail union leaders who should be spelling them out to the membership.

By Martin Elvin

Around the regions

THE WEST Midlands NUR District Council have held two mass meetings. The first, called 'Crisis in the Rail Industry' dealt with all the issues and speakers included Les Felton, EC member for the area for ASLEF who pledged his union's solidarity.

When the ballot was brought forward we immediately organised another meeting for the guards.

Management has sent letters to all the guards' depots telling some of them that there will be cuts in manning levels, probably to worry them, and reassuring other depots like Birmingham New Street that there will no losses, hoping to divide and rule.

But during the ballot at New Street all the indications were of a very good vote in favour of action against DOO. Many members were making no secret of their intentions, letting others know they were voting 'yes'.

By Mick Atherton
(President, West Midlands District Council NUR)

EASTERN REGION management have chosen to concentrate their attack at the Immingham depot and introduce DOO over the heads of the trade unions.

At each stage the temperature has been deliberately raised by management provocation. The whole process culminated last week in the

sacking of the Immingham guards.

Against all forms of pressure and intimidation, and now even against dismissal, the Immingham men have remained solid. They have earned the respect of workers throughout Yorkshire and Humberside.

Railworkers are very angry in this area, particularly train crews. But for a certain feeling of the need to wait for the ballot result, there is no doubt that action in support of Immingham would have spread throughout the area.

The mood in this region is unquestionably for an immediate national guards' strike once the ballot is declared.

The Immingham delegates at a meeting of the Federation of Railway Unions in Doncaster made it clear that they must have support if they are to maintain their action.

As one ASLEF speaker at the meeting said: "Management have an armoury of weapons at their disposal—unlimited cash, the press, the TV, the laws. We have one weapon—unity."

By Geoff Bright
(Vice-president, Sheffield and Chesterfield NUR District Council)

St Pancras near miss

DOO HAS been operating on the St Pancras to Bedford line since 1983, but not as successfully as the press might lead you to believe. There have been countless incidents and near misses, some of which could have claimed many lives.

In 1984 the driver of a train at Hendon used his cab-to-signalbox radio-telephone to ask for permission to drive his passenger train back into the station.

Meanwhile the following train had passed the signal before the station and been cleared to proceed, before the other train in front was authorised to go back.

The driver of the second train knew that he was following one, so he proceeded into Hendon station with caution, only to find the other train moving back towards him!

He put his brake to emergency, stopped his train and contacted the signalman to tell the driver of the other train to stop. Had he not been so alert there could have been a serious accident.

Had there been a guard riding at the back during the setting back operation, he would have been in a position to see the following train and bring his own one to a halt immediately.

This incident was caused by a mix-up with the much

Wales Labour Party affiliation row

43 members - 5000 votes

THE SOCIALIST Health Association, a body affiliated to the Labour Party, has withdrawn recognition from its Wales branch after allegations, exclusively reported in Militant on 9 August, that it was being run unconstitutionally.

The allegations have been confirmed in a letter sent on 23 July 1985 by the association's Honorary Secretary, Joyce Dunn, to constituency Labour Parties in Wales. It says:

"At the meeting of the Central Council of the SHA on 20 July 1985, it was decided with regret to withdraw recognition from the Wales branch of the SHA. The branch has for some years conducted its affairs on an unconstitutional basis, despite requests from Head Office that it puts its house in order.

"Irregularities have included the sending of delegates to constituency Labour Parties and to the Labour Party Wales on the basis of 5,000 individual members when head office has records of only 43 individual members in Wales.

Ignored

"Requests to correct these irregularities have been ignored. Central Council recommended that a meeting should be called of all individual members and affiliated organisations in Wales to discuss the future organisation of the SHA in Wales and I will notify you of the details as soon as such a meeting has been arranged."

This year the SHA has reduced its affiliation from 5,000 to 4,000 but that is still eight times the 500 members on which the SHA affiliates to the Labour Party at na-

tional level.

These most serious allegations bring into question the election of an SHA representative to the Executive Committee of the Wales Labour Party, Dennis Stone.

Stone has been a member of the Ogmore Constituency Labour Party where *Militant* supporters, including some who are officials of St Johns Lodge NUM, have been threatened with expulsion.

He is known as the right-hand man of Ray Powell, MP for Ogmore, who has instigated these expulsions and moved the expulsion of Chris Peace from the Labour Party Wales Executive Committee.

Since 1983, Stone has been nominated by the SHA for the Executive Committee of the Labour Party Wales and has been elected, in the section for "other affiliated organisations," which comprise the SHA, the Socialist Education Association

(SEA), the Welsh Organisation of Labour Students and the Fabian Society. In 1984 he received 5,000 votes, to 2,000 for Andy Price of the SEA and 1,000 for Mrs M Davies of the Fabian Society.

Elections

At this year's conference, Stone was elected with 5,000 votes, to 2,000 for Wayne David of the SEA and none for Mrs Davies of the Fabians.

It is clear from these figures that if the SHA had been affiliated only on the minimum level of 1,000 members these results could have been very different.

Commented Chris Peace: "This contrasts sharply with the way I've been treated on the REC and underlines the unconstitutional manoeuvres the right-wing will use to fight their political battles".

Isle of Wight executive backs expulsions

THE EXECUTIVE Committee of the Isle of Wight Labour Party has voted to recommend the expulsion of three *Militant* supporters, Gerry Dominey, Vic Dale and Pat Westmore.

The issue will now be decided at the party's General Management Committee on 29 August.

The three were summoned to the executive's meeting on 20 August to answer charges that they were members of 'Militant Tendency.' No real evidence was shown to prove these allegations and part of the 'evidence' included a pink fighting fund collector's card, which is freely available to *Militant* supporters.

Although some sections of the party clearly want to proceed with the expulsions, many party activists are outraged. They are also angry at statements made in the *Tribune* newspaper by the newly selected parliamentary candidate, Kevin Pearson, who claimed that "there is no witch-hunt in the Isle of Wight Labour Party." This statement made no reference to the recommendation by the executive for expulsions which had already been made.

If the expulsions do go through it could open up a period of civil war in the party which could seriously damage Labour's chances in the next election.

By Militant reporters

Miner's anger at barring of railwayman

ONE OF those expelled from the Labour Party in Sheffield is Geoff Bright, a member of the National Union of Railwaymen's delegation to this year's Labour Party conference.

A member of the Treeton National Union of Mineworkers has written to express the feelings of many thousands of his fellow workers about Geoff's contribution to the labour movement:

Workers in South Yorkshire's heavy industries will be trying to make sense of the recent expulsion of NUR member Geoff Bright from Sheffield Attercliffe Labour Party.

Over the past ten years, first as a shop steward in the local private sector steel industry and then on the railway, Geoff has become known as a fighting socialist trade unionist. That commitment has earned recognition. He is chairman of Tinsley NUR branch, a vice-president of Sheffield and Chesterfield district council, chairman of the area Federation of Railway Trade Unions and a member of the national steering committee of the Railworkers' Broad Left.

The miners' strike was the greatest test of commitment for generations. As an NUR activist, Geoff fought energetically to ensure support for the miners at every level in his own union, helping to organise collections, social functions and industrial support.

During the strike he spoke to NUM branches throughout S. Yorks. He was also instrumental in setting up a solidarity committee backed by the NUM and the rail unions.

The reward for this activity from Sheffield Attercliffe CLP is 'exclusion from

membership'—expulsion! Ironically Attercliffe has Sheffield's last remaining pit, Brookhouse, which the NCB plan to close in December.

Of course it is not the individuals that are important. Geoff Bright is being attacked because he is a Marxist. It was Marxist ideas that determined his stand during the miners' strike. And it is Marxist ideas alone that can explain the decline of South Yorkshire's heavy industries and offer a way forward.

But at another level the expulsion is an insult to the railworkers of South Yorkshire and particularly of Tinsley. Their record is second to none. During the miners' strike. They collected £10,000, stopped all coke trains from Orgreave to Scunthorpe and never moved a cobble of coal. It is their class consciousness and militancy that is being expelled through the person of Geoff Bright.

All trade unionists should protest at the Attercliffe expulsions. Already support has come from Houghton Main, Darfield main and Treeton NUM, East Midland divisional council of the NUR, Brighton Joint and Liverpool 5 NUR branches and the Sheffield district committee of the AUEW.

NUR members must demand that NUR follow the lead given by Mosborough and Birley Labour Parties and refuse to accept the expulsions so that Geoff Bright can attend Labour Party conference on the NUR delegation. Other trade unionists and Labour Party members should raise it in their respective organisations. Letters of protest should be addressed to: Rob Murray, Secretary Attercliffe CLP, 102 Handsworth Rd, Sheffield 9.



Liverpool Labour councillors face threats of surcharge and bankruptcy for their stand against Tory cuts.

Photo: Militant

Blackburn unions fund campaign

BLACKBURN CORPORATION Joint Shop Stewards' Committee (JCC) has given its backing to Liverpool City Councillors in their determination to safeguard jobs and services by pushing ahead with a budget above the government limits.

The meeting, held on 17 July, also decided unanimously to set up a fund to support the campaign.

The transport union (TGWU) branch chairman of Blackburn Transport Dept received full backing of the membership to donate £20 to start the fund in motion. The six other local authority unions representing council employees are expected to follow this line after the local

holidays have ended.

Two delegates from the JCC are to be elected to attend the next meeting of the National Local Authorities Co-ordinating Committee (NLACC).

Sales of *Militant* were carried out at the local authority departments and discussions on the issues surrounding the Liverpool campaign were lively and informative with great interest being taken by council workers.

By Frank Crompton

Kent activists' petition against expulsion

LABOUR ACTIVISTS in Sittingbourne, Kent, have shown that there is little support amongst local people for expulsions of socialists from the party. They have been collecting signatures against the expulsion of three *Militant* supporters from Faversham Constituency Labour Party.

"It was amazing how many people have now started to ask: 'What does this Labour Party think it's at? We have had enough!' 'They should be fighting the Tories not expelling within their own ranks'," reports Anne Ursell from Sit-

tingbourne Labour Party.

"Going from door to door, questions showed much more political interest than previously. As one lady remarked: 'It's the working class that always fights. Give us a paper?' 25p? 'That's a lot! It's worth it—it prints the truth about working folks!'"

Letters

Two copies of *Militant* were sold to the same household and eight others in the space of one hour.

Letters are rolling in now from MPs, Eddie Loyden,

Kent campaign

GILLINGHAM branch Labour Party has voted by 20 votes to ten against the proposed expulsion of three members of Faversham Labour Party. This party was itself attacking a *Militant* supporter, Bob Hurley, only last year.

A Defend *Militant* Supporters' Campaign is to be started throughout the county of Kent, taking in Chatham, Gillingham and Maidstone.

A special appeal is also to be made to the National Union of Mineworkers branch at Aylesham and contacts made during the miners' strike in Yorkshire.



This year's Notting Hill carnival was swelled by an estimated half a million people and brought some life to the streets of London for two days. Despite large numbers of police the heavy handed actions of previous years were absent and the dancing in the streets, window ledges and doorways went on uninhibited. Many policemen got carried away and joined in the fun—I saw two swigging from a pink-coloured bottle and screwing their faces up—and now the Met is cross that they've been accused of being soft on drug offenders.

Report and photo Ben Eastop

Women fight pit closures

THE FIRST national conference of Women against Pit Closures was held on 17 August in Sheffield.

The conference is a mark of the degree of seriousness shown by women who became involved in the strike, and the important role that they played.

The organising of women during, and after the dispute in the mining communities will provide invaluable lessons for the labour movement in future struggles.

However the expected 2,000 delegates and visitors to the conference didn't materialise, and the actual attendance was 700.

Partly this may have been due to the fact no agenda was sent out beforehand, so no-one knew what the feelings of different areas were. It became clear that many areas such as South Yorkshire, Doncaster and Scotland were unhappy with the arrangements and the proposed constitution. The lack of voting rights to the delegates came as an unpleasant surprise to almost everyone.

One of the main arguments over the proposed constitution is the inclusion of 'ex-officio' members in the leadership involving Betty Heathfield and others. All the women in the strike worked

themselves into the ground and all should be equal in the organisation. All should have to be elected to any position. This goes as well as for the proposed full time secretary/treasurer who should be regularly elected, with all groups entitled to nominate candidates.

Another shock was that to speak you had to hand in your name and the subject you wanted to speak on. Only then were you called to the microphone. Many felt that this was used to filter out opposition.

The lack of democracy was not accepted. There is now talk of a weekend conference in September, where proposals will be debated and voted on. The only worry is that genuine debate will be stifled by severely restricting the number of delegates entitled to attend, by only allowing districts to nominate delegates. If WAPC is to survive, a democratic structure is vital, otherwise many women will drop away. We must demand:

- ★ A representative conference
- ★ A printed agenda containing the National Committee's proposals and amendments and further proposals from individual groups
- ★ No ex-officio members, all officers

to be elected

★ Regular election of the full-time secretary/treasurer

★ Time for a full and free discussion from the floor

No conclusion was reached and no definite proposals made on the question of associate membership for womens groups in the NUM, but recognition of women's role would be welcome.

Apart from Scargill the best received speaker was from South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), who spoke on the terrible conditions faced by women in South Africa, and on the battles taking place there. There's no doubt that any action that the South African NUM take will receive tremendous support from WAPC.

The amnesty campaign for all the sacked and jailed miners was also at the front of the discussions. No doubt many support groups will be sending coaches and delegates to the BLOC/Amnesty Campaign Lobby of the Labour Party Conference.

A *Militant* Forum was held at Dinner time; 25 people attended. A very lively meeting took place around the way forward for WAPC.

Southwark festival

SOUTHWARK'S first Youth Information Festival will be taking place on 1 September in Southwark Park, Bermondsey.

The festival is a joint effort between Southwark's Labour council and the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign (YTURC) and aims to get 10,000 young people to the event.

Several bands, such as Faith Brothers, Chalice UK, Gary Cowley and Lorna Gee will be appearing. There will be stalls with literature from

YTURC, the Labour Party Young Socialists, Southwark Council and the GLC.

Teams of Young Socialists have been campaigning to make the festival a success with days of action and meetings at council depots and local hospitals, together with leafletting, fly-posting and canvassing on the local estates.

The festival will take place from 2.00pm to 8.00pm—so make sure you're there!

By Militant reporters

Stop the NF

THE NATIONAL Front is planning a meeting at Chatham Town Hall on 4 September which appears to be part of a campaign by the fascists to get a base in the North Kent area.

The National Front has been denied actual use of the Town Hall but they say they will meet on the steps. The

newly-formed Medway Anti-Racist Defence Campaign is appealing to all labour movement activists in the area to assemble for a counter-demonstration at 5.30pm at the Town Hall, Chatham.

By Andy Hammond
(Gillingham Labour Party)

Edinburgh cuts its rate

EDINBURGH District Council's battle with the Tories over increasing jobs and services has ended with the council complying to George Younger's demand

This will mean for a 5.2p in the pound cut in the rates, which has meant £15.1m reduced from the council's budget.

In order to maintain current housing programmes, services and jobs the council are now balancing the books by selling off capital assets and council mortgages, rescheduling loans and increasing commercial charges. This means 500 new jobs can be maintained for the time being, along with some improvement in services for the time being.

However, no clear strategy for defeating Younger's proposals had been worked out by the council. It went into discussions with Younger and tried to get him to see their viewpoint. Support from the council workforce and tenants was not mobilised and Younger flatly turned down the council's attempt to make a compromise.

Militant supporters in Edinburgh had argued that if the council took the fight to the workers with confidence, then there would be a favourable response and backing for the council—65

per cent of those polled in the local newspaper supported the district council's demand for additional resources to tackle the massive housing problem. Unfortunately some councillors argued to the contrary, saying there was no mood for a fight. But a large Labour Party Young Socialists meeting, attended by 300 and a third of whom were council workers, indicated that there was a mood for a fight.

Arguments about the national campaign having collapsed seemed to mean that, like the media, certain sections have forgotten that Liverpool City Council is still fighting. The idea also put forward that a breathing space was needed for next year's fightback will ring very hollow for many activists who have heard the same arguments since 1979.

The lessons will have to be learned. The reality of the situation is that if any campaign is going to be launched successfully to defend jobs and services it will be necessary to mobilise behind local councils all sections of the working class, both in public and private sectors as Liverpool council are doing at the present time.

By Eddie Donaghy



Ted Grant, political editor of *Militant*, speaking at the Trotsky commemorative rally in London.

Trotsky remembered

THREE HUNDRED people packed into the Conway Hall in London to commemorate, to the hour, the assassination of Leon Trotsky at 7.30 pm, Tuesday 20 August 1940.

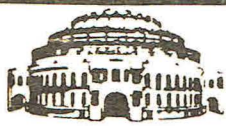
Ted Grant, political editor of *Militant* spoke of Trotsky's life and his invaluable contribution to the world working class movement.

Evidence of the value of Trotsky's ideas was provided by David Hemson, a socialist recently expelled from Zimbabwe. He showed the importance of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution to the historical struggle now unfolding in South Africa. The collection of £1,488 was a fitting tribute to the memory of a mighty fighter for socialism.

THE SOUTH Wales *Militant* summer camp went ahead successfully after a near disastrous start when the wrath of the gods sent torrential rain and gales.

The marquee was blown over and children in nearby tents had to be rushed to safety. However, the ideas of Marxism triumphed against the heavenly powers and the sun came out.

With a bit of socialist reconstruction, the meetings, discussions, games and entertainment went ahead (full report next week).



Militant Third National Rally

**21st Birthday celebration
Sunday 3 November, 1985
Royal Albert Hall**

**Speakers include: Jack Collins (Kent NUM)
Peter Taaffe Ted Grant Harry De Boer**

**All tickets £3 (Cheques to "Militant Rally")
'(Crèche available, but places must be booked)**

Booking Form:
We would like Tickets and enclose
(Payable to *Militant* rally)

Name

Organisation

Address

CRÈCHE: Places must be booked in advance. We will be bringing the following children

Name Age

Address

Please return to:
Militant Rally, 3-13 Hepscoot Rd, London E9

FIGHTING FUND

Since last issue: **£2,540**

| Area | Received | % of target achieved | Target |
|-----------------------|-------------|----------------------|--------------|
| 1 London South East | 128 | | 2100 |
| 2 Scotland West | 272 | | 3750 |
| 3 Lancashire | 73 | | 1300 |
| 4 East Midlands | 161 | | 3050 |
| 5 London West | 131 | | 2650 |
| 6 Merseyside | 350 | | 6550 |
| 7 Southern | 292 | | 5400 |
| 8 Eastern | 146 | | 3500 |
| 9 Scotland East | 95 | | 3150 |
| 10 Wales West | 88 | | 2950 |
| 11 Yorkshire | 185 | | 5800 |
| 12 Humberside | 32 | | 2100 |
| 13 London East | 64 | | 3250 |
| 14 Manchester | 44 | | 2850 |
| 15 South West | 35 | | 2150 |
| 16 West Midlands | 86 | | 4700 |
| 17 Northern | 39 | | 4750 |
| 18 Wales East | 5 | | 3000 |
| 19 London South West | 0 | | 1200 |
| Others | 685 | | 5800 |
| Total received | 2971 | | 70000 |

THE BOSSES' donations to the Tory party keep rolling in. McVities and many of the breweries have recently donated money to Tory funds or their front organisations.

Apart from boycotting biscuits for a while, we should take a lead from a Hertfordshire reader who was sponsored to abstain from beer for a month. This sacrifice is what you might call a 'gut' reaction to the Tories and raised £43.

Rumour has it that he had to discard his old vest at LPYS summer camp. Two comrades who had forgotten their tent made use of it.

Our appeal for supporters to organise events has had a lightning response from Swansea who have kicked off with a jumble sale this

week which netted £38.70. Other supporters should make a jumble sale their goal.

Also rattling tins have been in prominence at the British Aerospace paper sale, Preston where £2.50 was raised and at the Garston, Liverpool sale which brought in £7.25. Keep rattling and keep battling—we're on our way.

In a magnificent tribute to the ideas of Trotsky, comrades raised £1,488 at a Conway Hall commemoration rally in London. With pledges like £300 from Wally Kennedy, Ruislip and £100 from Paul Kearney, Acton we can ensure that Trotsky's ideas increase their influence within Britain.

And a final word before mentioning other donations received this week. Look at how much has been raised in your area and what the

quarter's target is—show us how you will smash through the 100 per cent figure, but show us now! We must have £5,500 a week to crack the £70,000!

By Simon Rogers

MANY THANKS to J Murdoch TSSA Nottingham £25, S Ryder Long Eaton £5, J Halford ASTMS Arnold £1, B Shepperson NALGO Gedling £1, T Walker Tobacco Workers Union, Gedling £6, Paul Fogione CPSA Maidstone £2, Marjorie Wilson Cambslang Scotland Student £10, Clinton Home NUR £1, Richard Hopkins £3.75, Loughborough Labour and trade union group members £1.50, D Severn, Loughborough 58p, Swansea LPYS £5, TGWU 5/826 branch £4, S Risborough Sittingbourne Labour Party 50p, Pub collection Sussex £7, Jim Gray Leith GMBATU No2 £10 and Alf Millbrook pensioner 25p weekly.

Marxist Daily Building Fund

| | £ | | £ |
|---------------|------|---------------|---------------|
| Eastern | 2996 | Scotland East | 2238 |
| East Midlands | 3278 | Scotland West | 2546 |
| Humberside | 1694 | Southern | 4070 |
| London NE | 3442 | South West | 902 |
| London NW | 4115 | Wales East | 1946 |
| London SE | 2110 | Wales West | 1538 |
| London SW | 2184 | West Midlands | 2110 |
| Lancashire | 606 | Yorkshire | 1767 |
| Manchester | 2658 | National | 1302 |
| Merseyside | 5181 | | |
| Northern | 3326 | Total | 50,007 |

sit back. With industrial battles looming we need the resources now to finance our campaign—and we still need a further £25,000 to finish paying off the debts we incurred in the year as a result of our moving into the new building and because of our work during the miners' strike.

This week we have had a £100 donation from Harlow and £55 from supporter in the Aire Valley. Angela Donisthorp from Leicester

has given us a first installment of her week's wages of £8.85. £36.50 has come from a South Staffordshire supporter and £60 from a reader in Hertfordshire. All these donations mark considerable sacrifices by our readers who are going without their pay for a week to build a Marxist Daily Paper.

Can you match this sacrifice and help us to raise that £25,000? Rush your donations in now.

riston. In Neath regular sales have also been established in Skewen town. Paper sales have doubled.

Alan Huyton from Aberystwyth wrote to us saying how well issue 761 with its lead story on the growing menace of heroin addiction went down: "On Friday we sold 29 papers and on Saturday we sold another 17. People, especially mothers with children, read the headline

and commented that it was time something was done. We collected over £3 for the fighting fund".

Keep on sending in reports of your sales and the response of our readers to the material we produce. This way we can encourage other areas to follow the examples set.

By Gerry Lerner

GET Militant

DESPITE the holiday period new sales are being made by our enterprising supporters. Even in such little-known places as Oakham near Leicester there is a growing interest in Marxist ideas. 27 papers were sold there on a day of action.

In Swansea, regular Saturday morning sales are spreading out from the city centre with new pitches in Uplands Square and Mor-

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.

BARNEY and Eileen Burke wish to thank all *Militant* supporters in Liverpool Walton for their support and help following their recent bereavement.

VIC and Mara Dale (IOW) wish to announce the birth of Sasha Marie on 9 August. Many thanks to comrades, family and friends for their help and good wishes.

MILITANT Liverpool Broad-sheet 'Defend our City' 25p (including postage) Orders of 10 or more 10p each. To Circulation Department, 3-13 Hepscott Rd. London E9 5HB.

MILITANT MINER POSTERS: 'Miners unite, no splits'. Bulk orders from Circulation Department, 3-13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB. Price 50p per dozen (post free).

PARLIAMENTARY Selection: Enfield North CLP invites applications for prospective parliamentary candidate. We recognise that white middle class males are already over represented in the PLP. This equal opportunity Labour Party particularly welcomes applications from members of ethnic and minority organisations within the labour movement. Closing date for nominations, first post 6 December. All replies to Secretary, Enfield North CLP, 324 High Street, Ponders End, Enfield, Middlesex.

WANTED: Co-op stamps. Loose, part or full books for F/F. Send to Circulation Dept, 3/13 Hepscott Road London E9 5HB.

TROTSKY Commemoration Meeting on C-90 tape: Dave Hemson—the Struggle in South Africa. Ted Grant—the life and ideas of Trotsky. £1.25 plus 25p postage. From World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5 HB. Also available: C-90 The Rise of Bolshevism Tape 1. The 1860's to 1890's by Alan Woods. To accompany the articles in the MIR. Also £1.25 plus 25p P&P.

ACCOMMODATION in London (permanent) urgently required. Anyone with a spare room in shared flat? Tel: Ginny Armstrong (H) 519 6375 (W) 242 2548.

SCHOOL STUDENTS UNION: recruitment leaflets—£8 per 1,000, stencils for leaflets—70p each, posters—£5 per 50, activists pamphlets—20p each (orders over 20, 15p each), Badges—20p, Stickers—£10 per 1,000. All prices include p&p. From YTURC, c/o 109 Rannoch Road, London W6.

I LOST the bet—it's a girl! Congratulations from Grandma Daisy.

MILITANT FF pocket address books, Diaries 60p, plastic paper sleeves 20p, pens 20p, bookmarks 40p plus post to: Militant, 10 Rodney Court, Anson Drive, Sholing, Southampton, SO2 8RU.

LPYS 'Fighting for our future' T shirts (red, yellow and green on white). Available now from Lesley Phillips, 5 Alverstone House, Kennington Park Road, London SE11 5 TS.

M, L, XXL for £4 or for £4.50 get an enormous baggy one! Cheques to: 'London LPYS Campaign Fund' and add 25p p&p.

SMASH PINOCHET Public meeting to commemorate the military coup of 11 September, 1973. Wednesday 11 September 7.30 pm, Camden Town Hall, Bidborough Street. Opposite St Pancras Station. Organised by Chile Socialist Defence Campaign and London LPYS.

SUPPORT THE people of Chile. Picket the Chilean Embassy, (12 Devonshire Street, London W1) 12-2 pm, 11 September. Bring your banners.

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

Now available on cassette: all centre-page articles from issue 730-755. Send either seven blank C-90 cassettes or £6.30 payable to *Militant* tapes, 18 Blandford Grove, Woodhouse, Leeds 2. Phone: (0532) 455936.

Militant Meetings

ABERYSTWYTH: Thursday 5 September, 7.30pm. 'What we stand for.' Speaker Neil Williams. Vale of Rheidol pub, opposite BR station.

ABERYSTWYTH: Weekly *Militant* discussion groups. Details, phone Alan Huyton on 615911.

BRIXTON: Wednesday 4 September 7.30pm. 'End Apartheid—for a socialist South Africa.' Speakers from SALEP, SOLSAY and *Militant*. St Matthews Meeting Place, Brixton Hill, London SW2.

GRIMSBY: Tuesday 3 September, 7.30pm. 'Support the railworkers.' Speakers Geoff Bright (Vice President Sheffield and Chesterfield NUR, personal capacity) and Paul Spooner (Hull docker). Grimsby Central Library.

HARROW *Militant* Marxist Discussion Group. Monday 2 September, The Communist Manifesto.

MAIDSTONE: Thursday 5 September, 8pm. 'The way forward for the trade unions.' Speakers: Phil Waker (UCW Broad Left National Secretary) and Andy Scott (Tavistock UCW, personal capacity). Wheelers Arms, Perry Street.

MILITANT Marxist Discussion Group meetings held monthly in Swindon. Phone Martin on 24796 for details.

ORGREAVE: Sunday 15 September, 7.30pm *Militant* Miner public meeting. Speakers: Geoff Bright (Tinsely NUR and expelled member of Sheffield Attercliffe Labour Party) and Gary Ironmonger (NUM delegate, Cortonwood, personal capacity). Red Lion, Catcliffe, near Orgreave Coking plant.

YORKSHIRE Militant meetings. 'Liverpool council take on the Tories.' **Huddersfield** Zetland Hotel, Queensgate, (opposite Poly) Thursday 29 August 7.30pm. **Halifax.** AEU Club, 11 St James St (by bus station) 7.30pm Tuesday 3 September.

NORTHERN WOMENS Weekend School 31 August-1 September, North Hulme FE Centre, Jackson Crescent, Hulme, Manchester. Saturday—Origins of the Family. Workshops a) Warnock, Powell, Gillick. b) The Fowler Review. c) Violence against women. Reports backs and summing up. Working class women and the struggle for socialism. Sunday—Internationalism. Workshops a) Northern Ireland b) South Africa c) Famine and food policy. Creche provided, but please book in advance. Social-Saturday evening. Cost £2.50 waged, £1 unwaged. For further details please contact and bookings to: Maureen Reynolds, 2 Brown Hill House, 48a Sandy Lane, Chorlton Manchester 21. Telephone: 061 860-4652.

WEST MIDLANDS Labour Unity Conference. Saturday 21 September 10.30am to 4pm. Speakers include Dave Nellist MP, Derek Hatton, deputy leader Liverpool Council and Ian Schofield (Senior Steward, Rover). Venue Dr Johnsons House, Bull St, Birmingham city centre. £2 per delegate to P Pritchard, 115 Ridgeway, Edgbaston, Birmingham 17.

Conference greetings

GET YOUR LPYS, trade union or Labour Party to place a greetings ad in our Labour Party Conference edition. Hurry, the closing date for copy is 18 September.

Make cheques payable to Militant Publications and send with your greetings to 3-13 Hepscott Rd, London E9 5HB. Rates: 3 column centimetres £6; 6 col. cm. £12; sixteenth of a page £20.

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Leicester fights fascism

A MAJOR campaign is underway in Leicester to defend nine anti-fascists who were arrested during a British National Party (BNP) meeting in April.

By Alan Horne

The BNP 'election' meeting at the Avenue Road School was called during the county council elections.

200 police were on duty, with about 10 blue wagons. No time had been given for the meeting to start. The protest was organised by word of mouth, following a call from the local National Union of Teachers and the Castle branch of the Labour Party.

They assembled outside the school in dribs and drabs, but eventually outnumbered the BNP by four to one. They were five to ten yards away from the fascists and there was no violence outside the meeting.

The police said they would be democratic and allow in 20 of them, 20 of us, 20 of them, 20 of us, until the hall was full. In the end there were about 70 of each, the fascists all male, the protesters male and female.

As the chairman rose to speak, heckling began and shouts of 'scum' which drowned the meeting out. After the meeting calmed down, one steward and two policemen moved to eject a woman. Everyone stood up and chairs were thrown by the BNP. The police rushed into the protesters and arrests were made.

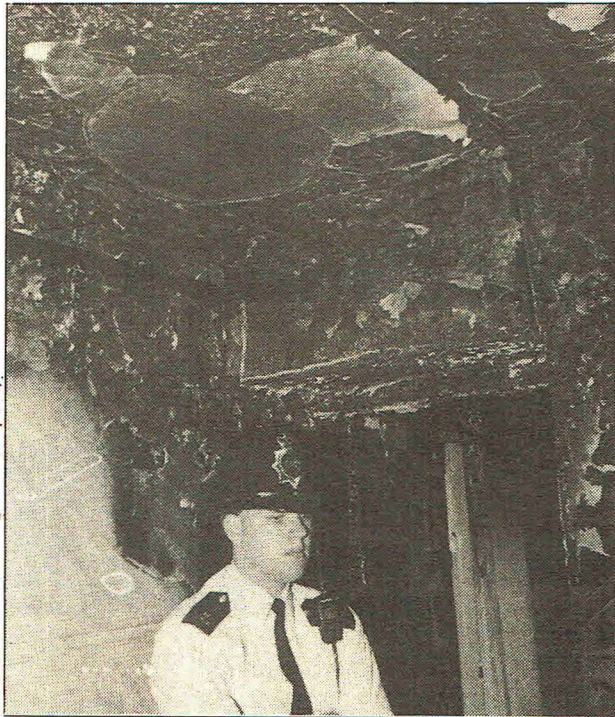


Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (Report)

Police guarding Bengali Family's home in Bow, East London, after it was gutted by racist fire bomb attack, obviously more important now empty, than when the family lived there.

They tried to re-commence the meeting but the pickets continued to protest and further arrests were made. The arrests were totally arbitrary, often after a BNP steward had pointed someone out. All but one were charged with breach of peace, one for assaulting a police officer.

After the meeting, police formed a line across the street and swept it clear. They arrested a young Asian (the only non-white arrested) saying "he'll do", though he was not involved in the meeting in any way.

One of the nine, a student, pleaded guilty expecting to be bound over. Even though a barrister had told the court that she would be representing him, she was not told

that he had been called. He was not asked if he wanted representation and was fined £250.

Legal Aid

The defence campaign got off to a good start, getting backing from Leicester Trades Council and Leicester South and Leicester East Labour Parties. Some 1,500 leaflets have been distributed in the mainly Asian Belgrave area each Saturday afternoon. Last week 20 papers were sold and £20 raised. Some Asian shopkeepers are displaying the leaflets for a public meeting.

£300 has been raised from the labour movement. Loughborough Trades Council have reversed their



Photo: Dave Sinclair

BNP members unable to leave their coach in Liverpool on 16 March because of the strength of the counter-demonstration by both black and white.

earlier decision not to give active support to the campaign and speakers are to address local NUPE and TASS branches.

Send donations and messages of support to: The Anti-Fascist Defence Committee, 25 Hipwell Crescent, Leicester.

THE CASES of two of the nine were brought to court on 21 August.

Thomas Kiernan and Amanaul Haq were charged

with threatening behaviour and breach of the peace respectively.

Haq's case was adjourned until the 21 November, due to problems in obtaining defence witnesses.

After a long and complex case, Kiernan was found not guilty. The verdict is a clear vindication of the defendant himself and an example of how an effective and concerted campaign like ours can produce results.

How US shielded Japan's Mengeles

IF IT had not been for the row over the banning of *The Edge of the Union, Unit 731*, a documentary on ITV the following week, might well have been banned.

By Dave Campbell

It exposed the hypocrisy of the capitalist powers in the aftermath of the Second World War.

During the war, a research

station was set up by the Japanese in Manchuria in China for studying germ warfare. The guinea pigs were human beings, mainly Russian and Chinese prisoners of war.

These prisoners called Maratos (literally blocks of wood) by the Japanese were infected with anthrax, typhoid, bubonic plague and other diseases to test the potency and effect of these weapons.

One of the researchers, to

test a bomb to spread the germs, would stake prisoners out in a field to study the effects of the bomb. Another put two Russian prisoners into a deep freeze and watched while they froze to death. Yet another dissected prisoners whilst they were alive.

These experiments were not restricted to prisoners alone. On one occasion, aircraft dropped rice and fleas that had been infected with bubonic plague (black death)

on a civilian population in China. As a result of this, 700 died. On another occasion, a Russian river was polluted with anthrax. On yet another, 1,700 Japanese troops died of Cholera after an experiment backfired.

Atrocities

These atrocities, which are enough to turn the stomach of any normal person, had a different effect on the heads of the American army.



Rather than bring these criminals to justice, General McArthur, on behalf of the American government, granted all those involved immunity from prosecution in return for the details and research notes from the experiments.

Now, many of those involved hold leading positions in Japan. Dr Yoshimura, who froze prisoners to death was, a few years ago awarded Japan's highest medal, the World of the Rising Sun. Another of the researchers is now head of the Japanese Medical Association. Many others are professors or heads of department at Japanese universities—and, of course, there is Hirohito himself—still Emperor of Japan, now one of the West's key allies.

The real reason for the cover-up, which wasn't really gone into in the programme, was pointed out at the end, when they said that the allies needed Hirohito to provide stability in Japan after the war.

In other words, just as the Americans dropped the atomic bomb on Japan to warn the Russians—and the Japanese working class—not to get out of hand, they were prepared to use Hirohito, one of the world's worst war criminals to maintain the existence of capitalism in Japan.

Horrors of Vietnam war

SUE HARRISON and MARTIN CRAXTON review *Tracers*, showing at the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs, Sloane Square, London SW1.

WHEN THE ruling class fails to get what it wants through politics or deception, it turns to force. The working class always pays.

What about the soliders who fight for them? In this play, which is written, directed and acted by Vietnamese war veterans, they reflect the horrid but true reality of modern war.

The company called VETCO (Vietnam Veterans Ensemble Theatre Company) along with the New York Shakespeare Festival, communicate true experiences of Vietnam.

Everyone involved has served in Vietnam. The play is rough and real. There is a lot of swearing, beginning with the drill sergeant who hammers

home just how rough Vietnam will be. Nearly all the conscripts were only nineteen, with eighteen weeks training. Many went on a one-way ticket—50 per cent would be killed or wounded.

The play is highly emotional. The audience becomes part of it all. It is really scary having a gun pointed at your face and being shot at.

To have been in Vietnam must have been hell, a totally horrific and unreal world. In the real world, back home, their girlfriends write about getting a job, their college courses and their new dates.

Isolated in the jungle the soldiers ask "What was it for?" Some escape with drugs or suicide.

For those lucky enough to get home, the isolation continues. Can anyone appreciate why they can't settle down and fit in? Who cares about the victims of cancers caused by Agent Orange or the deformations of the vic-



US troops in Vietnam.

tims' kids?

The veterans may not be socialists, but they'd agree with us in telling the ruling class that we ain't their boys; it's our lives, our futures!

There can be an end to this misery and that can only be an end to capitalism that was born into the world dripping from head to foot from every pore with blood and dirt.

117th Trades Union Congress

'New realism' shared by miners'

THE 117th Trades Union Congress assembles in Blackpool this weekend. Either it will stand firm, or will show weakness, and prepare the ground for further attacks on the movement.

Last year's congress had as its backdrop the miners' strike. This time, unfortunately for the trade union leaders who were hoping for a peaceful conference, it takes place with the prospect of a national rail strike beginning during the week and the sacking of trade union members at GCHQ, whom they are committed to defend.

It can only be hoped that unlike the hollow words uttered in support of the miners last year, this time the resolutions of support and solidarity will be turned into concrete action.

Of major importance also is the battle against the Tories' union legislation and how to deal with the unions that are undermining the united stance against the laws.

To understand the process at present affecting the trade union movement it is vital to understand the lessons of the miners' strike.

The year long struggle of the miners and their families has been an inspiration to the workers of Britain and the world. Their solidarity and determination illustrates the desire of the working class to change society.

It marked a turning point in the class struggle. The naked class interests of the bosses were clearly exposed. The anti-trade union laws, the courts and the police, the full force of the state, was used to try to drive the miners back to work.

Although the miners failed to gain their immediate demands, for the Tories it was a pyrrhic victory. The strike has acted as a catalyst, deepening and hardening the class polarisation within society.

Other trade union members were

By Peter Jarvis

inspired by the struggle. Some, such as the teachers, have already moved into action with the example of the miners fresh in their minds.

The anti-Tory mood within society intensified, especially in the last months and above all it spurred the youth into action. Of major significance was the strike of 250,000 school students in April. A whole new layer of society has been radicalised in the wake of the miners' strike.

The strike was an embarrassment to many union leaders. For them the battle took place in a kind of time warp which they vainly hoped had now passed. Nevertheless they still have to debate the NUM's motion on the issue.

This resolution must be fully supported. After the magnificent year-long struggle the labour movement must stand by those who have been victimised, made criminals, incarcerated in jail and lost their jobs because loyally they fought for victory.

The difficulty for the TUC leaders is that it calls upon the next Labour government to immediately legislate for a complete review of all cases of miners jailed as a result of the dispute, guarantee the reinstatement of all miners sacked for activities arising out of the dispute and reimburse the National Union of Mineworkers and all other unions with all monies confiscated as a result of fines, sequestration, receivership, legal and other costs, etc.

Arthur Scargill declared this issue at the NUM conference to be "a basic principle of trade unionism on trial." Many of the

trade union officials have remained silent. Neil Kinnock immediately repudiated the possibility of a general amnesty.

The NCU have come to the rescue of Kinnock and those who lined up with the Tories against the idea of a full amnesty. They have changed the demand on the next Labour government to read "calls on the TUC to immediately campaign for." The demand remains but for the TUC to mount any effective campaign the rank and file will have to assert enormous and continuous pressure. Many of the union leaders have made it known they don't support a full amnesty, so unless pressure is maintained, even this neutered campaign will be conveniently dropped.

Pessimistic

The trade union leaders tamely complained that they could not deliver solidarity during the strike. In the aftermath they are even more pessimistic. Their belief, which they named "New Realism," that the workers would not fight was destroyed by the miners' strike. Support was forthcoming especially when it was boldly campaigned for.

This attitude of "can't deliver" meant in their eyes that workers won't fight. "How can we fight when even the miners could not

win?" was used to rationalise a retreat step by step. It is a rationalisation for opposing struggle.

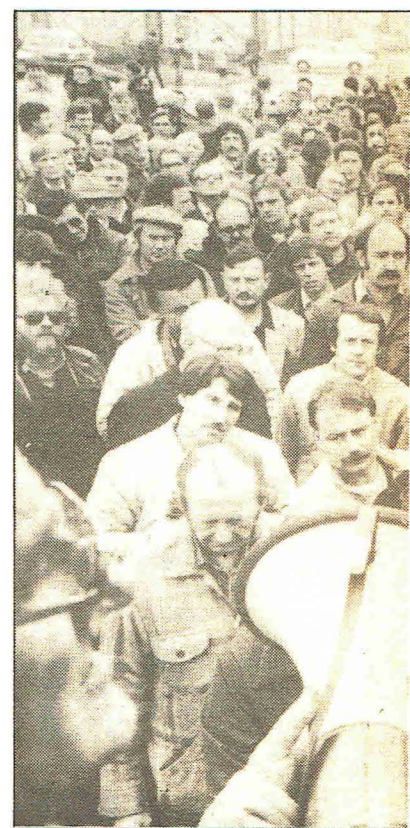
The effect of this incorrect analysis and lack of political determination has resulted in both right and left reformist leaders re-examining their attitude to the Tories' anti-union laws.

Behind the problems faced by the reformists is the economic crisis. Trotsky long ago explained: "Capitalism can continue to maintain itself only by lowering the standard of living of the working class. Under these conditions trade unions can either transform themselves into revolutionary organisations or become lieutenants of capital in the intensified exploitation of the workers."

The latter is the path they are now following in relation to the Tory trade union legislation.

At the time of the publication of Tebbit's Bill, the TUC General Council warned about its effects and called a special conference of executives of all affiliated unions in April 1982 at Wembley. The eight point declaration was accepted and later endorsed at the full Congress in September.

Item three, under the heading of "Public funds for trade union ballots", states: "Affiliated unions shall observe Congress policy and not seek or accept public funds for union ballots under the Employment Act 1980 ballot funds



Mass picket at Warrington in November scheme."

Both Hammond of the EETPU and Laird of the AUEW have applied for the Tory blood money. The AUEW already has £1m in its hands.

This was too much even for the right wing dominated AUEW national council to stomach. They slapped down their leaders by deciding that the membership should be re-balloted on whether to accept the funds. The leadership have been instructed to emphasise the union's opposition to acceptance.

The EETPU leadership is considering no change of policy; on the contrary they have just taken money for the ballot on the political fund.

The TUC is now examining whether the EETPU and the AUEW should be expelled. But in the changing climate the outcome is in the balance. The EETPU leadership is contemptuous of the rest of the trade union movement.

Not only are they at the forefront of the battle to undermine united resistance to Tory laws. This union is also engaged in negotiating single union deals, including one with publisher Eddie Shah who defeated the NGA in a bitter union bashing exercise, aided by use of the Tory laws.

Even APEX, not noted for its left wing stance, has been forced to propose a resolution expressing concern at such agreements.

Expulsion is not a step to be taken lightly. But it must be faced. They are openly and continually flouting Congress policy. They should be suspended for a year



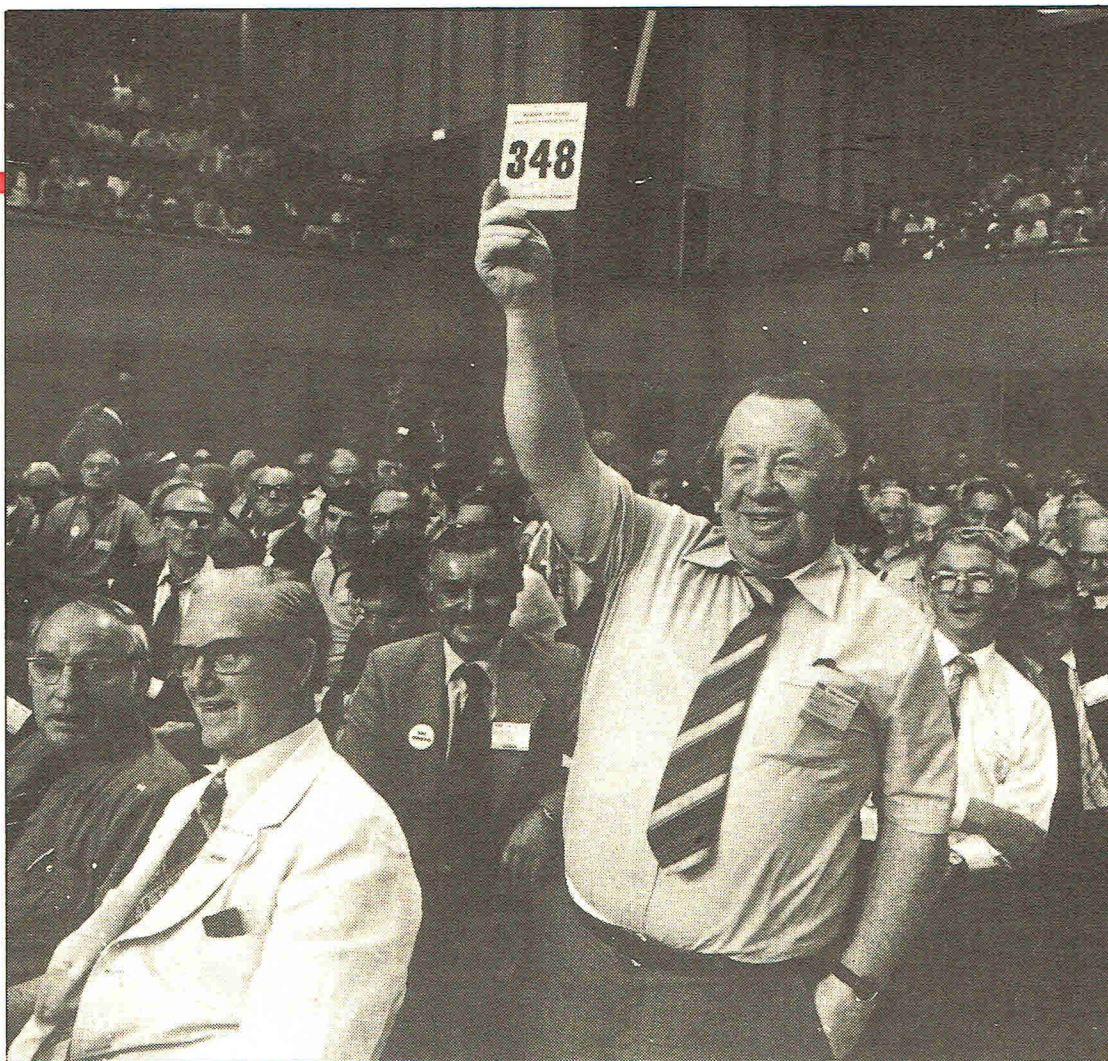
Miners' strike—confrontation between pickets and police at South Celynon in November 1984. Photo: Craig Stennett

attered strike



1983 in support of the printers at the *Stockport Messenger*.

Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (IFL)



UCATT delegate casting his block vote at the 1980 TUC. Photo: Militant

Minister Tom King has recently unveiled their next objectives—banning strikes in essential services and protecting the right to scab. The FBU are already demanding support because they understand they will be deemed an essential service and denied the right to strike.

Congress last year accepted unanimously a motion that called for a 24-hour day of action if any person was sacked at GCHQ for insisting on the right to belong to a trade union.

Since the announcement back in January 1984, the TUC have never pushed this dispute to a conclusion. The half-hearted calls have resulted in a response.

The day following the announcement, more than 100 social security offices shut and the day of protest in February saw thousands taking action with both rail and newspapers hit.

Now is the time to prepare for deeper action. The civil service unions will ballot their membership if a dismissal notice is issued.

Eric Hammond, has similarly declared an intention to ballot his union's members in the power industry. If agreed it would black out the country. He sees this issue as "fundamental to the continuation of the trade union movement".

These words must seem ironic to those sacked NGA members who fought to defend trade union rights against Shah's *Messenger* Group in Warrington.

Undoubtedly, this action is an attempt to diffuse the growing criticism being levelled at the way the EETPU's right wing are pushing the union out on a limb. They understand the power supply industry is next in line for the Tories' attention. Even a tame bosses' union can occasionally make a noise, or its sham is clearly exposed.

All-out stoppage

These ballots will, however, only begin when the members are sacked. The whole movement should be mobilised in a 24-hour general strike the day after any single dismissal notice is served. The ballot and the campaign, if launched now, will serve as warning to the Tories. The Civil Service unions must prepare for an all out stoppage. This time the battle must be seen through to the end. The trade unions cannot remain politically neutral in the present

epoch. Even a 'non-political' union like NALGO, voted for electing a Labour government as the best way to combat privatisation.

The only alternative being offered by some union leaders, however, is to wait for the return of a Labour government. But attacks on jobs, services and living standards are taking place now. Merely waiting for an election will be too expensive for our class.

The mood does now exist for the election of a Labour government. The changes of fortune of the Labour Party are due to the miners' strike not in spite of it. It shattered any lingering idea of 'one nation' nurtured so effectively by the Tories after the Falklands war. Today the ever-increasing chasm that exists between the classes is plainly seen.

having regard for the need for higher investment and control of price increases. In that context Congress calls on the next Labour government to respect the right of trade unions and their members to democratically determine their own demands."

This sacrifice of working class living standards, which is what such deals also lead to, will be justified in the name of unity. It abandons all the lessons of pay restraint under successive Labour governments.

The working class now see the essential need for unity in action, especially after the miners' strike, certainly on the linking of the industrial struggle to the political battle. The union leaders however are turning this mood of unity on its head by using it to argue for support for the right wing policies being pushed by the leaders in the Labour Party.

Political ballots

They all feared, bar none, the outcome of the political ballots. To date all the unions who have declared the result have had overwhelming votes in favour of retaining political funds. Whitty, the new General Secretary, at one time believed that Labour could retain 20 per cent of the income from this source. These ballot results could be used as a beginning of a campaign to rid us of this Tory government.

The attempt by the Tories to create non-political trade unions have failed. Again the right wing leaders are coming to their aid. Discussions are being held about a new 'moderate' centre being formed.

The reverse will be the case. The working class will turn its attention to the political field. Industrial action alone cannot keep up living standards. The capitalist class will increasingly try to place burdens on workers' backs, opening up an era of political confrontation. Trade unions will be forced to become more political.

The growing success of the Marxists in the trade unions is a clear reflection of the correctness of our political perspectives and tactical orientation and the confidence that Marxism has in the ability of the working class to fight. If the TUC gives a lead, the working class will respond.

with expulsion to follow if they do not change their ways. The left in the EETPU should be warning that the consequences of the present policies are leading their union to disaster.

But other unions are running from a fight with the Tories. Many union leaders want a re-think.

The Engineers and Managers Association want the General Council to invoke no disciplinary proceedings against unions taking government money for ballots and any in the pipeline to be dropped.

Clive Jenkins, the general secretary of ASTMS, is in favour of reviewing the situation.

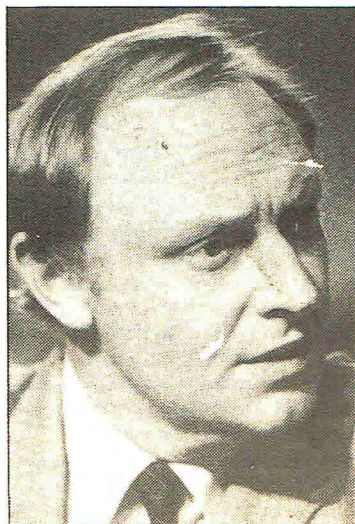
The GMBATU soft-peddles with a call for no further applications to be made by affiliated unions for government funds for ballots. They want those unions which have already accepted money to place it in a special fund.

The EETPU are hoping to exploit the desire to avoid conflict with the government and within the TUC. One of their motions aims at bringing about full-scale retreat: "the decisions taken at the Wembley 1982 conference of executives were dependent upon the election of a Labour government at the subsequent general election. Accordingly, Congress believes it is now timely to review those decisions."

The Wembley speeches and spirit have faded. They had, according to item five of the Wembley agreement, "Support from the movement", and the duty to "coordinate action by other affiliated unions in support of the union in difficulties, including, if necessary,

calling for industrial action against the employer concerned, or more widely."

This was ditched at the time of the NGA dispute with Eddie Shah at the *Stockport Messenger*. Snared in the nets of the Tory judges and their belief in honouring 'the law of the land', the General Council turned its back on the Post Office Engineers, the NGA, the civil servants at GCHQ and the miners.



Neil Kinnock

The phrase 'business as usual', coined by Len Murray meant no preparation or explanation to the membership concerning the likely battles resulting from the Tories' attacks.

All this backtracking at each stage made the Tories more resolute in pushing through the next phase of their attacks.



Norman Willis

The movement can accept no deals before the election that would pave the way for attacks by an incoming Labour government on living standards. An incomes policy must be ruled out.

Yet incomes policy will be discussed. The UCW have amended the TASS motion in support of free collective bargaining to accommodate pay restraint within some new 'social contract.'

It subtly changes the motion. The original motion says: "Congress reaffirms its support for free collective bargaining." The amendment inserts "within the framework of a planned and agreed economic strategy, taking account of the overriding need to create jobs and improve living standards for those most in need. Also

Photo: Dave Sinclair

Chile, Bolivia

Letter
from
ChileProtests grow
-opposition
still divided

DURING THE recent lull in the struggle against the Chilean dictator Pinochet, thousands of people have been arrested, many being tortured and killed as the right-wing of the regime moved onto the offensive.

However the repression has failed to destroy the determination of the workers and youth to struggle against the dictatorship.

We publish below extracts from a letter recently received from Chile. Since the letter was received the regime has entered a new period of

crisis. Mendoza, hated ex-police chief and member of the junta since 1973, has been forced to resign. His resignation was provoked by information of killings by uniformed police being made available by the secret police, the CNI.

Ruthless public expenditure cuts, have reduced the wages paid on the government works schemes (PEM) by up to 50 per cent. Workers on the PEM schemes are now estimated to spend 80 per cent of their wages on buying bread alone.

Due to the labour laws different factories have certain months in which to negotiate wages and conditions, and this year there has been a certain upturn in the industrial struggle with some factories recently taking strike action. Three for example in the footwear industry.

What has been very important is that the police have given some support. Even the military police. In one strike the riot police took collecting boxes to pass around. There have been many examples of police on duty giving money and expressing support.

The general political situation shows that the right are divided. There are some around Pinochet, (the National Action Movement and the Independent Democratic Union) with this or that 'personality' around them but nothing else.

On the other hand the National Party now wants a transition and agreement with the Christian Democracy (CD) for a centre-right coalition to replace the regime. They want to keep out the workers' parties.

In the CD there are many divisions. The right wing appear to have the majority and don't want to include the workers' parties. However their membership, especially around the trade unions want to work with the Communist and Socialist parties.

Overall the capitalists seem to be trying to put together a centre-right coalition but can't get an agreement amongst themselves. They still have no clear strategy to resolve the crisis. It is clear that through the National Party they have discussed again with the tops of the armed forces about action to get rid of Pinochet. The officers still say '... but there is no-one to hand the power to'.

A protest was called recently. The level of participation was higher. Eighty-seven arrests took place in the city centre. Armed police were out in force throughout the city. Stationed every 10 metres in groups of five or six in Alameda (the main street in the centre of Santiago) and along the Mopochero river.

Some sections of the trade union leaders are again talking about a general strike. A conference has been called for 3 August. We think the pressure will be very great for a strike to be called. The Socialist

Party is divided and the Communist Party (CP) has moved to the right at the top. This has caused a lot of opposition from the youth with some even being expelled from the CP. The leaders are talking about an agreement with everybody and even of the need to speak to the armed forces. Can you imagine it? Talking to those murderers.

A series of trials have taken place against the police. Over the last 12 years the judiciary has done nothing. Suddenly 14 policemen and CNI men are on trial for torture and killings. Even names and photos have appeared in the press. The capitalists are clearly trying to clean up the image of the judiciary. Some of the police seeing the explosion which is coming are trying to distance themselves. It is a bit of a farce in the courts. But you know the Communist Party has gone along with the whole thing. They speak about the 'impartiality and reliability of the judiciary'.

Linked to this there has been sharp upturn in the activity of the para-military groups. They are acting like lunatics and independently of the officers and it's not usually on orders from above. But kidnappings, disappearances, and torture have all been on the increase. Two students came out of a tube station the other day in broad daylight and were bundled into a car and have not been seen since. The CNI said they had nothing to do with it.

The pressure is building up each day. Here things are quite black. Almost every day they are arresting people and torturing groups. They said that they didn't belong to the security services in the case of those who were found with their throats cut.

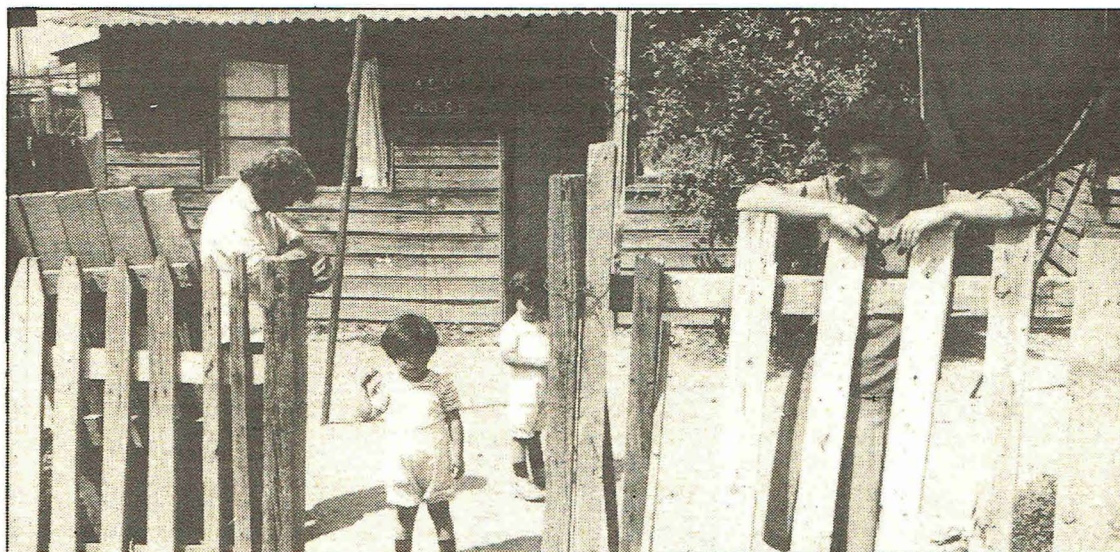
Two students from the university have been kidnapped three times and have crosses carved into their chests and nipples. They have also taken a woman twice and carved crosses into her breasts.

These are the cases most widely known. Others have taken place at local level. Not for nothing did the USA pressurise extremely hard for the lifting of the state of siege, (they don't want another Nicaragua if they can avoid it). The problem is that the lifting of the state of siege hasn't signified anything and the repression still continues.



Dictator Pinochet and generals in Santiago.

Photo: Jacob Sutton (Reflex)



Santiago shanty town.

Photo: Jacob Sutton (Reflex)

Bolivian leader wants IMF
support for stability

THE 190th government in Bolivia's 159 years' history has taken office: Victor Paz Estenssoro, leader for the nationalist National Revolution Movement (MNR) has been elected president.

He defeated Hugo Banzer, a previous military dictator responsible for at least 200 deaths, 14,750 jailings and 19,140 exiles. Ironically, Paz was an early supporter of Banzer's 1971 coup.

Paz takes over from Hernan Siles who himself came to power in October 1982 when the dictatorship of General Luis Meza Garcia was brought down by a general strike. Siles, supported by the pro-Moscow Communist Party, then became president. He demanded '100 days of sacrifice', setting the tone by cancelling an expensive contract for the showing of *Dallas*!

Austerity

His programme of austerity met with determined resistance. By March 1985 there had been at least 10 general strikes, covering 35 days in 1984 and 16 days in 1985. The *Wall Street Journal* (8 February) reported:

"In one recent fairly typical week workers in 34 factories took 180 business executives hostage in wage disputes". In December 1984 nine cabinet ministers were taken hostage by government employees demanding overdue wages. The water supply to the presidential palace was cut off at one stage by the water workers! It was therefore only a matter of time before the president, who went through 74 ministers and six cabinets in two



Deposed Junta chief Garcia Meza.

They have not forgotten that the 1952 revolution in which the army was virtually destroyed started as a coup. It was left to this same Victor Paz as head of the 'revolutionary' government to reconstruct the armed forces that eventually retook control. In fact the 10 hour abduction of Siles in July 1984 brought 100,000 workers onto the streets and a general strike! The *Irish Times* (2 July, 1984) was moved to comment:

"The failure of the military abductors to gain any more support for their coup attempt indicates that even...the coup-prone Bolivian armed forces are now reluctant to inherit the enormous economic and social problems which plague the country."

The working class, organised in the COB (trade union movement), is the only force capable of bringing 'order' to the lives of the Bolivian people. The leaders of the COB have always used their influence to take the movement to the brink only to prevaricate and fumble. "Look at what democracy has brought us" commented a peasant to one journalist, indicting that not unlimited time is available before the military feels confident for a successful coup.

The economic outlook remains bleak. Estenssoro, supported by the pro-Peking Communist Party, has already said that he will seek IMF backing for a 'stabilisation programme'. The COB leaders should now match the determination of the Bolivian working class to demand a workers' government committed to socialist planning to release the enormous wealth of Bolivia for the benefit of the workers and peasants.

years, should eventually succumb and call elections one year early.

Wages have risen by 1,500 per cent since 1982 but in real terms wages are only 50 per cent of what they were in 1980.

Inflation reached 329 per cent in 1983, 2,700 per cent in 1984 and is predicted to reach 40,000 per cent during 1985. However, the *Wall Street Journal* points out that prices rose in January 1985 at an annualised rate of 116,000 per cent!

Siles' reaction in the end was to go on hunger strike, in a powerful symbol of paralysis—the 70-year head of state threatened to kill himself!

In fact there are only two powerful forces in Bolivian society. Firstly the army, the traditional bringer of 'order.' But it is the army that fears a coup at the moment. They fear the response of the workers.

S.A. economic slide hits black workers

THE BACKGROUND to the upheavals now taking place in South Africa is a capitalist system chronically incapable of providing the necessities of life for the vast majority of the population.

As even the capitalist press recognises, "the SA economy is in a mess" (*Sunday Times*, 28 July 1985). It continues:

"Inflation now nudges 17 per cent. Unemployment is rising sharply—up 68 per cent on a year ago—with all sections of South Africa affected.

"No accurate figures for the black population are available. But an estimated 3 million out of the 25 million black population are unemployed, half of these in the hated black homelands. Even the reduction in bank rates to 21 per cent has not helped.

"Blacks are suffering most of all. At the Albert Street labour bureau in central Johannesburg only a few hundred yards from the glittering shops of the Carlton Centre, hundreds of unemployed gather every day in the forlorn

hope of finding a job. They besiege passers-by, asking for any kind of work, regular or casual.

"One growing channel for black resentment—the increasingly militant black trade unions—has serious economic implications... Strikes are becoming more overtly political...

"White unemployment, previously almost unknown, has begun to bite, and has risen alarmingly over a year. Middle-class professionals are discovering what it is to be out of work for months

at a time.

"Continuing austerity measures by the government have simply added to the misery. The increase in general sales tax from 10 per cent to 12 per cent has hardened consumer resistance, leading Sanlam, one of SA's largest insurance companies, to project a 2.5 per cent decline in spending over 1985.

"Port Elizabeth, the Detroit of SA, is now derisively called the "ghost on the coast." The large car-makers—Ford, General Motors and Volkswagen—are

operating at half capacity. Only three of the country's 10 car makers expect to make a profit this year. Sales figures are 52 per cent down on June 1984.

"In British terms, that would be the equivalent to knocking Austin Rover out of the market completely, taking a good chunk of Ford as well.

"The housing market has crashed... Ominously for the white community, the outflow of 'funk money' is accelerating... People are following the flight of money."

Life in a black township

THE ANGER and hatred pouring from the black townships in South Africa marks the bursting out of a revolutionary struggle against the apartheid regime.

The fine thread of relative stability has finally broken as the mass of black workers and youth prepare to challenge for power.

The youthful black working class has been driven into confrontation through the intolerable and debasing existence forced on them by South Africa's system of segregation.

The conditions and struggles of the 30,000 blacks in Duduza, for example, are a microcosm of those of the millions of township dwellers. Situated on the East Rand outside the mining town of Nigel, it is one of the many townships which have exploded into near-insurrectionary struggle in recent months and is now under military rule.

With no sewerage system, so-called "night-soil"—in homes and schools alike—must be deposited in buckets, which are collected only three times a week. (In protest residents dumped "night-soil" outside the government's township offices in February).

Tarred roads and electricity are absent. The only water is provided by communal taps, only one for every 15 homes.

Since last September, mass resistance escalated rapidly, around rents, the situation in the schools, and against collaborating "councillors" and black policemen. Almost the entire community, including migrant workers in the

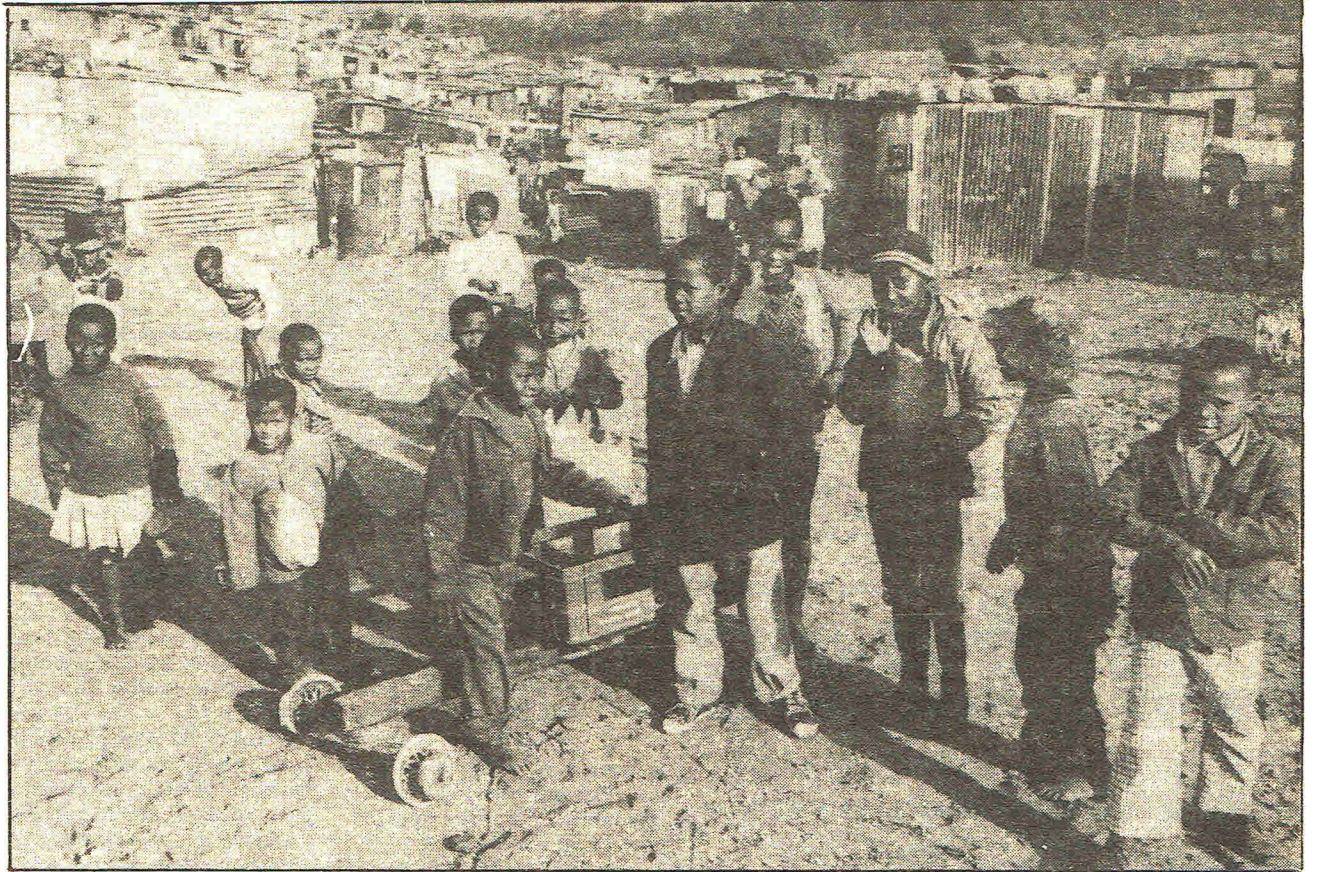
hostels, is organised into the civic association or the youth congress—with a leadership largely of union members and youth. In the period before the emergency six area committees—one for each main road—were formed.

Against this resistance the regime for months threw in teargas, rubber bullets, buckshot, dogs, a "seal-and-search" raid which interrogated even children of 10. Numbers of activists "disappeared", or were seen taken off by police wearing balaclavas.

This only hardened the mood. This is vividly illustrated by an incident which occurred only weeks before the emergency at a funeral of activists killed by police in KwaThema, also on the East Rand. In the course of the funeral black police guarding the mayor's house fired at and killed two youths.

The crowd immediately began to discuss storming the mayor's house. To a priest warning them it would be suicidal, youth argued that "some of us might die but the policemen have to run out of bullets".

The willingness to struggle, even to die, is everywhere to be seen. As one layer of leaders is arrested or "disappears" so a new one is ready to take its place. Botha has warned that he is prepared to use harsher methods but the white ruling class have an impossible task in rooting out opposition. They turn their backs on events, fearful of white reaction while the resentment continues to boil up from below.



Dwellings in a black township in South Africa. The recession is driving more black workers into mass poverty and unemployment.

American telegraph workers strike

OAKLAND, 1 August. Six thousand, five hundred Western Union employees, members of the United Telegraph Workers Union went on strike on 27 July.

The United Telegraph workers can add themselves to the long list of trade unionists that are being attacked as the economy slips further into decline.

Only last year, the Western Union employers approached the UTW asking for wage cuts. The cuts were necessary for the company's future, bankruptcy couldn't be prevented otherwise.

The UTW offered to take a 15 per cent pay cut but the employers turned it down claiming that it wasn't

enough. They wanted the removal of severance pay and the shifting of health benefit costs onto the workers. With no national health service then these costs can be exorbitant.

It was finally agreed that the UTW would accept a 10 per cent cut in pay to help the company but this was only temporary and that the 10 per cent would be paid back in July 1985.

When the deadline came the employer reneged and not only did they refuse to repay the money, they said the only way this money would be repaid was if the workers gave up job security and the health benefit scheme. The company also wanted to contract out work

and have temporary workers in at a reduced rate of mere five dollars seventy five \$5.75. All this as well as laying off 1,500 to 2,000 workers.

Open books

Before the strike, the union demanded that the company open up its books, a demand that was upheld in the courts. The company managed to get a stay order on this and it is as yet unresolved.

The workers are out on the streets and Western Union have been using supervisors, temporary workers and retired workers to man the offices.

Larry Ross, a branch

official for the United Telegraph Worker Local 34, said that management had been threatening to reduce the pensions of the retired workers if they didn't scab.

Although strike figures show a decrease in the States, the figures do not include strikes of under 1,000 workers. In the San Francisco Bay area strikers appear to be on the increase. The Western Union strike is no isolated example and it's this type of management tactics that will drive the American working class into action. American workers true to their traditions will fight back and move towards independent political action in the form of a Labour Party.

'Framed' Pakistani trade unionist hanged by military

AYAZ SAMOO, a trade unionist, faced execution at the hands of Zia's military regime in Pakistan. Sadly despite strong protests Samoo, aged 22 was executed on 26 June.

Mohammed Zaman, an active member of the National Union of Public Employees (NUPE), who chairs St Mary's Hospital branch in Paddington, London, recently contacted MPs and union leaders about Samoo's plight.

Samoo was a local union leader who sympathised with the outlawed Pakistan People's Party (PPP) deposed

by Zia in his military coup in 1977. On 6 December last, Samoo was arrested and held under martial law. He was beaten and tortured before being accused of the murder of Zahur Bhopali jointly with Sadiq Umrani—despite the fact that the latter was in jail at the time for the murder! Ayaz Samoo was sentenced to death by a secret military court.

Innocent

His friends and family knew he was totally innocent. His sentence was given as a warning to others who

represent their fellow workers not to get involved with the PPP. On the eve of his execution, Samoo's family were summoned to Karachi jail, having been told that he was ill. Surprised at this act of consideration his family turned up only to be placed under arrest. They were told that Samoo was to be hanged within hours and they were to take away his body. They would not be allowed to leave until after the execution so that his supporters could not be informed.

Sympathisers did get hold of the news however, and

immediately contacted the Chief Minister of the province who declared himself helpless as the case was in the hands of the military governor.

Blood sample

Samoo was killed secretly because of the regime's fear of public outrage. Only a week previously the People's Party had circulated a letter stating that a sample of Samoo's blood they had got tested in Britain did not match the blood group of the person who committed the murder. Samoo was

clearly framed. To prevent demands for an independent analysis of Samoo's blood group by an internationally recognised body, the regime moved swiftly to end his life.

Such was Samoo's stature in the public's eyes, over seventy thousand people took part in his funeral procession. The regime may have killed one man but they were unable to kill off what he stood for.

Mohammed Zaman thanked those in Britain who tried to help save his life on behalf of his people and the PPP. He is now anxious to build support for those trade

unionists and socialists in Pakistan in their struggle for democratic rights and legitimate trade unions by committing more fellow union activists in this country to a campaign.

Information

Some NUPE members have already shown willing to give what support they can. If you would like more information or invite a speaker to a union or Labour Party branch write to Mohammed Zaman, c/o St Mary's Hospital, London W2.



THE MINERS' strike of 1984-85 saw the longest mass strike in British, American or European history. This historic event has now been captured in a new book titled *Blood, Sweat and Tears—photographs from the Great Miners Strike*.

A compilation of over 150 photographs, it graphically illustrates all aspects of the year-long strike.

Inspired by photographer John Sturrock and financed by individuals and the National Union of Journalists, it features the work of 21 different photographers (who all donated their work).

Blood, Sweat and Tears costs £6 and is available from Artworker Books, 34 Evering Road, London N16 7QJ.

With all proceeds going to the NUM Hardship Fund for victimised miners, *Blood, Sweat and Tears* should be on the bookshelf of every socialist in the country.

Blood, Sweat and Tears – the great miners' strike



Photographs from the book, clockwise: Christmas dinner at Cadeby, near Rotherham (Photo: John Sturrock); Striking miners end the occupation of Betteshanger pit in Kent (Photo: PA); Message to scabs in a pit village (Photo: John Sturrock); Easington, September 1984 (Photo: Chris Killip); Centre: billboard outside Armthorpe shop (Photo: John Harris).

Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism. Write to *Militant*, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB

Ordeal miners face in prison

Dear Comrades,

I had to write after reading about Mrs Tracey Best (wife of a miner recently imprisoned). I am very bitter. It is a disgrace that the courts can imprison men with families for three years. The judge I had on my case was a right Tory. I know how my mother felt, and I was only in for three months.

Prison life really got on top of me, I was in with a person doing life for murder. In prison I was treated like rubbish. They tried to make me shift coal, but I told them what to do with it, even though

it meant doing the whole three months. I lost two and a half stone and got plenty of stick from the prison officers.

I would like to say to Mrs Best she and her husband have my sympathy. Here's hoping we soon all get reinstated and husbands get reunited with their families. Let's hope we all get back to normal, getting rid of this Tory government and getting Labour in.

Yours fraternally
Stuart Stephenson
Easington NUM
Durham

Defend jobs and culture

Dear Comrades,

On Friday 9 August, six members of Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Cymraeg (Welsh Language Society) were arrested at the Welsh National Eisteddfod in Rhyl. They were part of a crowd of 120 which caused £3,000 worth of damage to a Welsh Office stand.

The demonstration was aimed at drawing attention to organisations such as Clwyd County Council and

the Polytechnic of Wales, who were alleged not to be doing enough to support the Welsh language. At the same time a protest is building up over the decision that Gwynedd County Council acted illegally in operating an employment policy excluding non-Welsh speakers; only 19 per cent of the population of Wales speak Welsh.

The decline of the Welsh language over the last century can be directly linked to the systematic suppression of the Welsh culture by the English ruling class. Lower wages and high unemploy-

Temps vulnerable

Dear Comrades,

You are totally vulnerable while temporarily employed through employment agencies. While working for one of these agencies I was dismissed midway through the job I was employed to carry out.

The problem is that workers employed by these

agencies have no rights as far as the bosses are concerned, and you are entirely at their whim.

I was given no proper explanation whatsoever apart from the incredulous reason that I'd been listening to a radio during a work-break. I'd heard of the persecution of radio-owners during World War II but this was ridiculous.

Yours fraternally
Kevin Williamson
Edinburgh

Cost of redundancies

Dear Comrades,

Look at the cost of mass redundancies. If 40,000 workers lost their jobs, in say a major employer like the steel industry, what does it mean in cold financial terms? If they were all paying around £30 tax, that's £1,200,000 lost every week. Then say they only spent £10 a week on goods while employed, that's another £400,000 lost to the economy. The cost of loss production and the cost of keeping them on the dole could be at least £200 a

week. It totals £9,600,000 lost ever week.

This doesn't include the hidden human cost, nor the money lost to associated businesses.

The next phase of Thatcher's plan is to take on the railway workers. Let's hope those workers stand firm. But that is not enough. There must be thousands of men and women up and down the country who want to have a go and get rid of Thatcher. Why wait, why hesitate?—get involved. Fill in the form on the back page of the paper and get involved in the fight to boot the Tories out.

Yours fraternally
Mike King
Southampton

ment in Wales have led to young people emigrating to England and abroad, further diluting Welsh speakers in Wales, as the rich buy up holiday homes.

While the Eisteddfod protest was going on an announcement was made not 20 miles away that 150 Courtalds workers are being laid off at the Deeside mill plant. This is the last remaining plant since the closure of the Wrexham factory and the Greenford mill site (with a loss of 600 jobs). On the same day 70 workers were sacked by Rushcliffe Ltd of Wyddgrug (Mold).

Only socialism can guarantee real jobs and respect and support for a people's language and culture. Endless electioneering rhetoric from the Welsh Labour Party leadership and mindless, aimless protests from the nationalists do not provide any solutions. As we saw in the miners' strike English, Welsh and Scottish workers can unite against the common enemy—the parasitical capitalist class.

Yours fraternally
Gwyn Price Morris
Bedford

LEFT and RIGHT

Sunday crimes

THE BUSINESS Section of the *Sunday Times* (4 August) warns its readers to have nothing to do with an attempt to cash in on the Queen Mother's 85th birthday. The Library of Heirloom Investments firm are offering 32 gold imposed 'stamps' depicting scenes from the royal life, going for £14.50 each or £542 the set. The *ST* warns: "Besides flouting royal protocol, they have been condemned as almost worthless by the stamp trade." But what do we find in the *ST*'s down market sister paper, the *News of the World* on the very same day? Yes a full page ad in the colour supplement for the "almost worthless" stamps. The owners of both papers, News International, may be concerned for their middle class *ST* readers, but as for the plebs, well...

In Franco's footsteps

SPAIN'S 'SOCIALIST' prime minister, Felipe Gonzalez, has taken time off from demanding 'austerity and sacrifice' from the masses to take a three day holiday cruise on the navy yacht *Azor* complete with its 47 strong crew. Its not just the luxurious lifestyle that has angered the Spanish labour movement. An annual cruise on the *Azor* was also the favourite summer past time of the former dictator Franco (from which he used to fish for dolphins). Gonzalez answered his critics saying: "It's time for politicians to rid themselves of reluctance to use any buildings etc associated with the previous (Franco) regime. Otherwise it's only a waste of public money."

End of a dream

UNEMPLOYMENT IS still gripping Switzerland. Unemployment figures have always been kept artificially low through the Swiss economy's ruthless use of immigrant workers for public sector 'dirty jobs', on short term contracts. However, the leap to one percent unemployment last year and the current figure of 0.9 per cent unemployment has hit mainly women workers. While the rest of Europe may dream of such low figures, the current rate has sent convulsions through Swiss society. Especially when you consider that as recently as 1974, out of a population of six million the unemployed numbered only three.

Abolition threat must be fought

COUNCIL WORKERS in the Metropolitan councils and GLC are threatened with the loss of thousands of jobs following the successful passage of Tory legislation to abolish their authorities.

A mass campaign must be launched by the trade union and labour movement to prepare industrial action to defend these jobs and the services they provide.

With the failure of the publicity and lobbying campaign, abolition is now a fact.

Workers are desperately concerned about the future of their jobs. The unions must show that after the failure of parliamentary and political manoeuvres they are now determined to mobilise the entire movement in a fight for jobs.

After using the tactic of 'non-cooperation' with any measures leading to abolition as a substitute for a fighting campaign with the council workforce, Ken Livingstone pushed through its abandonment at the GLC. His new 'realistic' stance was rapidly followed by the local and national Labour leaderships.

A recent NALGO special advisory conference on abolition voted to maintain the non-cooperation position, as for the moment does the TUC. Unfortunately the trade union leaderships involved show no sign of launching the militant campaign necessary to prepare the membership to defeat the imminent threat to jobs.

Amendment

Metropolitan county and GLC delegates to the NALGO conference supported the National Local Government Committee against an amendment from Knowsley Metropolitan district moved and seconded by Militant supporters Roger Bannister and Roger Bradley (West Yorks Met county).

The position of Met county and GLC delegates at the brunt of abolition carried the conference despite the unease of many delegates and the likelihood of the collapse of the existing strategy as members become more and more concerned about their futures.

Moving the Knowsley amendment Roger Bannister deplored the Labour Party

By a Militant local government correspondent

decision to nominate for successor committees and boards against the express wishes of the Met county Labour Groups and NALGO.

But, he argued, the fact of abolition and the consequences of Labour's decision cannot be ignored. After all, the Labour Party was the other half of the 'non-cooperation' strategy.

NALGO should now, he said, hold the Labour Party to its promise that as soon as its nominees took their places on successor committees and boards their first task would be to ascertain if central government financing is sufficient to maintain manpower and services.

They must then immediately report back to their parties and the trade unions and review their position if resources are inadequate.

Recognising that the Tories intend to impose major job losses, NALGO must prepare for industrial action to fight redundancies by September-October.

Militant supporters in the Labour Party will be arguing for Labour nominees to such bodies to refuse to give credibility to any redundancies, deterioration in conditions of service or cuts in services to the public resulting from their creation as tools of the Tory Secretary of State.

Livingstone has openly described his arguments as the 'dented shield' position. But it will only further destroy workers' confidence in Labour if its representatives give credibility to successor bodies destroying jobs and services. As soon as it becomes clear Labour representatives cannot halt such policies they should withdraw.

Roger Bradley criticised non-cooperation as it has been implemented as always having been the soft option strategy for NALGO. It had precipitated hardly a day's strike in any of the Met

county branches in all the time it had operated, he said.

Ninety five per cent of the membership could vote for it in the sure knowledge that there was little they could co-operate about nor would they be asked. The other five per cent—the chief officers who could co-operate—had shown repeated willingness to do so.

Having witnessed treachery by the chief officers and successive 'cave-ins' by the Labour Party leadership in the last year on non-co-operation, the Met county NALGO membership have largely lost faith in it as a sanction.

Whilst they might still be persuaded not to co-operate with transfer to successor authorities until NALGO obtains a satisfactory agreement on jobs and services, they certainly wanted their trade union to be involved now in any discussion the successor joint committees or boards might be holding about their futures.

Danger

If local and national leaderships of NALGO continued to try to hold them behind their unrealistic position of total non-cooperation with successor bodies at this stage, there was a danger that their support could be lost completely, resulting in a disastrous scramble for jobs as soon as the successor bodies advertise them, beginning with the top posts.

The Tory government would not be fooled by bluff, he said. Well before the question of transfer to successor authorities, NALGO should make a stand on resources and prepare the membership for industrial action.

In rejecting the Knowsley amendment some Met county delegates seemed genuinely to believe that non-cooperation would eventually result in industrial action arising from sympathetic support for some member victimised for refusing to co-operate.

This has never happened. Chief officers have avoided victimisations knowing they'd receive no support from the Labour leaders of the Met counties and the GLC. In any case jobs and

services cannot be left to depend upon unplanned last minute spontaneous industrial action.

For some Met county delegates and NALGO's NEC, the non-co-operation strategy continues to provide a pretext for avoiding all that would have to go with a campaign of industrial action and the hard task of preparing the membership for it.

They will claim that they at least stuck to the 'principle' of non-co-operation until the membership deserted them.

NALGO must rally its members in London and the Met county areas behind a campaign of industrial action to prevent jobs and services being lost or wages cut as a result of abolition and should canvass support for this position from local Labour Parties, he finished. Labour Party members must commit their parties and Labour Groups to full support for such action by local authority workers.

The fight now is for adequate finance in 1986/87 or the successor Met district and London borough councils to be able to continue Met county services without cuts.



GLC leader Ken Livingstone. Photo: Militant

The focus of the campaign now is no different from that in Liverpool, Lambeth and Edinburgh. It is a fight against cuts in local government services.

If the government persists in trying to cut the current Met county and GLC jobs and services by starving the successor councils of finance, jobs and services in Met district and London Boroughs will be equally threatened

Industrial action

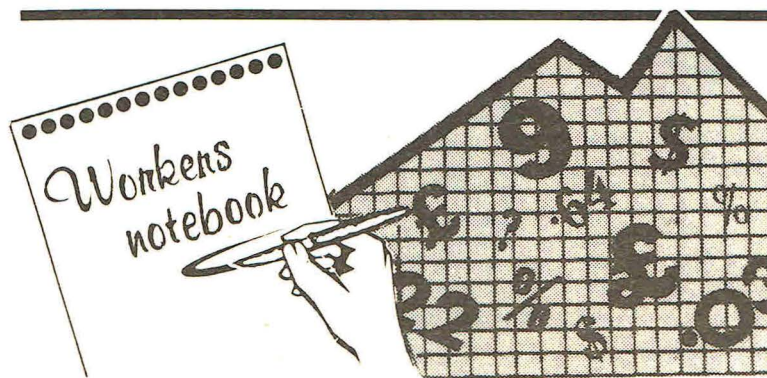
Met district and London Borough branches of NALGO must therefore unite with the Met and GLC branches in the campaign for adequate finance and must be involved in the industrial action which will be necessary to achieve this.

All Met district and London borough Labour Parties should as a matter of urgency seek to commit their councils to the principles of:

- ★ No job loss and no detriment to Met county and GLC staff.
- ★ No cuts in services levels or privatisation of Met county services.
- ★ Continuance of Met county and GLC services on a county-wide and borough basis.
- ★ No implementation of the abolition proposals until the government allocates adequate finance for met county and GLC services in 1986/87 to achieve the above.
- ★ Support industrial action by the local government trade unions in defence of jobs, conditions and services.



GLC and Inner London Education Authority staff protest against abolition in January 1984.



THE MAIN Latin American countries now owe a total of \$435 billion in national debt. Brazil now owes international creditors \$103bn, Mexico \$96bn, Venezuela \$34bn, Argentina \$48bn, Chile \$20bn, Peru \$14bn, Ecuador \$7.5bn and Columbia \$12.5bn. The International Monetary Fund's solution to these debt mountains in the past has been to call for Latin American countries to carry through austerity programmes. This they have carried out ruthlessly, yet producing no solution.

THE TWO main civil service unions, CPSA and SCPS have completed a report which shows that since 1979 1,000 staff have been cut from the customs service. In the same period heroin smuggling has increased 640 per cent, cocaine 220 per cent and cannabis 100 per cent. The two unions point out that the customs service needs at least 1,236 new staff to bring custom control up to an adequate level.

The Knowsley amendment to the NALGO Special Advisory Conference on abolition called on the union to:

1. Cooperate with Coordinating Committees, Joint Boards and Committees in which Labour representatives are participating up to and including feasibility studies on the continuation of services on condition that there is regular negotiation between the bodies and the union.
2. Absolute non-cooperation with any sort of implementation of abolition, or transfer of functions until the objectives of maintenance of jobs, conditions of service and public services are achieved for all Metropolitan County and GLC members.
3. Urge the National Local Government Committee to liaise with the other unions, the Labour party and the Labour Councillors, in order to adopt a common strategy between the Labour Party and the TUC Local Government Committee...
4. Urge the National Local Government Committee to take all necessary steps to prepare the membership... for industrial action, including strike action, should moves be made to implement abolition or transfer of functions before guarantees of jobs, conditions and public services are obtained...

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

Union split leaves no defence

DURING THE miners' strike at the now infamous Daw Mill pit in Warwickshire, only 12 miners out of 1,500 joined the strike.

Daw Mill is now the pace-setter in the Coal Board's plan to break the NUM. A ballot of miners at the pit has been much-reported in the press; 826 miners voted to 'leave the NUM'.

What is significant is that despite the difficult conditions 20 times the number of those who struck voted to remain with the NUM.

The arrangements for the ballot provide a partial answer as to the 'yes' vote. The other key factor has been the role of the leadership of the two sides in the conflict; on the one hand McGregor, and men like Dick Emery, Daw Mill branch secretary—and on the other the area and national leadership of the NUM.

Ballot

The sequence of events surrounding the ballot was this: Thursday—McGregor visits Daw Mill for "discussions"; Saturday—Daw Mill branch meeting votes to ballot; Tuesday—ballot held, result 826 for a 'split', 249 against, two spoilt papers, about 250 not voting, and about 90 on the sick or on holiday.

The visit of McGregor makes it clear that the Daw Mill 'leaders' are puppets of the Coal Board. It is worth

By Pete McNally
(Coventry South-East CLP)

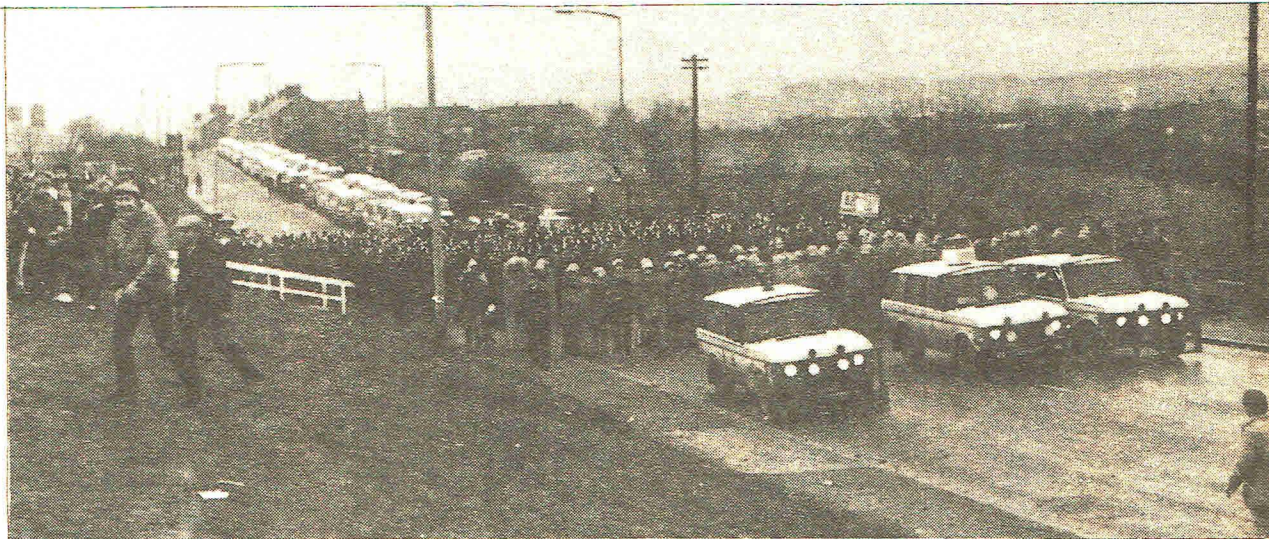
noting that breakaway leader Dick Emery (not the comedian, but an aspiring amateur), has been doing his homework on the issues of pay and bonuses. He has visited West Virginia and Pittsburgh, USA and saw one pit which produces 50 per cent more than even the mighty Daw Mill. Mr Emery was said to be impressed.

Will the Daw Mill miners be 'impressed' to know that the US pit only employs a quarter of the number at Daw Mill? The Americans are reported to be earning £27,000 per year. But not all year round or every year. The lack of protective legislation means miners can be laid off for months when demand drops.

And when the US miners are at work, all is not rosy. There are no baths or canteens.

Split from the power of the national union they will be a sitting duck for future management attacks. Any concessions given now will be taken back when the 'new' union is at the mercy of McGregor.

What will the 'new union' propose if management attack them? To call on the



Police mounted para-military style operations against pickets in the miners' strike. Above, riot police at Cortonwood. Yet even the capitalist courts are now finding the police went 'outside the law' in their mass arrests of miners. Photo: Militant

Morale booster for Coventry

AT LAST things seem to be turning in favour of the victimised miners at Coventry colliery.

Following the dropping of cases against miners on trial in Sheffield, Barry Gittings and Ben Roberts, two of the Coventry miners in court in Nottingham on riot charges, have been

acquitted on the orders of the judge

And now an industrial tribunal has ruled in favour of the four strikers who were jailed and sacked after a police attack on a party at the house of strike committee chairman, Colin Ward.

These judgements have raised spirits

NUM to come to their rescue? Will they travel to Yorkshire and South Wales to ask the miners there for help?

The reality is that the decisive weapon of the working class, the strike, will be lost to them because it could never be effective while the

NUM pits continued to work.

Arthur Scargill has met Midlands NUM leaders, and it is to be hoped that a thorough campaign has now been mapped out. It is not too late to defeat the management-inspired Daw Mill breakaway.

The breakaway movement can be stopped if every Daw Mill miner is visited and discussed with, in a patient and friendly fashion, to explain the full position. So far this job has been left to the rank and file. Midlands miners must force the local leadership to play an active

at the pit, but the miners realise that the tribunal result alone is not enough to get their comrades reinstated. They have voted to strike for one day, if the pit management won't let the four have their jobs back. In a ballot, 525 voted in favour of action to 470 against—a tremendous result considering that only about 200 were out at the pit by the end of the strike.

By Tony Cross

Co-op plant faces axe

OVER 420 jobs will be lost if the threat to shut down the 117 year old Co-op Wholesale Society biscuit works in Crumpsall, Manchester goes ahead.

Shop stewards at the works and Manchester Labour councillors have accused the CWS management of acting more like a "Commercial capitalist enterprise rather than part of the labour movement."

Members of Manchester Labour Women's Council met with stewards to discuss the closure. John Manning,

chair of the stewards committee and John Hamilton, USDAW branch secretary, described how the union had been calling on the CWS to reveal its plans for the site for nearly a year. They were told there was no chance of closure but then less than a week later, it was announced the factory had been losing money for three years so it would close and production moved to Harlow in Essex.

John Hamilton said: "It has made a profit for over a hundred years and any losses

now are through no fault of the workforce. The CWS won't invest, saying the factory's too old. We don't agree. The buildings are old but they have been allowed to decay and modernisation could solve the problem. There is plenty of land to build on. They have taken 100 years of profit out of the works and put nothing back."

The closure would have a devastating effect on the area. Two thirds of the workforce are women who rely on their jobs to supple-

ment family incomes, or, increasingly, they are the only wage earners in the home.

Donations and messages of support to Mrs J Liddle, Treasurer Crumpsall Biscuit Works Action Committee, 25, Clevedon Street, Harphey, Manchester.

Co-op and USDAW Broad Left members wishing to get involved with the campaign, write to Colin Wolfenden, 131 Eddy Coleman Court, Salford Prescinct, Salford.

By Kath Newman
(Manchester Labour Women's Council)

Silentnight meeting plans campaign

THE 500 workers at Silentnight bedding company, sacked over a month ago for taking industrial action, are still on strike after 12 weeks.

On 21 August a meeting of the Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union for the whole Silentnight group was held in Manchester. Although shop stewards were present from Silentnight in Barnoldswick, Lancashire, and Sutton, West Yorkshire, management of other factories in the group refused to allow stewards to attend.

Letters

Undeterred, Silentnight stewards pressed their case with the FTAT officials, who represented the other factories. It was agreed that letters should be sent out to all shop-floor workers in the group, explaining that if Silentnight workers lose their fight, workers in smaller factories in the group will find themselves in a very weak position. Mass meetings are to be organised for the other factories, so that speakers from Silentnight can get the message across to production workers throughout the group.

Also at the FTAT meeting were workers from the non-unionised Lay-e-zee (Batley, West Yorkshire), where a shift system has been introduced in an attempt to get Silentnight's work done there. The shift system is be-

ing forced on them, with no bonus payments for the early shift, and only 15p per hour for the back shift.

Letters have gone out from the TUC to all affiliated unions, confirming that the Silentnight strike is official. Silentnight strikers will also be lobbying the TUC conference in Blackpool.

In the meantime, it has been announced that Silentnight has got a large government contract, for a so-far unspecified government ministry.

The local Tory MP for Pendle, John Lee, who up until 1983 was an advisor to the National Furniture and Bedding Federation (largest company: Silentnight) has denied any current associations with the furniture industry. John Lee is now a junior minister and procuror for the Ministry of Defence.

● Last Wednesday, 21 August, a *Militant* readers' meeting in Barnoldswick Civic Hall attracted 60 people, including a large number of Silentnight strikers.

A collection raised £46 for the *Militant* and a further £46 was raised for the Silentnight strike fund.

By Linden Stafford
(Skipton Labour Party)

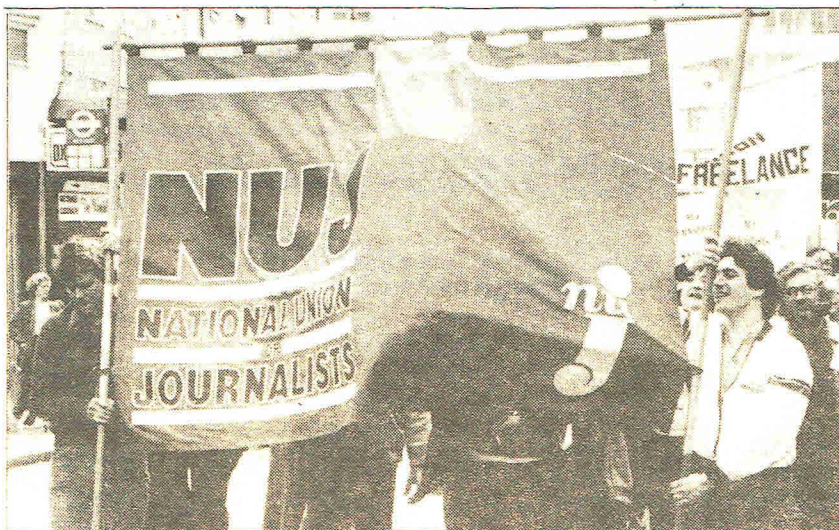
and **Gerry Cumisley**
(FTAT shop steward,
Silentnight,
personal capacity)

Journalists locked out

MEMBERS OF the National Union of Journalists employed by the *Bath and West Evening Chronicle* have been locked out by management since 14 August, following a two day protest strike over management plans to break the national agreement governing bank holiday working.

The agreement says that there should be a day off with pay "on or near" the bank holiday. Management are demanding the right to enforce the practice of bank holiday working, never mind the word "on" in the agreement. The initial protest strike followed management sending out letters to journalists effectively breaking the agreement without negotiation.

At the moment all the members of the NUJ chapel are locked out, with a pale reflection of the normal paper being produced by means of a small



The NUJ national banner. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

number of non-union members and members of the Institute of Journalists.

The paper is part of the Wessex Newspapers organisation, in turn owned by the Westminster Press group, a subsidiary of S Pearson and Sons, who own the *Financial Times*.

In addition to being the largest publishing group in the provincial press, they have considerable business

interests throughout Britain and internationally and have in the past made large donations to the Tory Party, British United Industrialists (a Tory front) and the right wing organisation Aims of Industry. This year though they started donating money to the Liberal/SDP Alliance!

By Angela Anderson

From the coalfields

Miners fight divisive bonus scheme

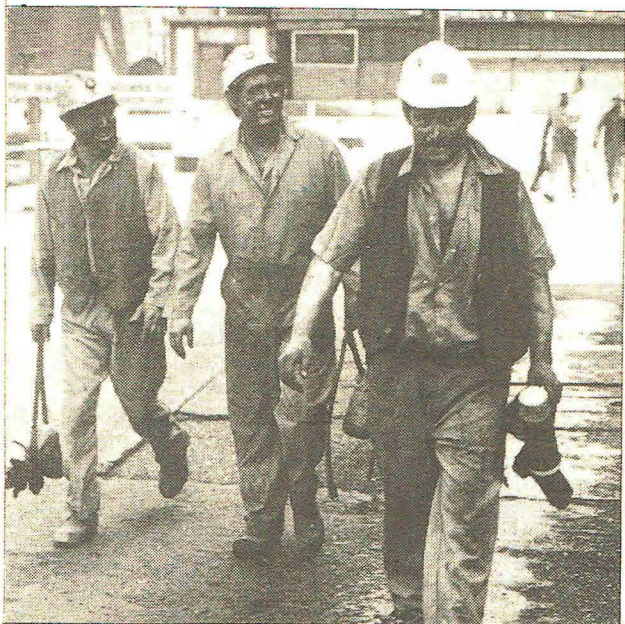
THE COAL Board management at Markham Main colliery, Yorkshire, are trying to go above the union, direct to the workforce.

By Bill Getty

(Markham Main, Doncaster Area NUM, in a personal capacity)

Recently every worker at the pit received an NCB propaganda sheet on the proposed incentive scheme, which they want to operate at Markham. This document is full of their figures on how, if the workforce listens to them, they will make Markham 'a highly productive, highly paid enterprise, with an excellent future.'

The document revolves around the union's refusal to implement a new bonus scheme. At present the pit operates the Yorkshire incentive scheme, under which all faces and headings work on a combined tonnage scheme. At the end of the week the tonnage is worked out and all facemen end up on the same amount of bonus pay. All the way down the grade ladder the bonus payments are equal in relationship to each job.



Five miners at the end of a shift.

Photo: Militant'

The Yorkshire scheme ultimately bonds together the workforce into a close-knit and strong body, as was proved the other week when for three days the entire workforce was on strike over water payments.

On the other hand the Doncaster scheme is a very dangerous animal, because it has the ability to pay very high bonus payments to selected workmen, and very low payments to others. 30p a day is not uncommon

under this scheme.

Under the Doncaster scheme each face is given a target to achieve. Once the basic target has been passed then you start earning bonus pay. This scheme plays face against face and man against man, and any solidarity that existed between the workforce goes out the window.

I have worked under both systems and under the Doncaster one a heading was earning £44 a day bonus per man and a coal face in the same pit was on three pounds per man a day bonus. Under systems like this, the workforce is totally split.

In the document the NCB states: 'The NUM have a clear choice and that is either to opt for the Yorkshire incentive scheme or the Doncaster scheme.'

It would appear because the NUM has rejected the Doncaster scheme, then the NCB are to conduct a campaign to try and get it accepted. So much for democracy.

I have no doubt that the NCB will offer a honeymoon period after which the scheme could be accepted or refused. It will be one hell of a honeymoon, with massive bonus payments, but once they got the scheme accepted, then the fun would begin. What happened to us at Frickley was that once you reached your target, then conveyor belts have to be repaired on management's orders, and other mystery breakdowns happen very often.

I think the give away quote in the document is this: 'It also aims to give coal producers, rippers and development men a level of earnings which relates to their individual performances during the week.'

The aim of management is to divide Markham Main's workforce, so that no longer will they be faced by a united workforce, which is obviously harder to beat. Now is the time to get rid of bonus payments once and for all and settle for a decent minimum wage.

Blood money

COAL BOARD boss Ian MacGregor claimed when he visited Daw Mill colliery, Warwickshire, that miners could earn nearly £30,000 a year, if they increased productivity levels reached in the USA.

But figures produced by the US department of Labour show that in 1982, productivity in pits employing over a thousand miners was 4,024 tonnes per man per year. Each miner at Daw Mill produces 662 tonnes—in other words to match US levels, Daw Mill's miners would have to increase productivity by 600 per cent. Even at Britain's most productive pit, Thorsby, productivity would have to increase three-fold to reach US levels.

The reason for high productivity in US mines is both because of geological conditions and management tactics which MacGregor is keen to introduce here.

US miners have very little security of employment, nor a guaranteed five day week.

If demand falls, as in recent years, miners are laid off—the coal is left in the ground. When demand picks up again miners still in work are forced to do overtime, often six or seven days a week. This is the main reason for the high wages.

The safety record in the US is correspondingly much worse than in Britain. An American miner is four times more likely to be killed than his British counterpart.

There are many American miners who would welcome the conditions and safety record British miners have won through decades of powerful and united union action.

By John Chapman
(Houghton Main NUM Yorkshire Area)

Four get jobs back

FOUR NORTH Staffs miners, sacked during the strike, have been re-employed by the NCB.

The four, Brian McKean, Stan Edwards, David Weyms and Keith Boulton were sacked after being charged with assault during a picket line incident early in the strike.

At Stoke-on-Trent magistrates court all charges against the men were dismissed by the judge.

The NCB still refused to reinstate them, so their case for unfair dismissal was then taken to a tribunal sitting in Birmingham. It ruled that the NCB were wrong to sack the four and ordered that they reinstate each man within 60 days.

The Coal Board, however, have not reinstated them in their old jobs back at Trentham Area Workshops, but have 're-employed' them at different pits in the area doing menial work.

At nearby Hem Heath colliery, other sacked men are involved in a struggle for reinstatement.

Miners from Hem Heath were jailed during the strike and many were sacked for trivial offences.

Reports of victimisation of strikers have come out of the pit since the return to work, with NUM representatives not being properly recognised by management. Men have also been given menial jobs since the return resulting in a loss in wages.

No doubt the NCB management at Hem Heath revel in victimising men who were loyal to the strike, but the management have failed to break the spirit of men who stood firm during the 12 month historic struggle.

They proved their willingness to fight back when 300 turned back from work on Monday 5 August. They refused to cross a picket of sacked miners, wives and supporters protesting against



Arthur Scargill speaking at 'No victimisation' rally in London in July.

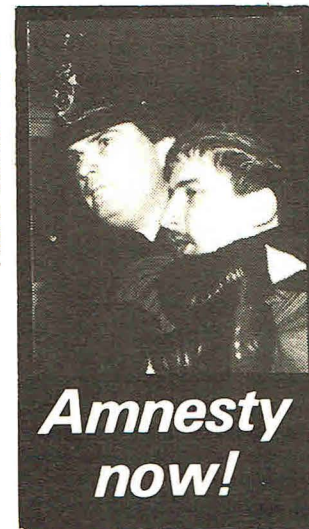
three Yorkshire scabs beginning work at Hem Heath while men remain sacked. The NUM branch earlier voted unanimously not to accept the transfer of scabs from other coalfields.

These struggles must be linked together by the NUM locally in order to build on the tremendous support for

the four 're-employed' and also men still sacked at Hem Heath.

Despite the public bleatings of NCB management, privately they understand only too well that miners are not prepared to accept all that management throw at them.

The tops of the NCB and



Thatcher's government also understand that they have failed completely in their bid to smash the NUM.

What the Tories have achieved is to politicise miners and also much of the wider labour movement. This represents a complete disaster for the Tories and their friends in big business and has served only to speed-up Thatcher's downfall.

By A Bentley

Miners' strike brought to life on stage

'The Enemies Within' performed by the DAC Theatre Company, covers many of the activities and real life dramas of the 1984-5 miners' strike, such as flying picketing, street collections, arrests and an evening at

the miners' welfare club.

The play's script was taken from verbatim recollections of miners and their wives. This method gives the play a convincing ring of authenticity. At times you seem to recognise the miners involved.

Their determined spirit and good humour is well portrayed, especially the irrepressible humour. The main scenes are two monologues. One describes how a miner separated from his fellow pickets at Orgreave faced thousands of police, who at first joined in his mock parade of inspection. He then decided that as he had come to picket, that was what he was going to do, and ventured into what

was termed 'no man's land.' He stood alone facing thousands of police and then was brutally arrested and charged with threatening behaviour!

Snowman

The second reconstruction is that of the now quite well-known episode involving a chief inspector, a police land rover and a snowman covered concrete post. It ended with a badly dented land rover.

The suffering of the miners' families is movingly illustrated in scenes such as that of a mother whose 14 year old boy was buried alive while digging for coal. Re-

counting his death she lays the blame squarely at the door of Thatcher and MacGregor.

The play ends with a speech by Mark Jones, the father of David Jones who was killed while picketing. The speech ranged from YTS schemes, Nelson Mandela's imprisonment and back to the miners' strike. While linking different aspects of the class struggle together it failed to give any perspective on how society can be changed, other than getting active and fighting.

In my opinion the play concentrates too much on police violence, in an effort to redress the balance in the media overkill. This is at the

expense of other aspects which could have been covered such as the level of rank and file and international trade union support, examples of solidarity action or perhaps the debate amongst the miners and their wives as to tactics and planning the various activities.

The play is entertaining on the whole, and for those in the audience who weren't active during the dispute, it may have been something of an eye-opener. For us it provided a valuable reminder of the miners magnificent stand for jobs and the working class in general.

By John Hogan
(Erith and Crayford Labour Party)

Militant Miner Public Meeting

Sunday, 15 September, 7.30pm In the Red Lion (1/2 mile from Orgreave Coking plant). Speakers: Geoff Bright (Tinsley NUR and expelled member of Attercliffe Labour Party) and Gary Ironmonger (NUM Delegate, Corntonwood in a personal capacity).

Militant

TUC Militant Readers Meeting
 Tuesday 3 September 7.30pm
 Derek Hatton and NGA
 and NUM speakers
 Central Library,
 Queens Street, Blackpool

Outrage at police killing

THE KILLING of five year old John Shorthouse in Birmingham by an armed policeman as the house was being searched is the culmination of a series of deadly 'mistakes' by the West Midlands police.

In 1980, sixteen-year-old Gail Kinchin was shot four times and killed by police as they confronted her former boyfriend who was armed and using her as a shield.

In 1982 during a raid on a house in the Winson Green area of Birmingham, an

armed policeman tripped and accidentally fired into the bed of a sleeping child. The child escaped unhurt, but police later admitted they had raided the wrong house.

In 1983 armed police raided a pensioners' home in Dudley. Again it was the wrong house. In the same year a grandmother's home in Solihull was raided. Another mistake—they wanted the house next door.

More recently a mother and her children in Kingshurst were held and questioned by police at gunpoint. When they realised it

was yet another case of mistaken identity the police gave her a turkey as compensation.

Demands for a public enquiry into the Shorthouse killing are already mounting, despite the opposition of the constituency's Tory MP Anthony Beaumont-Dark. Such an enquiry will want to know why did the police wait five hours before they informed the public of the killing? Why was John's father, held in police custody, not told of his son's death until 11 hours later? Why did the policeman still have his gun

drawn even though John's father had already been arrested? And why do West Midlands police use .357 Magnums which, unlike most revolvers, have no safety catch?

Such an inquiry, if it goes ahead, will expose the way in which the police are a law unto themselves. The labour movement in the Midlands must demand that the police are brought under democratic public control, answerable to democratically elected bodies.

By Bob Wade

Newspaper barons launch offensive

THE PHONEY war in Fleet Street is now over. The suspension of nearly 5,000 workers at the *Mirror* Group of Newspapers by press tycoon Robert Maxwell marks the beginning of the bosses' offensive on the print unions.

The *Mirror* dispute came to a head last week, when Maxwell attempted to move production of the MGN title *Sporting Life* to a new production site. The *Mirror's* compositors held a chapel meeting, while machine room workers banned overtime which led to three-quarters of a million copies of the *Mirror* being lost. Maxwell suspended publication of MGN papers, effectively locking out all the workforce until the main print union, the National Graphical Association, agreed to the production transfer.

As *Militant* goes to press there are reports that the *Mirror* workers are set to return to work. But in the coming months disputes can flare up at anytime on Fleet Street, as print workers are forced to defend their rights and jobs.

Jobs slashed

The Fleet Street bosses want to bring in new technology into the newspaper industry at the expense of thousands of print jobs. Even though most Fleet Street papers are profitable—the *Mirror* Group last year made £3.8 million profit—it is not enough for the newspaper barons like Maxwell who want to boost their profits even more.

Waiting in the wings to see the outcome of the *Mirror* dispute are the rest of Fleet Street. All the newspaper groups have their own new technology plans. The *Daily Mail* group and the *Telegraph* both have new sites being prepared on London's docklands. At the same time Eddie Shah of *Stockport Messenger* infamy is preparing to launch his high-tech national daily next Spring, excluding NGA members from the production process.

By an NGA member

It was no accident it fell to Maxwell to take the first step in attacking the print unions. Over the past few years he has used aggressive tactics against his workforce to cow them into line, such as at the *Radio Times*.



Robert Maxwell.

The leadership of the NGA must respond to this assault. This is not just a fight for *Mirror* workers but all print workers. At the very least a combine meeting of All NGA FoCs (stewards) must be called throughout Maxwell's printing empire, such as at Pergamon Press and BPCC, to plan action to defend the *Mirror* workers. The members will respond—on Monday night attempts to print the northern edition of the *Mirror* in Manchester were stopped by NGA members.

Meanwhile the NGA nationally should respond as one in the defence of their jobs—if the *Mirror* goes today, it will be the *Mail*, *Telegraph*, etc tomorrow.

But above all it is imperative that the leaderships of all the print unions—the NGA, SOGAT'82 and the National Union of Journalists—unite around a common campaign strategy. They must not allow themselves to be picked off as the bosses use classic divide and rule tactics, as has been seen in the provincial press.

TUC must lead fight-back

Continued from front page

on tactics from the union leadership there was only vagueness.

Moreover, many guards will have understood that to win would require a solid movement of all railworkers that would then turn to the wider trade union movement for help.

Militant warned of the need for a campaign for a united strike of all railworkers and fraternal links with bus workers and lorry drivers. None of this preparatory work was done in the majority of areas. In fact the NUR campaign did not even reach all guards.

The NUR annual delegate meeting must now be recalled to reaffirm its confidence in the fighting capacity of its members. It must map out a programme of action, beginning with a mass campaign of education and preparation among NUR members.

BR will attempt to step-up its attack on other grades and the workshops. The executive must therefore launch a campaign to explain that there is no alternative—either railworkers unite, pull together all their separate problems and struggles, or one-by-one they will be picked off. The railway industry is very diffuse, scattered across the country in small towns and isolated rural areas. All these workers need to be contacted regularly and involved in a discussion of the policies needed to defend their jobs and their industry.

This must be the approach also in the wider movement. The TUC leaders should not be allowed merely to sit back and say that the workers will not fight, that they "can't deliver". The TUC leaders must be forced to lead.

A campaign throughout the whole trade union movement should be launched from the TUC in defence of the workers at GCHQ. Conferences of shop stewards and mass meetings should be called in preparation for a

one-day strike if the government should go ahead and sack the 90 civil servants.

Such a campaign can make the government have second thoughts. Any hesitation or half-heartedness, however, will have exactly the opposite effect—the Tories will press on even more relentlessly.

One-day strike

Many workers who do not feel confident of striking in their own industries on industrial issues will understand that a one-day strike of the whole labour movement is an entirely different question. A one-day general strike would be a massive political demonstration of trade union strength. It would be a warning to the Tories to back off. It would be an inspiration to workers who would overcome any feelings of isolation. They would feel part of a class, the most powerful force in society.

The whole face of British society would be altered. The way would be prepared for wider and deeper action if necessary. But the working class cannot be taken for granted. They are not to be turned on and off like a tap. If the TUC is to lead such a movement, first they must show to ordinary workers that they are serious.

Such a lead from the TUC General Council, given their utter inability to rally support for the miners, is clearly unlikely.

In this situation, it is vital that the railworkers Broad Left should call together the widest layer of activists to draw up a balance sheet of these events. In the general trade union movement the potential for the broad lefts in the next few months will be enormous.

Some of the older left representatives may be affected by temporary moods of doubts and despair. But underneath a new layer of young workers will be taking their places, pushed forward by events, by pressure and the whip of management. This new layer will be only too eager to come together within trade union broad lefts to co-ordinate effectively

against the ruling class and those right wing leaders who attempt to block the path of any meaningful struggle.

Marxists in the unions will play their full part in showing a way forward. We will explain that a period of relative quiet can suddenly be turned inside out. This is an age of volatility. The more management pushes, speeds up, goes on the offensive, the more, under the surface they are preparing for some day in the future, a social explosion.

The ruling class is giving the working people of Britain a lesson in the naked brutality of capitalism. More and more now, political conclusions are being drawn.

Millions of workers have already understood the need for a Labour government. The TUC must act decisively to link the struggles of workers against the onslaught from the Tories into a political campaign to get Labour elected at the earliest opportunity.

Many activists in the movement are determined to see the next Labour government repeal all the anti-trade union laws and turn back the tide of attacks on working people. But this can only be ensured by the involvement of the mass of trade unionists in the Labour Party—through the setting up of workplace branches, and taking up their affiliation to local parties, and through the affiliation of other unions.

However the Labour government will be under the same pressures as previous ones, but even more so in this time of deepening economic crisis. Either it will submit to the dictates of big business and introduce further attacks on workers, or it can implement far-reaching, socialist policies aimed at removing the effective control by the multinationals—this can only be done by nationalising the 200 or so monopolies, which control the major part of the economy, under workers' control and management.

The Tories are acting ruthlessly on behalf of their class. Let us fight for a Labour government that will act just as ruthlessly on behalf of working people.



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