

Militant

The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth

25p

ISSUE 781 17 January 1986

Inside...

America's boom peters out p8-9

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Press bias—p12 Mirror smears—p5
Fleet St printers—p13

Labour councillors on trial

LIVERPOOL AND Lambeth councillors marched to the High Court on Tuesday at the head of a thousand-strong demonstration.

They went to hear their appeal against possible surcharge and disqualification from office threatened by the District Auditors.

They marched not as criminals but as those who have fought to defend their communities against the ravages of the Tory government.

The rally beforehand was attended by Labour MPs, councillors and council workers from both Liverpool and Lambeth. Derek Hatton called on the Labour leaders to unite round the campaign to de-

fend the councillors. He said it was "a tragedy that the leaders of the party were conducting the inquiry into Liverpool Labour Party in order to launch a witch-hunt, instead of making a stand against the Tories."

The Labour councillors were elected to carry out their commitments to defend jobs and services in their communities. The democratic rights of workers are under threat. If the councillors lose their appeal the Tories and Liberals, who were beaten in the polls, will take over the running of the councils by default.

Liverpool and Lambeth have

suffered years of neglect and government cuts. On average the rate support from the government has been cut from 62p for every pound spent in 1979 to 46p spent now. That is why Liverpool council has conducted its campaign to get back just some of the £millions taken by the Tories.

The councillors have been forced to defend themselves in court because of the decisions of unelected and unaccountable state officials. Their position of delaying setting a rate was justified. It was designed to press the government into giving more money to their communities. But at no time

would the government negotiate.

The Tories aim to make an example of Liverpool and Lambeth councils. If the councillors are surcharged it will mean no Labour council will be able to defy the Tories' plans—they will be forced to meekly follow the government's dictates.

Meanwhile the Labour leaders have publicly attacked the actions of Liverpool council instead of giving their support. The ranks of the movement should show the real support for these councils and the stand that they took.

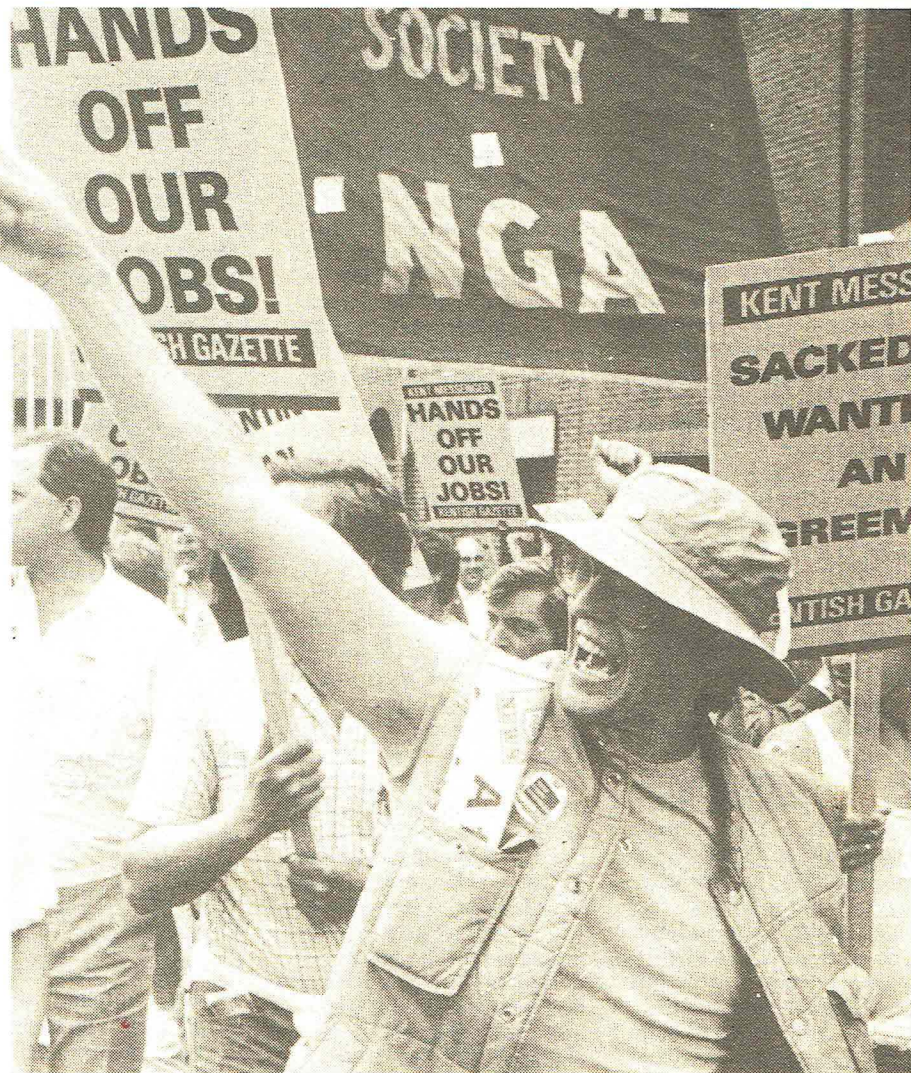
If the councillors lose their appeal there must be a call to action

by the trade unions nationally in their defence.

Jim O'Brien Chair of Lambeth Council Joint Shop Stewards Committee (JSSC) said that: "If necessary workers in Liverpool and Lambeth councils should be called out on strike action to defend their councils. We must get that support nationally. Our communities will be left wide open and the trade union leaders can't carry on hiding behind the Tory smear campaign conducted against people like Derek Hatton."

By Ben Eastop

Bosses war on print unions



Print workers demonstrate in Wolverhampton in support of Wolverhampton Express and Star strike over new technology working agreements. Regional papers have been used as a testing ground in the run up to a major confrontation with national unions by the newspaper bosses. Photo: John Smith (IFL)

PRESS BOSS Rupert Murdoch has thrown down the greatest challenge yet to the rights of the unions in the printing industry. It is the first shot in the war planned by all the national newspaper barons.

By Mick Carroll
(London Region NGA,
personal capacity)

Murdoch's News International Group, owners of the Sun, News of the World, Times and Sunday Times are planning to print a 16 page supplement to next week's Sunday Times using scab labour at their new plant at Wapping, East London.

The bosses want an end to effective trade unionism in the print industry; they want to set the pace throughout industry by attacking workers on Fleet Street, the unions' strongest point.

Murdoch wants to ban not only strikes but the closed shop, and the chapel

(branch) structure. He wants to vet shop stewards and let management decide on all the rules. Every gain won over the centuries in the print is in Murdoch's sights, first for the new Post but also for his other titles.

This would be unacceptable to any trade unionists, let alone to print unions where the closed shop has won rewards which are widely admired by other workers.

Labour movement activists are disgusted that the electricians' union (EETPU) leaders seem willing to negotiate these horrific terms for a single-union, no strike agreement similar to the one they are finalising with scab employer Eddie Shah, for his new Today paper.

Even the TUC leaders who have tolerated the EETPU leadership's blatant provocations over accepting government ballot money have been forced to write to the EETPU warning them under TUC Rule number 11.

(Continued on page 2)

Defend Liverpool District Labour Party

Lobby Labour's
National Executive

8.30 Wednesday 29 January
150 Walworth Road London SE17
(Elephant and Castle tube)

Labour cuts youth cash

TUESDAY'S LABOUR Party Youth sub-committee decided to slash the Labour Party Young Socialist's budget and reduce the subsidy for Socialist Youth to zero.

Only the LPYS representatives and MPs Eric Heffer and Dennis Skinner voted against the proposals.

Scandalously the other wing of Labour's youth, the students, represented by National Organisation of Labour Students Chair, Sarah Boyack, "supported the overall drift of the proposals" and proceeded to vote with Gwyneth Dunwoody and the rest of the

right wing to slash the LPYS finances.

NOLS now has a bigger budget than the LPYS. Obviously we are not against NOLS getting more money from the party, but not at the expense of the LPYS.

The meeting ended with a further attack on Socialist Youth. A meeting is to look into the possibilities of producing a joint youth/students publication, which would take away editorial control from the LPYS. This will be resisted by the leadership of the LPYS.

By a Militant reporter

Scotland left to Tories

AS STEEL workers from the threatened Gartoch mill in Lanarkshire marched to London to save their industry from closure, the government minister in whose hands their fate rested was suddenly promoted to Defence Secretary.

Having failed to defend Scotland from the ravages of Thatcher's economic policies, Secretary of State George Younger, educated at Winchester and Oxford, heir to the Viscount Leckie and the family fortune made in brewing, has now been given the job of defending the country.

Scottish workers will not be impressed by press stories that Younger has been successful in lobbying to protect industry from the worst effects of the recession.

Unemployment at 15.5 per cent is still two per cent above the national figure, and that conceals far higher rates in many of the old industrial areas. Scotland suffers from immense social problems in housing, health and education. The teachers' struggle for a decent wage has been more intense than in England and Wales.

Even the middle class have been enraged by Younger's bungled attempt to 'reform' the rating system which involved a shift from the big industrial rate-payers to the mainly middle-class domestic and small business ones. This has led to an un-

precedented revolt within the Scottish Conservative Party.

It is no wonder that there has been a resurgence of Scottish nationalism among a section of the Scottish middle-class, as a protest against what they see as a neglect of their country.

More alarming is that this has spread into Labour areas. Recently the Scottish National Party won two council by-elections from the Labour party. One was in the steel town of Motherwell in a solidly working-class area. The other was in Livingston, seat of Robin Cook, a leading supporter of Neil Kinnock. The SNP have also been allowed to play a prominent role in the campaign to save Gartoch.

Labour

The Labour Party should be winning hands down in Scotland, given their traditional base of support and the failures and splits of the Tories. The failure of nearly all Scottish Labour local authorities to wage any fight against government cuts and the witch-hunting attempts of the party leaders have done nothing to inspire Scottish workers. There is an urgent need to turn Labour outwards into a fighting body, to defeat the Tories and the 'Tartan Tory' demagogues of the SNP.

By Pat Craven

Bosses' war

(Continued from page 1)

But at the time of the *Stockport Messenger* dispute in Warrington in 1983 the right wing leaders of the TUC refused to aid the National Graphical Association (NGA) in its battle against Shah, who has now grown into a national menace. His plans for a new paper are spurring on all the national papers into a war with their workforces.

The TUC must put itself decisively behind the Fleet Street workers. For the first time in some months, all the Fleet Street unions agree on the urgency of fighting the attacks. The print union

leaders must immediately issue a call for all trade unionists to help out in their struggle. If the TUC equivocate in their backing an appeal must be launched over their heads.

Each union must prepare its membership for the conflict. Immediately there is any move to print papers with scab labour a strike must be declared of all those employed by the Murdoch empire, coupled with an immediate one day strike of all print workers and an appeal to all trade unionists for solidarity support.

There is a mood for a fight but particularly given many workers' fears about the role of the TUC, this cannot be taken for granted. It must be organised.

The print union officials must be on full alert to give Murdoch the answer he deserves.



Above: Liverpool councillors on steps of High Court awaiting the start of their appeal against surcharge. Below Lambeth councillors on demonstration to High Court. Photos: Dave Sinclair, and Mick Carroll



Scargill backs councils

MINERS' LEADER Arthur Scargill has thrown in his support for the Liverpool and Lambeth councillors who are facing possible surcharge and disqualification from office.

He was speaking at a packed meeting of over 500 at Lambeth Town Hall last Sunday and said that the councillors were being attacked for carrying out the policies they were elected on. Where were all those in the commons who were arguing about ballots during the miners' strike he asked?

The meeting was also addressed by Dennis Skinner MP, Ted Knight, leader of Lambeth council, and Liverpool City Councillor Felicity Dowling. All condemned the witch-hunt in the Labour Party.

By a Militant reporter

Met Police report into riot is based on fantasy

THE REPORT by the Metropolitan Police into the Tottenham riots claims that the clashes on the Broadwater Farm Estate were the result of a plot, hatched several months in advance, for the mass assassination of police officers.

With such fantastic claims the black community have come to know what to expect from internal police inquiries.

The report attempts to resurrect the racist notion about divisions between West Indians and Asians by claiming that an Asian supermarket was daubed with racist graffiti ending in "...Niggers rule OK". But most blacks are quite well aware that this is the language of fascist white youth or even police officers.

By claiming that young blacks were preparing 'lakes of petrol' into which policemen were to be lured, the police are trying to divert attention from their own provocative actions.

The report points to "particular individuals being observed on several occasions giving directions to others by words or gestures". Apparently young

blacks communicating with each other is conclusive evidence of a conspiracy!

Then it contradicts itself by saying... "within 20 minutes of the start of the riot, every entrance to the estate was barricaded by burning cars, making it impossible for police to advance or retreat. It was for this reason that the police did not walk in to the ambush made for them". (*Guardian* 13/1/86).

Trap

Surely, if the youth involved had gone to so much trouble to lay such an elaborate trap they would not prevent their prey from entering it. Some people taking part in the demonstration before the clashes said that on their return to the estate they saw police officers overturning cars.

The report also mentions that police were told by a drug offence suspect of petrol bombs being stored on the estate; "the exact location was never determined".

Throughout, the facts behind the events in Tottenham are absent. During the demonstration which took place after the death of Cynthia Jarrett in an unlawful police raid some

demonstrators were attacked by police attempting to arrest some youths.

If there is a conspiracy then it is in the proposed new Public Order Act produced within two days of the Broadwater Farm incidents. The Tories are intent on arming the police both literally, and with new laws, to repress black people and the working class in general.

So far the report hasn't been shown to the democratically elected Haringey council police committee but the national press have had their copy. Haringey must demand that they are consulted and that any conspiracy claims should be proved by photographic or fire brigade forensic evidence.

The council must ensure that the inquiry that they have proposed is funded properly and goes ahead with the full involvement of the community with representation from the Broadwater Farm Defence, Jarratt Family and Winston Silcott Campaign.

By Derek Richards
(Edmonton LPYS and Broadwater Farm Defence Committee)

Sharks close in round Westland

FOR A firm riddled with death-watch beetle, Westland shares are soaring. Having become a national focus of attention the ailing helicopter manufacturer is finding itself stalked by all kinds of two-legged predators.

Take Alan Bristow, the mystery millionaire, whose 12 per cent stake could well spoil Sikorsky's bid for Westland. He claims to be out for the small investor. But he's only ever been out for one thing in his career, and that's Alan Bristow. As operator of the largest helicopter fleet in the country he forced out a strike by 50 pilots by sacking the lot of them.

Lazard Freres, the stockbrokers, have been creeping around buying all the shares it can find on behalf of Sikorsky/Fiat and United Scientific Holdings has been acting as a stalking horse for the Euro-consortium.

All of a sudden Westland shares are flavour of the month. Bristow has already been offered a price for his slice of the cake, way above the market price, by Westland's chairman, Sir John Cuckney. Bristow turned the offer down because he said he was "a long term investor"—in other words he can make much more money by keeping a foot in. Undoubtedly other sharks are circling round in the hope of making a quick buck out of the enhanced shares.

Such is the sudden interest from shareholders that the meeting set for Tuesday is postponed until Friday in the Albert Hall—not that there's an urge for an exercise in democracy but both camps are concerned about one thing—lining their pockets. The workforce don't get a look-in.

Thatcher's official position has been to let management decide! Yet Westland has been steadily mismanaged to the brink of ruin. It is not even market forces that are to blame in the case of helicopter production since the work is designed and paid for by the Ministry of Defence. Management of weapon firms only stand to enrich themselves at the taxpayers' expense.

Ken Gill, expelled by the Communist Party for being too left wing, has been campaigning hard for the European camp in the take over bid. Even the Labour Party leadership has put forward a more radical view in demanding state intervention.

Under capitalism Westland is a minnow bound soon to be some shark's breakfast. The real socialist solution is to integrate firms like Westland into a planned, nationalised British Aerospace industry. Under socialism the defence industry could then be turned to producing socially useful products.

By Mick Brooks

Militant fights back

Meetings
planned
nationwide

IN RESPONSE to the unprecedented attacks being made against *Militant*, members of the paper's Editorial Board and other leading speakers are touring the country to answer the lies of the Tories, the press and their echoes in the Labour Party. Details of further meetings will appear in future issues of *Militant*. Where no venues or details of speakers are listed, see local *Militant* sellers for details.

London

Putney: Wednesday 22 January, 7.30pm, Dryburgh Hall, Dryburgh Road, SW15.

London LPYS Conference: Saturday 25 January. Speaker—Alan Woods.

Tooting: Thursday, 30 January, 7.30pm, Wheat-sheaf Pub, Tooting Road, Tooting Bec, SW17.

Hounslow: Wednesday 5 February, 7.45pm, Hounslow Manor School.

Woolwich: Wednesday 5 February, 7.45pm, Clock House Community Centre, Defiance Walk, Woolwich SE18.

Tottenham: Thursday 13 February, 7.45pm, Tottenham Community Project, High Road, N17.

Acton: Tuesday, 18 February, 7.30pm, Ealing Town Hall, High Street, W3.

Brixton: weekend of 1-2 February, 12.45pm London Labour Party conference fringe meeting, Brixton Recreation Centre, SW2.

Scotland

Glasgow: Thursday 6 February, 7.30pm, McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street. Speaker—Ted Grant.

Motherwell: Friday 7 February, 7.30pm. Speaker—Ted Grant.

Wales

Cardiff: Monday 3 February, 7.30pm. Speaker—Peter Taaffe.

Llanelli: Tuesday 4 February, 7.30pm. Speaker—Peter Taaffe.

Midlands

Birmingham Sparkbrook: Wednesday 22 January, 7.30pm, Mermaid Pub, Stratford Road, Sparkbrook. Speakers—Lynn Walsh, Bill Mullings.

Chesterfield: Wednesday 19 February.

THE FOLLOWING have passed resolutions opposing either the inquiry into Liverpool District Labour Party or the continued witch-hunt against *Militant*:

Constituency Labour Parties

Scotland: Glasgow Shettleston, Leith, Edinburgh West, Pentlands, Edinburgh Central, Clydebank.

North West: Garston, Mossley Hill, Withington, Blackley, Manchester Central, Rochdale.

North East: Sunderland North, Wallsend and executive of Blyth CLP.

Yorkshire: Sheffield Hillsborough, Sheffield Heeley, Hemsworth, Pudsey, Leeds North West, Leeds North East, Barnsley West and Pennistone, Bradford North.

East Midlands: North West Leicestershire.

West Midlands: Birmingham Ladywood, Birmingham Perry Barr, Coventry North West, Coventry North East, Coventry South East.

Eastern: Harlow, Hertford and Stortford, Bedford, Luton North, Hertsmere, Colchester.

London: Bethnal Green and Stepney, Hammersmith, Hampstead, Brent East, Deptford, Feltham and Heston, Hackney North and Stoke Newington, Hackney South and Shoreditch, Vauxhall, Ealing Southall, Uxbridge, Greenwich, Hayes/Harlington.

Southern: Fareham.

Wales: Swansea Labour Association.

South West: Bristol East.

District Labour Parties

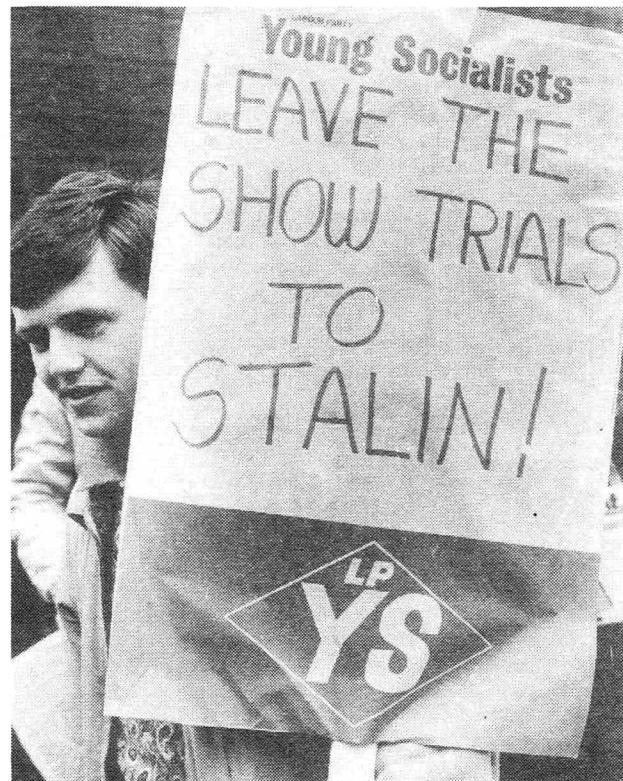
Besides the obvious opposition of Liverpool DLP, also Manchester City, Basildon, Brighton, Thamesdown, Bristol and the executive of Greater London Labour Party.

Youth Sections

A total of 89 Labour Party Young Socialist branches and eight college Labour Clubs have already condemned the action.



The *Militant* Editorial Board, expelled from the Labour Party. From left to right: Clare Doyle, Peter Taaffe, Lynn Walsh, Ted Grant and Keith Dickenson. Photo: *Militant*.



Northern

Ashington: Saturday 1 March, LPYS Regional Conference fringe meeting. Speaker—Clare Doyle.

Newcastle: Saturday 17 May, Labour Party Regional conference fringe meeting.

North West

Warrington: Tuesday 21 January, 8pm, Mersey Hotel, Mersey Street.

Liverpool: Wednesday 5 February.

Oldham: Wednesday 5 February.

Blackpool: Saturday 15 February, 7.30pm, LPYS Regional Conference fringe meeting, Winter Gardens, 7.30pm.

Blackpool: Saturday 15 March, North West Labour Party Regional Conference fringe meeting.

Yorkshire

Leeds: Sunday 26 January, 7.30pm, The Grand Hall, Grand Theatre. Speaker—Ted Grant.

Sheffield: Saturday 1 February, Yorkshire Regional LPYS conference fringe meeting. Speaker—Rob Sewell.

Hull: Thursday 6 February, 7.30pm, Trades and Labour Club, Beverly Road. Speaker—Rob Sewell.

Bridlington: Saturday 1 March, Yorkshire Regional Labour Party Conference fringe meeting.

Eastern

Stevenage: Monday 27 January, 7.30pm, Stevenage Leisure Centre.

Luton: Tuesday 28 January.

Peterborough: Thursday 30 January.

Norwich: Saturday 1 February, Local Government Conference fringe meeting.

Harlow: Tuesday 4 February.

Colchester: Saturday 15 February, 7.30pm, Colchester Labour Club.



Protest at start of NEC inquiry into Liverpool District Labour Party. Photo: Dave Sinclair.

Trade Union Organisations

NUM Lodges: Bold, Sutton Manor, Wearmouth, Darfield Main, Houghton Main, Allerton Bywater, Coventry, Wearmouth Mechanics, Seafeld SCEBTA. Also protest from Kent NUM executive.

TGWU: 6/612, 6/631, 6/51, 6/552, 1/1347, 1/874, 6/171, 1/6, 9/8, Tilbury Docks and Riverside, Blackburn buses.

NUPE branches: Wirral District Health, Gateshead, Guys hospital stewards, Paddington and Kensington, Tower Hamlets, Liverpool caretakers, Brighton local government, Dudley, Edinburgh southern hospitals, Northumberland.

AUEW: Cardiff No 9, Manchester South shop stewards, Blyth, Kilnhurst, Skipton, Keighley No 1, Tyne Junior Workers Committee.

GMBATU: No 5, No 24, No 40, Glasgow Cleans-

ing Workers, Rosyth Dockyard, Lanarkshire Gas.

AUEW/TASS: No 11, Manchester East, Barnsley, Sheffield and Precision Metals.

NUR: Liverpool No 5, East Ham, Willesden No 1, Bedford and Luton.

ASTMS: Liverpool Shipping, Royal Insurance, Manchester Community Workers, Bradford.

Others: Bakers Union National Executive, Bakers Union North West region, CPSA Longbenton, CPSA South West Regional Committee, NCU London Centre GMO executive, East of Scotland USDAW, EET-PU Rosyth Dockyard, EETPU East Kilbride, Liverpool City Council JSSC, Rolls Royce Joint Staffs TU Committee, Harlow TUC, Coventry TUC, Newcastle TUC, Highroads COHSE, Southwark NALGO, Liverpool NALGO, Manchester Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Workers, USDAW (Capital Holdings).

Socialist programme for Labour victory

THE TORY Cabinet has been thrown into turmoil following the resignation of Heseltine and the political storms which surround the Westland affair. All the underlying tensions within the British ruling class and their political representatives have been brought to the surface.

For the Labour opposition now should be the time to go for the Tories' jugular. Thatcher's standing has never been lower; not only have her policies led to the de-industrialisation of the country, mass unemployment and poverty for millions, but she is now seen as a petty dictator even in her own cabinet. Labour should be preparing for a landslide victory.

Recent by-elections and opinion polls, however, show that Labour is far from being poised to sweep the Tories from office. Even the first poll to be taken after Heseltine's resignation for Channel 4 News showed Labour a mere one per cent ahead of the Tories and two per cent ahead of the Alliance. In the Tynebridge by-election last month, in a solid Labour area, Labour's share of the vote rose by no more than 1.3 per cent from the general election.

Now there have been serious **defeats** in council by-elections. In two Scottish wards, Labour seats have been lost to the Scottish National Party and in Liverpool the Old Swan election was won by the SDP. Behind all these

setbacks for Labour, especially in Old Swan, lies not only the failure of the party leadership to fire the enthusiasm of the voters who are looking for a change in government, but their damaging move to plunge the party into internal conflict through inquiries and purges.

The Old Swan result is in no way a vote against the stand taken by the Liverpool City Council. In addition to the hysterical campaign of lies and slander by the Tory press, it was the actions of the leadership in attacking the city council and holding an enquiry into the District Labour Party which led to this setback. The remarkable fact about the by-election was that 2,358 voters stayed loyal to the Liverpool party despite all the attacks and the absence of a word of support from the party nationally.

In all these by-elections, the Tory vote evaporated, there was a small improvement for the Alliance in England and the SNP in Scotland, much of it taken from the Tories, but Labour voters abstained in droves. In Tynebridge only 38 per cent of the electorate voted. In Livingston the SNP vote was up by only 60, while the Labour vote fell by 447 to less than half its vote in 1979.

So long as the NEC leadership see their priority as trying to expel party members who support *Militant*, they will pay the electoral price. Working class voters will not be attracted to a party which is seen to be internally split. If it's to win the forthcoming Fulham by-election and the next general election, then the Liverpool inquiry and all the threatened expulsions must be abandoned forthwith. Only a united party can ensure victory over the Tories.

Linked to this is the urgent need for Labour to launch a new campaign to bring those abstainers to the polling stations. The underlying reason for the attacks on *Mili-*

tant is that it is the Marxists who have most exposed the lack of a clear programme from the leadership at the moment. We have been accused of 'impossibilism' for putting forward demands like a 35-hour week, a £115 minimum wage and guaranteed jobs for YTS trainees.

These are the sort of specific promises that workers want to hear about from their political leaders. They want to know that the next Labour government will bring about real improvements for them and a better future for their children. If even such modest proposals are declared 'impossible' by Neil Kinnock, there is no wonder that there should be so many abstentions.

Labour must above all offer a vision of a better society which will enthrone workers to vote and give active support. That society will never be built within the confines of the present capitalist system. As long as investment in industry is dictated by profit, then real, lasting reforms will indeed be 'impossible'. That is why there is no alternative for Labour but to adopt the socialist programme put forward by *Militant* for the public ownership of the shrinking number of giant industrial and financial companies which control the economy.

With compensation only on the basis of need, and workers' control and management of industry, it would be possible to plan the economy, provide jobs for all, produce the goods that people need and rebuild the social services which have decayed or been wrecked over the past seven years.

If they break out from the bounds of the capitalist system, Labour will be able to offer a real alternative and sweep to power. It is now urgent for the party to end the attacks against the Marxists and to adopt socialist policies, so that victory can be assured.

Ranks knock back witch-hunt attempts

OPPOSITION TO the witch-hunt is growing. The North West Region Labour Party executive on Saturday called on the National Executive to postpone the Liverpool inquiry while the Liverpool councillors are facing court action. The decision, against the wishes of the chairman and regional officials, was passed 18 votes to 15.

The meeting was lobbied by Labour Party members from Liverpool, Manchester and Lancashire.

After meeting a delegation from Knowsley North Labour Party the executive also agreed to ask the NEC to confirm that the constituency's reselection process to choose a candidate for the next election will go ahead. The process has currently been suspended by the NEC.

Meanwhile, in a setback for the right wing in their plans to exclude two *Militant* supporters, the **Welsh Labour Party regional executive** has been ordered to meet by the NEC. The Welsh EC had not met after the right wing majority refused to accept *Militant* supporters Chris Peace and Tony Wedlake who were elected onto the committee. At a special meeting of the EC, Charles Turnock for the National executive ordered the right wing to obey Labour's constitution and reconvene their meetings with the two accepted as bona fide members. However, he then said they could present a case

to the NEC for Peace and Wedlake to be expelled, which the right wing will clearly take up. If the two are then expelled by the NEC directly it would be a serious extension of the witch-hunt.

At the January meeting of **Swansea Labour Association**, a right wing resolution backing expulsions was defeated. Despite being backed by full time officials and right wing councillors, it was voted down by 47 votes to 42. In the debate, TGWU buses' chairman Dai John said "I'd rather have the Militants behind me going into battle, than some of the right wingers who have used the movement in the past for their own ends."

A £100 donation was also made to the Liverpool City Council defence fund.

In Scotland, supporters of the Liverpool's campaign had been hoping to put a resolution condemning the current inquiry to the general committee of **Livingston Labour Party**, the constituency of Robin Cook MP. However, the December meeting could not go ahead as it was *inappropriate*. Cook is the Labour Party's campaign manager.

Livingston's January meeting was well attended and went ahead. However, despite the meeting lasting over four hours, the Liverpool resolution was not reached on the agenda.

By Militant reporters

Kinnock backed by Tories

NEW SUPPORT has come in for Kinnock's attacks on *Militant*—from the Tory group on Dudley Borough Council.

They passed a resolution which supported Kinnock because *Militant* was "avowed... to destroy the democratic way of life so enjoyed in this country... not to mention *Militant* wanting a "workers' militia" and the "ending of Parliamentary elections".

Even more incredible though was that the right-wing on the council's Labour Group wanted to back the Tory motion. The Labour Group meeting was lobbied by 25 supporters of the Black Country Campaign Against Witch-hunts.

A three-line whip was put on the Labour Group to abstain, so the motion was passed. It is a graphic example of where the inspiration for the witch-hunt is coming from.

Why Labour lost Old Swan

THE OLD Swan by-election result in Liverpool was a bitter disappointment to all Labour Party activists. The SDP candidate won with 3,313 votes, Labour second with 2,358 while the Tories were way behind with 506 votes, alongside 126 votes for the Independent Liberal.

This was no ordinary by-election. The whole of Fleet Street, the television, the leaders of the Tories and the SDP/Liberal Alliance were all ranged against Labour, who had to try and answer a campaign of lies and abuse that the media has poured on the Liverpool Labour movement constantly for the past two years. It is unprecedented that national newspapers like the *Daily Express* should carry whole editorials on the election—all for a municipal council by-election!

The SDP played on the media's red scare campaign, reproducing copies of the anti-council *Liverpool Echo*, exploiting the confusion sown by the press about the council's battle against the Tory government.

In the past the SDP and Liberals have been split, but this time they picked up not only the 'official' Liberal vote but also that of the Tories, whose vote collapsed, dropping a staggering 43 per cent.

But a Labour victory could have been won had the Labour leadership backed the Liverpool Labour Party. Instead they have played right into the Tories' and SDP's hands with their attacks on the City Council



Labour candidate Ann Holinshead campaigning in the Old Swan by-election. Photo: Militant.

and their current organisational measures against the District Labour Party.

It was a highly politicised election with a high turnout of 53 per cent—those 2,358 who voted for Labour consciously voted for radical, militant socialism. It will be a solid foundation to build Labour's support to re-win Old Swan in the May elections.

● It has been a disappointing time for Labour in

council by-elections. Last week in Motherwell, Labour lost a seat to the Scottish National Party, the SNP receiving over 1,000 votes. Earlier in December, Labour lost another seat to the SNP in the Swingston ward of Robin Cook MP's constituency of Livingston. Labour's vote collapsed by over 30 per cent, with the SNP taking the seat by only 61 votes after a large scale abstention by Labour voters.

Cardiff—appeal for funding

THE THREE Labour Party members expelled from Cardiff South and Penarth Labour Party, have launched a financial appeal to pay for legal action in their defence.

The three—Andrew Price, Dave Bartlett and Diane Mitchell—were expelled for supporting *Militant*. In a letter sent to local labour movement organisations they point out they are taking legal action 'reluctantly' but feel they have no alternative given the undemocratic and unconstitutional way they were treated.

In the letter Andrew Price points out:

"The chairman of Cardiff South and Penarth Labour Party has gone on record as saying that he would like another 12 members expelled from the local party. This would mean a purge which went beyond *Militant* to other sections of the left. The real aim of the right-wing is of course to expel anybody who disagrees with them. This is why all socialists should oppose witch-hunts."

Cheques etc should be made payable to: Cardiff South Legal Defence Fund and sent to: A Price, 8 Dunsuir Road, Tremorfa, Cardiff.

**Militant
and NUM
under
attack**

THE WITCH-HUNTERS of Mansfield Labour Party right-wing have set themselves two major targets—supporters of *Militant* and members of the National Union of Mineworkers.

The members of the so-called Union of Democratic Miners and the right-wing clique that control the party are victimising both groups in the Labour Party. In an outrageous decision, the party's executive committee—following the Labour Party ruling that UDM branches cannot send a delegate to party general committees—have said they will only accept Notts NUM delegates if NCB colliery management verify how many NUM members from each pit live in the constituency!

The annual general meeting of Woodhouse Ward Branch had to be postponed last week, after the executive ruled that striking miners who paid £2 reduced Labour Party membership fee last year would have to pay the full amount before they were considered members. The ward meeting had to be abandoned after severe disagreements.

Meanwhile the attacks against *Militant* supporters continue. The executive have also started the procedure to have six Labour Party members expelled because they have been "seen selling *Militant*".

Despite all the tricks the right-wing pull, they will not be able to stem the process of change that is taking place in the party, which will be transformed into a campaigning socialist party that supports workers in struggle rather than look to the Coal Board to see who it will allow into the party.

Mirror's smears - the truth

A PROPHECIC resolution was unanimously endorsed by Liverpool District Labour Party a year ago. The revival of smears against Derek Hatton in relation to the proposed Asda superstore by Granada TV's *World in Action* and by the *Daily Mirror* on the eve of the Old Swan by-election have more than underlined its points.

By Lynn Walsh

The resolution condemned the dirty propaganda war being waged by the Liberals, Tories, and the media against the council and "particularly the McCarthyite campaign of character assassination against Derek Hatton". Its real objectives were to "discredit the Labour Party and undermine support for the campaign to defend jobs and services".

Fearing the enormous sympathy and support amongst workers everywhere, the capitalist media have tried to smear leaders like Derek Hatton with unsubstantiated allegations—smears—of corruption and personal self-seeking.

Last year's resolution was in response to media scandal-mongering over Asda's application to build a superstore in the Speke Enterprise Zone. Initially, Derek Hatton, with a majority of the District Labour Party Executive, supported the proposal. After a full debate, the District Labour Party voted against the Asda application. On the council Derek Hatton then voted against the proposal, in line with the DLP's decision.

For the Liverpool labour movement this was the end of the matter—unless the Secretary of State, who is considering Asda's appeal, should try to overrule the council's decision.

However, following unfounded allegations which Derek completely denies, the police started investigations for possible corruption. This



Derek Hatton (right) with Liverpool and Lambeth councillors at the High Court on Tuesday. Photo: Dave Sinclair.

had been going on for over 11 months, without Derek himself being given any opportunity to answer questions and refute the smears.

Then on the eve of the Old Swan by-election, with blatantly politically motivated timing, the police reputedly announced that they intended to question Derek over the Asda allegations. Reports that the police also wanted to question Derek over expenses claims were totally untrue.

Strong denial

On the day of the by-election, the *Mirror* devoted nearly a whole page to the allegations. Undoubtedly guided by the advice of their lawyers, the *Mirror* quoted several times Derek's strong denial of any corrupt involvement. But the article was maliciously written to build up an impression of corruption, clearly aiming to bring about a Labour defeat in Old Swan.

It concluded with the comment, obviously reflecting political wish-fulfilment on the part of millionaire Maxwell, that the publicity on this issue might "yet deliver a knockout blow to *Militant's* fortunes in the city". As Maxwell will find out, it

will take more than this to undermine the immense standing of a council that consistently defies the Tory government in defence of workers' interests.

Doubts may well be raised among workers who do not know all the facts. But when the issues are explained, workers will understand the cynical motives of those trying to blacken the names of Liverpool's leaders.

While not repeating all the allegations, smears and lies contained in Granada's *World in Action* programme (shown on 16 December 1985), the *Mirror* obviously assumed that many of its readers would have seen that programme.

What is the truth?

The issues raised by the Asda proposal (fully explained in *Militant*, 15 February 1985) were not clear cut. The Marxists in the Labour Group all believe that the only real solution is the development of publicly-owned industries and services on the basis of socialist planning. But under existing conditions of capitalist de-industrialisation and a government-imposed Enterprise Zone, councillors had to weigh up what immediate steps would most benefit the working class locally. It was

on the immediate steps, not general policy, that there were different views.

The case supported by Derek Hatton and by a majority of the DLP Executive was that the Asda project would mean a £20 million investment, would bring a rate income to the city of £1 million a year, and would lead to the creation of 1,000 new jobs. No one concerned about the conditions in Speke could dismiss this out of hand. Sections of a number of trade unions, including UCATT, the GMBATU, and the TGWU supported the Asda plan.

Damaging

On the other side, other trade unionists and Labour party members, in line with previous DLP policy, argued that the superstore, while it might create jobs, would have a seriously damaging effect on the existing retail trade, with an overall detrimental effect on the level of unemployment.

The suggestion, which has been made by many opponents of the Liverpool Labour Group, that Derek supported the proposals because of his association with Tony Beyga, a Knowsley councillor, who

was well known to be a public relations representative of ET Spencer (a builder involved in the Asda proposal), or that Derek Hatton used disreputable tactics to try and get the proposal adopted, are totally false.

As the *Mirror* said, Derek Hatton and Tony Beyga were 'old friends'. They have never concealed the fact they "have met socially" through the St Ambrose Amateur Boxing Club. It was no secret that they went to Tangiers together on a holiday—for which they both paid their own share.

Before a planning application was made for the Asda scheme, there were quite open and legitimate meetings between representatives of the labour movement to discuss a general policy on a superstore in the Enterprise Zone. These meetings involved Tony Beyga, a Knowsley councillor, Derek Hatton and other members of Liverpool City Council planning committee, including Bill Snell, who was also on the Liverpool planning committee. Snell is an USDAW official, and also one of the five defectors who voted against the council's no-cuts stand.

In these meetings there

was a discussion of whether Liverpool City Council should adopt a policy which would accommodate a planning application for a superstore in the Enterprise Zone.

Once a formal planning application was made, meetings on the scheme took place with council officials, present, according to the usual practice.

Meanwhile however, the general policy was debated by the DLP. After a full, democratic debate the DLP rejected the executive's recommendation and came out against the Asda superstore.

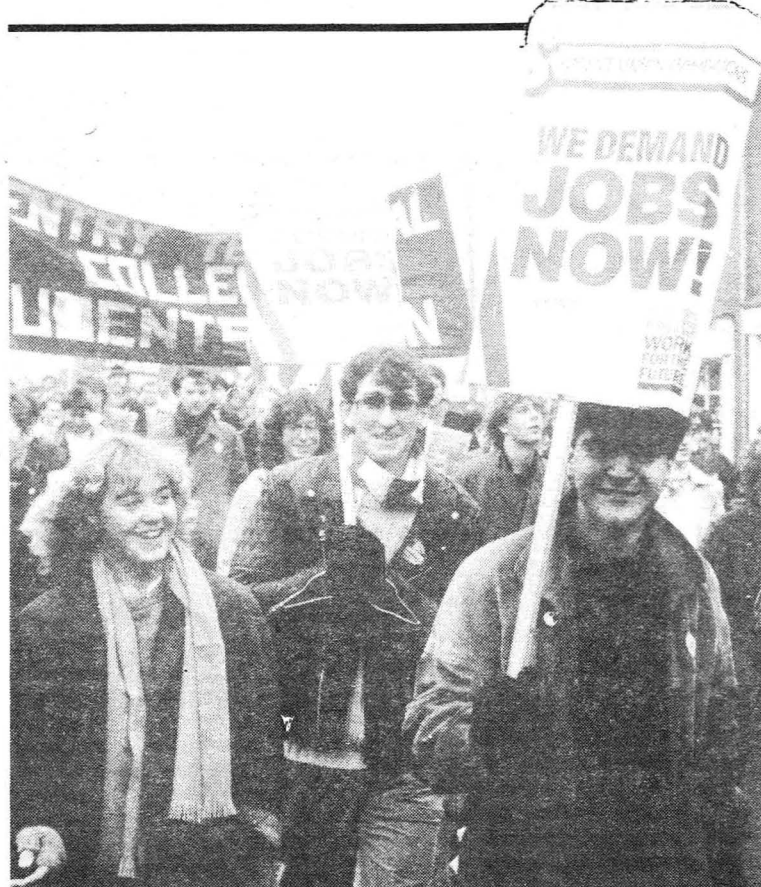
Is it not ironic that those critics who are so eager to fling mud at leading Labour councillors are mostly the same people who condemn the decisive policy-making role of the DLP? It is not possible for any individual councillor, whatever his or her motive, to dictate policy without the approval of representatives of the local labour movement. The DLP debates all key issues, takes the final decision, and thus acts as a democratic check of the Labour council.

Dungheap

The *Mirror's* smears, the putrid topping on a dungheap of slanders and lies, undoubtedly played their part in Labour's Old Swan defeat. But they will not succeed in undermining the campaign led by Liverpool Labour Party.

The real grievance of big business and their kept press is not corruption and self-seeking. This goes on everywhere; it is spawned by the capitalist greed for profit. In 1984 alone, for instance over 600 cases of fraud were being investigated in London involving over £750 million. How many swindlers have been brought to justice?

No, the real complaint is that Liverpool councillors are workers' tribunes, democratically accountable to the organisations of the labour movement—and because of this they are able to lead a bold, unbending struggle in defence of workers' interests and for a change in society.



Students demonstrating in Sheffield for jobs for students leaving Further Education. Photo: John Smith (IFL).

Labour students increase vote in Further Education sector

THE CONFERENCE of students in the Further Education sector in December last year was the largest ever. The National Union of Students had made a big intervention into the FE sector through the launch of the 'Work for the Future' campaign. The campaign was a result of pressure from Further Education Labour Students (FELS) reflecting a determination amongst the students to fight the Tories' attacks on education and youth.

By Louise James

Although there was an underlying mood towards Labour FELS failed to win a position on FE sector national committee. This was mainly because of personal attacks on the FELS candidate, Lesleigh Woodburn, by National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS) officials in the NUS. Despite the attacks, however, her vote increased on last time, and FELS held its

largest ever conference meeting with almost 50 students attending until 1.30 in the morning.

The Further Education sector's national committee had improved its performance considerably over the last year. In the previous year only one member of the committee remained in office for the full term and less than half the required number of meetings was held.

This year all the meetings were held and all the members stayed the full course. But there is lack of leadership and direction in the FE sector and the conference remains unaccountable to the mass of students. Most of the delegates are not elected and only a handful of resolutions are handed in from the 385 colleges.

To build an accountable, representative conference of 5-600 strong requires a thorough campaign by the Labour clubs in the colleges. The Labour clubs could show in practice the need for a socialist leadership which is capable

of fighting for students' needs, and forging links with the trade unions in the colleges. The national committee has the potential of playing an important role in the campaign but its hands are tied by the NOLS leadership who want to see its role limited to an advisory one.

The Further Education sector represents 64 per cent of the NUS membership and with the Tory cuts in education and the plans to extend YTS to two years it is vital that the FE students are united alongside the trade union movement.

World Socialist Books
1986 Booklist now
available from 3-13
Hepscott Road London
E9 5HB phone (01)
533 3311.

FIGHTING FUND

This week
£2787

Quarter ends
31 January

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 London South West	1186		1200
2 London West	1602		2750
3 Scotland West	1852		3800
4 East Midlands	1458		3050
5 Humberside	1032		2150
6 Southern	2282		5450
7 London East	1384		3350
8 London South East	881		2200
9 Eastern	1282		3450
10 Manchester/Lancs	1307		4200
11 South West	594		2150
12 West Midlands	1276		4500
13 Yorkshire	1481		5650
14 Northern	1178		4650
15 Wales West	625		2950
16 Merseyside	1063		6850
17 Scotland East	484		3100
18 Wales East	393		3050
Others	6581		5500
Total received	27941		70000

Three weeks to beat record!

MANY READERS have already promised to raise £30 from friends and relatives to make sure that once again our fighting fund breaks a record. With just two weeks to the end of the quarter we need such all-out effort from every area.

Use the petition sheets (available from this office) to raise money amongst your workmates and friends, or simply ask for tenners and fivers from everyone you know.

Our supporters come from every age range from the very young like Jasmine aged 7 from Dover who collected £1 for our funds to the not so very young such as Mr Maxwell-Taylor (an ex-soldier 1939-47) and a regular donor. He sent £4 and told us: "I want a real socialist government and I hope for you all my best wishes for we know you print the truth".

Regular donations of this type provide the largest proportion of the fighting fund. It represents the solid support of people who

don't just talk about changing society but actively do something about it. We will never have raised enough until we succeed in that task, so keep that money rolling in!

Many Scottish readers are organising Burns' suppers and superbowl nites and we have already seen money from an East London 'Mammoth Quiz Show' (£24) and £36 from Northumberland Xmas social. Have you organised your end of quarter social yet? Have fun!

By Ruth Campbell

Donations

Mark and Lorraine, Basingstoke £3; Glyn Jones, T&G shop steward from Burton-on-Trent £3; Mr J Wheatstone, Cinderford £25; DHS Bowdler, Reading £30; a pensioner from Hamilton £1.50; Joan and Bob Dolan, Islington £20; G Littlejohns, NUT £3.25, G Webster, TGWU 75p; C Reader 25p all from Leicester; a supporter from Ilkeston for his regular monthly donation of £5.

Get Militant

THE STORM brewing over Fleet Street only confirms that workers need their own paper, that tells the truth, defends their interests and is not in the pocket of one millionaire or another.

While the so-called 'Labour' *Mirror* is shedding one third of its workforce, Murdoch is leading the campaign to try and destroy union power in the printing industry. *Militant* sellers must recommit themselves to building our circulation until we can fully rival these anti-working class dailies.

Print battle

This includes right now building up sales amongst print workers themselves, who are in the frontline of the Tories' offensive. *Militant* with its regular articles on these coming battles should be taken down to Fleet Street and to provincial papers and the printing

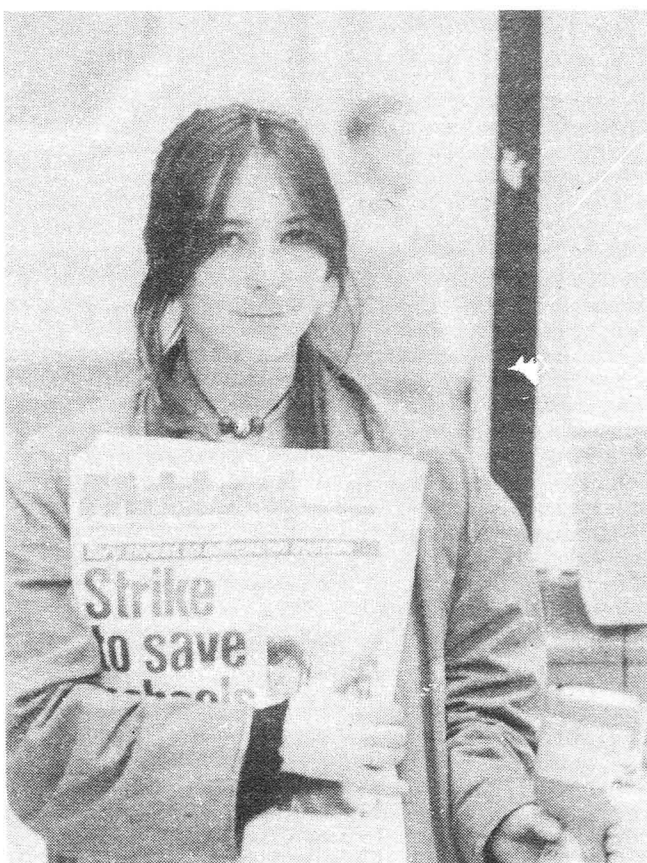
By Jeremy Birch

unions' meetings.

Last week using *Militant's* coverage of the Westland issue, 11 papers were sold in the streets of Yeovil, and then an estate sale was carried out near the plant.

In South Wales Newport sellers responded defiantly to threats of expulsion by Executive members of Newport East Labour Party, of anyone seen selling the paper. A mass paper sale was held, unfortunately in torrential rain, which saw 33 papers being sold.

With all the activity around the 150 local anti-witch-hunt public meetings, bumper sales of *Militant* are expected from every area.



Marxist Daily Building Fund

1986 IS to be the year of the *Militant*. The campaign to increase the sales of your paper will capitalise on all the publicity supporters of *Militant* have had over the past year and will increase the number of workers who don't just buy *Militant* but sell it.

But 1986 should also be the year when we lay concrete plans for the produc-

tion of a more frequent *Militant*. We don't use the criteria of the capitalist press when they consider the viability of expanding their production. A more frequent *Militant* will depend on how many sellers we have in the factories, colleges and estates and how many papers you sell.

But, unfortunately, we also have to consider the cost

of expanding. We need extra capacity on our printing press and typesetting equipment. We will need extra staff for the production and distribution of the paper. To do that, we need cash.

The campaign over the past few months enabled us to do some, although not all, of what we would have liked to do in support of Liverpool council and has enabled

us to reduce our debts. But we cannot afford to let up now.

If you haven't already done so, don't forget to give your tenner to the Marxist Daily Building Fund or to donate a week's wages so that we can be in a healthy financial position at the start of 1986.

By Dave Campbell

A chat, a cup of tea and an MIR

BEAT THE witch-hunt by taking the ideas of Marxism to every corner of the movement. Take out *Militant* to the factories and estates.

We have found in Stevenage that many workers have a thirst also for the more in-depth analysis of the *Militant International Review (MIR)*.

In recent weeks, while the right wing in Stevenage have been busy wasting the time, energy and money of the Party in a divisive attack upon Marxists, we have been busy explaining the reasons behind the witch-hunt at public meetings, in the Shopping Centre and on the estates winning support and selling over 30 *MIR's* in the process.

With reports of the local witch-hunt splashed across

the local press we have had a favourable response on the doorsteps. Workers want to know why the attacks are taking place. Will the next Labour government be like the last? After a chat many enthusiastically snap up a copy of the *MIR*.

The next week you go round, you get invited in for a cup of tea and a lengthy discussion on the brilliant article outlining the prospects for the next Labour government. Incidentally, when you sell the Autumn issue go back a couple of weeks later and you will find it easy to sell the Summer issue for the first part of the history of Bolshevism.

So if you have not yet tried selling the *MIR* on the estates including your own regular paper sales then you

are not only missing out on extra sales (and cups of tea) but also an opportunity to defeat the witch-hunt and build support for the ideas of Marxism.

By Jim Horton
(Stevenage Labour Party)

NEW *MIR* OUT SOON with feature articles on the lessons of Liverpool, the Anglo-Irish Agreement—A Warning to Labour, After the Riots—prospects for the Black community and the history of Bolshevism, Part Three.

Coming later this month...

ONLY 30p!

In the battle to prove what we really stand for, can any *Militant* supporter afford not to buy one? Order your copy now from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB.



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.

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 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB. 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.

ENAMEL *Militant* badges: now available. Cost £1. Bulk orders (10 or more). Cost 75p each + 25p post and package. Contact: Fighting Fund Department, 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB.

NOW AVAILABLE 1986 *Militant* poster calendar. £1.00 each plus postage and package. 50p each on orders of 10 or more—profit to your area Fighting Fund. Orders to 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London, E9 5HB. Cheques payable to *Militant*.

OUT NOW Banned LPYS pamphlet 'The ideals of October'. Every YS branch should order in bulk. Price 50p, 20p for individual postage. Bulk postage free. Cheques payable to *Militant*, send to L Waker, 3-13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB.

LONDON LPYS Anti racism rally Sunday 26 January 2pm. North Peckham Civic Centre, Old Kent Road SE15. Speakers include Tony Benn MP, Bernie Grant, Groce and Jarrett family support group speakers and Labour Party Young Socialists. Entrance free.

1986 MARKS the fiftieth anniversary of the Spanish civil war. The Spanish revolution was one of the most heroic struggles of the century. To mark the occasion we have brought together some existing material covering the momentous events of 1936 and the lessons of the disastrous policies of Popular Frontism pursued by Stalin. A ideal introduction for all socialists. Contains: The Spanish Revolution 1931-37 by Peter Taaffe and Ted Grant. The Lessons of Spain by Leon Trotsky. Marxist Study Guide. Popular Frontism. Articles covering French Popular Front 1936, The Spanish Revolution and Chile—Lessons of the Coup. Plus the Spanish Revolution by Alan Woods—C 90 tape. Available from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB. Only £2.25.

What we stand for meetings in London:

PUTNEY: Wednesday 22 January 7.30pm Dryburgh Hall, Dryburgh Road, SW15.

TOOTING: Thursday 30 January 7.30pm. Wheat-sheaf pub, Tooting Road, Tooting Bec SW17.

WOOLWICH Wednesday 5 February 7.45pm. Clock House Community Centre, Defiance Walk, Woolwich SE18.

ACTON: Tuesday 18 February 7.30pm. Ealing Town Hall, High St Acton W3.

HOUNSLOW: Wednesday 5 February 7.45pm. Hounslow Manor School, Hounslow.

TOTTENHAM: Thursday 13 February. 7.45pm. Tottenham Community Project, High Road, Tottenham N17.

LONDON Labour Party Conference, Brixton Recreation Centre, Brixton SW2. 12.45pm.

MILITANT Latin American Day School. Saturday 22 February Kingsway Princeton College, Sidmouth Street WC1. Near Kings Cross Tube. Main session: Peter Taaffe, Chile on the brink. Commissions on Nicaragua, Guerillaism and the armed struggle in Latin America, The Latin American revolution, The Popular Unity government in Chile 1970-73. Main session begins 10.30am. £1 waged, 50p unemployed.

LONDON LPYS conference *Militant* Readers Meeting. Hear Alan Woods, Mark French, Saturday 25 January 6.30pm. The Library Hall, North Peckham Civic Centre, Old Kent Road, SE15.

LONDON LPYS 1986 regional conference. Weekend of 25/26 January. Starts 10am. North Peckham Civic Centre, Old Kent Road, London SE15. Lively political discussions for 1½ days. Disco Saturday night 8-12pm. Speakers include Eric Heffer MP, Andy Bevan, Silentnight speakers, YTURC. Visitors tickets £2. All welcome.

Democracy, socialism and internationalism

AFTER MANY hours of debate at all levels, the General Committee of Chesterfield Labour Party accepted an 'Aims and Objectives' document that will be important for the wider labour movement.

Complimenting the party on the high standard of debate, Tony Benn MP declared it to have been the best General Committee debate he had ever participated in.

The right-wing began by trying to have the whole document thrown out, arguing that we should stick to existing policy. Speaker after speaker pointed out that the document was closer to conference policies than much that has come from the leadership itself of late.

After their initial failure, the right concentrated on attempts to water down the document but again their efforts ended in failure,

with majorities against them of the order of four to one.

The majority of the GC saw their task as not simply to defend the document, but to 'firm it up' in a number of ways. This task was begun by establishing in the first sentence that the Labour Party was unequivocally a "non-doctrinaire policy of class struggle".

Rights fought for

Similarly, original references to "all human beings having certain inalienable rights" were amended in recognition that rights do not simply fall from heaven, but exist only because they are fought for by working people who have to struggle just as hard to retain them.

The document calls upon the movement to recognise that the law

is not something neutral and sacrosanct, but is used by capital to enforce its will over labour and that socialists have a right and duty to oppose unjust laws, which kept the rich up there and the poor down here. This discussion was the part of the debate which produced most howls of anguish from the right.

So too did Tony Benn's stress on the right of party members to have their own views "and to organise within the party to promote them".

Stress was also placed on the need for accountability of leadership, with the election of the cabinet and shadow cabinet and the recognition that "no one can demand blind obedience from us in the name of loyalty or unity".

Most important of all, the document calls for "the common

ownership under democratic control and management of the commanding heights of the economy, including the banks and finance houses, the land and companies which dominate our industrial system."

Entrenched by law

This was recognised by the GC to be the central core of the 'Aims and Objectives' document. Without the accomplishment of this, nothing real in respect of the rights to jobs, housing, etc stated elsewhere in the statement could be implemented. As the document puts it: "These rights cannot be fully realised in any society under capitalism, which as in Britain now, has entrenched by law, the power of capital over labour".

The document has its faults. There is an unfortunate vagueness, for example a demand for "mass media which provide accurate news" with no mention of how this might be achieved. There is a demand for the right of all to a continuing education, but no mention is made of the needs of working class students wanting to stay on to receive proper grants.

Important contribution

This vagueness is especially bad given the vacuity of the Labour Party leadership on certain policy issues and their direct move away from socialist commitments on others, for example, Neil Kinnock's recently expressed views on renationalisation.

Nevertheless, Tony Benn and the Chesterfield Labour Party have made an important contribution to the debate that is going on in the labour movement. The document must now be used by the left as part of the process of building up an alternative to the mish-mash, confusion and retreat by the national leadership.

By Roy Davies
(Chesterfield Labour Party)

The aims and objectives of Chesterfield Labour Party

MILITANT IS publishing the full statement in the interests of political discussion, though we do not agree with all the points and we will be taking them up in future issues.

THE CHESTERFIELD Constituency Labour Party is a democratic, socialist and internationalist party, with a growing membership made up of men and women, young and old, who are widely representative of all aspects of life in the town; closely linked to the trade unions, and other affiliated organisations, in pursuit of the historic role of Labour as a non-doctrinaire party of class struggle.

We are an integral part of the British Labour Party, and accept its constitution and policy, as laid down at its annual conference.

We work for the election of Labour candidates, in all local and national elections, on the basis of the political programmes put before the electors.

We believe the Chesterfield party has a duty to defend working people and their families, and to campaign actively for policies that will help them.

This statement of our aims and objectives has been prepared to provide a focus for political discussion and education within the party; to allow those who join the party to understand the policies for which we stand; and to be the basis of our long-term political work.

We believe:

That there should be certain rights which must be won and maintained.

★ The right to life, free from fear, oppression, ignorance, preventable ill-health or poverty.

★ The right to useful and satisfying work, balanced with leisure, to meet the needs of society.

★ The right of everyone to receive an income sufficient to maintain a decent standard of living.

★ The right to a good home for all in which to live, bring up children and care for all dependents.

★ The right to receive the best possible medical care, free, and at the moment of need.

★ The right of access, throughout life, to the full range of human knowledge, through education at school, in college and afterwards.

★ The right to mass media which provide accurate news, free from bias or distortion, and a diversity of views.

★ The right to enjoy dignity, and a full life, in retirement in suitable accommodation, free from financial anxieties, with proper medical, and other facilities, including personal care, necessary to make that possible.

★ The right to expect that any government in power will work for peace and justice, and will not provoke international conflict or hostility or divert resources from essential purposes to build up the weapons of mass destruction.

★ The right to equality of treatment under just laws, free from all discrimination based upon class, sex, race, life-style or beliefs.

★ The right of free speech and



Tony Benn being declared elected as MP for Chesterfield.

Photo: John Smith (IFL).

assembly, the entrenchment of civil liberties and human rights and the right to organise voluntary associations and free trade unions for the purpose of protecting and improving the prospects for those who belong to them, and in particular, the right to withdraw labour as a means of securing justice.

★ The right of elected local and national authorities to provide those jobs and services needed by the community.

—In democracy

We are deeply committed to the democratic process in the political, economic, social and administrative spheres, and believe that no person should have power over others unless they are accountable to, and removable by, those over whom they exercise that power or by elected representatives of the people.

—In socialism

We are socialists because we believe that these rights cannot be fully realised in any society under capitalism, which, as in Britain, now, has entrenched by law, the power of capital over labour, and subordinated human values to the demand for profit, at the expense of social justice and peace.

—In internationalism

We are an internationalist party believing that all people, everywhere are entitled to demand the same rights and with this in mind we have set up an International Committee of the Chesterfield party to work with those who share our view.

—In the rights of self-determination

We believe that the people of every nation have the right to govern themselves and to be free from any form of colonial or imperial domination.

—In solidarity

We believe that we have a moral responsibility to defend all those who are attacked for protecting their own democratically gained rights, and with this in mind we are establishing workplace branches so that each can help others more effectively.

—That conscience must be above the law

We assert the right of all people to follow their own conscientious beliefs even if it involves them in breaking the law; and that while there may be a legal obligation to obey the law there is no moral obligation to obey unjust laws; but we also know that those who break the law on moral grounds, may face punishment for their beliefs, and the final verdict on their actions will rest with the public and with history.

—In the rights of all to their beliefs

We believe that socialist ideas which have been evolved in this country and abroad, over the centuries have given us a rich inheritance; but we do not believe that truth can be captured in any one creed to which all must subscribe under the threat of expulsion or exclusion; and we respect the rights of all members of the party to hold their own views, and to organise, within the party to promote them, being convinced that diversity of opinion adds strength to our cause.

—In progress through collective action

We believe, in the light of our own experience, that the only secure basis for social progress must lie in collective action; and that those who have the privilege of representing us, at all levels, must remain accountable for what they say and do, and that no-one can demand blind obedience, from us, in the name of loyalty or unity.

—That we are servants of the community

We see the Chesterfield Labour Party, and all its representatives, as servants of all those who live and work in the area, and with that in mind we have helped to establish the Chesterfield and District Community Defence Campaign to work in co-operation with others who share that same approach.

—In more democracy in the Labour Party

We want to see the Labour Party made into a more democratic and representative body, with equal rights for women and the ethnic minorities and we would welcome the affiliation of other groups. We also believe that

the Parliamentary Labour Party and Labour Groups should be more closely linked with the membership and that the shadow cabinet should be elected by the electoral college, with similar arrangements made in respect of local government.

The policies we want:

—For Chesterfield and Derbyshire

★ The provision of jobs for all who live in the town and the county and in particular the development of mining, engineering and manufacturing industry, and the provision of public services to make that possible.

★ The pursuance of a big house-building programme to meet the needs of all those, including the elderly.

★ The establishment of a fully comprehensive educational system for all students, and the right of all to continuing education and training.

★ The establishment of full and free health care for all.

★ The accountability of all managers in the public sector to the elected local authorities, who should have the power to require their replacement if they do not meet the needs of the people in the area.

★ The granting of comprehensive general powers to the Derbyshire County, and Chesterfield Borough Councils, to do whatever is necessary in the interests of their communities, free from administrative control by Whitehall.

★ The banning of all bloodsports on land owned by Derbyshire County Council and Chesterfield Borough Council, and also whatever is possible to seek to abolish blood-sports altogether, and the enforcement of all existing legislation relating to animal abuse.

—For Britain

★ The return to full employment and the adoption of the means necessary for that purpose by, amongst other things, the common ownership, under democratic control and management, of the commanding heights of the economy, including the banks and finance houses, the land and all the

companies which dominate our industrial system, and the development of new forms of social ownership.

★ A shorter working week and earlier retirement.

★ The establishment, as of right, of a comprehensive welfare system which will safeguard the living standards of our people.

★ The elimination of all discrimination and injustice.

★ The introduction of a system of taxation which will radically reduce the present gross inequalities of wealth and income.

★ The provision of good housing, health and education for all, by absorbing those private facilities that might be necessary to achieve a fully comprehensive system giving real choice to all.

★ The introduction of a major programme for the democratic reform of the apparatus of the state including the abolition of the House of Lords; the ending of all patronage in making major public appointments; the democratisation of the magistracy, and lay supervision of the judiciary by the introduction of assessors from all walks of life into the High Court; and the democratic control of the police by elected local authorities.

★ The ending of all nuclear weapons and bases in Britain; and the phasing out of civil nuclear power in favour of coal, conservation and alternative benign sources of energy.

★ The provision of cheap and safe public transport for the use of the public, to protect us from the chaos that would follow from leaving key decisions to unrestricted competition.

★ The protection of the environment so that this, and future generations may enjoy it, free from pollution and exploitation for profit.

★ The proper provision for a leisure and multi-cultural society.

★ The protection of the animal kingdom so that this, and future generations, may enjoy the natural wildlife of Britain.

★ The upholding and enforcement of existing legislation relating to animal abuse, and efforts to secure the introduction of further legislation making all blood-sports illegal.

—In international affairs

★ The adoption by Britain of a non-aligned foreign policy, committed to the United Nations but free of all military alliances, so that this country, with others could help ease international tensions, reduce arms expenditure and assist the development of the Third World.

★ The development of closer economic, industrial, social and political links between working people here and in other countries free from the control of the Treaty of Rome or NATO.

An appeal to the people of Chesterfield

We appeal to all those in Chesterfield who share these aims, to work with us for to help to realise them and we invite all those who would like to do so, to join us as individual members so as to assist, in a practical way, to make this possible.

America's boom ruins

THE CRUSHING economic supremacy of the United States of America, following the Second World War laid the basis for the domination of the capitalist world.

It was responsible for producing over half the world's industrial goods and as late as 1953, 55 per cent of value-added manufacture. 80 per cent of world gold was held in the USA, which also produced 79 per cent of the world's cars.

While the American colossus dominated the globe there was little questioning of the huge military bills which appeared to guarantee the markets which were the source of Uncle Sam's super-profits.

US imperialism was forced to develop its rivals and sow the seeds of its own relative decline. Unrestrained by the burdens of military expenditure and operating on low rates of return on their investments, America's capitalist rivals were able to eat into the markets of US companies, and grab a proportionately larger share of expanding world markets.

Between 1950 and 1970, the US share of world manufacturing exports was halved from 33 per cent to 16 per cent. By 1979, the US was producing only 22 per cent of the world's value added by manufacture and by 1982 only 19 per cent of the world's cars. Now Japan with half the population produces more steel than the US.

Lenin pointed out that imperialism played a progressive role in introducing modern production to the world as a whole but in relation to the domestic economies of the imperialist powers, it tended to play a retrogressive role in the sense that the drive for productivity at home was displaced by the search for larger absolute profits in new markets.

American capital went the way of her British forerunners. In 1955 new manufacturing investment per worker in the US was 60 per cent greater than her rivals in Europe and 400 per cent greater than in

By Phil Frampton

Japan. By 1970 Europe had caught up to the US which in turn was investing at only a third of the Japanese rate.

In 1969, the chairman of the big Bethlehem Steel Company lamented: "We are approaching the pitiful economic condition of Great Britain characterised by...an inadequate investment policy." By the mid-70s the capital behind each American industrial worker was one third less than a German worker and only half that of a Japanese worker.

A worker's remarks in *Business Week* (30/11/85) confirm that US industry has got the 'British disease'. Of his factory, part of the Purex company, he said: "Most of the machinery there is about 25 to 30 years old—tied down, wired down, tape, rubber bands, whatever it takes to get it running." American industry's superiority has been eaten away with rivals improving productivity at a much faster pace.

Military burden

In the 1980s US productivity increases have been zero, indicating that in many sectors productivity will have actually declined!

The burden of military commitment is shown in government research expenditure comparisons. The Japanese spend 15 times more on research for agriculture and industry than the US.

This is because the US government spends two thirds of its necessary money on space and

defence—four times as much as Japan. It was recently estimated that the Star Wars research project would alone consume a third of all America's engineering graduates in the next few years.

The end of the post-war boom rudely shattered the illusions of the 'American Century'. A new balance of forces was emerging both between US capitalism and its rivals and between imperialism and the world working class. The Nixon-Carter era was one of military defeat followed by paralysis at the threat of social revolution in the former colonial countries.

The attacks on wages, with real hourly earnings falling by 13 per cent in the decade after 1972 provoked the US workers into one of the highest strike rates in the world.

Reagonomics represented the frenzied response of the American ruling class to these defeats and retreats on the economic and military plane. By savage attacks on workers' living standards and rights via tax handouts to big business, Reagan promised to restore profitability while simultaneously re-establishing US military supremacy. But rather than halting the decline, the economy after a brief flicker has been brought to the brink of a disaster.

Some leading businessmen are so desperate that, having been through Keynesianism, Monetarism and 'Reagonomics' they now see a crash as the only way out! "Congress might be pushed into doing something...by a crisis such as a run on the dollar. In some ways a crisis would be the best way out." (The head of

Leythold group of brokers in *Dun's Business Monthly*).

The urgency of clipping the costs of the arms race is based on the economic problems now facing US capitalism. The real background to the recent Geneva armaments talks is the fear of the ruling parasites of the East and West that the crises of the productive forces will be exacerbated by the arms race and lead to collapse of their rule.

Reagan's tax handouts and his \$1½ trillion armaments drive have finally led to a crippling \$200 billion annual government budget deficit, industrial stagnation, a farm crisis, the threat of a banking collapse and a world upheaval. In short—a disaster.

Ironically it was Reagan's predecessor, Carter, who had toyed with the idea of emulating Roosevelt's 'New Deal' of the thirties—which through massive government spending engineered a boom following the great crash. But it was Reagan who, having burned his fingers with monetarism and seen US industry slump in 1981, turned to a massive inflationary programme of Roosevelt dimensions. The only difference from Roosevelt was that Reagan's 'New Deal' made no pretence of being for the poor.

'New deal'

Leon Trotsky commented of Roosevelt's New Deal that "it was possible only because of the tremendous wealth accumulated by past generations. Only a very rich nation could indulge itself in so extravagant a policy. But even such nations cannot go on living at the expense of past generations. The New Deal policy with its fictitious achievements and its very real increase in the national debt, leads unavoidably to ferocious capitalist reaction and a devastating explosion of imperialism." (in *The Living Thoughts of Karl Marx*)



Reagan with McFarlane — military spending



The boom has made fortunes for some

The Roosevelt boom collapsed after five years leaving a massive increase in the national debt, a new slump and presaged a world war.

Reagan's boom lasted just two and a half years, doubled the national debt and now heralds the most tumultuous period in the history of mankind. The trillion dollar bill for the arms drive and the tax handouts remains unpaid, taking the national debt to \$2 trillion and making the USA the world's biggest debtor nation. Reagan achieved a boom which got him re-elected but it was a once and for all achievement—selling Uncle Sam's silver.

In 1982, Reagan turned up on TV with his aptly named Laffer Curve. He announced to the world his new guru, Arthur Laffer, who had produced a scientific diagram to 'prove' that tax cuts would lead to people working harder,

Mineworkers v. multinationals

SIX MONTHS after Britain's NUM started the historic strike for jobs, members of the American miners' union UMWA struck against a dozen pits owned by the A.T. Massey company in Kentucky and West Virginia. The strike is still going on.

Several of Massey's subsidiary companies pulled out of contract negotiations then being held between UMWA and the bosses, the Bituminous Coal Operators Association. By October 1984 the two sides had agreed modest improvements and maintained all the other articles in the UMWA contract.

Masseys though, offered the contract only to some employees, on a mine or plant basis, saying each subsidiary was 'independent' with Masseys acting as only a sales agent. But this was a smokescreen behind which they hoped to split workers. The union say the contract should be signed on an all-Massey basis, this position has been upheld by the National Industrial Relations Board (like the British ACAS, only legally binding).

Miners need the employment

security of a single company contract. Over 50,000 union mineworkers are laid-off nationally, including over half of UMWA members in West Virginia and Kentucky.

Jobs are the main issue. Individual mine contracts would end the "panel rights" which let miners who are laid-off at one pit, bid for work at another owned by the same firm. The union has operated "bidding" and "seniority" procedures which they want built into the contracts. Laid-off workers apply for panel so that when jobs become available in the company they go to the union member with longest service in the company provided they are able to do the job.

Union busting

If Massey's win this dispute they would use the old union-busting tactic of closing down the mine, "selling" it to one of their subsidiaries and reopening with non-union labour.

What makes this normal capitalist skulduggery more significant is the ownership of the pit. The US-owned Fluor Corporation and the British-based Royal

Dutch/Shell group have come together to form Massey Coal, one of a number of cases of multinational energy companies extending their monopoly by taking on coal assets. Massey Coal runs coal, transport and exporting operations. Fluor and Shell have spent \$1 billion to make Masseys America's second biggest exporter of coal and fifth largest producer.

They want Massey non-union. The state's Democratic Party governor Collins brought in riot troops, a helicopter and a maze of injunctions to beat back the union after a visit to London where many union members believe they met Shell officials and Thatcher government representatives.

Internal Massey documents show that decisions about all major policy issues are made by a committee representing the two multinationals. Shell of course have long tentacles stretching around the world, including coal firms in South Africa, one of the targets for the sanctions campaign against South Africa in the States.

US coal is threatened by cheaper coal from the apartheid regime. Shell own 50 per cent of the Rielsruit mine in SA. Last year two

black miners were killed in the mine. Members of the NUM took two hours off work to hold a prayer meeting and pay their respects to relatives. The company sacked two union representatives and suspended four others. When 800 miners struck in support 86 union members were dismissed.

Global perspective

Miners everywhere, including Britain where privatisation hangs like a sword over our jobs, have to follow Shell in one way, by thinking in a global perspective. The miners of Massey with their picket signs "America free; scabs go back to Poland" and "who do you back, corporate greed or the UMW?" are fighting the same fight as South Africa's miners.

They are fighting the same battle as British miners and other trade unionists, to stop Shell bringing conditions in all mines in line with what they are trying to enforce in South Africa. International workers' solidarity is our only defence.

By an NUM member

ns out of steam



ng like the rocket system (right) has exacerbated the crisis of American capitalism.



ulators—it has not solved US capitalism's problems.

therefore increasing the tax base and total revenue. The result of tax handouts, Reagan claimed, would be a \$30 billion increase in government revenue which would help to pay the arms bill.

Tax handouts

In the first year tax revenue fell by \$18 billion. But the arms bill continued to grow and now stands at almost one third of all government expenditure. The dream of endless profits and the miracle of inflation—free growth blinded US big business to the consequences of Reagan's magic until the boom petered out.

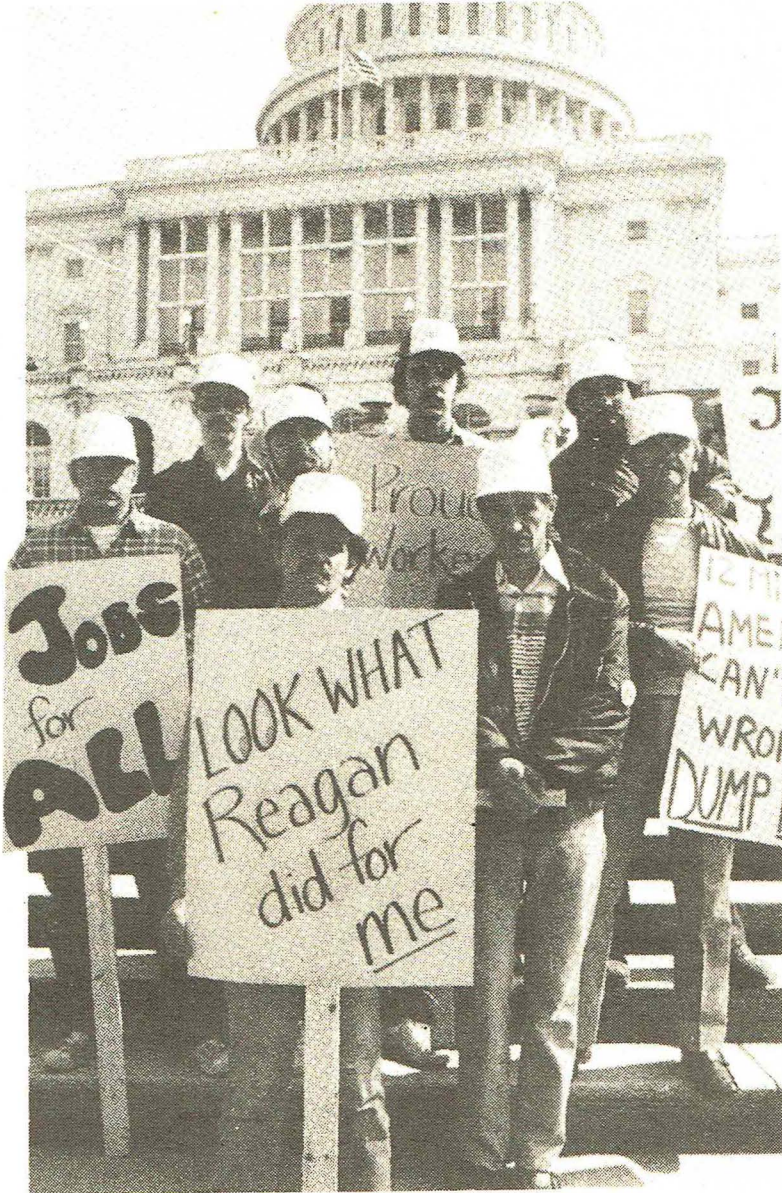
The running of the huge budget deficit forced the government to maintain high interest rates to attract money to finance the deficits. The high rates sucked in money from abroad driving up the demand for dollars and pushing up the price of dollars by 45 per cent

compared to their 1980 level. The over-valued dollar kept prices down and helped Reagan's re-election but it made US goods expensive against her rivals both in world and in domestic markets.

At a result, manufacturing imports which in 1963 were 3 per cent now account for 25 per cent of the US market.

Three in every four shoes worn in the US are now imports. Half the radio and TV sets are imported. In the home of the motor car, a colossal 30 per cent of cars were imported by October 1985 and another 5 per cent produced by non-US manufacturers in the USA. In 1984, business imported one quarter of its durable capital requirements and in the high technology area of semi-conductors, 30 per cent.

Exports have been savaged. The Morgan Guaranty Trust reports, "Real exports in the first half of this year (1985) were 12 per cent



Above and right—protesting against Reagan.

below the level of 1980." Between 1982 and 1984 exports were static while imports grew by 34 per cent. This had the effect of cutting the boom by transferring its fruits abroad.

In 1984 it is estimated that the trade deficit cut growth by a third. The main beneficiaries of the boom were the food and service sectors. Symptomatic of the sick economy, the MacDonalds hamburger chain expanded to employ one and a half times more workers than the once mighty US Steel Company.

Some sections of the vital smokestack sector (accounting for 45 per cent of US production) were devastated. Machine tool output in 1985 is less than half the level of 1981. Heavy truck output is 30 per cent less than in 1979. Car production is over 20 per cent below 1977.

Protectionism

With industrial production stagnant since Reagan's re-election, the employers are screaming for import controls. As the deputy chair of the chemical giant Dupont commented: "Free trade is easy when you are winning." 300 trade protection bills are now going through Congress. There is a mood of panic. "...For reasons we cannot fathom, the captains of industry have forgotten they head huge multinational concerns. The US is threatening to blow apart the world economy." said the *Wall Street Journal* editorial (1/10/85).

Reagan is trying to hold back the threat of protectionist measures which will, like the Smoot-Hawley Act of 1930, trigger a terrible trade war and conditions worse than the great depression. In fact the recent limited move to devalue the dollar is itself a protectionist measure. And between 1980 and 1984 the

proportion of US manufacturers covered by 'non-tariff' barriers increased from 20 per cent to 30 per cent.

The *Wall Street Journal* comments that a trade war would threaten not only US exports but also the earnings of US manufacturers abroad which are three times greater than export earnings. But more important it would threaten the total collapse of the indebted countries of Africa and Latin America, a world crash—an economic Armageddon.

Bringing down the dollar's value will only offload the crisis onto the rest of the world. But this could only be achieved by lowering interest rates and thus cutting the budget deficit or through massive inflation. To cut the deficit, Reagan must either massively increase taxes or cut spending either on arms or on social programmes already pared to the bone.

These options are even less attractive when it is pointed out that US industry is so underinvested that it may not even take advantage of a dollar devaluation. The *Wall Street Journal* points out that: "between 1971 and the end of 1979, the US trade balance continued to deteriorate while the dollar fell in value" (by about 50 per cent against the Deutschmark).

Trotsky in the twenties showed how the US capitalists tried to solve their crisis by 'putting Europe on rations'. But the very internationalisation of the world economy now makes any such exercise perilous and likely to boomerang. The high dollar has temporarily boosted Latin American competitiveness against US goods and staved off a deeper crisis in Latin American debts to US banks. Some major US banks would crash if the Latin American rulers defaulted.



The banks have already lost millions.

But on the other hand the high dollar has built up a \$200 billion debt to the banks in the US farm sector where exports have declined by 30 per cent between 1981 and 1984. Farm incomes have been cut by a third and land prices by half, resulting in 20,000 bankruptcies a year.

World crisis

Rich US farmers have been reduced to semi-colonial status hiring singers like Bob Dylan to their own Farm Aid concerts and demanding the rescheduling of their debts. Loan write-offs in this sector have also resulted in bank crashes and could create a national crisis.

Catastrophe threatens US capital whatever it does. US big business will not be able to avoid social upheaval at home or abroad. The crisis is a world capitalist crisis of overproduction. The productive forces are restricted from further development by the profit system and by 'national' interests of the capitalists.

In the constricted markets, US capitalism is being exposed. It cannot maintain its current levels of production and consumption indefinitely on a capitalist basis. But even cuts in military expenditure will court crisis by threatening the profits of the huge military-industrial complex.

Nothing short of the socialist call for a rational plan of production based on need poses a way out of the threatened catastrophe. All else amounts to fiddling while the modern Rome burns. The stumbling, doddering old ex-actor Reagan is a fitting Nero for a senile system in its death agony.

USA, Haiti

US unions must reject concessions

IN DECEMBER carpenters throughout Northern California agreed to a new concessionary contract by a vote of 4,142 to 1,372.

This was the second vote on an almost identical contract, which included elimination of the "black Fridays" (every other Friday off work), pay cuts for beginning apprentices, elimination of the cost of living allowance, and other setbacks.

Perhaps the greatest threat was the establishment of a "Work Preservation Committee" empowered to "approve such changes (in the contract) as it deems in the best interests" of the union and the contractors (as if they have common interests). In other words, it is empowered to grant further concessions any time it wants!

The reason for the acceptance after the earlier rejection were several. Carpenters in outlying areas accepted overwhelmingly, after an earlier pay cut proposal for them was removed. Also removed was a clause which would have eliminated jurisdictional lines for carpenters, leading to open warfare among the trades with the lowest paid trade getting all the work.

Only a quarter of workers voted, many opposed the concessions but did not see any way to alter things. Also, there was a certain tiredness among the most determined elements within the union. They opposed concessions, but couldn't clearly see a way to fight them when the entire union

By John Reimann
(Carpenters Union)

leadership was solidly pushing for them. A lot of energy (and money) was put into organising opposition to the first proposal, and it was difficult to organise as effectively against it the second time.

The US building unions are headed for a crisis. From over 80 per cent of the workforce unionised in 1953 to an estimated 22 per cent in 1985, their decline has markedly accelerated in recent years. In North California, construction of a \$250 million gold mine, a \$100 million refinery and a \$44 million freeway interchange have all gone non-union.

Non-union threat

In the Bay area, considered the last stronghold for union construction in the country, some 20 to 30 per cent of the work is now non-union. (As recently as 10 to 15 years ago, non-union construction in this area was virtually unheard of).

The chief weapon to hamstring unions is the "two

gate system". Based on the Taft-Hartley Act, passed under a Democratic administration, the "two gate system" uses two construction gates on jobs where one or more contract on the job is non-union.

Non-union workers and suppliers pass through one gate, union workers and suppliers through the other. The union may legally picket only the non-union gate, so union workers technically do not have to pass a picket line and the other unions can't legally tell their members to get off the job.

This has been used to divide the building trades unions and allow non-union contractors to gain a foothold and grow stronger. (Of course craft unions, rather than one big industrial union, such as UCATT, doesn't help either).

Presently, there is a small boom in construction in many cities—especially in commercial construction. However, this is almost entirely based on tax laws rather than demand, and office buildings now have a 15 per cent vacancy rate nationally which will certainly bring office construction to a grinding halt, causing tremendous unemployment in the industry.

This will only accelerate the growth of non-union construction, and the union contractors will then come to the building trades officials demanding even more severe concessions, including drastic wage cuts, which the



Carpenters and other trade unionists protest in California at the "two-gater" system.

leadership will seek to force through. Unionised contractors will claim that they need these cuts to "compete" with non-union contractors and this idea will be echoed by union officials to their members (as they have done for the last 10 years).

Political struggle

This time, the rank and file will strongly resist, however. Members will say to their officials: "You told us these last concessions would solve the problem, but it's only gotten worse. Now you're telling us we have to take further cutbacks? Are you taking a cut in your \$55,000 salary? You can take this contract and shove it!"

All the most militant traditions of the construction workers will start to return. In the Minneapolis 1934 Teamsters' strike, construction workers played a key role in shutting down the city. In 1973, Bay Area carpenters were the only ones to strike against Nixon's wage controls (completely illegally too). During the Greyhound strike two years ago, many construction jobs in Boston were shut down as building trades workers rallied to support their striking brothers and sisters.

The only winning strategy will be to fight for a first-rate contract—with a shorter work week, coffee breaks and job protection—and

then use this fight to organise the non-union carpenters. This must be coupled with a political struggle against the two-gate system and the police, the courts and the politicians who enforce it.

Battles

This will tend to coincide with growing battles throughout the labour movement—battles that will inevitably spill over into a struggle for a mass Labor Party. Union activists should prepare themselves for this coming period by developing an understanding of these processes and by starting the fight along these lines now.

Millionaire dictator fights for life

JEAN CLAUDE "Baby Doc" Duvalier was declared "President for life" in the Caribbean state of Haiti when he succeeded his father in 1971. A growing number of Haitians cannot wait that long for change.

In December, 3,000 demonstrated against the dictatorship in a northern town. Four school students were shot dead. On 6 and 7 January, thousands of slum dwellers in the capital Port au Prince took to the streets shouting anti-Duvalier slogans. In the South a military commander was kidnapped and forced to shout "down with Duvalier".

A student boycott has gained widespread support. Some former allies are deserting the President, and dissent is spreading to the Army and the Tonton Macoutes, the private militia

started by Duvalier's father 'Papa Doc' after gaining power in 1957. Duvalier now faces a probable general strike.

The new pressures on the government come from the new social forces generated by the President's feeble attempts to modernise Haiti, a larger capitalist class, a bigger intelligentsia and a new working class.

Haiti's slaves fought one of the most heroic battles in history nearly two centuries ago to abolish slavery and establish the world's first independent black republic. Tragically the plunder of French imperialism was replaced only by domination by the USA and by local rulers who have enriched themselves at the expense of the people.

There are around 200 millionaires in Haiti. Duvalier has around \$450 million stashed away in foreign banks. 24,000 people own 40 per cent of the wealth. One per cent get 44 per cent of the income but



A sewing worker at a multinational in Port au Prince on about US \$30 a month.

only pay 3.5 per cent of the tax. The rest of the five million plus population live in the grossest poverty. Haiti is the poorest country in the Americas with the lowest protein intake in the world.

Between 80 and 90 per cent of Haitians are illiterate. The infant mortality rate is ten times that of neighbouring Cuba due to the lack of health facilities. Because of the high prevalence of

disease Haitian blood is rich in antibodies. It used to be exported to the USA through corrupt government ministers' intervention until the scare about AIDS stopped the trade.

Explosive

Agriculture, a mixture of very primitive technology and cash crop estates has caused, and suffered from,

massive soil erosion. The government tried to diversify the economy by allowing free trade zones producing goods like baseballs. This has improved Haiti's finances only marginally but created a working class and a shanty town population of people fleeing the rural areas.

People sleep in three hour shifts in huts made of packing cases, metal sheets and

board. Rubbish piles up in the streets, filling the inadequate drainage and leading to regular floods.

The Duvalier family have kept a lid on this explosive situation partly by massive immigration to the US, Canada and Dominican Republic, (this is now being restricted), but mainly through severe repression. The President's father is believed to have caused the deaths of some 50,000 people. "Baby Doc", though more circumspect has not flinched from assassinations and torture.

Sections of the new capitalist class are rumoured to prefer a change of leadership but like US imperialism which backs Duvalier to ensure capitalist stability and facilitates loans for the dictatorship, they are scared to act for fear of something worse. They realise that if Duvalier stays, the revolutionary mood may grow. On the other hand, if he goes, the process of revolution may begin in earnest.

Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras

Mexico-bosses' plans in ruins

THE TREMORS from Mexico's earthquake last September reached far beyond its borders. Over 6,000 people were killed, countless more lost their homes, 50,000 were made jobless, 700 buildings collapsed, and entire neighbourhoods turned to rubble.

By Marcy Barnett
(Boston USA)

Yet it is not the human tragedy and devastation causing the alarm. US banks, businesses and politicians watch with growing anxiety the effect the earthquake is having on the already disastrous conditions throughout the country.

Mexico is the US's third largest trading partner and the third largest oil producer in the world. In the 1940s Mexico City was pioneered by the multinationals and became the model for developing countries. The idea was simple. By concentrating industry in one area development would be accelerated, labour cheap, and profits hefty.

The capital city grew rapidly in population and wealth. Mexico's GNP rose 6.4 per cent per year on average from 1950-74. After the 1970s the growth rate slowed, until in 1983 the GNP saw an all time record drop of 4.7 per cent per cent.

Because of its multinational industries, huge oil reserves, and strategic location, Mexico is vital to the capitalist world. To keep it from economic and political turmoil major US banks, the IMF and the World Bank began refinancing and rescheduling the debts accrued during the boom years. Mexico is now the second largest debtor nation in the world, owing \$96 billion.

Although the pressure is on the government to reduce its debt, the world banking system cannot afford to desert Mexico.

As the head of the Banco Nacional de Comercio Ex-



Rescue was mainly in the hands of local workers.

terior SA told *Wall Street Journal*, "If (more) funds don't come through it won't only be a crisis of major debtors. It will involve much more than the Brazils, the Nigerias and the Argentinas...It's the world financial system that's at stake." Another banker commented, "Mexicans are fond of pointing out: Mexico can make Bank of America disappear; Bank of America can't make Mexico disappear."

After three years of harsh austerity programmes Mexico still limps along, unable to solve its financial crisis. Inflation has reached 60 per cent a year and unemployment is officially 12 per cent. In reality 50 per cent of the workforce is either unemployed or underemployed. In the aftermath of the earthquake any prospects of recovery or debt repayment seem dim. The government is paralysed; its biggest fear is not the world banks, but the giant Mexican working class.

While industry was booming in Mexico City, its working class population began to grow until now it is the most populated city in the world,



On guard against looting after the Mexico earthquake. The state has done little else to ameliorate the situation.

with 18 million inhabitants. They come from the impoverished countryside. The master plan for quick industrialisation in one urban centre has left areas outside the capital underdeveloped with no electricity, running water, or adequate health care.

Except for the hope of a job, any job, the City offers the newcomers little more than the rural poverty they left behind. The Mexican model for development has turned to disaster. None of the wealth created by the workers trickled down to them. The World Bank notes: "Mexico's \$2,240 per capita income is relatively high, but only 9 per cent of all income is shared by 40 per cent of the population. By comparison, in Bangladesh (where per capita income is \$130) the poorest 40 per cent of the population share 17 per cent of total income."

Now in a period of economic decline conditions

have become worse, but the working class has become more powerful. The *Wall Street Journal* explains, "About six million people live in the slums ringing Mexico City, and thousands more pour in every day."

"Though migration to the city is the pattern all across the Third World, nowhere is the problem more immediately threatening to US interests than in Mexico City."

Working class

"These people form a pool of urban unemployment that could undermine political stability on America's southern border...Urban migration not only concentrates Mexico's poverty in the city but also raises its explosive potential." The *Wall Street Journal* points out the urban poor, unlike their rural relatives, expect a better future, and that: "political

awareness is growing as slum leaders organise the poor to demand more services, leading to a new anger, increasingly directed against the government."

Under the pressure of the IMF the government has attempted to cut services and subsidies to its capital city. However, the cuts cannot be implemented for fear of urban unrest. In fact, government officials are forced to extend some services such as electricity and water, to the residents.

The Mexican working class is highly organised, four million workers are union members. In the industrialised sector over 90 per cent are unionised. One of its largest unions, the Oilworkers Union, with 150,000 members, have forced major concessions from the government. In 1983 the Oilworkers won a 43 per cent wage increase from Pemex, the national oil company. The overall increase for unions during that period was 20 per cent.

Mexico has worried Western political and economic strategists. There is no solution to its financial crisis and human suffering under capitalism. After the disaster of the earthquake, Mexico is even more threatening to the capitalists. The *Wall Street Journal* reported: "All over the city, independent groups have sprung up, feeding earthquake victims, dispensing medicine—and either rejecting government help altogether or making sure it goes through private hands."

"Teenagers have formed teams, spraying names like 'the Spider Brigade' or 'the Untouchables' on vans and cruising the street with drinking water and supplies. Some groups are offshoots of established opposition parties; others are new brigades organised by neighbourhoods, private universities or even furniture stores."

"Six-table taco stands now are packed with citizens listening to dissident leaders who a month ago had no following. Slogans appear on cracked walls: 'The aid is being stolen by the PRI and we are in the streets' or 'For-

ward with the organisation'.

Officials of the ruling party PRI, unnerved by the independent agitation, are anxiously touring the earthquake zone. "As long as people aren't (politically) conscious, they're safe", one city government official has said. "Now they're conscious, and that makes them dangerous."

The Mexican people have begun to fight back. They face though, a vicious opponent to the north—American imperialism. "The US has invaded Mexico before, and it would undoubtedly do so again if it felt threatened enough by events," warned the *Wall Street Journal*.

"The US shares a 2,000 mile border with Mexico. Mexico's oil is strategically vital to the US. The two economies are inextricably linked: Mexico is the US's third largest trading partner. And Mexico is arguably more important to the US than many European countries. Should a Mexican Fidel Castro come to power, all-out war would probably ensue."

Divide and rule

Conditions in the US are also growing worse, prospects for workers and youth here are becoming as dismal as in Mexico. Both the Mexican and US capitalists understand the threat of a united working class movement, and use the familiar tactic of divide and rule. Yet, working class communities of both nationalities have existed for years throughout the Southwest. Recently the American AFL-CIO has begun organising Mexican workers in US factories along the border.

It will take a bold, conscious leadership to fight American capitalism. But the willingness of workers, north and south of the border, to face the battle has been proven. Only a workers democratically controlled, planned economy can solve the nightmares of Mexican society. Armed with socialism and internationalism Mexican workers could light a beacon for the working class throughout the Americas.

Guatemala's first civilian president since 1954 coup



General Vitores, Army leader



Vinicio Cerezo at a press conference

Photo: Joe Fish (Report)

ON 14 January, Guatemala in Central America is due to see its first civilian President, for 31 years, Vinicio Cerezo (above).

In 1954, the CIA planned and aided a military coup against the reforming nationalist government of Jacob Arbenz which had the temerity to try to implement land reform, taking unused land from the dominant US owned United Fruit multinational and extracting taxes from them.

The army is retaining a huge influence. Apart from its firepower it is

the biggest economic power in the country with its own bank and the biggest export business in Guatemala.

'Moderate' intentions

Cerezo is the former leader of the Christian Democrats and a lawyer. Some of Reagan's advisors are wary of his intentions, partly because he refuses to condemn the Nicaraguan government. But his own stated aims are very "moderate". He says he has "no plans for land reform or for a tax

on unused land".

The two thirds of the population officially in deep poverty may have different expectations of the new experiment in democracy.

In the neighbouring state of Honduras, banana workers shocked the US owned Standard Fruit company by striking before Christmas after the firm started laying off workers—Standard claimed workers' pay was too high.

Press bias - division of labour

LAST WEEK ANDY BEADLE looked at the way the press is controlled both by the multi-millionaire owners, by big business who hold the purse-strings through advertising, and the resulting bias against socialists and the labour movement. The concluding section of his article explains how the press uses both subtle and blatant methods of propaganda. Even the categorisation of 'serious' and 'popular' papers distinguishes between two classes.

THE SERIOUS papers are clearer and have a smaller circulation. You only have to look at the job ads, sorry, 'career opportunities', to see who reads them.

In general they attempt a serious analysis of society from the viewpoint of preserving the capitalist system.

They report on the whole spectrum of social, political and cultural issues, but every article is imbued with the same class viewpoint.

They invite the reader to

All papers distort the facts to some extent even if sometimes unconsciously. They tell the truth 90 per cent of the time more effectively to twist it the other 10 per cent.

The 'serious' press is not averse to descending to the level of mere propaganda sheets when vital class interests are at stake.

THE 'POPULAR' press has a different approach. It seeks to keep workers uninformed of events by



rapes, muggings and murders—always presented without details of their cause and without any questioning of a society which breeds violence—paves the way for rabid editorials on 'law and order'.

As Britain's economic decline propels more and more workers into struggle, these papers will seek baser methods to sow divisions in the labour movement.

In the 1930s it wasn't only the *Daily Mail* and the *London Evening Standard* which supported Mosley's fascist Blackshirts, but even the *Daily Mirror*. It was only after the war that the *Mirror* adapted itself to the lucrative market of Labour voters, all the better to dupe them.

Why do workers read the tabloids in their millions? For the sport, the TV, the Perishers... partly as a social habit, mainly as a form of entertainment and escapism.

And in the vain hope of learning what's going on in the world, given the lack of an accessible alternative.

Socialists do not sneer at their fellow workers. Workers do read the press critically. Although they can see the evident contradictions they are never presented with a coherent alternative.

IF THE papers manage to pull the wool over many workers' eyes to some extent, a huge responsibility rests with the leaders of the labour movement.

True, some individual leaders like Moss Evans have spoken out against bias in the press and the print unions have raised the issue, but a truly massive campaign is needed.

Neil Kinnock on the other hand has positively cultivated the *Daily Mirror's* image as a Labour paper, at a time when, if anything, it is moving to the right. How can a Labour paper be owned by a millionaire business tycoon who is currently trying to sack thousands of workers?



Photo: Militant.
Robert Maxwell whose *Mirror* is passed off as a 'Labour' Paper.

The only official labour movement press is the minuscule *Labour Weekly* and the trade union journals, all of which are for internal consumption rather than for the presentation of socialist and labour policies to the public and working class at large.

For a socialist daily paper

It is a disgrace that one of the largest and most powerful labour movements doesn't have a single daily paper financed and controlled from its own resources.

Mass class consciousness would spell the death of the capitalist press and they know it. Their whole policy is directed against it.

A mass socialist campaign would expose the undemocratic clique of press barons with their cynical contempt and conscious deception of the working class. It would undermine one of the main props of the Tories and their system.

But such a campaign would bring the labour movement into head on confrontation with the ruling class and sharpen class consciousness to a massive degree.

The Labour and trade union leaders lack confidence in the ability of the working class to respond to such an appeal.

The so-called 'lefts' around Kinnock have come forward with much glib talk about modern methods of communication and 'image presentation'.

Obviously the labour movement should employ the most effective methods to get its message across.

But in practice the current campaign means playing down socialist policies in favour of the 'lowest common denominator' methods of commercial advertising.

In the end it would be reduced to the same position as the old 'social democratic' right-wing who wish to 'modernise' the Labour Party on German SPD or American Democratic Party lines.

They want to reduce the Labour Party to an electoral machine to facilitate their political careers in the system not a campaigning socialist party with mass working class involvement.

The labour leaders prefer to rest on the passive support of the workers. They settle for a comfortable, quiet life.

They accept the bosses' power whilst trying to moderate their excesses.

But that can only work whilst the system is working. When recession and slump provoke conflict and confrontation they come under pressure from both sides of the class divide.

Then they try to silence their Marxist critics who argue for a determined challenge to the lies of the capitalists.

These are the reasons why Labour lacks its own voice or the determination to take on the bosses and why they aid their lie machine in churning out its filth against workers in struggle and their most conscious representatives, the Marxists.

THE TIMES
TUESDAY JANUARY 14 1986

FINANCIAL TIMES

THE GUARDIAN

feel a part of this 'world'. Anything which is wrong, or clearly needs change, must be changed within the constraints of the existing system, or not at all.

This press plays an important role in organising a coherent ruling class opinion.

It demands of the reader a 'broad' outlook in the sense of being able to follow national and international events.

Many socialists read *The Times*, *Guardian* or *Financial Times* to glean the truth 'between the lines'. But beware!

reporting inconsequential stories or concentrating on the most trivial aspects of major news items. A slick journalistic style and professional presentation combines with a total absence of serious content.

Without generalisation, nothing is comprehensible. The layman is drawn to the conclusion that things are "best left to the experts".

This approach provides the basis from which to play on and elaborate unformed prejudices as and when necessary.

The endless chronicle of

Letters

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

Obituary Sam Glen

IT IS with sadness that I must report the untimely death at the age of 57 of Sam Glen.

Sam was well known amongst the Labour and trade union movement in the Glasgow area. For many years he was active in the GMBATU as a shop steward and branch chairman. Lately he devoted time and effort to building the Broad Left in that union. His ability to defeat local management by his uncompromising approach won him many friends among his fellow workers.

Joining the Labour Party in 1978 he became a stalwart of the local Riddrie branch

and a GC delegate to Provan CLP. Only last month he moved a resolution at the GC demanding action for his workers over a justifiable grievance they had with the council.

Sam will be best remembered as an active supporter of the *Militant*. It was here that he finally found the political perspective that his gut socialism had sought. His comrades will miss a kindred spirit who never stopped fighting for his beliefs and who helped us youngsters with his marvellous experience of life and the evils of capitalism.

It is for the likes of Sam Glen that we must re-dedicate ourselves to build the socialist society he fought so hard for and believed so fervently in.

By Eddie Phillips

Ipswich Labour Party

Dear Sir,

On behalf of Ipswich Labour Party I would like to correct errors made in articles in your 13 December 1985 issue:

★ With reference to the NEC's decision to inquire into Liverpool District Labour Party, your article stated that Ipswich District Labour Party carried a resolution supporting Liverpool council. This is *not* true. In fact, Ipswich District Labour Party carried a resolution (without opposition) *welcoming* the inquiry.

★ Your article also stated that Ipswich Women's Sec-

tion carried a resolution supporting Liverpool Council. This, too, is untrue.

★ With reference to an interview with two individual members of Ipswich Constituency Labour Party by our party officers, your report inferred that our Executive Committee did not support the officers' action. This is, again, not true. Our officers were, and are, carrying out the instructions of our Executive Committee.

Yours sincerely
John Mowles
Secretary/Agent
Ipswich Labour Party

Reply

MILITANT ACCEPTS that we were wrong to state that Ipswich District Labour Party and Ipswich Women's Section had passed resolutions supporting Liverpool City Council. We apologise for this.

On every other point raised by Comrade Mowles, however, we stand by our

story. At the time the two individual members of the party were interviewed by the officers, the Executive Committee had not authorised their action. This was only done *after* the interview.

It is also not true that the District Labour Party "carried a resolution (without opposition) welcoming the inquiry" into the Liverpool party. This view was only expressed in a letter sent by the Executive Committee.



Housing crisis of royals

SPARE A thought for the Duke and Duchess of Kent who have temporarily been made homeless. They have been forced to move in with relatives. In this case the Queen mum. An official statement explains: "Parapet repairs were put in abeyance when it was discovered that further work was needed. It will...cost £175,000". Ten times the value of most people's homes in itself.

Scabs honoured by Thatcher

TWELVE MEN who actively blacklegged during the recent miners' strike have received a variety of OBES, CBEs, and BEMs. Among them are John Liptrott of the National Working Miners Committee in Nottinghamshire, Ron Catherall, Conservative Trade Unionist and COSA member in Yorkshire and Ken Seed, COSA branch secretary in Durham. Other awards for services rendered to the Tories during the strike went to men employed in the NCB and CEBG and one to the Chairman of the Chamber of Coal Traders.

Fleet Street feature by Ian Ilett

Strength and weakness of the Street

THE SPECIALISED skills of many traditional printing jobs and the importance of speed in gathering news in a highly competitive industry has in the past put Fleet Street workers in a very strong bargaining position with their employers.

Just as the bosses generally try to squeeze every last minute of work or production out of their workforce, when workers find themselves in a strong bargaining position they squeeze the best wages and conditions they can out of the employers.

This is how capitalism works. That conflict and the irrationalities it creates in the organisation of production cannot be overcome by 'sensible' discussion or negotiation. The fundamental class conflict upon which the system is based is reflected in many distorted ways elsewhere.

Despite all the talk of 'industrial partnerships' and negotiation and conciliation procedures industrial relations remains fundamentally a trial of strength between the employers and organised labour. Workers con-

sciousness of their own power arising from trade union organisation is enormously important, but it can take a variety of forms depending upon economic and political conditions.

The power of print workers in the past, continued into the present in Fleet Street, has taken the form of a maze of craft and union demarcations and a tangled web of local agreements, traditions and practices.

The embodiment of their strength is the closed shop, the union's control over the employment of labour. Fleet Street for the moment remains the home of a traditional aristocracy of labour in a way which has disappeared in the rest of the printing industry.

In the past the newspaper proprietors grudgingly and relatively quietly accepted

this position in order to get their newspapers out. The advent of new technology, making many of the traditional operations open to replacement by simpler and quicker processes has dramatically changed the situation.

In order to overcome the economic difficulties they face in a declining industry and intensified competition the newspaper proprietors have launched an offensive. They want to destroy the power of the unions, especially the closed shop and the web of demarcations and agreements. They want to cut the workforce dramatically.

Union rivalry

Ironically, the very form which the print unions' strength has taken in the past now becomes a major source of weakness. The Street has a long history of inter-union rivalries, rooted in a jealous guarding of control of 'their' part of the production process and the major financial rewards to be won from it.



Printers have already faced a major test at Warrington over Eddie Shah scab printing plant. Fleet Street workers came out in solidarity. The coming attack in Fleet Street itself is even more important.

The autonomy of each union and even individual chapels or branches has become a deeply rooted part of print workers' attitudes, fed by the union leadership's concern to defend their bureaucratic privileges.

The owners have not been slow to play on these divisions. Divide and rule has become their major tactic, particularly of Robert Maxwell. But it has to be said that the print union leaders bear a burden of responsibility. By allowing sectionalism to reign they have played into the bosses'

hands.

They are now using both tactics, the carrot and the stick, to bully and badger the union leaderships and the members into acceptance of massive job losses. Maxwell has achieved a 2,000 job cut at Mirror Group Newspapers by these methods. In the background looms the threat of removal of nearly all the major titles to new plants outside Fleet Street equipped with new technology. Rupert Murdoch looks set to lead the way.

A single, united union for

print workers is vital. Along with a common strategy to resist the bosses' offensive this is now the most urgent task facing print workers.

Fleet Street workers have often shown their willingness to struggle. They have used their power to defend other workers from the worst press attacks.

They are a proud and resourceful group of workers who remember the blows inflicted by Eddie Shah and the police at Warrington with bitterness. Organised and militant action is vital now to stop the rot.

THE THREATENED hardship to Fleet Street workers of new technology is played down by management, media and even some people in the labour movement. They talk about high wages, second jobs, redundancy payments and the need for modernisation.

Underlying the hostility of many of the pundits is an old-fashioned hypocrisy, a resentment against blue collar workers getting wages equivalent to so-called 'professionals'.

But the fundamental objection is to the exercise of trade union strength. And that is the real object of the attack. Victory for the bosses would undermine the strength of the trade union movement generally and put many other workers in a weaker position.

Despite divisions within the industry, it would also hit workers in the general print trade by a body blow to the closed shop, undermining wage rates and conditions further.

Jobs destroyed in a drastic reorganisation of the national newspaper industry would be lost forever to the working class. They will not be replaced in other sectors. Nor will redundancy payments last for ever, they will certainly not support the young people who would traditionally have entered the industry.

But one section of Fleet Street workers as a whole face the destruction of their jobs with potentially disastrous consequences for many families. The Fleet Street casuals have no guaranteed income or security of employment. If a massive destruction of jobs takes place on the Street they will be thrown empty handed on to the scrapheap.

The system of 'casual' work which operates on Fleet Street is under the con-



trol of the unions. Members who for some reason are not in regular work (having been made redundant for instance) can get temporary work under union control.

The biggest single group of such workers are those in the London Central SOGAT '82 branch.

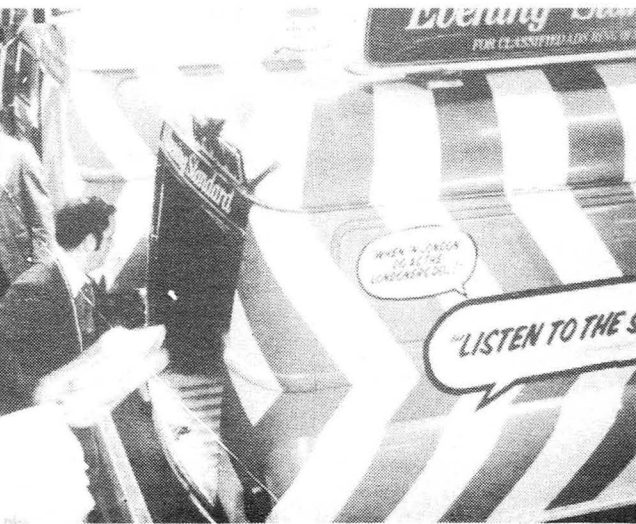
The branch's near 14,000 workers are divided into four main groups according to working patterns. Seniority in the branch and the financial rewards available are determined by card number, which in turn depends on length of time in the branch (not the union).

A brief description gives a flavour of the complexity of the practices which have grown up in Fleet Street over the years.

Working patterns

The regular 'five-nighters' are employed on a daily paper on a regular five night basis. Although papers work six nights, by rule the sixth

Casuals in the firing line



night, called a rota night, belongs to the branch for allocation.

The largest group are the 'three plus ones'. They are employed by a daily paper for three nights and work one night on a Sunday paper.

'Jobbers' are the most privileged section. This status is only awarded to the branch to low card numbers—under 8,000.

They are allowed to canvass for work (unlike casuals) and to work up to 56 hours a week. One night counts as ten hours, a Saturday night, eleven hours. Jobbers are regularly employed, usually on a Sunday paper. By a recent rule change new jobbers are only allowed to work 36 hours a week.

A fifth of the branch, about 2,700 is made up of casuals. Any member of the branch displaced from a job is entitled to go on the casual list and attend the union's casual call room to be allocated work.

feeling of the regulars that the casuals are only 'passing through'.

They have a full vote in the branch. But because they are split up over many different workplaces and shifts they have no cohesion. And by the rules of the union they are rigorously denied the right to organise separately. Their very different position to the members in regular work also creates a division in the branch. The only casual on the twelve man branch committee recently lost his position.

Conflicts

There are already a number of conflicts between the casuals and the branch and national leadership.

The 'rota night' referred to above under 'five-nighters' should be given to the casuals' call room but the newspaper chapels often allocate it themselves. There is no check on the working hours of jobbers, which means that when they work over their official maximum there is less casual work. Casuals are allowed to vote on the national trade agreement but not on the Fleet Street agreements.

On two occasions in the recent period casuals have taken the union to court.

The most recent was over a proposition moved several times in the past by casuals, calling for compulsory retirement at 65, which would mean more work being available. For the first time it was passed at the London Central branch. For the first time the national executive refused to ratify a proposition passed by the

branch.

The union was also taken to court over the blocking of a meeting of casuals in one of the few ways they are entitled to meet under rule. The casuals are allowed representatives to the twice yearly delegate meeting on a proportional basis. Because there were more candidates than places a meeting was called, as allowed under rules, to elect the delegates. The executive insisted that the names be drawn from a hat.

These conflicts are being sharpened by the increasing pressure on jobs. There has been a dramatic increase in the number of casuals over the last few years as jobs are lost in the industry. Casual work is hard hit by the sale of jobs.

Their peculiar position as Fleet Street workers without Fleet Street privileges makes them a potentially volatile force in the impending reorganisation, rationalisation and redundancies.

They have more to lose from 'negotiated' job losses. They are not on any permanent pay-roll. Their way of life, in many cases their only source of income, will be destroyed without recompense if the Fleet Street bosses' plans are allowed to succeed.

United, militant action to defeat Murdoch and Maxwell over the coming months is vital. These workers should be drawn into the centre of the battle by the union. They must organise and mobilise in order to provide a rallying point for all those Fleet Street workers prepared to defend jobs and unions.

Industrial reports

Decisive action for teachers' pay claim

THE NUT's Special Conference meets at a critical juncture in the long running pay dispute, and will be closely watched by all sides.

Even after having lost its majority on the teachers' side of Burnham, it is the NUT which remains the key catalyst in the whole dispute.

By clearly restating the 1985 pay claim; incorporating into it the claim for 1986 and mapping out precisely how the claim will be pressed, the other teacher organisations will be compelled to adapt, at least in words, and the employers will decide whether to press forward or stand back.

The dispute has smouldered on now for over a year. In some respects, the battle is as deadlocked as it has ever been.

The Local Education Authorities (LEAs) have slightly improved their offer over the year (partly because they have saved on interest accrued on money they have not had to part with since April 85!).

Nevertheless, there has been no significant move towards a £1,200 increase for all teachers.

Behind the LEAs has been a government firmly committed to blocking the financing of a settlement unless there is an acceptance of new (and substantially worse) working conditions involved.

This position even

By Bob Sulatyski
(West London NUT, personal capacity)

prevents them from doing a deal with the leaders of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers and Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association, over the heads of the NUT.

While the government blocks a settlement, it is also unable to secure a victory. Recent efforts from Thatcher and Joseph designed to encourage Tory LEAs to take union members to court for 'breach of contract' and to dock pay from teachers for the 'period of disruption' as a whole (ie. a lock-out) seem to have fallen on deaf ears at present.

Provocation

Even Solihull, never an authority to shirk from using petrol when paraffin would do, has been reluctant to go so far—fearing widespread retaliatory action and adverse parental reaction.

Meanwhile, the effect of these provocative, but as yet empty gestures, has only been to stiffen the resolve of most teachers. Not that 'his anger is effectively being translated into action at the moment.

Indeed the NAS/UWT leadership have signalled their willingness to abandon the 1985 claim—but find themselves with thousands

of radicalised members expecting a decent pay rise and unwilling to return to covering and the other old conditions.

If the NAS/UWT did settle in such circumstances, they would be faced with a mass exodus.

The NUT leadership is also prevented from compromising because of precisely the same considerations.

There is an irony in the fact that now, having lost the majority on Burnham, and therefore less able to dictate the terms of a settlement, they are suddenly much more radical than for all the years they held real power but did nothing to prevent the decline of teachers' salaries.

Yet even given the relative radicalism of the NUT leadership's stance on the pay issue, there is nothing concretely spelled out to advance the struggles in the Executive motion to Special Conference.

Conference must understand that the impasse will not continue indefinitely. If the teachers do not take the fight to the government, then the government and the LEAs will go on the offensive at some point.

In particular, the role of parents, who are now becoming far more vocal and organised, will become crucial. At present, there is still widespread latent support among parents for the

teachers' cause, but unless it can be clearly seen that the dispute is going forward, latent support could turn to outright hostility.

Saturday's conference must restate unambiguously the 1985 claim, and not the 'four points' (B5, Executive motion), and support a strengthened point 14 which declares the NUT's intention to continue action in the event of a sellout.

But it is in the area of action proposed in point 13 (Executive motion) that there is the most need for clarification and strengthening.

Those amendments calling for a levy, alteration of sustentation clauses and a one day national strike involving both NAS and EIS members, as part of a clearly specified escalating programme of action, should be supported.

Escalation

Amendments will also be put concerning refusal to invigilate public examinations. These should be supported only in the context of the adoption of an all-round escalation of action, and not as simply a short cut or panacea.

It would involve very thorough and careful explanation to students and parents alike; placing the battle for teachers' pay in the context of the defence of the education service as a whole.

Photo: John Smith (IFU)



Finally, and crucially, the NUT must at this Conference begin the task of developing, especially at rank and file level, as close links as possible with other TUC-affiliated unions, the NAS and EIS.

One TUC-affiliated education union in Britain is a necessity, and must become a reality if we are to overcome the difficulties that have beset us over the last year.

Support sweatshop women in revolt

JUST BEFORE Christmas five women, two of their husbands and their supervisor were sacked after the manager of Kay Wool Products Limited of Mossley near Manchester had tried to force them to work overtime.

The conditions in the mill were already bad enough with the women only being paid £1.67 an hour for working with foam which they made into cushions. But their conditions worsened when a new manager was introduced.

They had been working 8am to 4.45pm and often did half an hour to a couple of hours overtime. They never worked later than seven at night, and definitely not every night of the week.

One of the strikers explained: "The work was always hard graft but at least we knew where we stood. Then with the new manager the workload increased.

"We were working from 8am until 9 at night every night except Friday, but there was no weekend work. The work-load was so heavy that foam was piled around the working area so we had to climb over it to get to and from the bench.

"The passageways were blocked and safety lines covered by foam. The manager just kept adding new work and pressurising for more and more overtime. He said if we didn't get the

By Margaret Creear

order done we'd lose orders and lose our jobs.

"The manager set on an evening shift of two people but it only lasted a week. The week after, we worked until nine at night on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. At nine on Thursday we had a one-hour break then worked all night Thursday and all day Friday to 4.45pm".

On Friday afternoon the manager asked the supervisor if they would work overtime on Saturday. The supervisor refused to ask them. The women were then taken to the office but all refused to work overtime.

Walk-out

Nothing more was said until the following Monday when they turned in for work. Their supervisor wasn't there. The work was piled high again. They were tired from the pressure and the long hours they had worked the previous week.

All five women went and complained to the office and



Working class women in low-paid jobs are increasingly turning to the labour movement to defend jobs and living standards.

threatened to go home. They were ordered back to the shop floor so they all walked out.

When they left they saw the supervisor's car in the car park so obviously she was in the mill, but in a different part of it. The managing director sent her after them to ask why they had walked out and he later told them to clock on the next morning.

The next morning they were kept in the rest room until 2.30pm and the five women were then seen individually along with the supervisor and the husband of one of the women who'd taken an afternoon off in the

pervious week to attend to personal business.

They were told they had broken works procedure which was news to them as they didn't know there was one—it seemed to amount to 'What the manager says goes'.

The company secretary told them they couldn't be made to work overtime and would receive a copy of the company procedure. The women then left feeling it had been sorted out.

Sacked

But on Wednesday the seven people interviewed got

G&M members, are now out on strike, visiting the factories. The strike was expected to be made official on Monday but the union said that it cannot be recognised because the workers have not been union members for 27 weeks.

They deserve the support of the whole labour and trade union movement for the stand they have taken. The union can and must waive this rule—as they are entitled to. These conditions are typical of thousands of sweatshops up and down the country. A victory here would be an inspiration to those working and organising in sweat-shop industries all over the country.

The women are now receiving support from the local labour movement including one donation of £250 from the TGWU 6/51 branch and another donation from an NUM branch.

Paul Stonia the local parliamentary candidate has taken up their case along with Rochdale Women's Council. The parent company is in Dublin and the Irish labour movement has already been contacted for support.

Donations and letters of support should be sent to: Kay Wood Workers in Dispute, c/o Margaret Ashworth, 5 Hawthorne Terrace, Mill Lane, Mossley, Tameside.

The women, who are

Fight for fire service

THOUSANDS OF fire fighters will be marching in Liverpool on Tuesday from Shaw Street to the Pier Head. They are fighting for their jobs and the vital service they provide.

The Home Office has recently announced two directives which will have serious consequences on manning in all fire brigades.

A recruitment freeze is planned in four metropolitan authorities and inadequate budgets are to be drawn up for the joint boards in Manchester, London, Sheffield and Liverpool. Both are effective from 1 April.

Campaign

The FBU has called a series of demonstrations in all the affected areas: which started in Manchester of 28 November and end in London with a lobby of Parliament.

The restricted budget

will mean job losses. Many will be swallowed up by natural wastage, accommodated by the recruitment freeze. Some fire fighters may be made redundant.

The opportunity must be taken between now and April to initiate an intensive campaign to explain the issues, short term and long term, in detail.

This should be complemented by a campaign directed at the public to inform them of the dangers of cuts in the budgets and fire cover, whether it be cuts in appliances, longer minimum times to reach an incident, worse training, less equipment etc.

This must lead to a series of national one-day strikes, and if necessary an all-out strike, should the demonstrations fail to halt the Home Office's plans.

By a Merseyside
FBU member



Firefighters on 'democracy day' demonstration last year against the abolition of the GLC and metropolitan counties—now the government is following up abolition with attacks on the fire service.

Photo: Ben Eastop

NALGO victimises journalist

JOURNALIST AND Militant supporter Jimmy Roberts, sacked by NALGO in April of last year, began the New Year as he ended the old one—on the dole.

Roberts was dismissed for allegedly leaking a union document, a charge he has always strenuously denied and for which NALGO were unable to produce any hard evidence whatsoever.

His hopes of reinstatement at NALGO received a big set-back recently when his NUJ colleagues called off the boycott of his press office post, imposed at the end of an abortive three week long all-out strike by NALGO workers in May of last year.

The strike, involving 900 workers belonging to the NUT, ACTSS, and APEX, collapsed when the team of negotiators acting on behalf of the two unions recommended a return to work without having obtained any concessions from NALGO's leadership.

The ending of the strike allowed NALGO's annual conference to go ahead. Emergency motions calling for Roberts' reinstatement and/or arbitration on the issue were prevented from coming before the conference by a panic-stricken NEC which declared them 'incompetent'. In truth, they were frightened of a debate on the sacking because they anticipated defeat.

Later events at the conference proved that, on this occasion at least, the NALGO leadership's judgement was well founded.

Two emergency motions, from Islington and West Midlands County Council branches, which were allowed for debate by the agenda committee, were passed by conference with big majorities—in both instances against the NEC's recommendation.

Reinstatement

Thus, although conference was denied the right to have a say in reinstatement, the motions which were carried clearly put a moral obligation upon NALGO's NEC to reinstate Roberts in the wake of the conference. However, true to their witch-hunting tendencies, they chose not to do this.

The recent move to lift the boycott of the post at NALGO was led by Phil Hearse, a fellow journalist in the press office, and a leading member of a break-away faction from a so-called Marxist group which produces *Socialist Action*.

Roberts' hopes of regaining his livelihood now hinge on a possible legal action against NALGO which is under consideration by the NUJ. This year's forthcoming conference may also see a further attempt by NALGO activists to raise the question of Roberts' reinstatement.

His situation would have been far worse had it not been for the invaluable financial assistance he has received from the NUJ in the form of victimisation benefit which has been paid to him since July of last year.

By Bob Wade (NUJ)

Take BLOC into health service

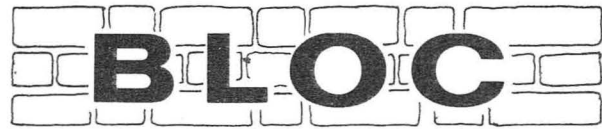
MICK BARWOOD, national officer of the BLOC, talked to Militant about the central theme of the coming BLOC National Conference on April 19th at Sheffield City Hall and how to organise for it.

Privatisation means loss of jobs for health services workers. It can also kill. There is no more important issue.

In my travels to hospitals, meeting and talking to health service workers. I have found that discussions are taking place everywhere—in

staff canteens, in the corridors and in social clubs. They arise from fear, which stems, tragically, from a lack of any leadership in the NHS.

The two biggest health service unions, COHSE and NUPE have substituted slogans, banners and



placards for organising a national campaign of action to defeat privatisation.

The national leadership have always adopted the strategy of fighting individual cases of privatisation as and when they arise, which leads to isolation, unless the workers concern-

ed take the battle out themselves.

At Addenbrookes hospital in Cambridge, strike organisers such as Sylvia Burton and Graham Henegan helped to do just that. They are becoming national figures and have organised the National Action Committee. It aims to unite health service workers against privatisation.

Lead needed

It would be far simpler if the unions took up the campaign. This is why Broad Lefts exist, and what BLOC aims to do—to force the national trade union leadership through rank and file pressure to lead a fightback.

That is why in the lead up to the conference we must get to every hospital to speak to the trade union officers about privatisation and the forthcoming BLOC conference.

Hospitals are probably amongst the easiest places to visit to discuss with the trade union officials. Hospitals are by their very nature open to the public. Here are some suggestions for planning a

campaign in your area:

★ Draw up a leaflet with the name and address of your local BLOC Secretary advertising the conference.

★ List all hospitals in your area from the telephone directory yellow pages. Often Psychiatric hospitals and hospitals for the mentally handicapped are better organised.

★ Many trade unions operate in all hospitals, including craft unions. Main unions are COHSE, NUPE, GMBATU, TGWU, ASTMS, also possibly EET-PU, UCATT, AUEW.

★ Visit the hospital. Find the union notice board or ask any staff working in the hospital, who are the union officials.

★ Always note down details of names addresses and the dates of union meetings.

★ Speakers can always be arranged. So offer a speaker and invite union reps to speak at your local meetings.

★ Meetings are monthly. Don't forget the possibility of a shop stewards committee existing. They were established in many hospitals during the 1982 pay dispute.

★ Find out the scope or effects of privatisation in the hospital. If there are disputes taking place or looming up the strikers should be invited to attend from their strike committee.



Marchers from the closure threatened Gartcosh steel mill in Scotland are greeted by striking Forgemasters steel workers in Sheffield. The marchers arrived in London last Tuesday—but Thatcher refused to meet them.

UBOs say no ethnic monitoring

NEARLY 50 CPSA members in the Department of Employment at Thornton Heath in London and Toxteth have been on all-out strike since 6 January in protest at management plans to introduce ethnic monitoring into Unemployment Benefit Offices. A one day strike also took place last Monday in London over this issue.

The plans involve Unemployment Benefit staff assessing the ethnic background of claimants in-

to one of four categories: Afro-Caribbean, Asian, Other and those refusing to co-operate. The proposals tie in with other plans to introduce a similar scheme into the Job Centre network.

Dangers

Apart from the blatantly racist nature of this survey, it is obvious that these statistics could be used to compare numbers of blacks and Asians on the dole to those who use the Job Centres seeking work in order to 'prove' that black and Asian

people are unemployed because they are not seriously looking for work.

The scale of opposition to these plans among CPSA members was demonstrated this week when 15 UBO's in the London area took solidarity action.

Phil Williamson, CPSA rep. at Holloway UBO, one of the offices involved in the strike: "90 per cent of staff at our office including non-members joined the strike and mounted a picket line. The unemployed were very sympathetic to our case when we explained why we

were striking, not that anyone took much convincing!

"The pressures of the system are already putting a strain on relations between staff and the claimants. Ethnic monitoring will only damage them more. CPSA members will fight this issue every inch until the plans are withdrawn."

CPSA members are also organising a public meeting on the ethnic monitoring scheme at Brent Unemployed Workers Centre, on 30 January at 7.30 pm.

Members at Thornton Heath and Toxteth are on 50 per cent strike pay.

Please send donations, messages of support etc. to: Toxteth. C/O Jean Anderson, UBO Park Street, Bootle, Merseyside, L20 3PF. Thornton Heath. F Sullivan, Employment Section, CPSA, 7-11 St Johns Hill, Clapham Junction, London SW11 1TN.

By Julie Wyeth

(Branch Organiser, DE London North branch, (personal capacity))

Militant

Inside . . .

Tottenham riot report Page 2

Teachers' pay claim Page 14

Tories public row



THE resignation of Michael Heseltine as Defence Secretary over the Westland helicopter dispute has split the Tory Party.

By Roger Shriver

The position of Leon Brittan, Trade and Industry Secretary, who won the undying hatred of workers as Home Secretary during the miners' strike, is in jeopardy. He lied transparently in Parliament over a letter from the Westland board.

However deep this government of grim reapers cut into industry, jobs, trade union rights and the living standards of the poor, lying in parliament and being found out is still considered the most terrible of all crimes.

Heseltine, the hero of the Molesworth operation, likes to see himself as a caped crusader, a man of principle, leaping to the defence of British industry. In reality he is a man of rent, interest and profit and huge personal ambition. The principles he will decide on later.

DAVE NELLIST MP has demanded the nationalisation of Westland.

"What confidence" he asked the Trade and Industry Secretary, "can the workers of Westland have in the job guarantees from either of the teams of big business which have been gazumping each other, especially from the team led by Lord Weinstock, who, during the past few weeks, has axed 1,000 jobs in GEC in Coventry South East?"

"If defence is the national priority which Mr Brittan consistently states it is, why do the government not follow the example of Mr Heath in 1971 and nationalise Westland and give guarantees to the workforce that any surplus capacity will be used for socially useful goods?"

The issue has now gone way beyond Westland. After his resignation, Heseltine criticised the Thatcher government of being in effect a one-woman show. He accused the Prime Minister of cancelling cabinet meetings to prevent discussion, and building up cabinet committees and policy units to get around opposition.

Millionaires

Undoubtedly Thatcher is autocratic even with her fellow defenders of capitalism. But this has been the hallmark of this govern-

ment since 1979. Heseltine has hardly been a champion of open government and democracy, his prosecution of Sarah Tisdall and Clive Ponting for making public part of the government's plans is far more vindictive than a mere snub in the cabinet.

Heseltine is a millionaire and like the rest of his class, he has kept quiet while Thatcher capitalised on the Falklands war to win the 1983 election, while the government allowed unemployment to rocket upwards and tried to destroy public services. He has kept

his mouth shut while trade union rights were trodden underfoot. He approves wholeheartedly.

But the Tories' road ahead is strewn with banana skins, like Ireland, inflation and mass unemployment. British capitalism's sickness will become even more noticeable as the world boom loses steam—and the radicalisation of the working class will become more pronounced.

Waiting for a u-turn

If the Tories' ruling class advisers feel the time has come for a u-turn and a new leadership, Heseltine will be there, charisma at the ready, perhaps to reflate the economy as a "matter of principle", while finding other ways to attack the working class.

Labour's leaders should be pointing out that both Brittan and Heseltine are Tories and capitalists who have no possible solution to our problems. There has never been a better time to put forward a clear socialist alternative than when the Tories are beginning to panic about the future.



Bilston Glen during the 1984 strike. Thatcher's victory has not ended militancy in the pits. Miners have grown angry at constant attacks.

Scottish miners defy Coal Board

ON THURSDAY 9 January the Scottish area of the National Coal Board announced that four sacked miners, two from Bilston Glen and two from Castlehill Colliery would not be reinstated.

The Coal Board were appealing against the decision of an industrial tribunal ruling that the miners had been unfairly dismissed and should be given their jobs back.

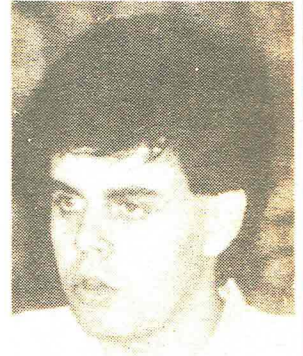
At Bilston Glen on Friday morning management intimated that even if their appeals failed, the two sacked men, (one a branch secretary and the other a committee member) would still not be reinstated.

When this was relayed back to the back shift in the canteen the idea of a day of action in support of the sacked men was applauded. Miners were angry at the Board's intransigence when the unions policy was to bend over backwards, some felt too far, to seem reasonable.

Management threats

The chairman and acting delegate of the union were then summoned by management and at a formal fully minuted meeting, management read at them the Trade Union Act of 1984. If the pit was to strike they would use the Act to take action against the branch and individual branch officials, to recover any lost production. It was also clearly implied that any individual miner could sue for loss of wages.

On Monday morning as the day shift arrived, many men knew what had happened and wanted action. Senior and middle management were patrolling the canteen and the baths waiting to



By Joe Owens
(Youth delegate, Bilston Glen NUM, personal capacity)

identify anyone who called a meeting so they could be victimised.

A small group of activists however, speaking to every mineworker in the canteen, on the steps, outside and inside the baths, and a leaflet from sacked men urging action led to an overwhelming majority from the day shift.

At Bilston Glen on the "Ham and egg" shifts no one went to work at all. Miners at Monktonhall colliery also withdrew their labour on this shift in solidarity.

Leadership is essential.

The anger must not be allowed to dissipate; the mood is there for further action. Regardless of hesitation at the top, the best activists are determined that that will not happen.



**BECOME A
Militant
SUPPORTER!**

Send to 3/13, Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB.

Name
Address

SUBSCRIBE!

BRITAIN & IRELAND	EUROPE (by air)	REST OF WORLD (by air)
13 issues . . . £5.00	26 issues . . . £11.00	26 issues . . . £16.00
26 issues . . . £10.00	52 issues . . . £22.00	52 issues . . . £32.00

Name
Address

Make cheques payable to Militant, and return to the Circulation Department, Militant, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB.

Donate

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

Sell

I would like to sell
papers per week
(minimum 5) on a sale or
return basis.